



Topic: HomeRoom Network Community of Practice

Session 4 – Increasing and Sustaining McKinney Vento Awareness, Outreach, and Professional Development

Date: 8/9/2022

Time: 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm EST

Materials

Presentation Slides: <https://cohhio.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/HomeRoom-Network-Session-4-Slides.pdf>

Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7tFewGo_9w

1. Introduction & Activity
2. Awareness Best Practices & Discussion
 - a. District McKinney-Vento awareness on a scale of 1 – 5
 - b. Work as a team
 - i. Ensure staff are aware of your role
 - ii. Ensure staff can identify the signs of homelessness within their respective roles
 - iii. Staff who may be particularly effective in identifying students experiencing homelessness are:
 1. School nurses
 2. Front office staff
 3. Resource officers
 4. Cafeteria staff
 5. Bus drivers
 6. Teachers, social workers, and guidance counselors
 7. Librarians, classrooms aids
 8. Administrators
 9. Coaches
 10. ESC liaisons
 - c. Incorporating the topic
 - i. The topic of homelessness can be incorporated into school curriculum or school assemblies
 - ii. Incorporating the topic reduces stigma around homelessness, allowing for more communication and identification
 - d. Awareness trainings
 - i. Strategies for raising the awareness of school staff and community members can include brief updates during regular staff meeting or more

intensive workshops that target specific goals related to homelessness and educational outcomes

- e. Discussion
 - i. Which collaborative relationships with staff have been most effective in increasing the identification of students experiencing homelessness?
 - ii. Which relationships could be strengthened to increase McKinney-Vento awareness?
- 3. Outreach & Engagement Best Practices & Discussion
 - a. Targeted outreach
 - i. Post information regarding the rights of students experiencing homelessness in places that youth and their families are likely to see them
 - 1. Schools, family and youth shelters, public libraries, soup kitchens, etc.
 - ii. Share information about McKinney-Vento eligibility and services in student handbooks, on the district website, and in other informational materials distributed throughout the district
 - b. Housing focused outreach
 - i. Goes beyond meeting basic needs
 - ii. Includes a navigational component of getting a student out of their current situation and into stable housing
 - iii. Outreach should not be a one-time interaction, but the beginning of a relationship with on-going support and follow-up
 - c. Relationship building
 - i. Collaboration with other educational programs, agencies, and organizations outside the district is not only encouraged but expected
 - ii. By making contact with low-cost hotels, social services agencies, local law enforcements, and other public service agencies, liaisons can increase the number of people on the lookout for students in need
 - d. Building trust
 - i. Promote collaborate, shared decision-making, and partnership between staff and youth at all levels
 - ii. Utilize a youth-driven, strengths-based approach that maximizes opportunities for youth to make decision about what they need and to regain a sense of control over their lives
 - iii. Create mechanisms to elevate parent and student voices, such as surveys, focus groups, and parent/student councils
 - e. Be flexible, considering access issues such as:
 - i. Availability
 - ii. Language
 - iii. Transportation
 - f. Use a trauma-informed approach when communicating with parents, guardians, and students about their needs. This means:

- i. Recognizing that youth experiencing homelessness or who have ran away have higher rates of multiple forms of adverse experiences
 - ii. Understanding that the impacts of trauma are far reaching and can affect youths' ability to:
 - 1. Form healthy and trusting relationships
 - 2. Regulate emotions
 - 3. Avoid risky behaviors
 - 4. Problem-solve, pay attention, and retain information
 - 5. Have a positive self-concept and plan for the future
 - g. Discussion
 - i. What flexibilities does your district provide to accommodate students and families experiencing homelessness?
 - ii. How have these flexibilities increased engagement with students and families?
 - iii. What flexibilities could your district provide that it is currently not?
- 4. Professional Development Best Practices & Discussions
 - a. Frequency of professional development across districts/ESCs registered for this session
 - i. Monthly: 6%
 - ii. Quarterly: 6%
 - iii. Every 6 months 6%
 - iv. Annually 38%
 - v. As needed 22%
 - vi. Other 22%
 - b. Train district and school personnel on the McKinney-Vento Act and related policies
 - i. Prepare your staff to understand and respond to the needs of families experiencing homelessness
 - ii. Train your staff to identify the signs of homelessness and connect students to their local liaison
 - iii. Provide training on homelessness and poverty locally and trauma-informed care
 - iv. Provide information to staff in multiple ways, including paper copies, online resources, videos, and social media
 - v. Trainings should not be "one and done", but ongoing and informed by the needs of students in your district
 - c. Train district and school personnel about the effects of trauma on service providers, understanding that direct exposure to trauma, secondary traumatic stress, and vicarious trauma can lead to:
 - i. Increased depression and anxiety
 - ii. Trouble regulating emotions
 - iii. Diminished concentration, difficulty with decision-making
 - iv. Fatigue and physical complaints

- d. Engagement and safety are compromised when both school personnel and students are affected by trauma, train district and school personnel to avoid retraumatizing practice when working with youth experiencing homelessness by:
 - i. Practicing self-care
 - ii. Maximizing youth voice and choice
 - iii. Avoiding harsh, punitive, shaming practices
 - iv. Adopting positive and restorative practices
 - e. Discussion
 - i. How do you train your staff on McKinney-Vento law?
 - ii. What has been effective in building staff awareness?
 - iii. Where are there gaps in staff knowledge and capacity to support students experiencing homelessness?
5. Challenges
- a. Awareness
 - i. "Minimal McKinney-Vento awareness from high level administration."
 - ii. "Identification is one of the biggest challenges our districts face."
 - iii. "Staff remembering that we are a resource."
 - b. Outreach/Engagement
 - i. "Connection of trauma with families experiencing homelessness."
 - ii. Determining eligibility when homeless experience extends beyond one school year."
 - c. Professional Development
 - i. "Staff and community having the time to do professional development around homelessness."
 - ii. "This topic often gets pushed back on PD agendas."
 - d. Discussion
 - i. Why is this issue important?
 - ii. What has been done to date to address this issue?
 - iii. How can our Community of Practice help address this issue?
 - iv. What action steps can be taken to further address this issue?
6. Upcoming sessions:
- a. 10/11/2022: Meeting the Needs of Marginalized Students Experiencing Homelessness; A Focus on: Unaccompanied Youth and English Learners
 - b. 12/6/2022: Developing, Maintaining, and Sustaining Transportation for Vulnerable Youth Experiencing Homelessness