



Topic: Ohio McKinney-Vento Community of Practice Notes
Session 3 – Identifying and Meeting the Unique Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness: A Focus on Unaccompanied Youth and English Learners

Date: 9/14/2022

Time: 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm EST

Materials

Presentation Slides: <https://cohhio.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/OH-MKV-Session-Three-1.pdf>

Recording: <https://youtu.be/or0aHgmd10s>

Feedback Survey: <https://forms.gle/cdaEBnQPPeNW9UzaA>

1. Objectives
 - a. Attendees will:
 - i. Understand the components of COHHIO Course to HOME
 - ii. Understand the educational rights of vulnerable students
 - iii. Learn best practices for meeting the needs of vulnerable students
 - iv. Learn resources to support unaccompanied youth and English learners experiencing homelessness in Ohio
2. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. COHHIO Course to Home team
 - i. Lisa Brooks, Youth Housing Initiative Director
 - ii. Ami Diallo, Youth Housing Initiative Specialist
 - iii. Evelyn Garon, Youth Housing Initiative Specialist
 - b. Guest Speakers
 - i. Karen Rice, Senior Program Manager of Education Initiatives at SchoolHouse Connection
 - c. What is [COHHIO](#)?
 - i. Coalition on Homeless and Housing in Ohio
 - ii. Coalition of organizations and individuals committed to ending homelessness and to promote decent, safe, fair, affordable housing for all, with a focus on assisting low-income and special needs populations
 - d. What is [COHHIO Course to HOME](#)?
 - i. Community of Practice
 - ii. Technical Assistance
 - iii. District Toolkit
 - iv. Communications & Newsletter
 - v. E-Learning
 - vi. Translated Materials
 - e. COHHIO Course to HOME Resources
 - i. Training
 - ii. System Coordination
 - iii. Community of Practice
 - iv. Practice Guidance
 - v. Technical Assistance

3. Understanding Community of Practice
 - a. *Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.*
 - b. The fundamental motivation for our community of practice is a group of people coming together driven by a shared learning need, in this case student homelessness with an emphasis on vulnerable groups
 - c. By engaging each other, over time, in collective learning, we develop a bond that in turn fuels the production of resources to influence our own practices. The combination of a shared field/area of expertise, community, and practice lie at the heart of a community of practice.
4. Supporting Immigrant and Migrant Students Experiencing Homelessness (SchoolHouse Connection)
 - a. Important Terminology
 - i. English Learners: Students who come from non-English speaking homes and backgrounds and are learning English as a second (or third) language
 - ii. Immigrant: A person who moves to a country and plans to stay permanently
 - iii. Migrant: Someone who moves because the student or family are involved in season agricultural or other season work
 1. Not automatically eligible for McKinney-Vento status; we need to look at their living situation to determine eligibility.
 - iv. Refugees: People who have fled their home country due to fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, and who are not in the U.S. while they are going through the initial immigration process
 1. Asylees: Refugees who are in the U.S. when going through the initial immigration process
 - v. Unaccompanied (alien) minors: Youth under age 18 who come to the U.S. without an accompanying parent or guardian. The term “unaccompanied” in this context refer to their immigration status, not their McKinney-Vento status.
 1. Unaccompanied homeless youth as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act are children and youth who lack fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and are also not under the care of a parent or legal guardian
 - b. Educational Rights of Undocumented Children and Youth
 - i. Children and youth living in the United States have the right to attend and participate fully in public schools, regardless of their immigration status
 - ii. Schools and LEA-administered programs cannot ask about a student or family’s immigration status, or take other actions that could discourage students from seeking enrollment
 - iii. Schools and LEA-administered programs cannot require Social Security numbers or immigration/citizenship documentation
 - iv. Schools and LEA-administered programs cannot contact ICE or other law enforcement officials about a student or family’s immigration status

- v. For all McKinney-Vento eligible students, regardless of immigration status, schools must address barrier to full participation in school activities, including transportation
 - 1. It is very important that students and families know that immigration status does not affect their services under McKinney-Vento, and McKinney-Vento eligibility is not a threat to their privacy/identification
 - 2. Career and Technical Education (CTE) services may require Social Security numbers or employment authorization if required for an employment or internship opportunity
 - 3. Foreign travel as part of an activity is not advisable for undocumented students, as their ability to re-enter the U.S. is not guaranteed
- c. Undocumented Children and Youth and McKinney-Vento
 - i. The McKinney-Vento act covers children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, nighttime residence
 - 1. Sharing the housing of others dues to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (“doubled up”)
 - a. Nationwide, approximately 75% of MKV families are in doubled up situations, it is likely very similar for undocumented children and youth
 - 2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations
 - 3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters
 - 4. Living in public or private places not designed for or used regularly as accommodations
 - 5. Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
 - a. What is substandard? Check utilities; infestations; mold; dangers.
 - b. Especially important to think about with migrant families; is their living situation adequate? – don’t make cultural assumptions about someone being doubled up or in crowded housing.
 - 6. Includes unaccompanied youth and migrant students living in those situations.
 - ii. Unaccompanied Youth
 - 1. Definition: A child or youth without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence **and** not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian
 - a. Many youths coming from other countries are not here with a parent or legal guardian
 - b. They are often put into unstable living situations
 - 2. Many youth run away from home due to abuse or neglect
 - a. 40-60% of unaccompanied youth were abused physically at home
 - b. 17-25% of unaccompanied youth were abused sexually at home
 - c. Research links parental substance abuse and youth running away from home

3. Parents force youth out of the home due to conflicts
 - a. Sexual orientation and gender identity
 - b. Pregnancy
- iii. Determining Eligibility
 1. Shared housing
 - a. Is it due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason, whether in the US or another country?
 - b. Family lost housing due to natural disaster, violence (war, gangs, coup), loss of employment of subsistence
 - c. Where would they go if they had to leave where they are staying?
 - d. Do they have any right to be there?
 - e. Is the housing adequate?
 - f. "Sponsors" don't change the analysis
 - i. "Sponsors" have no legal guardianship; eligibility comes down to the living situation the sponsor provides
 2. To ask or not to ask:
 - a. Determining eligibility requires information about the student's housing situation
 - b. Federal law says schools cannot ask any questions that might create barriers to the right to enrollment for an undocumented student
 - c. Make sure to not ask about immigration status
 - d. With working with unaccompanied youths, ask during enrollment if there is someone they can list as a caregiver/emergency contact. If that student is sick/hurt, who can the school call?
 - e. Balance!
- d. McKinney-Vento Eligibility of Immigrant and Migrant Children and Youth
 - i. As with all McKinney-Vento eligibility determinations, each situation should be evaluated individually
 - ii. Immigration or documentation status does not affect McKinney-Vento eligibility
 - iii. The right to public education for immigrant children, including undocumented children, extends to preschool programs run by LEAs and/or state agencies
 1. Families may enroll their children in Head Start and Early Head Start programs regardless of their immigration status
 - iv. Unaccompanied minors who are living with a sponsor do not necessarily have fixed, regular, and adequate housing
- e. Cultural Considerations of Doubled Up
 - i. Families from other countries may have different values when it comes to multigenerational living situations
 - ii. Shared housing or multigenerational living situations:
 1. Who is included on the lease?
 2. Who is contributing to household costs?
 3. Does everyone have adequate space to sleep?

4. Is the living arrangement for everyone's mutual benefit? Or did they not have somewhere else to go?
 5. Are any members of the household looking for their own place to live?
 6. Was one family already living in the space and another family moved in?
- iii. Just because multigenerational families may be cultural, homeless liaisons still must evaluate each situation individually
- f. Strategies and best Practices to Support Immigrant and Migrant Children and Youth
 - i. Identify immigrant families experiencing homelessness
 1. Families receiving refugee resettlement funds to stay in a temporary living situations may not be considered McKinney-Vento eligible until they are no longer receiving those services
 2. Important to consider a culturally response and sensitive lens when having identification conversations with families. Instead of asking, "are you experiencing homelessness?" consider asking:
 - a. How would you describe your living situation?
 - b. What's your current housing situation?
 - c. Was your plan to be living here with family members? Are you staying with them temporarily?
 3. Provide families with private spaces where they can feel safe revealing their undocumented status a
 - ii. Collaborate across programs to provide wrap-around services
 1. Important to know where in the community there are resources for families
 2. Cross-training is important
 - iii. Provide families with information and support they can access
 1. Provide appropriate language services
 - iv. Remove barriers for immigrant children, youth, and families
 1. Have bilingual office staff
 - v. Build relationships with community partners
 - vi. Building trust with families is essential
 1. Knowing and understanding their McKinney-Vento rights
 2. Knowing that school is a safe place for their students
 - vii. Accommodate unique circumstances
 1. Unaccompanied homeless youth may have dual roles (student and employee, etc.), schools should work with students to find solutions that meet the student's needs
 - g. Consider the Unique Needs of Migrant Families Experiencing Homelessness
 - i. Train migrant recruiters on the McKinney-Vento Act, including basic understanding of eligibility
 - ii. Establish a clear process for migrant educators to make referrals to the homeless liaison
 - iii. For states with summer-only migrant programs, work with the program staff or family liaisons to help transitions students to

sending states, including referring to the homeless liaisons in the sending district

- iv. When working with migrant families experiencing homelessness who have you children (ages birth – six), check to see if there is a Migrant and Seasonal Head Start program nearby

h. Higher Education Opportunities for Undocumented Youth

- i. Undocumented youth can apply to public colleges and universities in every state, except Alabama and South Carolina
- ii. Youth with legal immigration status can apply for federal aid, even if their parents are undocumented, but undocumented youth are not eligible for financial aid
- iii. A number of states offer in-state tuition and/or state financial aid to undocumented students

i. Using ARP-HCY Funds

- i. Middletown, RI used ARP-HCY funds to hire a Family Services Coordinator to support multilingual families and contracts with Boys and Girls Clubs to provide wraparound services
- ii. New Philadelphia, OH used ARP-HCY funds to purchase bikes to support attendance of immigrant students within the LEA's walk zone
- iii. Grand Island, NE used ARP-HCY funds to hire a bilingual parent liaison to support families in the district's Early Learning Center access summer resources
- iv. Monte del Sol, NM used ARP-HCY funds to hire a bilingual benefits navigator to help families navigate housing in their native language
- v. Shakopee Public Schools, MN is using ARP-HCY funds to provide mental health supports for immigrant high school students to navigate and manage the trauma of their immigration experiences

5. Next Steps

a. Reminders

- i. Visit the COHHIO Course to HOME webpage [here](#)
- ii. Request technical assistance by emailing homelesseducation@cohhio.org
- iii. Join our mailing list [here](#)
- iv. [Sign up](#) for the **2022 – 2023 Foster Care and Homeless Education Regional Training**

1. The regional training series for local school district foster care and homeless liaisons will run from November 2022 – February 2023. This training covers federal requirements, state-level data and best practices in collaboration and provision of wraparound supports for youth in foster care and youth experiencing homelessness. You are encouraged to sign-up for the region your district is in to train with other liaisons in your geographical area. All trainings are virtual and will take place from 9:30 – 11 am on the dates listed below:

- a. November 3, 2022 – Northeast region
- b. November 17, 2022 – Southeast region
- c. December 8, 2022 – Southwest region
- d. January 26, 2023 – Northwest region

e. February 9, 2023 – Central region

b. Next Session

- i. November 2, 2022 at 1 PM
- ii. Identifying and Meeting the Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness: A Focus on Students in Foster Care and Justice-Involved Youth