Topic: Ohio McKinney-Vento Community of Practice Notes
Session 4 – Identifying and Meeting the Unique Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness: A Focus on Students in Foster Care and Justice-Involved Youth
Date: 11/2/2022
Time: 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm EST

Materials
Presentation Slides: https://cohhio.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/OH-MKV-Session-Four.pdf
Recording: https://youtu.be/I9-Hed__JBw
Feedback Survey: https://forms.gle/cdaEBnQPPeNW9UzaA

1. Objectives
    a. Attendees will:
        i. Understand the intersection of homelessness and foster care
        ii. Understand the intersection of homelessness and juvenile-justice
        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. Ami Diallo, Youth Housing Initiative Specialist
        ii. Evelyn Garon, Youth Housing Initiative Specialist
        iii. Lisa Brooks has accepted a new position at Abt Associates and will be taking her energy and expertise on youth homelessness to the national level
    b. Guest Speakers
        i. Kirby Gaherty, Program Manager, Justice Initiatives, National League of Cities
3. Youth Homelessness and Juvenile Justice
    a. The National Alliance to End Homelessness estimates that 4.2 million young people will experience homelessness for some period of time
    b. 1 in 30 youth between 13 and 17 will experience homelessness in a year
    c. Each year almost 700,000 children will have contact with the juvenile justice system
    d. 78 percent of homeless youth come into contact with law enforcement
    e. Not all youth experiencing homelessness are justice system-involved, but there is overlap between the populations
4. Risk Factors for Juvenile Justice Involvement
    a. Young people who are experiencing homelessness are disproportionately more likely to be youth of color as a result of over policing and other forms of racial bias
    b. LGBTQ and gender expansive youth are over represented in the youth legal system and among youth experiencing homelessness
    c. Drug abuse, mental health issues, and lack of access to services

       d. Length of time homeless/disconnected equals greater frequency/likelihood of legal involvement

       e. Most effective services include housing, employment, and behavioral health supports

5. Dangers for Youth Experiencing Homelessness
       a. Youth who experience homelessness are at risk for sexual and physical abuse
       b. Youth experiencing homelessness are vulnerable to engaging in criminal activity that stem from necessity
       c. Young people without stable housing are also at increased risk of illness and suicide

6. Juvenile Justice and Homelessness
       a. Some young people are homeless before they enter the system. This can include children who ran away from home or were forced out by their parents
       b. Some youth are forced out by parents as a result of system involvement
       c. Some young people experience homelessness upon aging out of the child welfare system
       d. Some are not picked up when they are released from incarceration

7. Status Offenses
       a. Status offenses are behaviors that violate the law, but would not be an offense if committed by an adult.
             i. Common examples include truancy, running away, curfew and liquor law violations and being beyond their parents' control.
       b. Mostly state law issue; Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act serves as primary federal law in this area
       c. The National Census of Youth in Residential Placement found that in 2017 alone, more than 1,690 children were estimated to be incarcerated each day for behaviors such as running away from home, skipping school, or coming home after curfew.
             i. This accounts for 3% of all youth in detention.

8. Other Links
       a. Other ways that juvenile justice and homelessness interact include:
             i. "Quality of Life" Ordinances: prohibition on being in public parks, etc. after dark
             ii. Survival Crimes: shoplifting, trespassing
             iii. Human trafficking
             iv. Family violence
             v. Behavioral health
             vi. Collateral Consequences: limitation of housing options

9. Supporting Justice Involved Youth
       a. Use trauma informed care
             i. Recognize that certain behaviors may be a result of trauma
             ii. Avoid harsh discipline policies for behaviors trigged by past traumatic experiences, instead offer support services
             iii. Protect and respect student privacy
             iv. Identify students' strengths and help them build upon their skills
       b. Utilize collaboration
             i. Partner with community-based providers for support services that can address behaviors that may lead to juvenile-justice involvement

        ii. Coordinate with juvenile-justice agencies to develop and implement transition policies for youth exiting a justice placement

    c. Targeting release from the juvenile justice system as a point to combat youth homelessness can both benefit youth who are at risk of displacement and reduce rates of youth recidivism

10. The Foster Care System
    a. Foster care is designed to provide temporary housing and care for children and adolescents until they can be either reunited with their family, taken in by relatives, adopted, or emancipated as an adult.
    b. However, youth that pass through the foster care system too often fail to find permanent homes, transitioning from one living situation to another.

11. Facts & Figures
    a. An estimated 20% of young adults in foster care experience homelessness immediately after emancipation
    b. 25% of youth in foster care experience homelessness within 4 years of aging out of the system
    c. Between 31% and 46% of youth exiting foster care experience homelessness by age 26
    d. About 1/3 of youth experiencing homelessness have had experiences with foster care

12. Pathways from Foster Care to Homelessness
    a. Aging out
        i. Young people age out of (or emancipate from) foster care when they become too old to remain in state care according to state law
        ii. In Ohio, this process occurs at age 19
    b. Reunification
        i. Youth may return to parents/guardians engaged in the same problematic behaviors that led to their removal
    c. Adoption
        i. Youth may experience family dysfunction or abuse from their adoptive parent or other family members

13. Unique Experiences
    a. Youth who have been in foster care experience significantly more adverse events than their peers with no foster care history
    b. Youth in foster care have higher rates of:
        i. Justice system involvement (15% more likely)
        ii. Identifying as LGBTQ+ (6% more likely)
        iii. Unemployment (7% more likely)
        iv. Pregnancy & parenthood
            1. 7 out of 10 girls that age out of the foster care system will be pregnant by the age of 21

14. Stability
    a. 48% of youth who are in child welfare custody for less than 12 months will change residences at least twice
        i. One study found that more than 30% of youth in foster care had 8 or more residential placements
        ii. Some youth have been in 20 to 30 different homes
    b. 65% of youth in foster care experienced 7 or more school changes from elementary through high school

    i. School changes result in further loss of adult support and peer relationships

  c. School transfers have particularly adverse educational effects on students in foster care, educational success often hinges on school stability

15. Educational Impact
  a. Youth in foster care are particularly vulnerable to adverse educational effects:
    i. Twice as likely as their peers to be absent from school
    ii. Twice as likely to experience out-of-school suspensions
    iii. 2.5 to 3.5 times more likely to receive special education services
    iv. Higher rates of absenteeism, tardiness, and truancy
  b. An estimated 50-70% of youth in foster care drop out of high school at an early age.
    i. Youth without a high school diploma or GED have 4.5 times the risk of experiencing homelessness

16. Supporting Students in Foster Care
  a. Use trauma informed care
    i. Exposure to trauma is even more common among youth experiencing homelessness that have been in foster care
    ii. Recognize the unique challenges and instability that youth in foster care face
    iii. Avoid harsh, punitive, and re-traumatizing practices
  b. Use Transition Planning
    i. Have conversations with youth about their transition plans
    ii. Connect youth with appropriate services and supports
    iii. Make youth aware of higher education and vocational options
  c. Collaborate
    i. Create and sustain relationships with child welfare agencies, juvenile/family courts, foster parents, CASAs, and other advocates
    ii. Involve the student in these collaborations and conversations
  d. Create stability
    i. Build trusting relationships with youth
    ii. Help youth secure the resources necessary to support their academic success
    iii. Encourage youth to stay in school

17. Professional Development
  a. Educators and other school personnel could benefit from trainings on:
    i. The unique experiences and vulnerabilities of students in foster care
    ii. How their involvement affects a child's development
    iii. How to support students involved with child welfare
    iv. The importance of keeping up-to-date, accurate, and complete educational records
    v. The need for timely enrollment and potential special education evaluations

18. 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](#)
- b. Next Session
  - i. March 15th, 2023 at 1 PM
  - **ii.** Identifying and Meeting the Needs of Students Experiencing Homelessness: A Focus on pregnant, parenting, or caregiving students