

HomeRoom Network

Community of Practice Session VII

Establishing and Sustaining Nutrition Efforts for Students
Experiencing Homelessness

2/14/2023

Welcome – Please sign in!

Please say hello in the chat box and share

- Your name & pronouns
- District
- How have you been practicing self-care this winter?



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Zoom Logistics



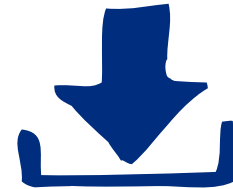
**All participants
can unmute**



**You can share
your camera**



**Questions can be
asked
throughout the
training**



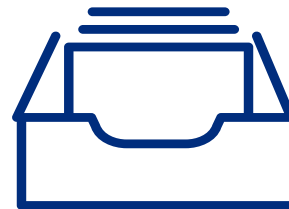
**The powerPoint
will be sent out
after each
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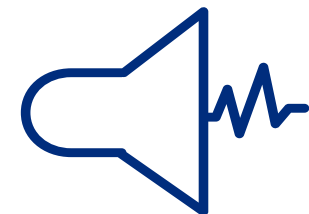
Breakout rooms



**Polls/
quizzes**



**Handouts/
Materials**



**Audio/video
issues**

Agenda

- Introduction
- Food Insecurity and Trauma
- Eligibility for Free School Meals
- Best Practices & Discussions
 - In-School Nutrition Services
 - Providing Food After School and on Weekends
- Closing & Resources

COHHIO Course to HOME Team



Amanda Wilson she/her
Youth Housing
Initiative Director



Ami Diallo she/her
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Initiative Specialist



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Youth Housing
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Food Insecurity and Trauma

Food insecurity: “the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways” (USDA, 2022).

Food insecurity is a form of trauma. Youth experiencing food insecurity may experience a variety of physical, mental, and emotional side effects such as:

- Difficulty concentrating and absorbing information
- Difficulty socializing in school
- Anxiety about food, impacting the ability to develop food regulation skills
- Being prone to risky behaviors in order to access food

Eligibility for Free School Meals

Students experiencing homelessness are categorically eligible for free school meals through the **Richard B Russell National School Lunch Act**

- USDA allows for automatic enrollment called “direct certification”

Student Group	Documentation
Students experiencing homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The student’s name or a list of student names (if necessary to identify the student(s), additional information such as a birth date or unique student identifier may be needed)• A signed statement from the LEA’s liaison or the director of a homeless shelter where the student resides indicating that the student(s) has/have been determined to be homeless with the effective date• An electronic data match that includes this information is also acceptable
Youth served by RHYA programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The student’s name or a list of student names (if necessary to identify the student(s), additional information such as a birth date or unique student identifier may be needed)• A signed statement from the LEA’s liaison or the director the RHYA program indicating that the student(s) is/are being served by a RHYA program with the effective date• An electronic data match that includes this information is also acceptable

Confidentiality

Information about a student's free meal eligibility status is confidential and may not be shared without parental consent; other than the following exceptions:

- Sharing information with school lunch and breakfast programs at other schools/school districts when a student changes schools
- Sharing name and meal eligibility status with persons connected directly with the administration or enforcement of a federal education program
- Disclosing a student's name and meal eligibility status to persons connected directly with the administration or enforcement of a federal, state, or local means-tested nutrition program with eligibility standards comparable to those of the school meals program
- Disclosing a student's name and meal eligibility status to Medicaid or the State Child Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)

Frequently Asked Questions

Are schools without school meal programs obligated to provide food to students experiencing homelessness?

No. If a school does not have a federal meal program, there is no obligation to provide students with food. Many schools, however, choose to provide students with food through collaborations with other schools and community partners.

Are private schools obligated to provide food to their students experiencing homelessness, or is the local public school district obligated to provide meals to those students?

No. Private schools are not obligated to provide meals to their students, and public schools are not obligated to provide meals to students experiencing homelessness that attend private schools.

Frequently Asked Questions

How should unpaid meal fees from before a student is identified as homeless be handled?

Regardless of past fees, every student identified as homeless is categorically eligible for free meals. There can be no delay in providing free meals to students who meet the relevant eligibility criteria due to unpaid fees.

If a student experiencing homelessness changes schools, does the student continue to receive free school meals in the new school?

Once a child is certified as eligible to receive free school meals, eligibility remains effective for the remainder of the school year and continues for up to 30 days of the subsequent school year or until a new eligibility determination is made.

Professional Development

Nutrition and cafeteria personnel can play an important role in identifying children experiencing homelessness who have not yet been in contact with the local liaison.

Many local liaisons provide training for child nutrition personnel, registrars, and other school and district staff members who may be in a position to ensure that eligible students are receiving free school meals. These trainings should cover:

- Common signs of homelessness
- How to refer children to the local liaison
- Local procedures for connecting eligible students to free school meals and other services

Comparable Services

Homeless students have the right to services comparable to those offered to other students [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(4)(A)].

Districts must provide students experiencing homelessness with nutrition services equivalent to those provided to other students.


Discussion: Nutrition Services

In Breakout Rooms:

What challenges is your district facing in providing nutrition services to students experiencing homelessness?

How do you work with your nutrition and cafeteria personnel to identify students experiencing homelessness?

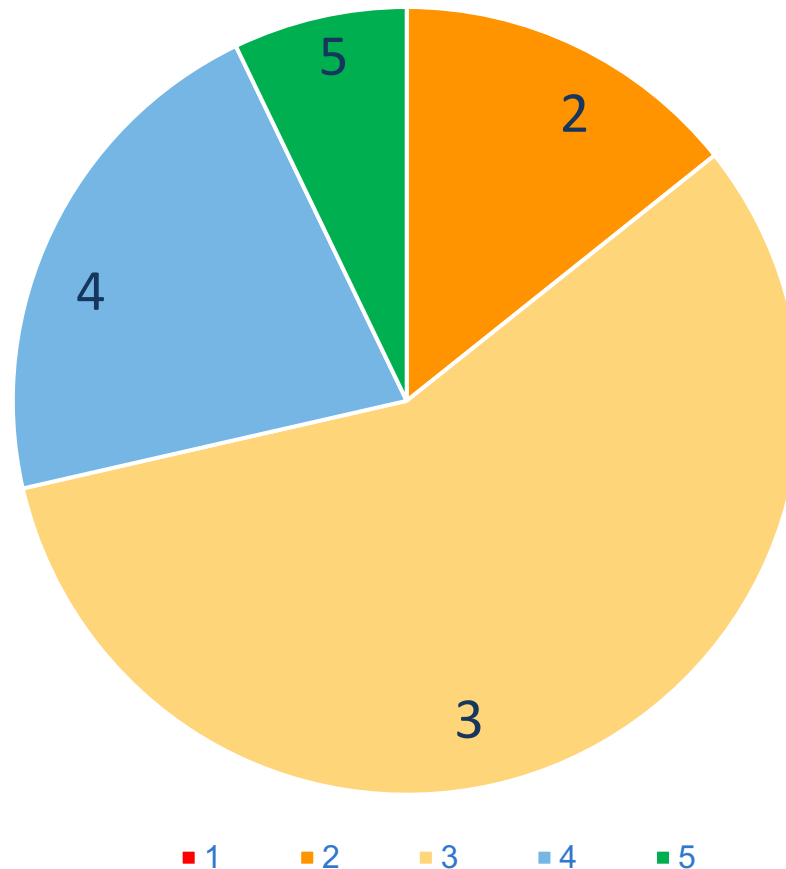
Does your district have specific nutrition services available for unaccompanied homeless youths?



Take notes and be prepared to share with the group!



District Capacity for Nutrition Services



Providing Food on Weekends and After School

To support students' access to adequate food, school districts should consider strategies for ensuring food access when school is not in session, such as:

- Collaborating with community partners
- Connecting families to additional resources
- Creating a school or district food pantry



Barriers to Sending Home Cafeteria Leftovers

There are several rules surrounding the federal school and breakfast program that prohibit school cafeterias from sending food home with students:

- Schools are required to produce, serve, and store food in conjunction with state and local health codes to maintain the highest level of food safety and sanitation for meals consumed on-site
- School meals given to children to take home are not reimbursable
- Schools must be careful not to overtly identify or disclose a student's eligibility

Program food that is not consumed may be donated to eligible local food banks or charitable organizations

Community Collaborations

Community-based organizations can play a unique and valuable role in providing nutrition services to students experiencing homelessness after school and on weekends by:

- Providing donations for school or district food pantries
- Creating weekend or summer food programs

Potential partners include:

- Food banks
- Faith-based organizations
- Civic groups
- Grocery stores
- Restaurants



Working with Families

Liaisons can work with families to help them access food outside of school hours by:

- Helping them apply for SNAP benefits that can be used to buy food at grocery stores, certain retail stores, and some restaurants
 - Unaccompanied homeless youths are also eligible for SNAP benefits
- Referring students and families to after-school programs, daycare centers, and emergency shelters that provide food through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
 - Contact your state CACFP agency, ODE, to apply for funds for your program or locate a participating facility



Funding

Title I, Part A

School districts may use Title I, Part A set aside funds to purchase food whenever reasonable and necessary

McKinney-Vento Subgrant Funds

Schools districts may use McKinney-Vento subgrant funds to engage and retain students experiencing homelessness in public school programs and services, as well as on an emergency basis to enable them to attend school

Considerations

It's important to ensure that the food districts and community partners provide to students and families experiencing homelessness can meet their needs. When providing nutrition services, the following should be considered:

- Is the food being provided in an accessible location?
- Can the food being provided be made easily, or does it require appliances the family may not have access to?
- Does the food provided represent a variety of different food groups?
- Is the food provided culturally appropriate for its recipients?
- Is the food provided in a way that does not stigmatize the student?

Discussion: Beyond Free Meals

In Breakout Rooms:

How does your district meet the nutrition needs of students experiencing homelessness outside of school hours?

Where might there be opportunities for collaboration when it comes to providing nutrition services for students experiencing homelessness?

How does/can your district ensure that the food provided to families is of good quality and culturally appropriate? How does your district avoid stigmatizing families?



Innovative Strategies

Dayton's Good-to-Go Backpack Program

In partnership with the Dayton Food Bank, Dayton Public Schools provides food over the weekend to children eligible for free or reduced meals

- Good-to-Go backpacks are sent home with specifically identified children every Friday throughout the school year
- Each backpack is filled with food children can take home and eat over the weekend
- The food is kid friendly, easy-open, and easily prepared
- No one but the child knows what is in his or her backpack, thus maintaining the dignity of each participant



Upcoming Sessions

Session Eight
4/18/2023

**Increasing and Sustaining School
Attendance for Students
Experiencing Homelessness**

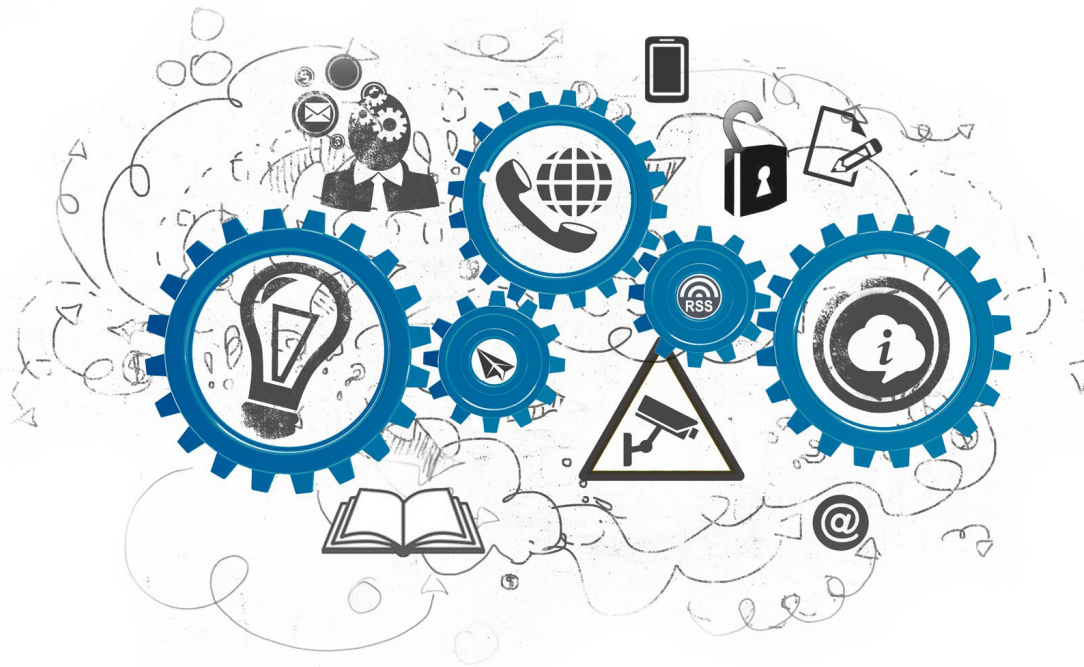
Session Nine
6/12/2023

**Meeting the Needs of
Marginalized Students
Experiencing Homelessness: A
Focus on Pregnant, Parenting, or
Caregiving Students**

Coming Soon

COHHIO Course
to HOME Toolkit

COHHIO Course to
HOME E-Learning
Center



Feedback

We invite you to provide feedback about today's session. You can provide feedback here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfWEUqcoBUjqTmJHLTvSZgK4KaZk3VuLQAcjyX9g2jXkobsAg/viewform>



COHHIO Course to HOME Survey

If you haven't already done so, we invite you to fill out this 5-minute survey to inform our upcoming Community of Practice sessions:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScvWedFYUFRSlaiMQT0nN7JDnti2w57pXrhQ2R5Mk-f_M6MIA/viewform?usp=sf_link

A stylized graphic of a spotlight. It features a grey base with two vertical black bars, a black trapezoidal lens, and a bright yellow circular light source. A wide, yellow cone of light extends from the lens towards the bottom right of the slide.

Spotlight Your District/ESC

We invite you to share about your district to be considered for spotlight.

Districts can be spotlighted in community of practice and/or the COHHIO Course to HOME newsletter.

If you're interested in spotlighting your district let us know here:
<https://forms.gle/JPL8548ighpR1kps7>

Resources

- [National School Lunch Program Fact Sheet](#)
- [NCHE: Access to Food for Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Food Assistance for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Webinar](#)
- [USDA National Hunger Clearinghouse](#)
- [ODE Food and Nutrition](#)
- [ODE National School Lunch Program](#)



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