



Topic: Ohio McKinney-Vento Community of Practice Notes
Session 7 – Supporting Transitions to Adulthood for Students Experiencing Homelessness

Date: 08/09/2023

Time: 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm EST

Materials

Presentation Slides: <https://cohhio.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/OH-MKV-Session-Seven.pdf>

Recording: <https://youtu.be/eIKKyOSkKC0>

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

1. Objectives
 - a. Attendees will:
 - i. Understand the importance of higher education for students experiencing homelessness
 - ii. Learn about the FAFSA process and procedures
 - iii. Learn best practices for supporting transitions to adulthood for students experiencing homelessness
 - iv. Learn resources to support transitions to adulthood for students experiencing homelessness
2. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. Guest Speakers
 - i. Jillian Sitjar, Director of Higher Education Partnerships, SchoolHouse Connection
 1. jillian@schoolhouseconnection.org
 - ii. Carlos Bing, Director of College Access Programs, Ohio Department of Higher Education
 1. Cbing@highered.ohio.gov
3. Role of High School Counselors
 - a. Pulled from the McKinney-Vento Act:
 - i. School counselors **must advise students experiencing homelessness** and help them **prepare and improve their readiness for college.**
 - ii. Local liaisons and school counselors should **ensure that all homeless high school students receive information and individualized counseling** regarding college readiness, college selection, the application process, financial aid, and the availability of on-campus supports.
 - b. School Counselors Can Support Students Experiencing Homelessness by:
 - i. Collaborating with the local homeless education liaison, including through joint training
 - ii. Supporting students with credit recovery options
 - iii. Providing students with waivers for college entrance exams and applications fees

- iv. Helping students access documentation that may be needed to apply for college
 - v. Providing information on sources of financial aid
 - vi. Exposing students to local postsecondary institutions
 - vii. Helping students select a postsecondary institution that is a good fit
 - viii. Providing a warm handoff to postsecondary campus-based supports
 - ix. Helping parents/caregivers know what to expect from the postsecondary environment and feel equipped to support the educational goals of their children
4. Need for Higher Education & FAFSA
- a. Why it Matters for Homeless Youth:
 - i. Some form of postsecondary education is necessary for jobs that pay enough to lift out of poverty and afford housing - **80% of “good jobs”** are held by workers with at least some postsecondary education
 - ii. Higher education appears to be a protective factor against youth homelessness. A **2019 study** shows four year college enrollment to be nearly four times higher for young adults without experiences of homelessness in the prior month
 - iii. New **data** links financial aid and upward mobility. In WA, all students who came from families with household incomes below \$63K saw their economic status rise within three years of earning a degree and entering the labor force
 - b. Financial Aid Makes a Difference:
 - i. High schools seniors that complete the FAFSA are **63 percent more likely** to enroll in higher education. The higher the amount of financial aid they receive, the higher the likelihood they will successfully transfer or graduate.
 - 1. Students receiving > \$7,500: 49% transferred or graduated
 - 2. Students receiving \$1,000-2,500: 17% transferred or graduated
 - c. Who is Considered Homeless on the FAFSA?
 - i. Unaccompanied homeless youth or unaccompanied youth who are self-supporting and at risk of homelessness are independent students.
 - ii. Independent students do not need to include parental information on the FAFSA.
5. FAFSA Simplification Updates
- a. The FAFSA Simplification Act: Major Policy Wins
 - i. Significant improvements for homeless and foster youth were included in the FAFSA Simplification Act
 - ii. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) is implementing the FAFSA Simplification Act **in phases through 2024-2025**
 - iii. ED released guidance on November 4, 2022, and April 14, 2023, declaring the homeless/foster provisions are **in effect now** for enrollment in the upcoming 2023-2024 award year
 - iv. While the text of the homeless/foster questions on the FAFSA that went online October 1 has not changed, **the law has changed**
 - b. Big Key Changes

- i. Homeless and foster youth care status does not need to be redetermined.
 - ii. Determinations must be made as quickly as practicable.
 - iii. More programs and officials can provide determinations (school district liaisons or their designee, directors/designees of an emergency or transitional shelter (does not need to be HUD/RHYA funded), TRIO/GEAR UP director, financial aid administrators).
- 6. Transition from High School/FAFSA Best Practices
 - a. Transition Best Practices
 - i. Start talking about college earlier than senior year
 - ii. ACT/SAT fee waivers
 - iii. [McKinney-Vento College tour](#)
 - iv. FAFSA mentors/graduation coaches
 - v. Homeless higher education liaisons
 - vi. Connect with other higher education professionals (financial aid, homeless higher education liaisons, support programs)
 - vii. Summer bridge programs ([Florida State Unconquered Scholar Program](#))
 - viii. Mentorship programs
 - ix. ARP-HCY money
 - x. [College starter kits](#) (laptop, luggage, school supplies, hygiene items, bedding, etc)
 - xi. Warm hand-off (The 3 Big E's)
 - b. FAFSA Best Practices
 - i. Stay up-to-date with new FAFSA changes!
 - ii. Once the FAFSA is available, use this [email template](#) to fill out.
 - iii. Provide unaccompanied homeless youth with determination letters ASAP
 - iv. Use this [sample form letter](#)
 - v. [FAFSA mentors](#)
 - vi. Financial aid nights/partner with local colleges
 - vii. School counselor FAFSA toolkit
 - viii. Remind students that the FAFSA needs to be filled out every year
 - ix. Encourage students to familiarize themselves with the financial aid office
 - x. Partner with financial aid
 - xi. Trainings
 - xii. FAFSA Challenge
 - xiii. Scholarships and emergency aid
- 7. Which Institutions Accept Federal Aid?
 - a. Public universities
 - b. Public regional campuses
 - c. Community colleges
 - d. Private, not-for-profit programs
 - e. Private, for-profit programs
 - f. Ohio Technical Center
- 8. Resources
 - a. [NCAN](#)
 - i. Free trainings available on FAFSA
 - b. [Ohio Department of Education FAFSA Hub](#)

- i. Provides information on FAFSA completion for students, parents, and counselors
 - ii. Toolkits, checklists, and Ohio campus deadlines
 - c. [FAFSA Completion by High School and Public District](#)
 - i. Allows you to see who has completed a FAFSA in your district
 - d. [Ohio FAFSA Data Service](#)
 - i. Allows you to see who has completed a FAFSA by name
 - e. Ohio REACH
 - i. Scholarships, emergency fund assistance, additional resources
 - ii. Post-secondary designation
 - 1. Designated person on campus that students experiencing homelessness can go to get support
 - 2. 28 institutions in Ohio have earned this designation
- 9. 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. November 15th at 1 PM