

May 2024 ▶

# SUMMER NEWSLETTER

2024

NEWSLETTER



COHHIO  
Course to HOME.



*Wrapping up*

## **COHHIO COURSE TO HOME**

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*Program review and reflections*

COHHIO Course to HOME, a partnership project between the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (DEW) and the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) is concluding this June. This project has brought together homeless education liaisons and other school and district personnel together from across Ohio to discuss strategies for meeting the needs of students and families experiencing homelessness. Since the project's launch in January 2022, COHHIO Course to HOME has:

- Hosted 10 Ohio McKinney-Vento Community of Practice sessions;
- Hosted 14 HomeRoom Network Community of Practice sessions;
- Responded to over 300 Technical Assistance requests;
- Sent out 10 quarterly newsletters; and

- Partnered with homeless education liaisons and Family and Community Partnership liaisons to develop e-learning courses and toolkit deliverables.

Throughout this project, school districts and Educational Service Centers across the state have shared their innovative programs, success stories, and strategies for overcoming challenges to address educational barriers for students experiencing homelessness. These peer-learning sessions have sparked new ideas, partnerships, and discussions around student homelessness. We are incredibly grateful for your continued participation and support of COHHIO Course to HOME, as well as your dedication to supporting vulnerable students and families in your community.

# WHAT'S NEXT?

## **E-Learning Center**

The COHHIO Course to HOME E-Learning Center is launching this summer! This online professional development center will feature a seven module course for homeless education liaisons and a one module course for educators and other school personnel.

These courses will provide information on the definition and common signs of student homelessness; the roles and responsibilities of homeless education liaisons and other school personnel; and strategies for working with and supporting students experiencing homelessness.

## **Toolkit for Schools**

The COHHIO Course to HOME Toolkit for Schools is a collection of templates, forms, and guides for schools and districts to utilize in identifying and supporting students experiencing homelessness. This toolkit will feature sample enrollment forms, professional development tools, communication and collaboration guides, family-facing materials, and more.

Family-facing documents in this package will include translated versions in Ohio's five most common foreign languages: Spanish, Swahili, Somali, Nepali, and Arabic.

## **Stay Connected**

### **COHHIO**

The team at COHHIO will continue to be available to provide resources or support at [homelesseducation@cohhio.org](mailto:homelesseducation@cohhio.org). To continue receiving communications from us, please [fill out this survey](#) to indicate your communication preferences.

### **Ohio Department of Education and Workforce**

The Office of Whole Child Supports is always available to provide guidance and technical assistance at [HomelessEducation@education.ohio.gov](mailto:HomelessEducation@education.ohio.gov).

## RESOURCES FOR CONTINUED LEARNING & SUPPORT

### **SHC Slack Community**

SchoolHouse Connection has created a Slack community - a dynamic, interactive platform dedicated to fostering collaboration, sharing resources with peers across the country, and getting inspired. [Join here!](#)

### **Youth Voice Panel**

Our most recent Ohio McKinney-Vento Community of Practice session featured a panel of youth and young adults with lived experience of homelessness. [Watch the recording](#) to hear about their perspectives and experiences.

### **Tools for Student Mental Health**

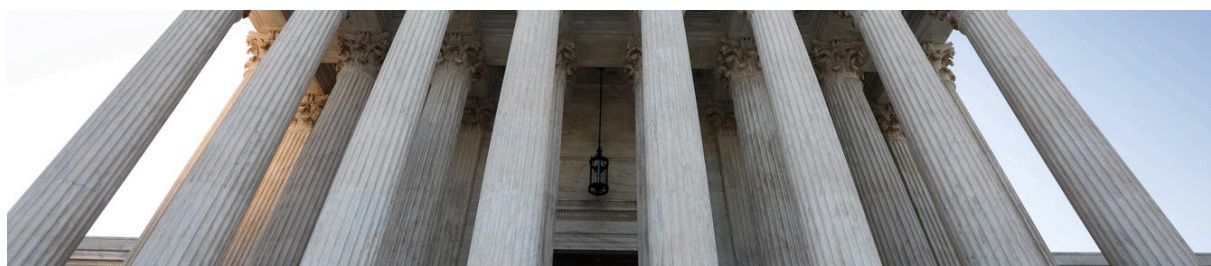
In response to unprecedented mental health concerns among students, Crisis Text Line has developed [a toolkit designed for educators](#) that offers activities and actionable resources tailored to different age groups.

# News from the Field

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*Housing, Opportunities, Meaningful Engagement*

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## **The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes**

The National Low Income Housing Coalition's (NLIHC) annual report, *The Gap: A Shortage of Affordable Homes*, investigates the severe shortage of affordable rental homes available to extremely low-income families and individuals nationwide and in every state and metropolitan area. This year's report finds that the lowest-income renters in the U.S. face a shortage of 7.3 million affordable and available rental homes. As a result, nearly three-quarters of renters with extremely low incomes are severely cost-burdened, spending more than half of their income on rent. [Read the full report and NLIHC's recommendations here.](#)

## **The Implications of Johnson vs. Grants Pass**

In April, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) heard oral arguments on the [case of Gloria Johnson vs. the city of Grants Pass, Oregon](#). This case will decide if a local government can arrest or fine people for sleeping outside if there is no adequate shelter available. The outcome of this case will have significant implications for individuals experiencing homelessness, with young people experiencing homelessness being particularly vulnerable to the consequences of this ruling. Criminalizing homelessness creates additional barriers to youth securing housing and succeeding in school. The Supreme Court will issue a ruling by the end of June.

## **Districts Across Ohio Adding On-Site Medical Facilities**

A lack of rural healthcare has prompted state leaders and local educators to embark on a new trend across the state: [adding healthcare facilities to school campuses](#). As part of the Appalachian Children's Health Initiative, Ohio has contributed more than \$64 million toward developing community and school-based health clinics. The initiative is slated to help more than 61,000 students and 375,000 residents. Governor Mike DeWine addressed the topic in his State of the State speech last month, stating that school-based clinics "have a significant impact not just on students' health, but also on their academic performance."



## MARION CITY SCHOOLS

Students experiencing homelessness are at higher risk for mental health struggles and behavioral challenges due to the stress and unpredictability of their living situations. Shelters, doubled-up living situations, and other nightly residences not designed for human habitation can be crowded, noisy, and lacking opportunities for personal space. Without a quiet, private space to decompress and unwind, many students experiencing homelessness arrive at school feeling overstimulated and overwhelmed, making it more difficult for them to sit still, pay attention in class, and retain information. Marion City Schools decided to combat this educational barrier through the installation of PEACE rooms in three of the district's elementary schools. PEACE rooms, or de-escalation rooms, are dedicated spaces within the school where students can meditate, relieve anxiety, and engage in activities that promote mental well-being. The rooms are decorated with calming colors and feature comfortable seating and soft lighting to create a serene atmosphere. When a student feels overwhelmed, they can request access to the PEACE room to check-in with staff about how they're feeling, complete activities that help them get their energy out, or take quiet time for themselves. The installation of these PEACE rooms has created a positive and restorative alternative to addressing behavioral issues through disciplinary action.



**Know a district or  
ESC whose work  
needs the spotlight?  
Tell Us About It!**

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# Featured Resources

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## **Quick Tips: Purchasing a Vehicle with ARP-HCY Funds**

[American Rescue Plan-Homeless Children and Youth \(ARP-HCY\) funds](#) provide an opportunity to meet transportation needs through more flexible uses of funding, including vehicle purchases. SchoolHouse Connection has created a [two-pager on key factors](#) for districts to consider in purchasing a vehicle with ARP-HCY funds.



## **Uplifting Community Voices: Housing and Health**

The Health Policy Institute of Ohio has released a [new fact sheet](#) uplifting experiences with two programs — Healthy Beginnings at Home (HBAH) and Families Flourish — with emerging evidence of improving housing stability and maternal, child and family health and well-being.

## **Brief: Partnering with School Social Workers to Expand Liaison Capacity**

Published by the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE), this brief provides [strategies for local liaisons and schools to build stronger partnerships](#) for the benefit of students experiencing homelessness by establishing shared processes.

## **Using Funds for Sustainable Impact: A Guide for EHCY Programs**

This [National Center for Homeless Education guide](#) discusses program sustainability with a focus on sustaining program impact, provides examples of activities with sustainable impact from across the county, and offers strategies for developing activities that will sustain the impact of homeless services when ARP-HCY funds are no longer available.

## **New York Times Article on Homelessness in America**

The New York Times released a special feature titled [Voices from Inside America's Homelessness Crisis](#), which focuses on the personal experiences of individuals living through America's growing homelessness crisis, including the experiences of families in doubled-up situations.



## **Data Mapping Guide by Chapin Hall**

Credible data on youth homelessness is essential for resource allocation and for monitoring progress towards preventing and ending youth homelessness. A new [Data Mapping Guide developed by Chapin Hall](#) helps communities in understanding the populations they serve.

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# THANK YOU

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HOW WE'RE DOING



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