

# HOMELESS EDUCATION

No Child Left Behind added to the existing McKinney-Vento Homeless Act by expanding the definition of those who qualify for services under the act and by insuring that appropriate educational services are delivered to children who are homeless. If you are living in homeless circumstances or believe that your living situation might be defined as homeless, please contact the principal of your child's school or Georgia Rush, Claiborne County Schools' Homeless Liaison, at 423-626-3543.

## Title X, Part C / McKinney-Vento Act

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program is designed to address the problems that homeless children and youth have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school. Under this program, educational agencies must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youth.

Homeless children and youth must have access to the educational and other services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging State student academic standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment.

### **Why do homeless children and youth need a federal law to protect their rights to an education?**

Homeless children and youth face many barriers in being successful in school, including:

- Enrollment requirements (school records, health records, proof of residency and guardianship).
- High mobility resulting in lack of school stability and educational continuity.
- Lack of transportation.
- Lack of school supplies, clothing, etc.
- Poor health, fatigue, hunger, anxiety/trauma.
- Invisibility (lack of awareness).
- Prejudice and misunderstanding.
- Who are homeless children and youth?

**Who are Homeless children and youth?**

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (‘doubled up’).
- Living in motels, hotels, camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations.
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Abandoned in hospitals.
- Awaiting foster care placement.
- Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live.
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, etc.
- Migratory children living in the above circumstances.

**Is there an age limit on who is eligible for McKinney-Vento services?**

- McKinney-Vento applies to all school-aged children and youth.

**What educational rights does McKinney-Vento guarantee for homeless children and youth?**

- A broad mandate for all school districts to remove barriers to school enrollment and retention by revising policies and practices.
- Students can remain in their school of origin (the school the child attended when permanently housed or in which he/she was last enrolled).
- Students must receive transportation to school of origin.
- Students have a right to immediate enrollment, even if they don’t have all their paperwork – for example, medical/health records, proof of residency, former school records, immunization records.
- Students have a right to access all of the school’s programs and services on the same basis as all the other students, including special education, migrant education, vocational education, school nutrition programs (breakfast and lunch), and extra curriculars.