

HOMELESS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE/FAMILIES IN TRANSITION PROGRAM

Homeless children and youth, including children who are living in transitional housing situations (i.e. living doubled up with family or friends, staying in a motel, staying in a shelter), face special problems in getting to school and staying in school. When families move one or more times during a school year, school records can get lost and families may face obstacles in enrolling their child(ren) in school. In addition, with every school transfer, a student loses 4-6 months of academic progress.

The Homeless Education Assistance/Families in Transition Program in the Burlington Area School District (BASD) is available to help homeless children and youth, as well as those in transitional housing situations, succeed in school and overcome enrollment obstacles.

WHAT IS THE MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT?

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act was created to ensure that homeless children and youth have access to the same opportunities as non-homeless students so they can be successful in school.

Children experiencing homelessness and transitional housing situations MAY face many barriers to education, such as:

- ✚ Delayed enrollment
- ✚ High numbers of school transfers
- ✚ Lack of school supplies and clothing
- ✚ Poor health, fatigue, and hunger
- ✚ Prejudice and misunderstanding

The term "homeless children and youth" refers to individuals who lack a "fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence" and MAY include the following possible living situations:

- ✚ Children and youth sharing the housing of friends/other family members (i.e. doubled up) due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason, and have no other place to live
- ✚ Children and youth who are staying in a shelter, including domestic abuse shelters
- ✚ Children and youth who are living in a motel/hotel or unsheltered (i.e. living in a car, campground, park, etc.) due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- ✚ Children and youth who are living in abandoned buildings, train stations, substandard housing, or spaces not designed for regular sleeping accommodations
- ✚ Children and youth who are temporarily staying with friends/family other than with their parents/guardians (unaccompanied youth)
- ✚ Children and youth who are unable to live with their parents due to conflict or for other reasons, such as being a runaway or kicked out (unaccompanied youth)
- ✚ Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in similar circumstances listed above



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FIND MYSELF FACING A TRANSITIONAL HOUSING SITUATION OR AM ALREADY HOMELESS?

- ✚ Contact one of BASD's homeless liaisons to receive assistance in enrolling your child(ren) in a new school or to keep your child(ren) in the school they were in before you moved.
- ✚ Tell your new school what will help your child(ren) be successful in school.
- ✚ Ask the BASD homeless liaison for help in obtaining food, clothing, and school supplies, as well as being connected to other community resources.

HOW CAN THE HOMELESS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE/FAMILIES IN TRANSITION PROGRAM HELP?

Children and youth who are identified as homeless/in transition are entitled to certain educational rights under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. These rights will be explained to you by one of the homeless liaisons. Some of these rights MAY include:

- ✚ Enrollment assistance, including help in obtaining school records, immunization and health records, and special education records
- ✚ The ability to continue attending the school they went to when permanently housed and receive free transportation (if eligible) or attend the school located in the attendance area where they are temporarily living.
- ✚ FREE breakfast/lunch
- ✚ Waived school fees
- ✚ Assistance with obtaining necessary school supplies/materials
- ✚ Waived extracurricular activities fees

- ✦ Waived field trip fees
- ✦ Participation in any school activity or program available to non-homeless students
- ✦ Assistance obtaining personal hygiene supplies and basic clothing needs
- ✦ Translation and ELL services
- ✦ Referrals to other community resources, social services agencies, and programs that can assist homeless/transitional families with basic needs
- ✦ Assistance with the appeal process if you feel your rights have been denied



HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD BE SUCCESSFUL IN SCHOOL?

- ✦ Talk to your child(ren)'s teacher(s) about any changes to your family's living situation. Your child(ren) may qualify for additional help through other school programs and resources.
- ✦ Make sure your child(ren) arrive on time to school and attend school every day.
- ✦ Make sure your child is well rested and gets enough sleep each night.
- ✦ Read to your child(ren) or have your child(ren) read to you. Set aside this time every day. Reading is one key to school success.
- ✦ Talk to your child about his/her day and what he/she learned. If you show interest in his/her day, he/she will know that school is important.
- ✦ Listen to what your child shares with you and talk about any problems he/she is having.

Burlington Area School District's

Local Homeless Liaisons:

- ✦ **Lori A. Radtke**, School Social Worker for Cooper, Waller, Winkler, and Lyons Center (262) 763-0180 ext. 2224
LRadtke@basd.k12.wi.us
- ✦ **John Kruse**, School Social Worker for Dyer Intermediate, Karcher Middle School, and Burlington High School (262) 763-0200 ext. 1025
JKruse@basd.k12.wi.us

Wisconsin DPI State Coordinators:

- ✦ **Karen Rice**, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Education Consultant, Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) (608) 267-1284
Karen.Rice@dpi.wi.gov
- ✦ **Kristine Nadolski**, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Education Consultant, Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) (608) 267-7338
Kristine.Nadolski@dpi.wi.gov



The Educational Rights of Children and Youth in Homeless & Transitional Housing Situations



BURLINGTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

100 N. Kane Street
Burlington, Wisconsin 53105
Phone: (262) 763-0210
Fax: (262) 763-0215
www.basd.k12.wi.us