

McKinney-Vento 101:

Understanding and Implementing the Law in Nebraska

Offered in partnership by



Welcome!

A welcome from the Nebraska Department of Education



Dr. Ken Howard

State Homeless Education Liaison

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About Pearl Strategies

Pearl Strategies provides consulting and technical assistance focused on the design, delivery, and evaluation of human services in education, housing and homeless response, workforce development, child welfare, and philanthropy



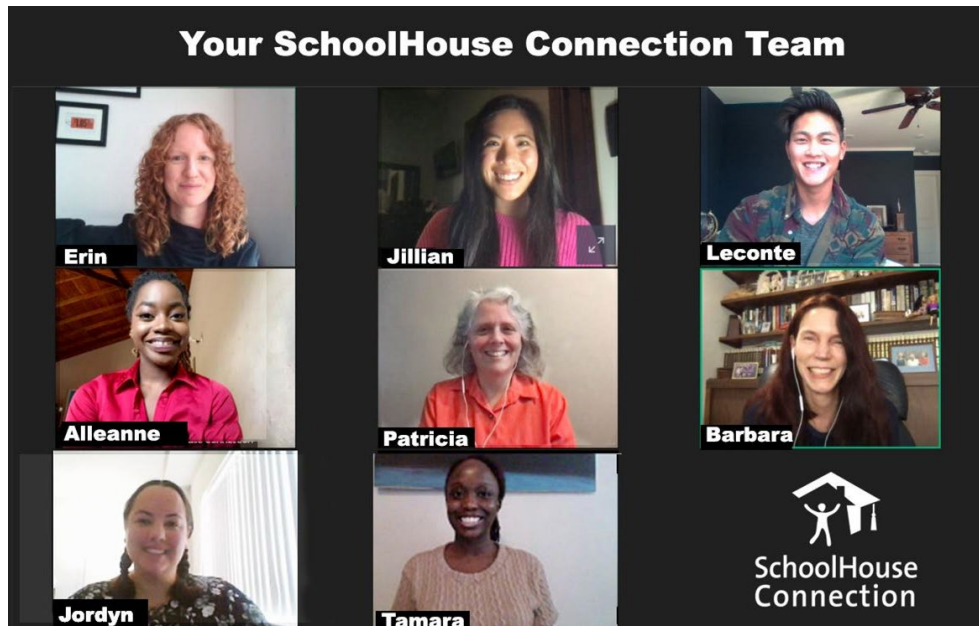
Christina Dukes

Founder and Principal

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About SchoolHouse Connection

[SchoolHouse Connection](#) works to overcome homelessness through education. We provide strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth.



Website

Federal and state policy advocacy

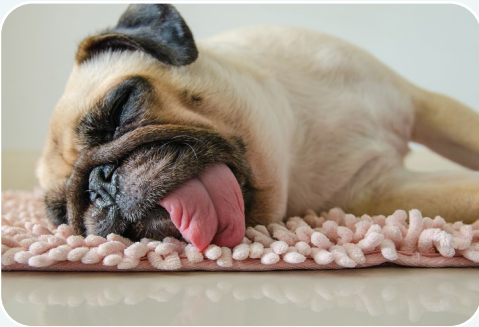
Q&A from our inbox

Webinars and implementation tools

Youth leadership and scholarship

Icebreaker!

Share in the chat: How are you feeling coming back from holiday break?



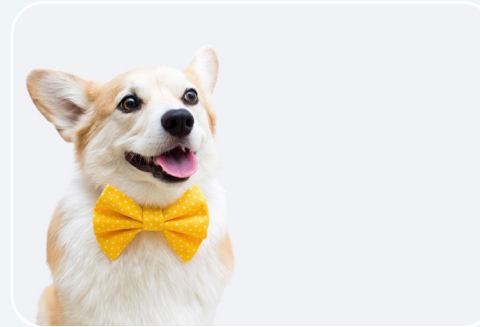
A.

Noooo, not
ready



B.

Ehhhh, not
sure yet



C.

Refreshed
and ready!

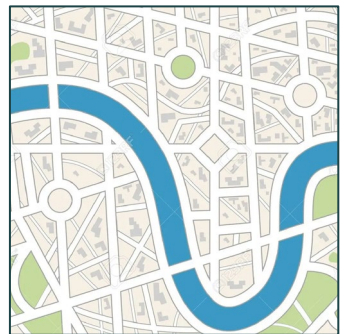


D.

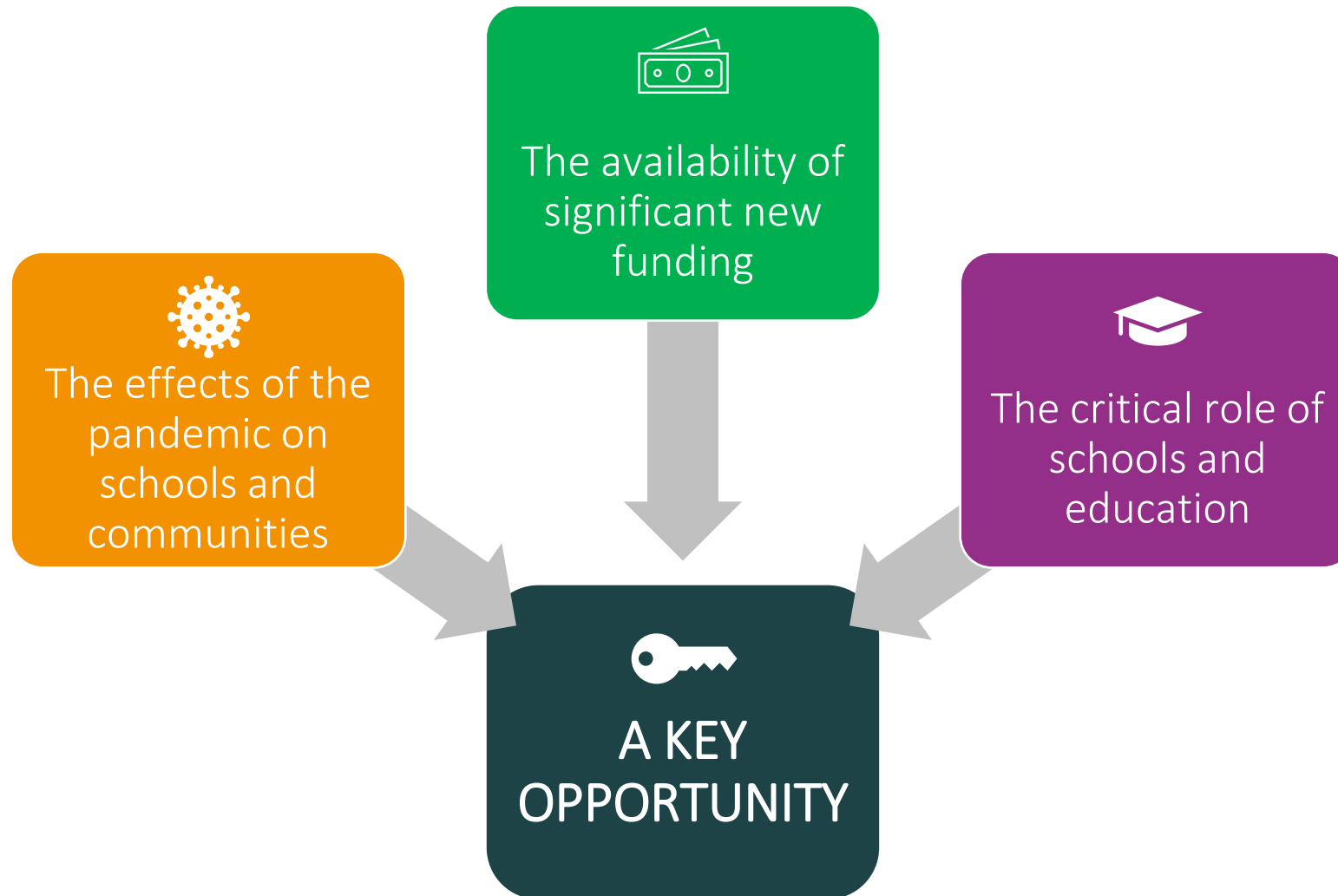
Other
(describe in
the chat)

Today's Roadmap

- Research on education and homelessness
- Understanding and implementing the McKinney-Vento Act
- American Rescue Plan – Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) funds
- Scenarios, Q&A, and discussion

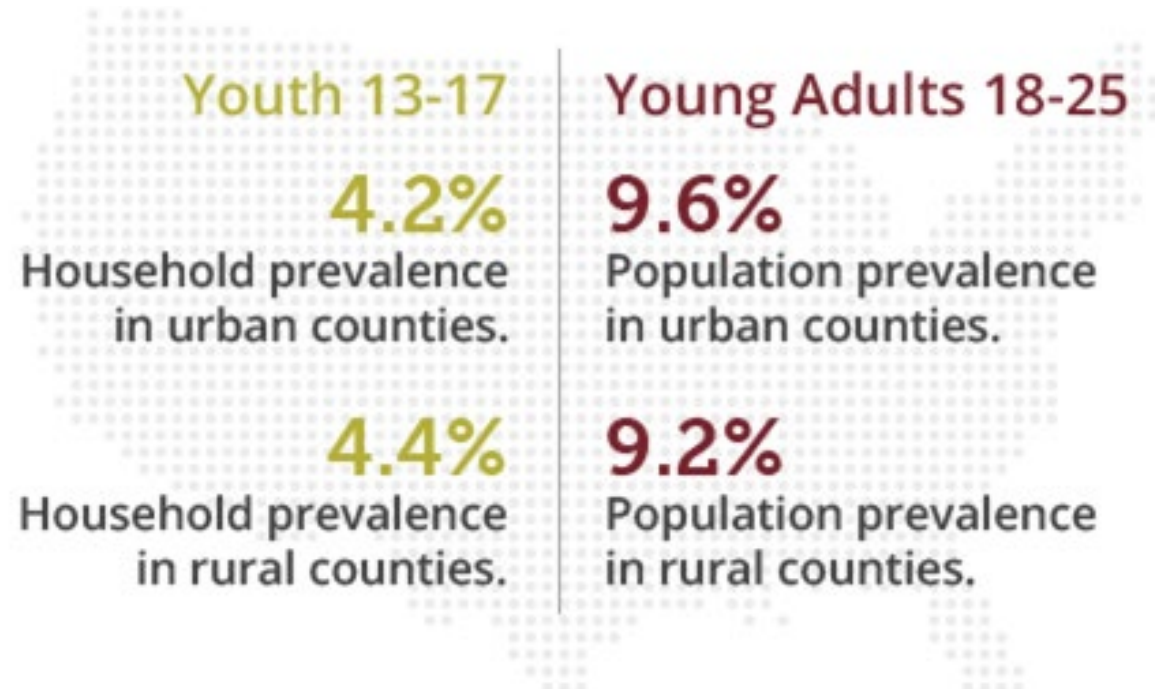


The Importance of the Moment



The Research: Rural v. Nonrural

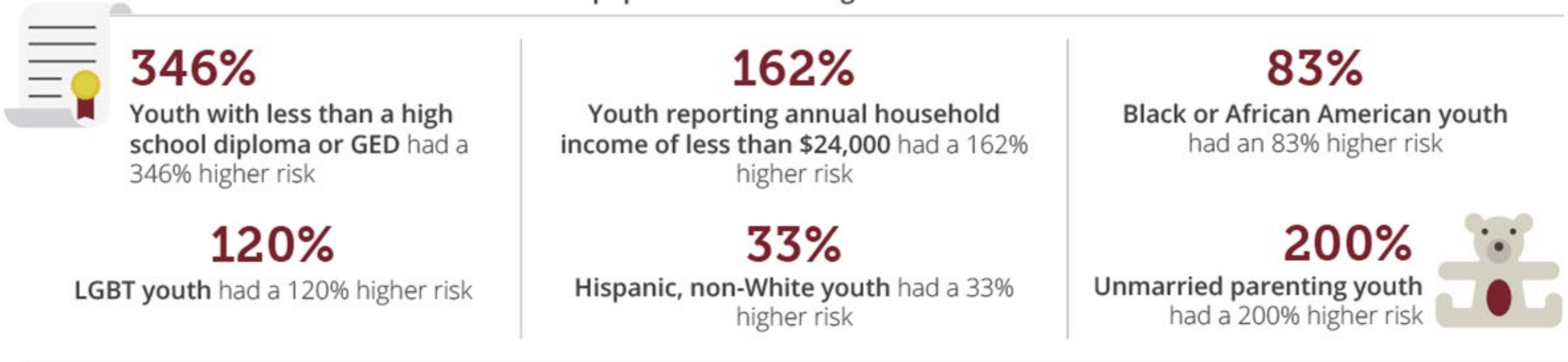
Rates of youth homelessness are statistically identical in rural and nonrural areas



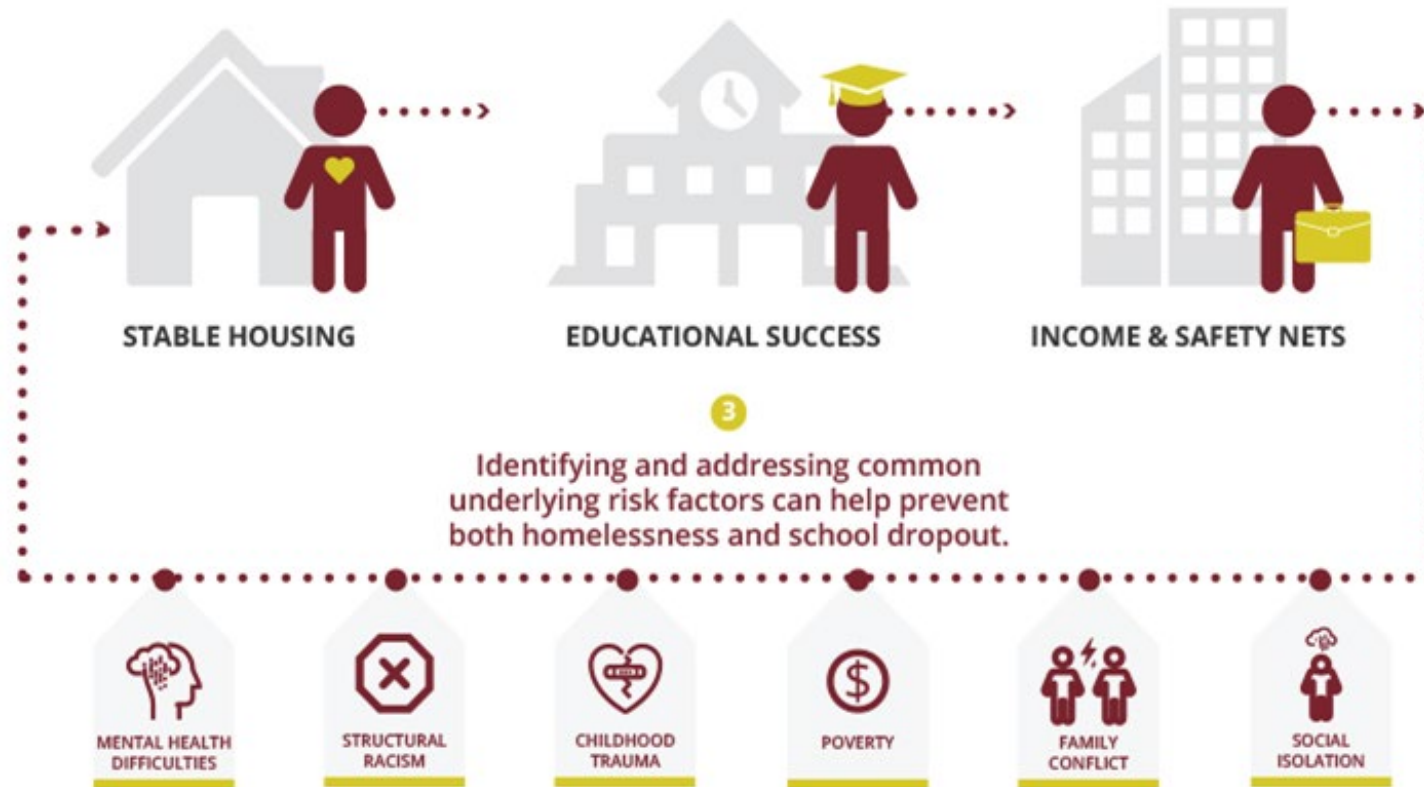
The Research: Risk Factors

Lack of a high school credential is the single largest factor placing youth at risk of experiencing homelessness

Particular subpopulations are at higher risk for homelessness



The Research: A Bidirectional Relationship



Source: Chapin Hall, [Missed Opportunities: Education Among Youth Experiencing Homelessness in America](#)

The McKinney-Vento Act

McKinney-Vento Basics

- Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
- Was reauthorized by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Addresses the unique educational barriers and challenges faced by students experiencing homelessness
- Requires state education departments to designate a State Coordinator for Homeless Education and school districts to designate a [local homeless education liaison](#)



Role of the Local Liaison

Duties of the local liaison include

- Ensuring the **identification** and school **enrollment** of students experiencing homelessness
- Connecting families experiencing homelessness to **early childhood services**
- Referring families experiencing homelessness to **outside agencies** (housing, health and mental health care, etc)
- Supporting the informed engagement of **parents**
- Disseminating **public notice** of McKinney-Vento rights and services
- Providing **professional development** to school personnel
- Supporting **unaccompanied homeless youth**

McKinney-Vento Basics: Breaking it Down

- State education departments and school districts must
 - Review and revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies
 - that may act as a barrier to
 - the identification of,
 - or the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of
 - children and youth experiencing homelessness

What Do You Think?

Share in the chat or over audio:

What are some of the educational barriers and challenges children and youth experiencing homelessness might face?



Homelessness: Challenges and Effects

Challenges

- Due to homelessness, students may
 - Be unable to meet school enrollment requirements
 - Move around and change schools a lot
 - Be hungry, tired, and anxious
 - Not have school supplies or a quiet place to study
 - Not have access to reliable transportation
 - Not have a parent or guardian to help them

Effects

- As a result, students experiencing homelessness are more likely to
 - Be chronically absent from school
 - Get lower grades
 - Have special education needs
 - Score poorly on assessment tests
 - Drop out of school

Who Is Homeless?

Children and youth who **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**, including

- Sharing the housing of other persons, *due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason*
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds *due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations*
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters, or abandoned in hospitals
- Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children living in the above circumstances
- Children and youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian living in the above circumstances

42 U.S.C. §11434a(2)

42 U.S.C. §11434a(6)

Determining McKinney-Vento Eligibility

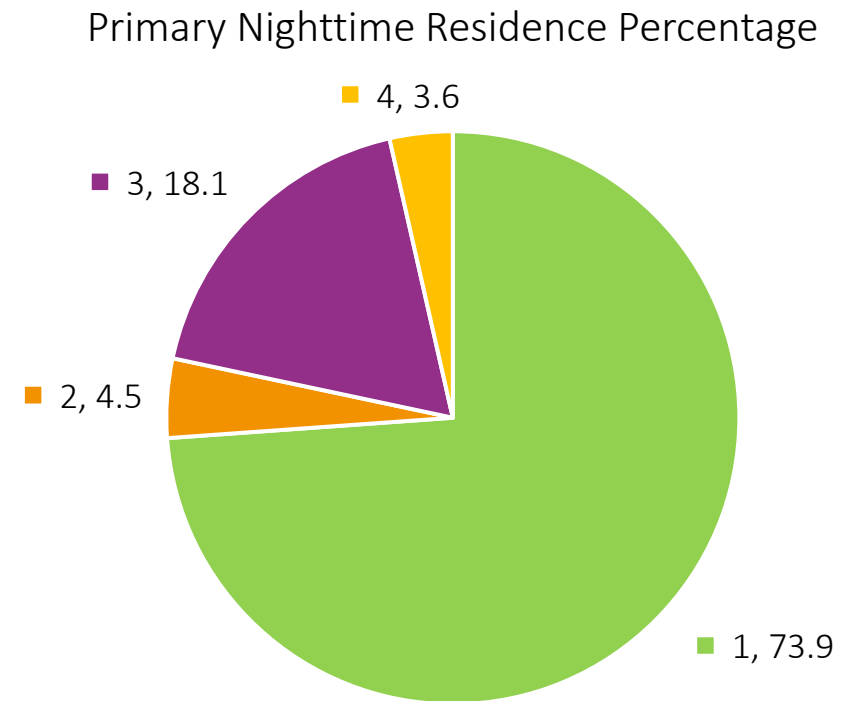


- The **local liaison** has the authority and responsibility to ensure that eligible students are identified
- Eligibility determinations should be made on a **case-by-case basis**, considering the circumstances of each student
- Pay close attention to the **legislative wording**, as it may provide needed clarity
- Download NCHE's [Determining Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Rights and Services](#) brief for more information

Nebraska Homeless Education Data

2019-2020 School Year

- Nebraska public schools enrolled 4,096 children and youth experiencing homelessness, including 309 unaccompanied homeless youth
- Quick look: [EdDataExpress](#)



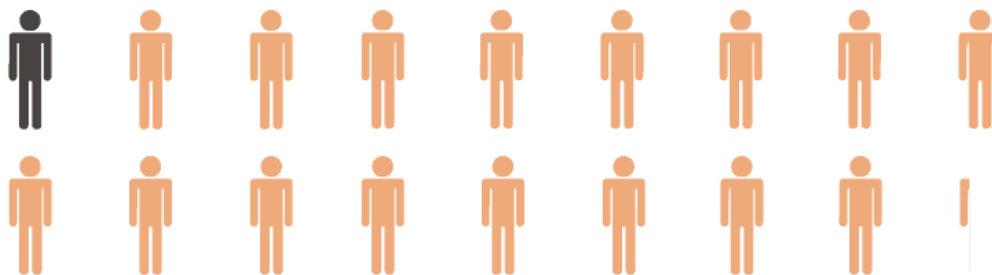
Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS): Prevalence of Homelessness in High School



Survey results show:

5.8% OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS INDICATED THEY HAD EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS IN THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR

For every
17.3 high school
students,
1 has
experienced
homelessness.



Based on YRBS homelessness data, public schools are identifying slightly **less than half** of high school students experiencing homelessness.

YRBS prevalence: 5.8%

Public schools prevalence: 2.27%

Data: SchoolHouse Connection's analysis of 2019 YRBS data from 27 states (AK, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, HI, ID, IL, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MI, MT, NH, NM, NC, ND, PA, RI, SC, SD, VT, VA, WI)

Source: SchoolHouse Connection, [Student Homelessness: Lessons from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey \(YRBS\)](#)

Meet the Carters

Cheryl Carter has been working as a server at a local restaurant for 3 years. The restaurant has struggled to stay afloat during the pandemic. Cheryl's hours had been cut steadily to the point where she could no longer afford the apartment where she and her 7-year-old daughter, Krystle, had been living. Cheryl asked her manager, Tamika, if she and Krystle could stay in her spare bedroom. Tamika said they could stay there until her son comes home from college for the summer.

Share in the chat or over audio:

Would you consider Cheryl and Krystle to be homeless?
Why or why not?



Identification



- **Identification is the first step** to ensuring educational access and success for students experiencing homelessness
- Liaisons must ensure that homeless children and youth are **identified** by school personnel through outreach and coordination with other entities and agencies [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)(i)]
- Liaisons must ensure that **public notice of homeless students' rights** is posted in an understandable manner in locations frequented by parents, guardians, and unaccompanied youth [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)(vi)]
- Resource: [NCHE educational rights posters](#)

What Do You Think?

Share in the chat or over audio:

What efforts is your district making to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness?

Did your approach to identification change as a result of COVID-19?
If so, how?



Immediate Enrollment



- Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to **immediate school enrollment**
 - even if lacking paperwork normally required for enrollment (birth certificate, proof of residence, previous school records, immunization/health records, etc.)
 - even if they do not have a parent or legal guardian present
- ***Enrollment*** is defined as “attending classes and participating fully in school activities” [42 U.S.C. § 11434a(1)]

School Selection and Transportation

- Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to attend
 - **The school of origin** [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(I)(i)]
 - The school that a child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled
 - **The local attendance area school** [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(A)(ii)]
 - Any public school that nonhomeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend
- **School of origin transportation** must be provided at the request of the parent or guardian, or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, at the request of the local liaison [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(1)(J)(iii)]

Determining Best Interest



- In determining best interest, the school district shall
 - **Presume** that keeping the child or youth in the school of origin is in the child's or youth's best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth
 - **Consider student-centered factors** related to the child's or youth's best interest, including factors related to the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety, giving priority to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth

Krystle's School Selection

Remember Cheryl and Krystle Carter? After learning more about their situation, you deemed Krystle McKinney-Vento eligible. They're staying with Cheryl's manager, who lives in an area zoned for a different elementary school than the one Krystle was attending.

Share in the chat or over audio:

Does Krystle have the right to continue attending her elementary school?
How do you go about determining which school is in Krystle's best interest?



What if We Disagree?

- If, after conducting the best interest determination, the district determines that it is not in the student's best interest to attend the school requested by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth
 - The district must provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with a **written explanation** of the reasons for its determination...
 - in a **manner and form understandable** to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth...
 - including information regarding the **right to appeal** [42 U.S.C. §11432(g)(3)(B)]
- The child or youth shall be **immediately enrolled** in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(E)(i)]

Barriers: A Deeper Dive



- In addressing educational barriers, school districts must
 - Address barriers related to **outstanding fees or fines, or absences** [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(I)]
 - Ensure students receive appropriate **credit for full or partial coursework** satisfactorily completed at a prior school [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(F)(ii)]
 - Address barriers to accessing **academic and extracurricular activities**, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(F)(iii)]

Higher Education



- School counselors must assist students experiencing homelessness with **college preparation and readiness** [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(K)]
- Local liaisons must inform unaccompanied youth about their **independent student status** on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and assist with verification of this status [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(6)(A)(x)(III)]

Removing Barriers for Krystle

Summer is approaching. Krystle did okay in school this year, but would benefit from attending her school's summer reading enrichment program. The school says she can't enroll in the program until she pays a fine related to a lost internet hot spot that was issued to help with remote learning during the pandemic. Krystle's mom, Cheryl, says she's looked all over for the hotspot, but it must've gotten lost or left behind when they got evicted and moved in with Cheryl's boss. She doesn't have the money at the moment to pay the fine but doesn't want Krystle to miss out on the reading assistance.

Share in the chat or over audio:

How would you address the issue of the hotspot fine?



More on ARP-HCY

New Funding: ARP-HCY

- ARP-HCY = [American Rescue Plan – Homeless Children and Youth funds](#)
- **\$3.5+ million in new funds for Nebraska** to serve children and youth experiencing homelessness
- Areas of focus: Identification, school engagement, wraparound services
- Intentional focus on historically underserved students
- [Flexible funds usage](#) (“any expenses necessary to facilitate the identification, enrollment, retention, and educational success of homeless children and youth”)
- Option to contract with community-based organizations (CBOs) to identify and serve children and youth experiencing homelessness

ARP Homeless I and ARP Homeless II

ARP-HCY funding is being distributed to districts in two “tranches”

- **ARP Homeless I**

- 25% of Nebraska’s funding
- Awarded to districts via **competitive** application
- Application is open to all districts, including those that have never received McKinney-Vento funds
- **Application is currently open** with a due date of January 24, 2022

- **ARP Homeless II**

- 75% of Nebraska’s funding
- Awarded to districts via **formula**
- Districts that would receive less than the \$5,000 formula threshold can apply in **consortium** with other districts
- Nebraska hopes to finalize awards in early February

ARP Homeless I and II: Help is Here!

- NDE is working with Pearl Strategies and SchoolHouse Connection to support ARP-HCY implementation, including assistance with
 - Conducting a district needs assessment to inform the usage of ARP-HCY funds
 - Identifying strategic uses of ARP-HCY funds
 - Forming consortia to apply for ARP Homeless II funds (for districts below the \$5,000 formula threshold)

Next Steps

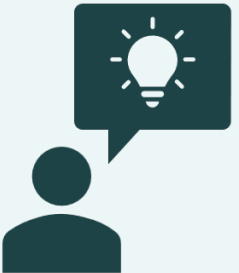


- Look for a follow-up message from NDE after today's session
- **Apply for ARP Homeless I funds** by January 24!
- Let the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) know you ["want in" on ARP Homeless II funds](#) as soon as possible
- Join Pearl Strategies for an **ARP-HCY "open house"** on
 - Tues, Jan 18, 10-11 AM CT/9-10 AM MT (pre-registration not required)
 - Wed, Jan 19, 2-3 PM CT/1-2 PM MT (pre-registration not required)
- Stay tuned for **additional trainings and supports** from NDE, SchoolHouse Connection, and Pearl Strategies

What Do You Think?

Share in the chat or over audio:

1. Do you plan to apply for ARP-HCY funds?
 - If so, how are you planning to use ARP-HCY funds in your district?
 - If you're not sure, what is your hesitation?
2. What is one next step you'll take after today's training?



For More Information

- [NDE homeless education webpage](#)
- [SchoolHouse Connection website](#)
- [National Center for Homeless Education website](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education ARP-HCY webpage](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education EHCY Program Non-Regulatory Guidance](#)



Thanks for Joining!



Christina Dukes

Founder and Principal

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