

Parents

Helping Your Child Succeed in School, Even When Dealing with Homelessness

- Know your child's educational rights:
 - Enroll your child in school. You can enroll your child even if you are missing documents normally required for enrollment such as immunization records, previous school records, birth certificates, and proof of residency.
 - Let the school know where you want your child to attend school. The McKinney-Vento Act gives your child the right to stay at the same school even if the family's homeless situation means you are no longer living in the same area. This school would be called the school of origin, and school districts must let students continue attending if this is in the student's best interest. Your child also may attend any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area where you're currently living are eligible to attend.
- Keep copies of critical records such as immunizations, Social Security number, health physicals, and individualized education programs (IEPs). Ask someone you trust to keep a set of records for you if your current living arrangements make this difficult.
- Maintain high expectations for your child.
- Ask questions, such as the following:
 - Who is the local homeless education liaison? How can I contact him or her?
 - What transportation is available for my child to stay in the same school (the school of origin)?
 - If my child changes schools, who can help us transfer records quickly?
 - How can my child receive free meals at school?
 - How can my child receive free school supplies, if needed?
 - Who can help if my child needs special education services? How quickly can these services be set up?
 - What academic help is available for my child, such as Title I, Part A, programs or afterschool tutoring?
 - What programs can help develop my child's talents and address his/her unique needs?
 - Are there sports, music, or other activities available for my child?
 - How can my child go on class field trips or participate in other school activities if I can't pay for them?
 - Is there a preschool program for my younger children?



For more information about helping your child succeed in school, visit the National Center for Homeless Education website at <http://www.serve.org/nche>, or contact the local homeless education liaison for your school district: