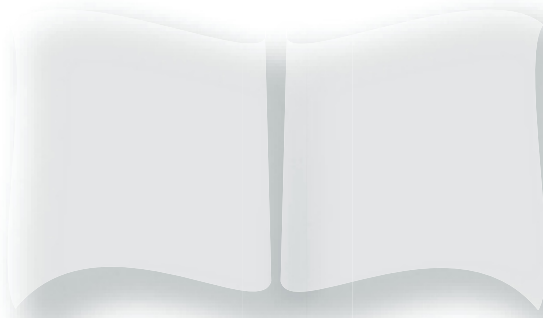


State Coordinator's Handbook for Supporting Local Homeless Education Liaisons



Pre-Publication Draft Copy



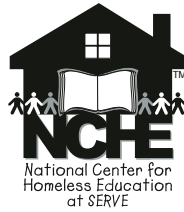
SERVETM
*Improving Learning through
Research & Development*

State Coordinator's Handbook for Supporting Local Homeless Education Liaisons



A Pre-Publication Draft Copy from
The National Center for Homeless Education
U.S. Department of Education

State Coordinator's Handbook for Supporting Local Homeless Education Liaisons



First Printing, 2003

**Developed for the National Center
for Homeless Education by**

Patricia A. Popp, Ph.D.

Jennifer L. Hindman, M.T.

James H. Stronge, Ph.D.

Project HOPE
The College of William and Mary, Virginia

A Publication from

The National Center for Homeless Education

Produced by

SERVE
*Improving Learning through
Research & Development*

Associated with the School of Education
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

www.serve.org

Edited by

Christy Casbon

Karen DeMeester, Ph.D.

Donna Nalley, Ph.D.

Designed by

Shelley Call

The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education or the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. This document was produced with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, under contract no. ED-01-CO-0092/0001. Permission granted to reproduce this document.

National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE), the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) was established at SERVE to provide critical information to those who seek to remove barriers to education and to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for children and youth experiencing homelessness. SERVE is a consortium of educational organizations associated with the School of Education and headquartered at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

The goals of NCHE are to:



Collect and disseminate important resource and referral information related to the complex issues surrounding the education of children and youth in homeless situations



Provide rapid-response referral information



Foster collaboration among various organizations with interests in addressing the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness



Synthesize and apply existing research and guide the research agenda to expand the knowledge base on the education of children and youth who are homeless

NCHE Staff

Diana Bowman,
Director

Beth Hartness,
Assistant Program Specialist

NCHE HelpLine

800-308-2145

NCHE Website

www.serve.org/nche

Table of Contents

Chapter 1	Overview	1
Chapter 2	State Coordinators' Survey Summary Report	3
Chapter 3	Establishing Local Homeless Education Liaisons	7
Chapter 4	Professional Development for Local Homeless Education Liaisons.....	15

Appendices

Appendix A	Sample Letter Requesting that a Local Homeless Education Liaison Be Identified	21
Appendix B	Sample Liaison Welcome Letter	25
Appendix C	Sample Update Postcard and E-mail.....	27
Appendix D	Sample Welcome Letter for a Replacement Local Homeless Education Liaison	29
Appendix E	State Forms: State Information Form Sample Technical Assistance/Barrier Tracking Form.....	33
Appendix F	Presentation: Introduction to the <i>Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit</i>	39
Appendix G	Workshop: Exploring the <i>Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit</i>	59

Tables

Table 1	Chapter Content and Related Appendices.....	2
Table 2	States Reporting the Use of LEA Contacts	5
Table 3	Potential Responsibilities of Local Homeless Education Liaisons	8
Table 4	Communication with Local Liaisons.....	12
Table 5	<i>Toolkit</i> Resources That State Coordinators Can Modify	13
Table 6	Summary of Abbreviated Overview Presentation	16
Table 7	Summary of Half-Day Workshop.....	17
Table 8	Potential Presentation Pitfalls	18

Chapter One: Overview



This *State Coordinator's Handbook for Supporting Local Homeless Education Liaisons* is intended to be a companion document for the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*. The *Toolkit* provides local education agencies (LEAs) and their designated liaisons with background information and sample resources to ensure homeless students have access to and success within local school districts. The *State Coordinator's Handbook* contains state-level suggestions for identifying, training, and communicating with local school-district liaisons and includes suggestions for modifying the *LEA Toolkit* to meet the specific needs of individual states. As many state coordinators recognize:

In districts that operate successful programs to serve students in homeless situations, there is one common denominator: a homeless liaison. Whether funded through the McKinney program or another source, the liaison is the person who orchestrates opportunities for students and families to begin to break the cycle of homelessness. (*Pieces of the Puzzle*, 1997, p. 75)

The level of involvement and responsibility for local liaisons in districts without subgrantee McKinney-Vento funding now resembles that mandated for liaisons in districts with subgrants. The *Handbook* and the *LEA Toolkit* are geared towards supporting school districts not receiving McKinney-Vento subgrant funds that may have less experience serving homeless students; however, suggestions will be valuable for subgrantee liaisons as well.

With the most recent reauthorization, effective July 1, 2002, legislation related to the education of homeless children and youth is now known as the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001 (Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act, P.L. 107-110) and will be referred to as the McKinney-Vento Act throughout this handbook. The McKinney-Vento Act requires local homeless education liaisons in all school districts, regardless of McKinney-Vento funding. This is a significant change that impacts the role of state coordinators who have not had local liaisons for non-subgrantee districts. Now, state coordinators must ensure that a liaison is identified in all school districts and that these liaisons have the necessary tools to fulfill their new responsibilities.

The McKinney Homeless Education Act, previously included in the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA), required a designated liaison for all LEAs with subgrant funding, and responsibilities of subgrantee liaisons were outlined in legislation. In addition, USDE Preliminary Guidance (1995) and Policy Studies Associates (1995) recommended that *all* school districts assign a liaison to "ensure that homeless children and youth enroll in and succeed in school, and that such children and youth and their families receive the educational services for which they are eligible" (USDE, 1995, p. 11).

The *Handbook* and the *Toolkit* were developed as a collaborative effort between the National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE (NCHE) and the staff of Project HOPE,



Virginia's Program for Educating Homeless Children and Youth, located at The College of William and Mary. An initial step in their development was a survey of state coordinators for the education of homeless children and youth. (A copy of the survey results can be found in Chapter 2 of this document.) The survey used the term *LEA contact* to identify a person responsible for homeless education issues in a school district not receiving McKinney-Vento funding. Since the term *liaison* is used in the reauthorization for all school districts, *liaison* has been substituted throughout the *Toolkit* and this handbook, with the exception of Chapter 2 where *contact* is used to differentiate subgrantee and non-funded positions.

Topics and sample resources included in the *Handbook* and *Toolkit* were based on the suggestions provided by state coordinators. The *Handbook* and *Toolkit* are available in hard copy and electronic versions. The electronic version will allow easy tailoring of sample materials to local needs and the option to incorporate new additions offered from the field. Your suggestions and stories of successful practices are most welcome. If you would like to share information for

possible inclusion in any updated versions of the *Handbook* or *Toolkit*, please contact:

The National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE
 P.O. Box 5367
 Greensboro, NC 27453
 800-308-2145
homeless@serve.org

State Coordinator's Handbook Module Matrix

The *Handbook* is divided into four chapters and related appendices with resources to be used as is or tailored to your state's needs. The types of resources are noted in Table 1.

- Chapter 1:** Overview
- Chapter 2:** State Coordinators' Survey Summary Report
- Chapter 3:** Establishing Local Homeless Education Liaisons
- Chapter 4:** Professional Development for Local Homeless Education Liaisons
- Appendices:** Resources and Sample Materials to Tailor and Reproduce

Table 1: Chapter Content and Related Appendices

Chapter	Focus	Types of Resources in Appendices		
		Letters/ Handouts	Sample Forms	PowerPoint Presentations
1	Overview			
2	Survey Report			
3	Establishing Liaisons	●	●	
4	Professional Development	●	●	●



Chapter Two: State Coordinators' Survey Summary Report



As an initial step in the development of the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit* and this handbook for state coordinators, the developers conducted a survey of state coordinators. The purpose of the survey was to determine what practices and resources were already in existence and what needs identified by coordinators should shape the creation of new resources. A complete copy of the research report can be downloaded as a PDF file from the Project HOPE website at www.wm.edu/education/hope/homeless.html. Chapter 2 of this handbook contains highlights of the study that state coordinators may find of interest. Because this study was completed *prior* to reauthorization, the *terminology used in the study is not consistent with the new McKinney-Vento Act and refers to the previous McKinney Homeless Education Act.*

For the purpose of this study, the term *LEA contact* was used to identify a staff person responsible for working with homeless-education issues at the local level in a school district *not* receiving McKinney funds. The term *contact* rather than *liaison* was chosen to recognize that, given the previous legislative mandates, the level of involvement and responsibility in districts without additional funding was likely to differ from those mandated for liaisons in districts with subgrants.

Because the use of LEA contacts was a recommended rather than required practice, states varied significantly in the use and even the existence of such contacts. Reauthorization has shifted this recommended practice to one that is mandated. The purpose of this study was to survey state coordinators for homeless education to determine:

- How many states already required LEA contacts.
- The types of roles and responsibilities LEA contacts held.
- Potential resources that state coordinators were willing to share with colleagues in other states.
- The content state coordinators believed LEA contacts should be able to access.
- The format state coordinators preferred when receiving resources related to the development of LEA contacts.

Findings From the Study

The level of knowledge about the McKinney program varied greatly among state coordinators. Some coordinators have held their positions for a number of years and have limited responsibilities beyond homeless



education. A number of coordinators commented that they were new to the program and/or were responsible for multiple programs that limited their involvement with homeless education. Such comments suggest that caution may be needed in analyzing the survey responses and underscore the value of providing additional support to coordinators who are now responsible for the identification of liaisons in all school districts.

Approximately half of the coordinators surveyed reported having LEA contacts in their states. Some responses later in the survey led the researchers to question whether all respondents understood that districts without funding were targets for the term *LEA contact*. For example, when asked how the contact was identified, one coordinator stated that it was via the grant application. Based on these observations, it is likely that the number of states with contacts in all school districts is less than 50%.

Most states identified contacts through a mailing from the state coordinator to local superintendents requesting a contact be identified. Others reported that the position was an automatic responsibility of a local administrator. LEA contacts often were Title I directors, pupil-personnel directors, and assistant superintendents. Of states with LEA contacts, 65% reported having established responsibilities. All contacts were a local point of contact for information dissemination from the state coordinator to the school district and individual schools. Most LEA contacts were required to collect information that would be forwarded to the state coordinator (e.g., child estimate data) and to assist with enrollment issues, including the identification of homeless students and the resolution of enrollment disputes. Less than 70% of coordinators included referral to other services, professional development, or parent training among the responsibilities of LEA contacts.

All state coordinators with LEA contacts reported that they provide federal homeless education legislation to contacts, and most share materials and resources, including materials from NCHE. State legislation and professional development opportunities were also shared with most contacts. Phone calls were reported as the most frequent vehicle for communicating with local contacts, followed by state-level communication, letters from the state coordinator, websites, e-mails, and conferences. State coordinators reported that they addressed professional development for LEA contacts through presentations at conferences, local staff development, meetings, and attendance at the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEH CY) annual conference. The focus of professional development included awareness and sensitivity training, the basics of the McKinney Act, and coordinating with Title I. State coordinators were most likely to communicate with LEA contacts once or twice a year.

All state coordinators were asked to share their opinions regarding content needed by LEA contacts and the preferred format for providing resources. More than 50% of responding coordinators selected all the items listed in the survey as critical information. Federal legislation, state legislation, strategies for meeting the educational needs of homeless children and youth, and homeless awareness resources were identified as critical by 87% to 91% of respondents. The preferred format was a downloadable Web-based resource, followed by a print publication.

All state coordinators were also asked what resources and formats would be most beneficial to support their efforts to work with LEA contacts. Having examples of professional development materials was identified most frequently (87%), followed by sample policies and procedures (80%) and the identification



process for LEA contacts (73%). Again, an Internet version was the preferred format, and a notebook was identified as a second preference. State coordinators were most interested in receiving this information through a workshop at the NAEHCY conference, followed by direct mail or a listserv announcement.

The supplemental comments from state coordinators suggest improvements that could be made in future studies of this kind. Additional demographic information about the coordinators should be included, such as the number of years they have held the position and the percentage of their time that is dedicated to homeless education. For this study, the percentage of time coordinators have allocated could be extrapolated from the 2001 Survey of State McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Programs that was conducted during the same period by NAEHCY, NCHE, and the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH). Full-time coordinators and turnover are topics of concern frequently discussed during meetings with homeless education

coordinators. Including these questions as basic demographic information in future research could provide a pattern over time and a means to begin evaluating the impact of dedicated time and longevity to the quality of state programs.

While most frequently cited responses are summarized in this discussion section, additional comments for items are in the “Results” section of the unabridged report and offer a variety of ideas that state coordinators may wish to explore. The items identified most frequently were used to determine areas of focus in the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*; additionally, supplemental ideas shared by coordinators were incorporated as frequently as possible. Table 2 lists states reporting that local contacts were being used prior to the 2001 reauthorization. State coordinators may wish to consult with coordinators in these states for additional support and direction as they develop a system for implementing local homeless education liaisons in all school districts.

Table 2: States Reporting the Use of LEA Contacts

State	Number of Years	State	Number of Years	State	Number of Years
AL	14	MD	5	OH	1
AR	unknown	MN	2	OR	6
CO	6	MS	8	PA	5
DE	unknown	MO	8-9	UT	10
IN	8	NV	10	VA	3
IL	2	NJ	11	WV	4
KY	4+	NY	7	WY	3
LA	10	NC	5		



Survey Highlights

Feedback from the participating state coordinators indicated that:

- Awareness of the McKinney Act and implications for local school districts is done on a continuing basis.
- Experience and expertise levels varied among LEA contacts.
- State coordinators maintained contact with LEAs through mail, fax, phone, e-mail, and conferences/workshops.
- LEA contacts held a variety of positions in school districts and had varying levels of responsibility for serving homeless children and youth, ranging from minimal contact to subgrant administration.
- State coordinators—as well as LEA contacts—had time limitations, and very few were full-time administrators serving homeless children and youth.

For an unabridged copy of the survey report:

- Visit the Project HOPE website at www.wm.edu/education/hope/homeless.html.
- Call the Project HOPE office at 757-221-4002.
- E-mail Project HOPE at homlss@wm.edu or visit the NCHE website at www.serve.org/nche.



Chapter Three: Establishing Local Homeless Education Liaisons



This chapter provides suggestions and tools for identification of, developing roles and responsibilities for, and communicating with liaisons, which are now required by the McKinney-Vento Act in all school districts. If your state has already implemented non-subgrantee liaisons, this chapter may still provide some suggestions for strengthening communication. If your state is just beginning to develop local liaisons in non-subgrantee districts, this chapter describes activities reported to be successful by fellow state coordinators. In addition, you may wish to directly consult state coordinators who already use local liaisons in all school districts. A listing of states reporting the use of non-subgrantee liaisons can be found in Chapter 2, Table 2. (These *liaisons* had varying levels of responsibility, and the term *contact* was used in the study referenced in Chapter 2.)

Legislative Update

The reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act requires the establishment of local liaisons in all school districts, regardless of subgrant McKinney-Vento funding in the district. While a number of states have identified contacts in all school districts, these roles have not traditionally been as extensive as the responsibilities defined for districts with McKinney subgrants.

Some states have seen the liaisons in non-subgrantee districts as *points of contact* for information dissemination and collection and possibly first contacts should an enrollment dispute regarding a homeless student arise.

Reauthorization increases the responsibilities for liaisons in all school districts. Review of policies and procedures continues to be a focus for local districts, especially those that have had limited experience identifying and serving homeless children and youth. Involvement in dispute resolution and in the coordination of school and community services needed by homeless children and youth has increased for all district liaisons. The suggestions for outreach and collaboration included in the *Toolkit* provide some initial steps toward fulfilling these new roles and responsibilities.

Table 3 is a duplicate of Table 4 found in the *Toolkit*. Consider this a template that lists multiple responsibilities. The template begins with responsibilities for local homeless education liaisons required by the 2001 reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Act and then lists optional items believed to be “good practice” in creating successful local programs. State coordinators are encouraged to identify responsibilities tailored for their individual states. The modified table could be incorporated into the *Toolkit* for your state or left for local districts to define.



Table 3: Potential Responsibilities of Local Homeless Education Liaisons

Issue	Responsibility	Legally Required
Policies and procedures	Review local policies and procedures that may impact homeless children and youth, such as school enrollment and access to school programs (LEA requirement, may be assumed by liaison).	●
	Revise local policies and procedures determined to be potential barriers for homeless children and youth (LEA requirement, may be assumed by liaison).	●
	Ensure that homeless students are identified by school personnel through coordination with other entities and agencies.	●
Enrollment and access to educational services	Ensure that homeless students enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, the schools of the LEA.	●
	Ensure that homeless families, children, and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, Even Start, and preschool programs administered by the LEA, and referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services.	●
	Assist children and youth who do not have immunizations or medical records to obtain the necessary records or immunizations.	●
	Ensure that parents or guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities that are available to their children and are provided meaningful opportunities to participate in their children’s education.	●
	Assist with enrollment dispute resolution cases, and ensure they are mediated in accordance with the state’s enrollment dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible.	●
Outreach	Ensure that the parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including to the school of origin, and that assistance to access transportation services is provided.	●



Table 3: Potential Responsibilities of Local Homeless Education Liaisons (continued)

Issue	Responsibility	Legally Required
Outreach, (continued)	Post educational rights of homeless children and youth <i>in all schools</i> .	●
	Post educational rights of homeless children and youth <i>in the community</i> in places that homeless families and youth may receive services (e.g., shelters, public health offices, libraries, and soup kitchens).	●
	Inform school personnel, service providers, and advocates who work with homeless families of the duties of the liaison.	●
	Collaborate and coordinate with state coordinators, community service providers, and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youth.	●
Unaccompanied youth	Assist unaccompanied youth in placement and enrollment decisions, including considering the youth's wishes in those decisions and providing notice to the youth of the right to appeal such decisions under the enrollment dispute provisions.	●
	Ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment and placement.	●
Suggested activities	Provide professional development for school district staff to build awareness of the educational needs of homeless students, legal responsibilities of the school, and local policies and procedures.	
	Provide outreach to community service providers through presentations, announcements, and dissemination of relevant publications.	
	Provide training for parents.	
	Distribute materials, tutoring supplies, clothing, etc., to schools.	
	Conduct a needs assessment.	
	Conduct an evaluation of the local homeless education program.	

Local Liaisons

Who will assume responsibility as a liaison?

As reported in Chapter 2, local liaisons may hold a variety of central office positions. The relationship between the state department of education and local school districts may shape the decisions made.

- States that have a tradition of being more prescriptive may require that an existing position automatically be designated as the local homeless education liaison. For example, requiring that the responsibility be given to the coordinator of federal education programs may be logical due to the need to collaborate with other federal programs, such as Title I.
- If localities have greater autonomy, a position may be suggested but localities allowed to make the assignment based on their particular needs and resources.
- Request that LEAs identify their liaison but note a position that will be used as a default for the liaison should the LEA not identify a person or position.

State coordinators may wish to be more directive if it is likely that local policies and procedures will require revision. Consider requesting a liaison who is more likely to have authority to communicate with policymakers, such as directors of pupil services or Title I or assistant superintendents. If your state code and policies already provide strong direction for local districts or if local policies and procedures have been reviewed and revised in many LEAs, liaisons closer to the provision of direct services may be preferred. These individuals have job descriptions and skills that align with the new requirements for greater service delivery and coordination. Social workers, special education staff, visiting teachers, and guidance counselors have been successful liaisons due to their skill

and experience with outreach efforts in the community.

How will liaisons be assigned?

Initially, follow the protocol typical in your state department of education to assign liaisons. It is recommended that the request be made to the local superintendent. Options include:

- Sending a request letter directly from the state coordinator or the coordinator's supervisor.
- Having the state superintendent of public instruction generate the request and asking that the state coordinator be provided with the necessary contact information for the LEA's identified liaison.

In addition to traditional written communication, electronic versions, such as e-mail, should be considered if the infrastructure exists to do so.

Appendix A contains a sample request letter, including a form to collect the necessary contact information. The next step would be a welcome letter (see sample in Appendix B.) outlining the responsibilities of the liaison position and providing contact information for the state coordinator. The *Toolkit* and other materials used in your state should be made available with this letter. It is recommended that the state coordinator maintain a file of materials that have been shared with local homeless education liaisons.

The most appropriate designee may not be chosen in all cases, especially as school districts learn more about the requirements found in the McKinney-Vento Act. One way to increase the likelihood that liaisons are selected carefully is to emphasize the liaisons' responsibilities in multiple venues, such as newsletters, initial request letters, and presentations to school district superintendents.



Support from the state superintendent can increase the success of these endeavors. In addition, personal contact from the state coordinator's office with designees, such as a phone call or e-mail, can be helpful in confirming that the liaison knows that he/she has been assigned and is aware of the responsibilities entailed in the role prior to face-to-face training. Finally, tracking turnover of liaisons may assist state coordinators when analyzing the appropriateness of assignments and the need for introductory versus ongoing training opportunities.

How can my list of liaisons be maintained?

It is recommended that the contact information for liaisons be maintained in a database-management system that is easily updated and accessed for mail merges with your word-processing program. For accuracy, this database should be updated at least once a year by alerting liaisons to confirm their current contact information on file. Some states post their liaisons on their homeless education website. Reminding liaisons that their information is posted on the Web has increased the timeliness of responses for updates. If possible, a Web-based listing can enable liaisons to update their contact information online.

While the beginning of the school year is traditionally a busy time, this is often a time when changes in positions occur and personnel are completing such forms for other departments. Make the process for responding as simple as possible. Some options include:

- A return postcard with former information printed that requests the liaison to initial the card if correct or edit as needed.
- An e-mail that prompts the liaison to confirm or share changes.
- An e-mail that links to the liaison-list website to prompt the liaisons to check information and e-mail any changes.

(Appendix C contains an e-mail and postcard version of an update letter.)

Changes in personnel and office locations may be the most common reasons for updates. In addition, changes in the person or position assigned the liaison role can be anticipated. It is possible that the first position or person identified for the role of liaison may need to change as the responsibilities of the liaison are clarified. When a replacement liaison is identified, provide a welcome letter via e-mail or traditional mail. Include the state coordinator's contact information and backup copies of information and materials sent in the past. For more extensive materials, such as binders and books, the welcome letter to the new liaison may include a listing of resources that should be available in the LEA. Let the new liaison know which items the state coordinator can replace, or include ordering information for the new liaison. (Appendix D contains a sample welcome letter for a replacement liaison.)

Communication with Local Homeless Education Liaisons

Table 4 summarizes some of the major purposes for communicating with local liaisons and types of information that could be included. Samples of such communication can be found in the appendices noted. In addition to traditional mailings, consider using electronic announcements, e-mail, and including information in other state-generated mailings. If most liaisons have access to the Internet, consider an e-mail announcement that newsletters or other new resources have been posted on the homeless-education website as a means to limit printing and postage costs while still reaching local school districts.



Table 4: Communication With Local Liaisons

Communication	Content to Include
Introductory welcome (See Appendix B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome, thank you for responding to the request • State coordinator’s contact information and support available • The definition of homelessness • List of known shelters that accept children in the school district (or neighboring vicinity, if none within the district) • Initial suggestions to provide outreach to identified shelters and other agencies that serve homeless families and youth • Cite child-estimate figures for the school district and state
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit</i> • Information for parents and youth posters from NCHE • McKinney-Vento briefs (Appendix G in <i>Toolkit</i>) • U.S. Department of Education guidance • Compendium from NCHE • State-developed materials (e.g., posters and family brochures) • Conference and professional development opportunities
Annual update (See Appendix C)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for updated contact information • Legislative changes, new resources, or upcoming events
Welcoming replacements (See Appendix D)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of liaison responsibilities • State coordinator’s contact information • List of resources that should be in local office and how to replace missing items
Newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletters generated by the state coordinator’s office • Subscriptions to <i>The BEAM</i> and other related service providers • Prepared articles for publication in state-level federal program newsletters, if available
Technical assistance (See Appendix E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone calls, e-mails, and letters, as needed, to respond to calls from liaisons, parents, and service providers when questions or problems occur • Review of documentation can be used to shape future professional development and plans for additional state support
Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New resources • Professional development opportunities • Legislative changes

Policies and Procedures

The companion document for this handbook is the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*, which contains a variety of sample forms, flyers, and suggestions for revising and developing local policies and procedures.

These generic examples can be tailored by state coordinators. Table 5 lists resources found in the *Toolkit* and suggestions that state coordinators may wish to use to adapt *Toolkit* materials to meet the specific requirements of their states.

Table 5: *Toolkit* Resources That State Coordinators Can Modify

Toolkit Location and Title	Considerations for Modifications and Additions
Chapter 2 Homeless Education and the Law	Review Table 2 and modify, if needed, based on state requirements.
Chapter 3 Liaison Roles and Responsibilities: Policies and Procedures on the Local Front	This chapter may require revisions to meet specific state needs. Liaisons are referred to their state coordinator for technical support when reviewing and revising policies and procedures. Modify Table 4, if needed, based on state requirements.
Appendix A Legislation	Include a copy of the state code related to homeless education issues.
Appendix D Poster and Family Brochure	Include a copy of your state’s version and ordering information, if available.
Appendix E Enrollment Packet	Compare forms to state and known local enrollment practices. Modify to address appropriate barriers.
Appendix G Sample Procedures	Include any suggested policies and procedures from your state. Add an example of local procedures from an LEA in your state.
Appendix M Basic Web Page	Add state coordinator contact information to Webpage form.
Appendix N Homeless Education Awareness Presentation	Amend slide 13 to include state policies. Provide your state’s child-estimate figures in notes page for slide 2. Consider communicating child-estimate figures for LEAs.



Chapter 3 of this handbook has focused on communicating with local homeless education liaisons using a variety of methods needed when communication is long distance. Despite broad-based training materials and consistent written communication, the state coordinator is likely to be contacted when unusual issues arise that must be addressed on a case-by-case basis. LEAs must receive timely responses from the state coordinator's office if lines of communication are to remain open and a trusting relationship is to be developed. Documenting issues that LEAs bring to the state office is critical in identifying potential changes that may be needed at the state

level (see Appendix E for a sample tracking form). It also provides the state coordinator with potential solutions and exemplary activities that will enable the state coordinator to better understand local challenges and assist liaisons in networking. Chapter 4 provides resources that state coordinators may employ when direct contact is possible for professional development. As noted in the *Toolkit*, face-to-face contact requires an additional level of commitment, especially in time, when distances are considerable. However, the personal contact is vital to strengthening relationships and ensuring federal and state requirements are implemented effectively at the local level.



Chapter Four: Professional Development for Local Homeless Education Liaisons



Providing professional development to local homeless education liaisons can take many forms:

- Some state coordinators hold state or regional meetings to provide such training.
- Others find ways to incorporate training through concurrent sessions at state-level conferences.
- Still others promote attendance at the annual National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth Conference and state Title I conferences.

Chapter 4 provides presentation materials for introducing local liaisons to the *Toolkit*. In addition to the formats noted above, coordinators may consider distance-learning options, such as a satellite workshop or videotaping an actual workshop, for liaisons that are harder to reach. For example, Pennsylvania has developed an introductory training video tailored to its state that can be used with liaisons and other school district personnel.

This handbook provides two formats for introducing the *Toolkit* to liaisons. One version is an overview that can be completed in a 45-to-60-minute session while another is a half-day workshop. A third presentation that can be used for follow-up or to extend the half-day workshop into a full-day workshop focuses on the nuts and bolts of outreach. The workshop-preparation packets contain written workshop plans, participant handouts, PowerPoint presentations, and session evaluation forms. The PowerPoint presentations contain few graphics because of the speed needed for downloading. State coordinators are encouraged to add graphics and modify the presentations to best meet the needs of liaisons being trained. It is suggested that state coordinators fill out the state information form (Appendix E) to inform participants of state-specific issues related to homeless education.

Since the *Toolkit* is available as a Web-based resource, state coordinators will need to decide which of the following options is most feasible. Different options may be used depending on the time and resources available to the localities attending. State coordinators may choose to incorporate the following:



- Hard copies of the *Toolkit* for participants if local programs have limited Internet access
- Copies of Web pages from the *Toolkit* incorporated into the PowerPoint presentation
- Access to the Internet to demonstrate the actual *Toolkit* online
- Copies of the *Toolkit* burned on CDs for liaisons to use following training

45-to-60-Minute Overview: *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*

Appendix F contains the materials for the presentation, including PowerPoint speaker notes that give suggestions for conducting the session using the slides provided.

Table 6 summarizes the abbreviated introductory session. While estimated for 45–60 minutes, it can easily be expanded to a longer concurrent conference session by adding several of the discussion cases from the *Toolkit* that are included in the half-day workshop. Coordinators may wish to select several cases that reflect the difficulties

occurring in their states or develop scenarios based on the requests for assistance they have received.

Half-Day Workshop: Exploring the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*

Table 7 summarizes the contents for the half-day workshop format. This workshop expands on the material included in the abbreviated introductory presentation. While some of the slides are the same, additional details have been added and more opportunities for participant activity are included. Again, it is recommended that state coordinators edit these slides to meet local needs and time constraints. The PowerPoint presentation, speaker notes, handouts, activity cards, and the evaluation form can be found in Appendix G.

Suggestions for Using Local Program Co-Presenters

A more extensive workshop can be developed using local representatives as co-presenters. This provides an opportunity for the state coordinator to share what is

Table 6: Summary of Abbreviated Overview Presentation

Topic	Slide Numbers	Suggested Time
Welcome and Introductions	1–2	5 minutes
Homelessness—An Introduction	3–5	5 minutes
The Law and Your Responsibilities	6–14	10–15 minutes
Ways to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness	15	5 minutes*
Starter Tools	16	5+ minutes*
Question-and-Answer Session/Thank-you	17–18	5–10 minutes

* These topics could easily be expanded for a longer session.



working in localities across the state. This workshop would ideally use a combination of presentations from the state coordinator with mini-presentations from subgrantees, other school districts, and shelters describing their successes. This could increase the workshop to an all-day professional development opportunity. Presenters from localities can add credibility about what strategies are feasible and provide actual stories to

put “a face” to the students experiencing homelessness. In addition, the local liaisons can network with each other and create supportive relationships.

With additional presenters, advanced planning is key. It is recommended that co-presenters be approached at least eight weeks in advance to facilitate planning time for the presentation. Invite one or two co-presenting

Table 7: Summary of the Half-Day *Toolkit* Workshop

Workshop Section	Slide Numbers	Handout	Activity Card(s)	Suggested Time
Pre-Workshop Refreshments and Activity	1		Graph	20 minutes
Welcome, Introductions, Agenda	2–4			12–15 minutes
Chapter 1 Overview	5			3–5 minutes
Chapter 2 Homeless Education and the Law	6–15			25–30 minutes
Chapter 3 Liaison Roles and Responsibilities	16–25	Quiz		30–35 minutes
Chapter 4 Strategies for Meeting Educational Needs	26–33	Chart		20–25 minutes
Chapter 5 Developing Collaborative Efforts	34–40			10–15 minutes
Chapter 6 Getting the Message Out	41	Chart		15–20 minutes
Chapter 7 and Appendices Research and Resources, Sample Materials to Tailor and Reproduce	42	Situation Matrix	Situation Cards	30–40 minutes
Wrap-Up	43	Evaluation form		7–10 minutes



districts, shelters, or schools to share ideas related to Chapters 3 through 7 in the *Toolkit*. If there are localities with very strong programs, there may be other topics that should be targeted and shared with participants.

Distribute information about the workshop at least six weeks in advance (after securing co-presenters), and have local liaisons register to attend. If possible, offer lunch and two breaks with light refreshments. Request that participants bring their copy of the *Toolkit* with them to the workshop.

Presentation Preparation Details

Send co-presenters a copy of the slides for the workshop so they know what to expect, and highlight the place(s) where you would like them to elaborate. Ask them to prepare a 20-to-25-minute presentation illustrating what is being done to facilitate the education of children and youth experiencing

homelessness. Allow another 5–10 minutes for questions for each co-presenting group. While the budget for the state coordinator is often modest, school district limits may impact co-presenters’ ability to make their own handouts. Therefore, consider making copies if the originals are submitted weeks in advance. Be sure to set a page limit to prevent the packet from becoming too cumbersome. Once the agenda is set, share it with the co-presenters.

In terms of a time frame, consider a start time of 10:00 a.m. and an end time of 3:30 p.m. This time frame will accommodate set-up for the state coordinator as well as travel time for individuals traveling several hours. If people are coming from greater distances, they will likely require lodging the night before. Be prepared to recommend hotels in the area, and have telephone numbers on hand when people call or include such information with registration materials.

Table 8: Potential Presentation Pitfalls

Despite thoughtful planning and preparation, training local liaisons is likely to have it challenges. The following table illustrates common issues state coordinators and other professional development personnel have experienced during early training sessions.

Potential Pitfalls	Possible Solutions
Resistant liaisons who see their new responsibilities as a burden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include enthusiastic and positive practitioner perspectives. • Maintain a focus on the student—most educators choose the field because they want to improve the lives of children. • Acknowledge the challenges while highlighting how compliance has the potential to improve educational experiences for all children.*
Liaisons with no background in homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include cases studies and awareness-building activities to build context. • Pair “seasoned” and new liaisons during training. • Consider separate trainings for liaisons with varying experience. • Differentiate group activities based on levels of experience.

* One presenter keeps an old Christmas card with her. The cover has a snowman looking in his stocking, saddened to find two lumps of coal. The inside has the snowman using the coal as eyes and shouting, “I can see! I can see!” The moral: What may seem to be “lumps of coal” can be just the challenges we need to create the vision for a better future for all our students.



Table 8: Potential Presentation Pitfalls (continued)

Potential Pitfalls	Possible Solutions
Low attendance at trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore possibility of assigning certification/relicensure points for participation. • Analyze convenience of times and locations. • “Piggy-back” with other training/conference events that attract the needed audience. • Explore possibility of making training attendance a state-level requirement.
The nature of questions that lead to getting lost in details or focusing on worst case scenarios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a “parking lot” flipchart page of issues that can be discussed later, if time allows or addressed through subsequent mailings/trainings. • Remind participants that “worst case scenarios” are infrequent and redirect to most common situations as quickly as possible. (Seasoned liaisons who can support such comments are extremely helpful here.) • Limit time to respond to questions. Have note paper for liaisons to write out questions to be addressed later. These can be reviewed during a break and answered when participants return or used for follow up correspondence.

Final Thoughts

The task of providing professional development across an entire state, whether small or large, can be a daunting task. It is important to recall that the information being communicated is critical to assist local school districts in compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act and to ensure that our ultimate goal, supporting children and youth who are experiencing homeless to access and succeed in school, is achieved. Face-to-face opportunities to share successes and challenges can personalize the process and allow for two-way communication. The state coordinator can gain insights from presentations to local personnel, and local personnel need opportunities to clarify confusing issues.

Providing professional development to novice and veteran local liaisons about using the *Toolkit* is ideally done in a face-to-face workshop. A workshop facilitates not only training with the *Toolkit* but also an opportunity for liaisons to network with one another. Depending on the state, a state coordinator may want to consider a train-the-trainer model and work with veteran local homeless education contacts to train other local liaisons regionally to limit travel expenses. Collaboration with a distance-learning lab at a local community college or university may offer an opportunity to train via distance learning technologies. Liaisons need a vehicle to prompt the opening of the *Toolkit* and exploring its contents. The tools in the *Toolkit* are more likely to be used if liaisons have been given designated time to work with the document and discuss its application.





Chapter Four

Appendix A:

Sample Letter Requesting That a Local Homeless Education Liaison Be Identified



Appropriate Department of Education Letterhead

Local Superintendent or other identified point of contact
Address [use mail merge option, if available]

Date

Dear [Superintendent's Name]:

The McKinney-Vento Act is federal legislation, Title X Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act, that ensures educational access and success for children and youth experiencing homelessness. Recent reauthorization has added the requirement that all local school districts identify a local homeless education liaison.

A table outlining the responsibilities of local liaisons is attached. Please identify a member of your central office staff to assume these responsibilities. If a liaison is not identified within 30 days, the Coordinator of Title I services will be assigned for your district. The contact information listed below should be forwarded to our state coordinator for homeless education. The identified liaison will be posted on our state's homeless education website. Questions related to homeless education issues and local liaisons should be referred to the state coordinator.

State Coordinator's name
Address
Phone number
Fax number
E-mail

Thank you, in advance, for responding to this request in a timely fashion.

Sincerely,

Name
Title

Local Homeless Education Liaison

School District: _____

Liaison Name: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Table 3: Potential Responsibilities of Local Homeless Education Liaisons

State Coordinator should modify this table to reflect *final* responsibilities required in the state.

Issue	Responsibility	Legally Required
Policies and procedures	Review local policies and procedures that may impact homeless children and youth, such as school enrollment and access to school programs (LEA requirement, may be assumed by liaison).	●
	Revise local policies and procedures determined to be potential barriers for homeless children and youth (LEA requirement, may be assumed by liaison).	●
	Ensure that homeless students are identified by school personnel through coordination with other entities and agencies.	●
Enrollment and access to educational services	Ensure that homeless students enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, the schools of the LEA.	●
	Ensure that homeless families, children, and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, Even Start, and preschool programs administered by the LEA, and referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services.	●
	Assist children and youth who do not have immunizations or medical records to obtain the necessary records or immunizations.	●
	Ensure that parents or guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities that are available to their children and are provided meaningful opportunities to participate in their children’s education.	●
	Assist with enrollment dispute resolution cases, and ensure they are mediated in accordance with the state’s enrollment-dispute-resolution process as expeditiously as possible.	●
Outreach	Ensure that the parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including to the school of origin, and that assistance to access transportation services is provided.	●

Table 3: Potential Responsibilities of Local Homeless Education Liaisons (continued)

Issue	Responsibility	Legally Required
Outreach, (continued)	Post educational rights of homeless children and youth <i>in all schools</i> .	●
	Post educational rights of homeless children and youth <i>in the community</i> in places that homeless families and youth may receive services (e.g., shelters, public health offices, libraries, and soup kitchens).	●
	Inform school personnel, service providers, and advocates who work with homeless families of the duties of the liaison.	●
	Collaborate and coordinate with state coordinators, community service providers, and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youth.	●
Unaccompanied youth	Assist unaccompanied youth in placement and enrollment decisions, including considering the youth’s wishes in those decisions and providing notice to the youth of the right to appeal such decisions under the enrollment-dispute provisions.	●
	Ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment and placement.	●
Suggested activities	Provide professional development for school district staff to build awareness of the educational needs of homeless students, legal responsibilities of the school, and local policies and procedures.	
	Provide outreach to community service providers through presentations, announcements, and dissemination of relevant publications.	
	Provide training for parents.	
	Distribute materials, tutoring supplies, clothing, etc., to schools.	
	Conduct a needs assessment.	
	Conduct an evaluation of the local homeless education program.	

Appendix B:

Sample Liaison Welcome Letter



Appropriate Letterhead

Liaison Name

Address [use mail merge option, if available]

Date

Dear [Liaison's Name]:

Thank you for your timely response in identifying a local homeless education liaison. Our mission in homeless education is to ensure homeless students receive a free and appropriate public education. With liaisons in all local school districts, we anticipate building greater awareness of these students and their special learning needs.

As initial resources, the following are being provided:

- A copy of the National Center for Homeless Education's publication *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*
- A listing of shelters that accept families and youth
- A listing of training opportunities that are planned
- [List any other materials that will be sent to all liaisons]

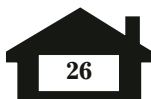
We would like to keep our records as up-to-date as possible. Our website has a listing of all local liaisons at http://_____. Please check the contact information listed at this site and notify us of any changes or corrections at your earliest convenience. A copy of your contact information is listed on the enclosed page if you do not have Internet access.

I look forward to working with you in this new position. Please contact my office if I may be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Name

State Coordinator for Homeless Education



Appendix C:

Sample Update Postcard and E-mail



Postcard: [Prepare address labels with mail merge]

Back of card:

Date

We are updating our records on local homeless education liaisons. The list can be found on our website at http://_____. Please check the contact information listed below and notify us of any changes or corrections at your earliest convenience.

[Print all contact information from mail merge to card or to labels]:

School District:

Liaison Name:

Position:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Sincerely,

Name

State Coordinator for Homeless Education

E-mail: [Establish an address group to facilitate e-mail alerts]

Dear Local Homeless Education Liaison:

We are updating our records on local homeless education liaisons. The list can be found on our website at http://_____ [hotlink to site]. Please check the contact information at this site and notify us of any changes or corrections at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Name

State Coordinator for Homeless Education



Appendix D:

Sample Welcome Letter for a Replacement Local Homeless Education Liaison



Appropriate Department of Education Letterhead

Local Homeless Education Liaison
Address [use mail merge option, if available]

Date

Dear [Liaison's Name]:

You have been identified as the new local homeless education liaison for your school district. As the local liaison, you will be responsible for ensuring that homeless children and youth in your district have access to an appropriate public education. A list of your liaison responsibilities is attached. Should questions arise regarding homeless students in your district, we are available to assist in any way possible.

A number of resources have been sent to local liaisons in the past. If you are missing any of the following materials, please contact our office for replacements.

- A copy of the National Center for Homeless Education's *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*
- A listing of shelters in your division that accept children
- [State coordinators should list other materials that have been sent]

Additional information can be found on our website, http://_____.
Please review the following information and contact us with any corrections:

School District:
Liaison Name:
Position:
Address:
Phone:
Fax:
E-mail:

If we can be of any assistance, please contact our office. Thank you for working with us to meet the needs of the students experiencing homelessness.

Sincerely,

Name
State Coordinator for Homeless Education

Enclosure: List of Liaison Responsibilities and State Information Form [Attach the following table (Table 3 from Appendix A) and the State Information Form (Appendix E)].



Table 3: Potential Responsibilities of Local Homeless Education Liaisons

State Coordinator should modify this table to reflect *final* responsibilities required in the state.

Issue	Responsibility	Legally Required
Policies and procedures	Review local policies and procedures that may impact homeless children and youth, such as school enrollment and access to school programs (LEA requirement, may be assumed by liaison).	●
	Revise local policies and procedures determined to be potential barriers for homeless children and youth (LEA requirement, may be assumed by liaison).	●
	Ensure that homeless students are identified by school personnel through coordination with other entities and agencies.	●
Enrollment and access to educational services	Ensure that homeless students enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, the schools of the LEA.	●
	Ensure that homeless families, children, and youth receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, Even Start, and preschool programs administered by the LEA, and referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services.	●
	Assist children and youth who do not have immunizations or medical records to obtain the necessary records or immunizations.	●
	Ensure that parents or guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities that are available to their children and are provided meaningful opportunities to participate in their children’s education.	●
	Assist with enrollment dispute resolution cases, and ensure they are mediated in accordance with the state’s enrollment-dispute-resolution process as expeditiously as possible.	●
Outreach	Ensure that the parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including to the school of origin, and that assistance to access transportation services is provided.	●

Table 3: Potential Responsibilities of Local Homeless Education Liaisons (continued)

Issue	Responsibility	Legally Required
Outreach (continued)	Post educational rights of homeless children and youth <i>in all schools</i> .	●
	Post educational rights of homeless children and youth <i>in the community</i> in places that homeless families and youth may receive services (e.g., shelters, public health offices, libraries, and soup kitchens).	●
	Inform school personnel, service providers, and advocates who work with homeless families of the duties of the liaison.	●
	Collaborate and coordinate with state coordinators, community service providers, and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youth.	●
Unaccompanied youth	Assist unaccompanied youth in placement and enrollment decisions, including considering the youth’s wishes in those decisions and providing notice to the youth of the right to appeal such decisions under the enrollment-dispute provisions.	●
	Ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment and placement.	●
Suggested activities	Provide professional development for school district staff to build awareness of the educational needs of homeless students, legal responsibilities of the school, and local policies and procedures.	
	Provide outreach to community service providers through presentations, announcements, and dissemination of relevant publications.	
	Provide training for parents.	
	Distribute materials, tutoring supplies, clothing, etc., to schools.	
	Conduct a needs assessment.	
	Conduct an evaluation of the local homeless education program.	

Appendix E:

State Forms:

State Information Form
Sample Technical Assistance/Barrier Tracking
Form



Information on Homeless Education in the State of _____

Last Revision _____

The most recent child estimate was completed in the state in _____. At the time of the estimate, there were approximately _____ children and youth identified in the state as homeless. The breakdown was:

Age breakdown	Number counted	Number in school	Number regularly attending school
Birth-K (estimated)			
K-5			
6-8			
9-12			
Total			

Responsibilities of Local Homeless Education Liaisons in our state beyond those outlined in federal legislation, are:

[Attach, including the legal reference, when appropriate]

The state has legislation and/or guidelines pertaining to the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness that state:

[Please state and include the reference]

State Coordinator for Homeless Education

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

State homeless education website, if applicable: _____



Technical Assistance and Barrier Tracking

The following pages may be adapted by the state coordinator to track calls for technical assistance and barriers reported by schools, service providers, or families experiencing homelessness. The detail form can be used to document specific events while questions and issues are being resolved. Note that the question regarding how the caller learned about the homeless education program can be valuable in identifying and documenting which awareness initiatives are reaching which audiences. This can be useful in justifying future awareness activities and budgetary expenditures. The summary form can be helpful when sharing such information with supervisors or other audiences responsible for state-level policy (e.g., state board of education). Depending upon the audience, the columns for LEA and Address/Phone may be needed (for internal audiences) or deleted (for external audiences).



Technical Assistance/Barrier Tracking Intake Form

Person completing form: _____ Date: _____

Person calling: _____ Role: _____

Location: _____

Phone number(s): _____

How did the person calling obtain the State Coordinator's contact information:

School district(s): _____

School(s): _____

Age(s)/grade(s) of student(s): _____

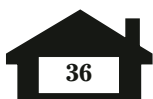
Child living with: Both parents
 Mother
 Father
 Legal guardian
 Other (specify) _____

Residing: Shelter
 Doubled-up
 Motel
 Car
 Campground
 Other (specify) _____

Issue: Health records
 School records
 Birth certificate
 Social security number
 Guardianship
 School of origin
 Other residency
 Transportation
 Other (specify) _____

Request is primarily: _____ Technical assistance

_____ Barrier issue



Technical Assistance/Barrier Tracking Intake Form (continued)

Initial Details:

Date	Contact	Details of Resolution



Technical Assistance/Barrier Tracking Summary Form

Date	LEA	Address/ Phone	Issue	Resolution Steps



Appendix F:

Presentation:

Introduction to the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*



Note: PowerPoint® presentation is available for download at www.serve.org/nche



Welcome! Introduction to the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*

According to legend...

If you wish to make an impact for one year, you plant corn.

If you wish to make an impact for a generation,
you plant a tree.

But if you wish to make an impact for an eternity,
you educate a child.

—*Author unknown*

As the local homeless education liaison, you can facilitate
the enrollment of a child and make an impact that will last
an eternity.

There are enough slides for a 60-minute presentation. Estimate about three minutes per slide when planning, and streamline based on your time limits and the anticipated needs of the participants.

Have this slide displayed as participants enter or as you begin your welcome.

Introduce yourself (name, title, and possibly the number of years you've worked with homeless students).

Survey the audience. Ask, for example, how many of the participants are new liaisons; "veteran" liaisons; other school district level administrators; teachers, social workers, or counselors; shelter workers; or are involved in other areas not included in your list.

Refer to the quote on the slide, and open by sharing the belief that education is a critical component to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness. You may wish to note that even homeless youth have articulated the belief that education would make the difference in their futures.

Note: This is not an interactive session. However, throughout the introductory workshop, participants can be directed to flip to different chapters in the *Toolkit*. To enhance interaction, you could bring some small tokens (e.g., pencils or hard candy) and "reward" the first person who locates and shares the page number where the item being discussed can be found in the *Toolkit*.



Goals for This Introduction

- Highlight key McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act requirements.
- Explain local liaison responsibilities.
- Provide a brief overview of the NCHE *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*.

Share the three goals of the presentation.



The Scale of Homelessness

- Up to two million people will experience homelessness this year.
- Approximately half of these people will be children and youth.
- Families are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population.

Source: National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. (1999). *Out of sight—Out of mind? A report on anti-homeless laws, litigation, and alternatives in 50 United States*. Washington, DC: Author.

You may wish to share the state homeless education form included in Appendix E. Cite the figures from the last child estimate. You may wish to reference the reported estimates for school districts that will be attending.

In addition, you may wish to share the number of shelters in the state and/or school districts attending to give the audience a sense of the scale of the issue.

Critical factors that lead to homelessness include poverty, illness, substance abuse, job loss, and mental illness. A critical factor in homelessness is the lack of affordable housing. The National Low Income Housing Coalition has an interactive website that provides stats for states and localities at www.nlihc.org/oorg2002/index.htm.



McKinney-Vento Act

- Reauthorizes the McKinney Act originally enacted in 1987.
- Provides states with funding to support local grants and statewide initiatives.
- Requires educational access, attendance, and success for children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Outlines responsibilities for local liaisons.

Note that the law was originally crafted due to the large numbers of homeless children and youth who were not receiving an education. Participants can be directed to locate the timeline for the legislation found in Chapter 2, Figure 1.

You may note that the role of a state coordinator for homeless education is a result of this legislation. Be sure participants have the appropriate contact information for their state coordinator.

The 2001 reauthorization required that a Local Homeless Education Liaison be identified in all school districts. (This new requirement led to the development of the *Toolkit* and training materials.) The liaison has the responsibility to ensure homeless children and youth have access to the educational system and receive the needed support to attend regularly and succeed in school.

A copy of the reauthorized legislation can be found in Appendix A of the *Toolkit*.



Maria

Maria and her seven-year-old and nine-year-old daughters have just moved into a homeless shelter. Maria visits the neighborhood school to enroll her daughters. She is given a list of required documents—items she does not have. Maria leaves, believing her daughters cannot attend the school.

Consider:

- Should Maria be able to enroll her children?
- Did something go wrong?
- What should be done?
- What could you do to prevent this from happening in a school in your district?

Share this case as an introduction to the McKinney-Vento Act. This is the same case study found in Chapter 2 of the *Toolkit*.

If time allows, lead a discussion of the questions or have participants reflect upon their own responses, and refer to Maria's story while working through the remainder of the presentation.



Who is homeless?

- An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:
 - Sharing housing due to loss of housing or economic hardship.
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate housing.
 - Living in emergency or transitional housing.
 - Abandoned in hospitals.
 - Awaiting foster care.
 - Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, and bus or train stations.
 - Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodations.
 - Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in the circumstances described above.

The descriptions listed here include new items found in the 2001 reauthorization.

Some people may not be familiar with the term doubled-up. Be sure to explain this term when describing “sharing housing.” Doubled-up is the sharing of housing with other families or individuals **due to a loss of housing** (not due to cultural preference or a desire to save money). Also, children and youth refers to individuals eligible to attend public school.

Note: This includes students with disabilities being served by IEP through age 21.

Not all persons living in the situations described would be considered homeless. Two major factors to consider when making a determination are the **adequacy and permanence** of the housing.

Chapter 3 of the *Toolkit* discusses identification of homeless children and youth. Appendix B of the *Toolkit* contains a flyer that outlines who is considered homeless. Appendix C of the *Toolkit* contains a flyer with common signs of homelessness. Appendix G contains reauthorization briefs, including a brief on the identification of students experiencing homelessness.

Note: Maria meets the definition of homelessness presented here.



McKinney-Vento Act: Enrollment

- Requires public schools to *immediately* enroll students experiencing homelessness even when lacking:
 - Proof of residency.
 - Guardianship.
 - Birth certificates, school records, or other documents.
 - Medical records, including immunization records.
 - Required dress code items, including uniforms.

The local liaison will need to ensure that local district policies are reviewed and revised to comply with this legislation. In reviewing the local district's enrollment requirements, the LEA should consider conflicts between the federal requirements and local guidelines and alignment between the processes of the local district and the federal act. The presenter may ask participants what other barriers students may encounter and how they can be addressed. The slide may be tailored to highlight individual state challenges and to eliminate issues that are not barriers in your state.

Participants or presenter could share possible alternatives to address barriers, such as:

- No proof of residency—use an affidavit describing current homelessness.
- No previous school records—the school must call or fax the previous school and request the records (new legal requirement).
- No immunization records—the school must enroll the student and refer to the liaison to assist with obtaining immunizations or immunization records (new legal requirement).

Chapter 3, Table 3 of the *Toolkit* includes possible solutions to enrollment barriers. Appendix E of the *Toolkit* has several forms and affidavits that may be useful to overcome barriers. Reference here or under liaison responsibilities.

If following up on the example of Maria and her children, you could note that Maria's children should be able to enroll in school.



McKinney-Vento Act: Enrollment

- **School placement**
 - School of origin, if the parent wishes and it is feasible
 - School in area of current residency
- **Educational rights posted**
 - In all public schools
 - In the community
- **Access for unaccompanied youth**
- **A dispute-resolution process**

You may need to explain the following terms:

School of origin—the school the student attended before becoming homeless or where the student was last enrolled. During the chaotic time students are experiencing, having a stable school environment can give students a place to count on, with people who know them.

Unaccompanied youth—student, who for whatever reason, does not live with a parent/guardian. (The local liaison must assist unaccompanied youth in the enrollment process.)

If the state has created materials for posting, have copies available for participants. The state's enrollment dispute resolution policy can be included in the participants' handout.

Appendix D of the *Toolkit* contains sample posters and family brochures, and Appendix E contains a variety of enrollment forms.

If following up on the example of Maria and her children, you could note that the posting of rights and brochures could have alerted Maria that her children could enroll.



Identify Enrollment Barriers

“Red flags”

Potential barriers for students who meet the definition of homeless:

- Birth certificates
- Tuberculosis testing
- Social Security card
- Immunization and medical records
- School records
- Proof of residency

Table 3 in Chapter 3 of the *Toolkit* offers suggestions to work with these barriers.

Remind liaisons that a Social Security card cannot be required for enrollment (see the U.S. Supreme Court case *Plyer v. Doe*).

If time is limited, this slide could be omitted. Any critical barriers could be discussed under “Immediate Enrollment.”



Take Action to Remove Barriers

- Identify the key personnel with authority to amend enrollment guidelines.
- Provide suggestions to ensure guidelines comply with the McKinney-Vento Act.
 - Plan awareness training for school enrollment personnel.
 - Offer alternatives to substitute for required documents.
 - Identify school and district responsibilities mandated in legislation.

Table 3 in Chapter 3 of the *Toolkit* includes many common barriers, such as birth certificates, tuberculosis testing, Social Security card, immunization and medical records, school records, and proof of residency. Table 3 also offers potential solutions.



McKinney-Vento Act: Attendance

- Transportation
- Attendance officers
- Truancy laws

Attendance is an obvious prerequisite to school success. Ensuring that students can get to school via safe and reliable transportation is critical.

The McKinney-Vento Act requires state and local educational agencies to adopt policies and practices to ensure transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), to and from the school of origin if

- Within the same LEA, the LEA shall provide or arrange transportation.
- The school of origin LEA and the LEA in which the student now resides agree on a method to apportion responsibility and costs for providing transportation to the school of origin. If an agreement cannot be reached, the LEAs must share the cost and responsibility equally. NCHE's *Proceedings from the National Symposium on Transportation for Homeless Children and Youth* provides some creative options for implementation of this requirement.

State coordinators should look at the specific truancy policies for their states and identify possible barriers to attendance. They should also make the person who is responsible for enforcing the truancy rules aware of the liaison and encourage collaboration between the liaison and the attendance officers to ensure that children are attending school.



McKinney-Vento Act: Success

- Comparable services
- Parental involvement
- Liaison collaboration between social service agencies and school districts
- Restriction of the segregation of homeless students

The McKinney-Vento Act requires that:

- Homeless students receive services comparable to those available to housed students.
- High school or GED completion be promoted.
- Liaisons collaborate with social service agencies and school districts serving students.
- Parents be fully informed of the enrollment options and educational opportunities available to their children and be involved in decision making regarding enrollment options.
- Schools/districts provide written explanations of decisions when disputes occur.
- Separate schools or programs for students experiencing homelessness be prohibited (with several exceptions noted in the legislation).

Chapters 4 and 5 of the *Toolkit* emphasize strategies for collaborating and accessing the appropriate educational services for students.

If following up on the example of Maria and her children, you could note that collaboration with the local shelter would have increased the likelihood that Maria would have known that her children could enroll.

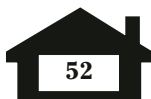


State and Local Policies

Because each state may have its own legislation and policies related to educating children and youth experiencing homelessness, the State Homeless Education Coordinator should include this information. In general, states must comply with the federal guidelines, but some states have gone further. States may include this slide and enter their additional requirements.

Liaisons should highlight any local policies on serving students experiencing homelessness at this point in the presentation.

Note: By accepting other NCLB funding, such as Title I, the state and local school districts have assured that McKinney-Vento requirements will be followed.



Local Homeless Education Liaison Responsibilities

- Review and revise local policies.
- Promote school and community awareness.
- Ensure
 - Identification.
 - Full and equal access to services, including appropriate referrals.
 - Parents and guardians are informed of rights, including transportation.
 - Unaccompanied youth are informed of rights and assisted with enrollment.
 - Compliance with state's dispute-resolution process.
- **Get the student enrolled!**

Direct participants to Chapter 3: Policies and Procedures for LEAs and Identified Liaisons (suggested time: 30–35 minutes)

Chapter 3 addresses the vital roles and responsibilities of liaisons to ensure students experiencing homelessness have access to and success in school. (See Section 722 (g)(6) “Local Educational Agency Liaison” for exact legislative language.)

Promoting school and community awareness involves not only posting the rights of homeless children but also training school staff, promoting community collaboration, and outreach.

Table 4 in Chapter 3 of the *Toolkit* describes additional responsibilities specified in the McKinney-Vento Act.

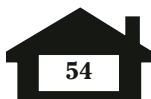


Ways to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness

- Designate a liaison
- Build awareness in:
 - Community
 - District
 - School
 - Classroom
- Develop collaborative efforts with:
 - Community agencies and service providers.
 - Enrollment officers and secretaries.
 - Other school district departments, such as:
 - Federal programs
 - Special education
 - Transportation

Note the strategies found in Chapters 4 & 5 and the PowerPoint® presentation in Appendix N of the *Toolkit* for local liaison use.

If following up on the example of Maria and her children, you could note that presentations to enrollment officers could ensure that staff know where shelters are located and could provide appropriate support during the enrollment process. Community presentations and collaboration will ensure that providers serving the needs of the homeless have the information they need to support Maria and inform her of her children's right to enroll in school.



Starter Tools

- **Research and Resources**
 - Research
 - Print resources
 - Audiovisual
 - Children's literature
- **Appendices that contain materials to be adapted and used in school districts**

Refer participants to Appendix O of the *Toolkit*.

If time allows, have participants select several resources that could be used with Maria's case and explain how they could be used. Other appendices may be employed as well.





Questions and Answers



Thank You!

I am a resource for you. Please contact me at
*insert the State Coordinator's
phone number and
e-mail address*

Be sure to add contact information to this slide.



Overview of the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit* Presentation Evaluation

Please indicate the approximate percentage of time allocated to the position of local homeless education liaison in your school district:

___ less than 25% ___ 25%–50% ___ 50%–75% ___ 75%–100% ___ not an LEA Contact

Indicate other responsibilities:

_____ Title I _____ Student Services _____ Assistant Superintendent
 _____ Counselor _____ Social Worker _____ Other (*please list*) _____
 _____ Other Federal Program (*please name*) _____

Rate the following items by circling your response.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
1.	Overall, the presentation was relevant to my needs.	4	3	2	1	N/A
2.	The presentation was well-organized.	4	3	2	1	N/A
3.	I am more aware of the responsibilities that local school districts have according to the McKinney-Vento Act.	4	3	2	1	N/A
4.	I am more aware of the homeless education resources available to local school districts.	4	3	2	1	N/A

Your comments/suggestions for improving the presentation are appreciated.

Please turn in the evaluation at the end of the presentation.



Appendix G:

Workshop:

Exploring the

Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit



Note: PowerPoint® presentation is available for download at www.serve.org/nche



A Toolkit for Local Liaisons: Resources and Guidance

James H. Stronge, Ph.D.
Patricia A. Popp, Ph.D.
Jennifer L. Hindman, doctoral student
Project HOPE
The College of William and Mary

Pre-Workshop Refreshments and Activity (suggested time: 20 minutes)

A check-in station to pick up nametags and *Toolkit* is suggested. From there, participants can enjoy the refreshments provided and begin the activity to be used during the welcome.

Refreshments

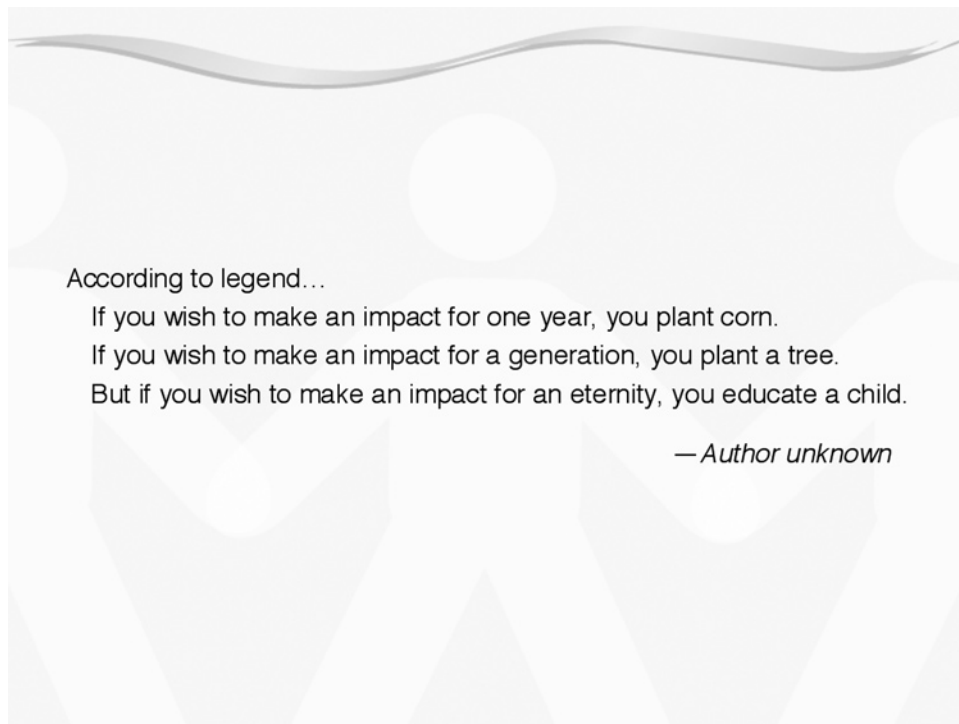
The refreshments (continental style or at least coffee and water) should be set up approximately 20 minutes before the scheduled start time as people who are traveling greater distances may arrive early.

Activity

The activity is made with post-it notes, masking tape, and a marker. Using masking tape, tape a flip chart onto the wall, and using the marker, make a large “L” to form the x and y axes of a graph. Title the graph, *Time Spent as a Local Homeless Education Liaison*. Label the x-axis *Number of Years* and the y-axis *Number of Individuals*. Post instructions by the graph and have post-it notes nearby.

A copy of the instructions and a sample graph is included with the workshop handouts.





Welcome and Introductions (suggested time: 12–15 minutes)

Introduce speakers.

Welcome (2–3 minutes)

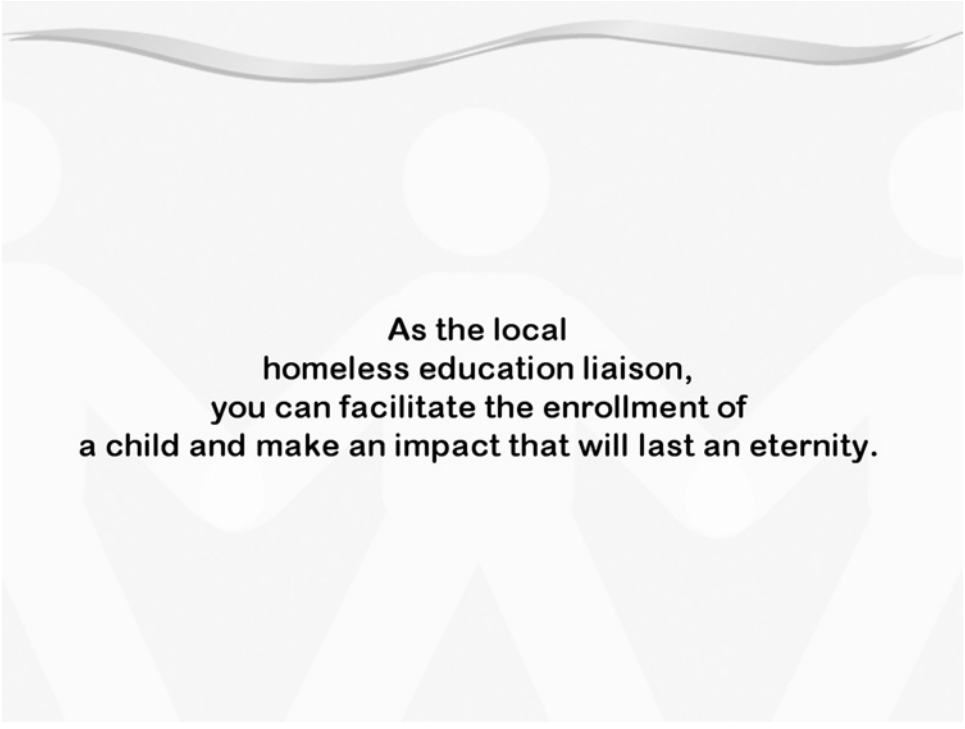
Welcome participants and note the results of the graph, such as the range of years as a liaison and the total years of experience in the room.

Encourage participants who have been involved with homeless education for several years to share their expertise with liaisons who are new to the position.

Explain that the session is intended to introduce a new resource from the National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE, a toolkit of resources for local homeless education liaisons.

Refer to the quote on the slide, and open by sharing the belief that education is a critical component to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness. You may wish to note that even homeless youth have articulated the belief that education would make the difference in their futures.





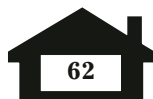
**As the local
homeless education liaison,
you can facilitate the enrollment of
a child and make an impact that will last an eternity.**

Introductions and Agenda Overview (suggested time: 10–13 minutes)

Introduction of the participants may vary. Some suggestions include:

- Go around the room and state your name, affiliation, position, and something positive that happened to you in the last month. (This is best for groups with fewer than 20 attendees.)
- For larger groups, ask participants to stand as you call out the number of years people have served as local liaisons or the central office positions held by participants. Use the increments that were used on the graph. Find out who the veterans are in the group. This also gives new liaisons a chance to identify colleagues who may be able to provide support.

Review the agenda, explaining that it follows the chapters in the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*. Note when the break will occur, the location of the restrooms, and any additional housekeeping.



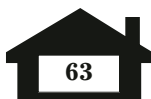
Agenda

- Opening activities
- Background information (Chapters 1 and 2)
- Liaison “basics” (Chapters 3 and 4)
- Outreach (Chapters 5 and 6)
- Application of tools (Chapter 7 and Appendices)
- Evaluation and dismissal

The sample agenda found here can be altered to meet the needs of the participants. Presenters should modify it as needed.

Workshop suggestion:

The *Toolkit* illustrates the focus of chapters through sample cases in introductory and closing sections. These cases may be used in the same way during the presentation as an anticipatory set. Have participants work in pairs or triads, read the opening case, and discuss the questions posed. The answers can be reviewed following the content presentation for the chapter.



Overview

- History of development
- Purpose of the *Toolkit*
- Available formats

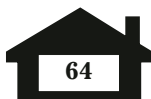
Chapter 1: Overview of the *Toolkit* (suggested time: 3–5 minutes)

Chapter 1 describes the history of developing the *Toolkit*, intended goals, and optional formats. If the state coordinator has tailored the *Toolkit* to reflect state laws, policies, and procedures, this may be noted in the overview.

The *Toolkit* is intended to support local liaisons in fulfilling legislative requirements and to offer suggestions for promising practices by addressing:

- LEA's legal responsibilities to fulfill legislative requirements in educating homeless children and youth.
- Potential roles and responsibilities local homeless education liaisons may assume.
- Identification of homeless children and youth.
- Guidance in identifying common barriers and creating solutions to address them.
- Sample tools to develop collaborative efforts, build awareness, and meet the educational needs of homeless children and youth.
- Identification of supplemental resources for further study and support.

The *Toolkit* is available online at the NCHE website. If you are unable to download the *Toolkit*, you may request a hard copy from NCHE. State coordinators may choose to reproduce hard copies or CDs for liaisons or post a state-tailored version on the state homeless education website.





**McKinney-Vento Homeless Education
Assistance Act**

**Title X, Part C
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001**

The reauthorization has some dramatic changes that need to be addressed.

The reason for the stronger language can be found as we move to the next slide. Due to the increasing numbers of homeless children and youth, the challenge has not diminished.



The Scale of Homelessness

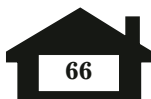
- Up to two million people will experience homelessness this year.
- Approximately half of these people will be children and youth.
- Families are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population.

Source: National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. (1999). *Out of sight—Out of mind? A report on anti-homeless laws, litigation, and alternatives in 50 United States*. Washington, DC: Author.

You may wish to share the state homeless education form, included in Appendix E of this handbook. Cite the figures from the last child estimate. You may wish to reference reported estimates for school districts that will be attending for reference.

In addition, you may wish to share the number of shelters in the state and/or school districts attending to give the audience a sense of the scale of the issue.

Critical factors that lead to homelessness include poverty, illness substance abuse, job loss, and mental illness. A critical factor in homelessness is the lack of affordable housing. The National Low Income Housing Coalition has an interactive website that provides stats for states and localities at www.nliihc.org/oor2002/index.htm.



McKinney-Vento Act

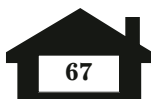
- Reauthorizes the McKinney Act originally enacted in 1987.
- Provides states with funding to support local grants and statewide initiatives.
- Requires educational access, attendance, and success for homeless children and youth.
- Outlines responsibilities for local liaisons.

Note that the law was originally crafted due to the large numbers of homeless children and youth who were *not* receiving an education. Participants can be directed to locate the timeline for the legislation found in Chapter 2, Figure 1.

You may note that the role of state coordinator for homeless education is a result of this legislation. Be sure participants have the appropriate contact information for their state coordinator.

The 2001 reauthorization required that a local homeless education liaison be present in all school districts. (This new requirement led to the development of the *Toolkit* and training materials.) This individual has the responsibility to ensure homeless children and youth have access to the educational system and receive the needed support to attend regularly and succeed in school.

A copy of the reauthorized legislation can be found in Appendix A of the *Toolkit*.



Maria

Maria and her seven-year-old and nine-year-old daughters have just moved into a homeless shelter. Maria visits the neighborhood school to enroll her daughters. She is given a list of required documents — items she does not have. Maria leaves, believing her daughters cannot attend the school.

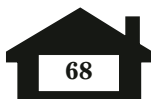
Consider:

- Should Maria be able to enroll her children?
- Did something go wrong?
- What should be done?
- What could you do to prevent this from happening in a school in your district?

Chapter 2: Homeless Education and the Law (suggested time: 25–30 minutes)

Share this case as an introduction to the McKinney Act. This is the same case study found in Chapter 2 of the *Toolkit*.

Lead a discussion of the questions or have participants reflect upon their own responses, and refer to Maria’s story while working through the remainder of the presentation.



Who are children and youth experiencing homelessness?

- An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:
 - Sharing housing due to loss of housing or economic hardship.
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate housing.
 - Living in emergency or transitional housing.
 - Abandoned in hospitals.
 - Awaiting foster care.
 - Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or bus or train stations.
 - Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodations.
 - Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in the circumstances described above.

The descriptions listed here include new items found in the 2001 reauthorization.

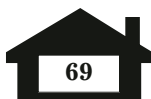
Some people may not be familiar with the term doubled-up. Be sure to explain this term when describing “sharing housing.” Doubled-up is the sharing of housing with other families or individuals **due to a loss of housing** (not due to cultural preference or a desire to save money). Also, children and youth refers to individuals eligible to attend public school.

Note: This includes students with disabilities being served by IEP through age 21.

Not all persons living in the situations described would be considered homeless. Two major factors to consider when making a determination are the **adequacy and permanence** of the housing.

Chapter 3 of the *Toolkit* discusses identification of homeless children and youth. Appendix B of the *Toolkit* contains a flyer that outlines who is considered homeless. Appendix C of the *Toolkit* contains a flyer with common signs of homelessness. Appendix G contains reauthorization briefs, including a brief on the identification of students experiencing homelessness.

Note: Maria meets the definition of homelessness presented here.



McKinney-Vento Act: Immediate Enrollment

- Requires public schools to *immediately* enroll students experiencing homelessness even when lacking:
 - Proof of residency.
 - Guardianship.
 - Birth certificates, school records, or other documents.
 - Medical records, including immunization records.
 - Required dress code items, including uniforms.

The local liaison will need to ensure that local district policies are reviewed and revised to comply with this legislation. In reviewing the local district's enrollment requirements, the LEA should consider conflicts between the federal requirements and local guidelines and alignment between the processes of the local district and the federal act. The presenter may ask participants what other barriers students may encounter and how they can be addressed. The slide may be tailored to highlight individual state challenges and to eliminate issues that are not barriers in your state.

Participants or presenter could share possible alternatives to address barriers, such as:

- No proof of residency—use an affidavit describing current homelessness.
- No previous school records—the school must call or fax the previous school and request the records (new legal requirement).
- No immunization records—the school must enroll the student and refer to the liaison to assist with obtaining immunizations or immunization records (new legal requirement).

Chapter 3, Table 3 of the *Toolkit* includes possible solutions to enrollment barriers. Appendix E of the *Toolkit* has several forms and affidavits that may be useful to overcome barriers. Reference here or under liaison responsibilities (slides 20–22).

If following up on the example of Maria and her children, you could note that Maria's children should be able to enroll in school.



McKinney-Vento Act: Enrollment

- School placement
 - School of origin, if the parent wishes and it is feasible
 - School in area of current residency
- Educational rights posted
 - In all public schools
 - In the community
- Access for unaccompanied youth
- A dispute-resolution process

You may need to explain the following terms:

School of origin—the school the student attended before becoming homeless or where the student was last enrolled. During the chaotic time students are experiencing, having a stable school environment can give students a place to count on, with people who know them.

Unaccompanied youth—student who, for whatever reason, does not live with a parent/guardian. (The local liaison must assist unaccompanied youth in the enrollment process.)

If the state has created materials for posting, have copies available for participants. The state's enrollment dispute resolution policy can be included in the participants' handout.

Appendix D of the *Toolkit* contains sample posters and family brochures, and Appendix E contains a variety of enrollment forms.

If following up on the example of Maria and her children, you could note that the posting of rights and brochures could have alerted Maria that her children could enroll.



McKinney-Vento Act: Attendance

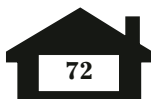
- Transportation
- Attendance officers
- Truancy laws

Attendance is an obvious prerequisite to school success. Ensuring that students can get to school via safe and reliable transportation is critical.

The McKinney-Vento Act requires state and local educational agencies to adopt policies and practices to ensure transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), to and from the school of origin if

- Within the same LEA, the LEA shall provide or arrange transportation.
- The school of origin LEA and the LEA in which the student now resides agree on a method to apportion responsibility and costs for providing transportation to the school of origin. If an agreement cannot be reached, the LEAs must share the cost and responsibility equally. NCHÉ's *Proceedings from the National Symposium on Transportation for Homeless Children and Youth* provides some creative options for implementation of this requirement.

State coordinators should look at the specific truancy policies for their states and identify possible barriers to attendance. They should also make the person who is responsible for enforcing the truancy rules aware of the liaison and encourage collaboration between the liaison and the attendance officers to ensure that children are attending school.



McKinney-Vento Act: Success

- Comparable services
- Parental involvement
- Liaison collaboration between social service agencies and school divisions to serve students
- Restriction of the segregation of homeless students

The McKinney-Vento Act requires that:

- Homeless students receive services comparable to those available to housed students.
- High school or GED completion be promoted.
- Liaisons collaborate with social service agencies and school districts serving students.
- Parents be fully informed of the enrollment options and educational opportunities available to their children and be involved in decision making regarding enrollment options.
- Schools/districts provide written explanations of decisions when disputes occur.
- Separate schools or programs for students experiencing homelessness be prohibited (with several exceptions noted in the legislation).

Chapters 4 and 5 of the *Toolkit* emphasize strategies for collaborating and accessing the appropriate educational services for students.

If following up on the example of Maria and her children, you could note that collaboration with the local shelter would have increased the likelihood that Maria would have known that her children could enroll.



State and Local Policies

Because each state may have its own legislation and policies related to educating children and youth experiencing homelessness, the State Homeless Education Coordinator should include this information. In general, states must comply with the federal guidelines, but some states have gone further. States may include this slide and enter their additional requirements.

Liaisons should highlight any local policies on serving students experiencing homelessness at this point in the presentation.

Note: By accepting other NCLB funding, such as Title I, the state and local school districts have assured that McKinney-Vento requirements will be followed.



Local Homeless Education Liaison Responsibilities

- Review and revise local policies.
- Promote school and community awareness.
- Ensure:
 - Identification.
 - Full and equal access services, including appropriate referrals.
 - Parents and guardians informed of rights, including transportation.
 - Unaccompanied youth informed of rights and assisted with enrollment.
 - Compliance with state's dispute-resolution process.
- Get the student enrolled!

Chapter 3: Policies and Procedures for LEAs and Identified Liaisons (suggested time: 30–35 minutes)

Chapter 3 addresses the vital roles and responsibilities of liaisons to ensure students experiencing homelessness have access to and success in school.
(See Section 722 (g)(6) “Local Educational Agency Liaison” for exact legislative language.)

Promoting school and community awareness involves not only posting the rights of homeless children but also training school staff, promoting community collaboration, and outreach.

Table 4 in Chapter 3 of the *Toolkit* describes additional responsibilities specified in the McKinney-Vento Act.



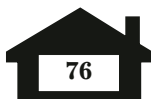
Which child is homeless?



Can you tell which child
is experiencing homelessness?

The liaisons' first step in fulfilling their responsibilities is to know whom they are serving. In the case of homelessness, this is also one of the most challenging steps. Appearance alone is not a good indicator of homelessness, so identifying these children and their families is often difficult.

Ask participants what physical characteristics they associate with homelessness.



Warning Signs of Homelessness

- Lack of continuity in education
- Poor health and/or nutrition
- Transportation and attendance problems
- Poor hygiene
- Lack of privacy and personal space after school
- Social and behavioral concerns
- Reactions or statements by parent, guardian, or child

For examples under each bullet, incorporate comments mentioned during the discussion of the previous slide. Chapter 3 contains lists under each of the bulleted headings.

- *Lack of continuity in education:* attended many schools, lacks enrollment records, gaps in skill development, unable to pay fees (e.g., band, art)
- *Poor health and/or nutrition:* lack of immunizations and/or records, unmet medical and dental needs, skin rashes, chronic hunger, fatigue
- *Transportation and attendance problems:* numerous absences, tardiness, lack of participation on field trips, inability to contact parents, absent on days when students bring treats from home
- *Poor hygiene:* wearing the same clothes for days, inconsistent grooming
- *Lack of privacy and personal space after school:* lack of preparation for school, missing homework, lacks school supplies
- *Social and behavioral concerns:* short attention span, change in behavior, low self-esteem, difficulty socializing with peers, clinging
- *Reactions or statements by parent, guardian, or child:* anger or embarrassment when asked where they live, says they are staying in a hotel or with relatives

Note that these signs alone cannot confirm a homeless situation because they can result from a variety of circumstances.



Tips for Identifying Homeless Children and Youth

- Analyze information you have on record.
- Know your community—“network.”
- Disseminate brochures and posters with your contact information to community areas.
- Train school enrollment personnel to:
 - Look for signs.
 - Offer assistance.
 - Contact you.

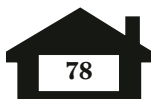
Analyze information you have on record; the student information network in a school district could search by common addresses. More than one family at an address may be an indicator of a doubled-up situation. Suggesting that the school check its mailing labels when sending out newsletters is another way.

Know your community (network). Be familiar with motel addresses, and request motel desk personnel to let you know if they think that there may be homeless students there so that you can work on enrolling the children.

Disseminate information to the public health department, shelters, and community organizations (e.g., food banks, soup kitchens) that assist the homeless.

Train school enrollment personnel to be aware of indicators of homelessness. Knowing what to listen for or look for may aid in identification so that students can be served.

Note: Knowledge of shelters and effective networking would have helped Maria enroll her children due to greater awareness and communication between schools and shelters.



Facilitating Enrollment

- Enroll homeless students immediately and then follow up on details.
- Obtain missing documentation and records.
- Discuss guardianship issues with:
 - An adult who is not the parent.
 - Unaccompanied youth.
- Verify residency requirements, such as address and school of origin.

Residency issues

Consider accepting an alternative proof of residency such as a motel receipt or an affidavit.

Appendix E has a form to assist in verifying homelessness and a checklist that can be used to determine the school of origin.

The McKinney-Vento Act strengthened the parents' or unaccompanied youth's option to elect to remain in the school of origin.

Missing documentation

In Table 3 of Chapter 3, suggestions for what to use in place of specific documents is presented.

Guardianship issues

Homelessness may complicate guardianship issues. Parents with young children may be reluctant to say they are homeless out of fear of losing their children. An affidavit may be an acceptable form of parental guardianship.

Shelters may have rules that preclude an older youth from staying with his mother (e.g., an abused-women's shelter). Enrollment cannot be denied if a student lacks a parent to sign for him or her.

Local liaisons must assist unaccompanied youth to ensure they are enrolled.



Identify Enrollment Barriers

“Red Flags”

Potential barriers for students who meet the definition of homeless

- Birth certificates
- Tuberculosis testing
- Social Security card
- Immunization and medical records
- School records
- Proof of residency

Table 3 in Chapter 3 of the *Toolkit* offers suggestions to work with these barriers.

Remind liaisons that a Social Security card *cannot* be required for enrollment (see the U.S. Supreme Court case *Plyer v. Doe*).

If time is limited, this slide could be omitted. Any critical barriers could be discussed while showing the previous slide.



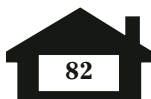
Take Action to Remove Barriers

- Identify the key personnel with authority to amend enrollment guidelines.
- Provide suggestions to ensure that guidelines comply with the McKinney-Vento Act.
 - Plan awareness training for school enrollment personnel.
 - Offer alternatives to substitute for required documents.
 - Identify school and district responsibilities mandated in legislation.

Table 3 in Chapter 3 of the *Toolkit* includes many common barriers, such as birth certificates, tuberculosis testing, Social Security card, immunization/medical records, school records, and proof of residency, and potential solutions.

Enrollment Dispute Resolution

This slide must be completed by the state coordinator to reflect the state's adopted enrollment dispute resolution process. State coordinators should review old resolution processes to ensure they are consistent with the 2001 reauthorization requirements.



Ensuring Access to Educational Services

- Free and reduced price breakfast and lunch programs
- Title I
- Special education
- Gifted programs
- Transportation
- After-school and summer programs
- Head Start and Even Start

Some homeless parents have difficulty filling out forms and may need assistance.

Programs that require screenings or evaluations may need to have the process expedited, especially if the process was started in another school and the child moved before it was completed.

See the National Association of Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) policy forum proceedings document *Educating Children with Disabilities Who Are Homeless* (December, 1999).

Head Start and Even Start may reserve slots for homeless children since these children may not be in the area during the enrollment time and waiting lists are common. This will require collaboration to negotiate an acceptable process. Note the references to Head Start guidance found in Chapter 2 of the *Toolkit*.



Quiz time on liaison responsibilities

How much do you already know about what you are responsible for doing to serve students experiencing homelessness?

Distribute the quiz, and let participants confer and then share. All the answers are true.

Item #	Ways to put the item into practice
4	Train school enrollment personnel on the law, and offer yourself as a resource.
6	Provide brochures and posters, and conduct outreach in the community.
7	Maintain relevant documentation, and act in the student's best interest.
8	Document the sharing of the information, and network with the transportation director to ensure continuity of service.
9	Disseminate the posters to schools.
10	Post the posters in shelters, laundry mats, and on community bulletin boards.
12	Follow up with the youth and school to make sure the student is enrolled, and provide training for enrollment personnel.
13	Have a referral list of contacts for securing the needed records.

The items highlighted above are new as of the most recent reauthorization. Engage participants in a discussion of how items can be incorporated into practices. (An additional discussion may address Section 722 (e)(3)(C), which requires written notice at the time of enrollment *and* at least twice annually while students are enrolled in a segregated school, if allowed in the statute.)



Chapter 4

Strategies for Meeting the Educational Needs of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

Chapter 4: Strategies for Meeting Educational Needs (suggested time: 20–25 minutes)

Present the PowerPoint® slides describing how the liaison can meet educational needs by promoting awareness.



Start with yourself as the Local Homeless Education Liaison

- Promote awareness of homelessness in the schools and the community with posters and presentations.
- Identify local barriers and work to remove them.
- Let shelter directors know you are available to assist students.
- Provide information to the schools.

The local liaison must first identify actions to be taken in his or her position. This slide contains several strategies to be implemented by the liaison. If time allows and there are veteran liaisons in the audience, participants may be asked to share additional practices they have found useful.

Optional Activity: Use the strategies worksheet (p. 103) and have participants identify possible means to reach and inform targeted audiences of their rights and responsibilities. Report out or refer to lists while presenting the next several slides.



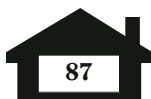
Conduct a Needs Assessment

- Determine the location of the shelters in the area.
- Identify organizations in the school district that assist the homeless.
- Know issues that commonly impact homeless children and youth in the school district (e.g., homeless families who live in resort areas often move into motels during the non-peak season).

A needs assessment is an optional activity for school districts that are not applying for a sub-grant; however, it can provide valuable information for future planning and evaluation of the impact of the liaison's efforts. See Chapter 4 of the *Toolkit* for additional details and Appendix F of the *Toolkit* for a sample needs assessment.

Contact directors and staff of shelters in the school division attendance zone, and:

- Share your contact information.
- Provide flyers, posters, and brochures.
- Include shelters in school division mailings.
- Consider meeting to discuss ways to support each other (e.g., "What resources can we share to best serve children and youth experiencing homelessness?")
- State coordinators may be a resource in identifying shelters and organizations with whom liaisons should make contact. Offer this assistance if it can be provided from your office or have other state contacts available who liaisons may approach.



Promoting Educational Rights

- Identify a point of contact in each school to serve as a resource for homeless education.
- Conduct presentations for central office personnel, schools, and community organizations.
- Use the following as vehicles to communicate:
 - Posters
 - Brochures
 - E-mails

The federal legislation acknowledges that a district contact is needed to ensure local awareness of homeless children and youth. Current liaisons who have identified a school-level contact for homeless education issues find this to be a valuable step in ensuring that students' rights are protected and awareness of homelessness exists at the school level.

Appendix H of the *Toolkit* contains a form for identifying a school contact, and Appendix N contains a PowerPoint® presentation for local liaisons to use. Other appendices in the *Toolkit* contain additional communication tools.

Note: Such posting could also prevent Maria from leaving the school without asking for assistance.



Getting the Message Out

Kenion is reading the most recent reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Act to see what new information needs to be shared with his school district. As the LEA homeless education liaison, he must identify efficient and cost-effective ways to reach staff in his large urban school district. Personnel need information to ensure homeless children and youth have access to the appropriate educational services. In addition to families in shelters, Kenion recently heard that older youth are living in makeshift camps by the river and in abandoned buildings downtown. He makes a list of the people who need information about the homeless education program and finds that they include the school district personnel and community members.

How could Kenion get his message out?

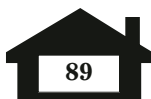
Chapter 6: Getting the Message Out (suggested time: 15–20 minutes)

Using the vignette at the beginning of Chapter 6, ask participants to make a three-column chart on paper. The column headings are (a) school district personnel, (b) community members, and (c) parents (or use the handout included). Have groups complete this activity independently and then share with the group members. Allow groups ten minutes to work.

Share the awareness PowerPoint® presentation and the associated handout with the participants. The State Coordinator should provide participants with suggested concise wording for the PowerPoint® presentation slide on state policy.

If you have time:

- Ask each group to share a vehicle of communication (no repeats). Ask if individuals are doing something in their school district that they would like to share.
- Model the “How Vulnerable Are You to Becoming Homeless?” or the “Get Out Fast” activities from the PowerPoint® presentation in Appendix N of the *Toolkit*.



Disseminate Information to the Schools

- Provide a flyer or poster with the educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness to be posted where students enroll.
- Provide tip sheets to school personnel with suggestions for how they can help.
- Conduct in-service training.

Posters, flyers, tip sheets, and presentations can be found in the *Toolkit* appendices.



**Now it is your turn
to identify strategies for
educating the following people:**

- School district administrators
- School administrators
- Teachers
- Parents

Hint: Use the *Local Homeless Education Toolkit*, especially Chapter 4, Strategies to Meet Educational Needs, and Appendix I.

Place three participants in a group and assign them a group of people to educate about strategies to use to meet the educational needs of homeless children and youth. The groups are made up of (a) school district administrators, (b) school administrators, (c) teachers, and (d) parents. Tell the groups that many strategies can be found on the tip sheets referenced in Appendix I of the *Toolkit*. The groups have ten minutes to identify strategies, and then they will share these with the group as a whole.



An illustration of three stylized human figures in white, holding hands in a circle. The figures are simplified, with circular heads and triangular bodies. The background is a light gray with a wavy pattern at the top and a pattern of overlapping circles and triangles below.

What strategies did you identify?

Thank the groups for sharing, and close this section by emphasizing the importance of awareness building since people in positions change and the homeless population is dynamic. Emphasize the key point that students must be afforded access to and success in school.



Developing Collaborative Relationships

- Identify the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.
- Target how an individual or department can meet those needs.
- Approach the individual with a win-win scenario.

Chapter 5: Developing Collaborative Efforts (suggested time 10–15 minutes)

Share the PowerPoint® presentation. Adapt the presentation to the individual state, if possible, by including specific examples of collaborative efforts already underway.

The care and feeding of a collaborative relationship requires the following:

- Establish a contact person, and get to know each other.
- Identify and jointly decide on the needs that will be addressed through common goals.
- Communicate regularly.
- Use real data.
- Maintain focus on the central issue—the kids.
 - Reflect together on overcoming frustrations.
 - Share the credit for successes.

Be aware of barriers to collaboration:

- Conflicting policies
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of clear policy
- Lack of a sense of responsibility for kids experiencing homelessness
- Identification of homeless students
- Denial of the issue
- Staff turnover
- An attitude that there are too many needs and “we can’t do enough to make much of a difference, so why bother trying?”

Be aware of goal displacement. The best way to advocate to someone is to appeal to what they believe is important. Try statements such as, “I understand that you need to see every kid succeed, and I can help you with it. Let’s talk” (Richard LaTour, NCHE National Symposium, 2001).



Collaborating with a Case Management Approach

In the West Contra Costa United School District in California, collaborating means working with Title I, housing, and community resources. The school district coordinator has a database of 900 children and tracks their cycle of homelessness.

- Title I and McKinney-Vento funds are used for bus vouchers since bussing increases student attendance.
- United Way provides funding.
- Relationship with housing gets the student's family to the top of the Section 8 waiting list.

Source: Presentation at the NCHE National Symposium, 2001



What is the impact of collaboration in Minnesota?

9,000 students were served with Title I
collaboration versus 4,000 four years earlier.

Source: Tom Gray, 2001

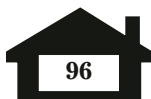


Potential Partners for Collaboration

- Shelters, soup kitchens, motels, and churches
- Local continuum of care (HUD)
- School district departments
 - Title I
 - Special education
 - Transportation department
 - Staff development
 - Preschool programs

Describe the Continuum of Care process briefly. If the training is regional, have local Continuum of Care contact information available for liaisons.

Ask participants to suggest other potential partners.



Starter Tools

- Research and Resources
 - Research
 - Print resources
 - Audiovisual
 - Children's literature
- Appendices that contain materials to be adapted and used in school districts

Chapter 7 and Appendices: Research and Resources, Sample Materials to Tailor and Reproduce (suggested time 30–40 minutes)

This chapter is best used in the field when specific information is desired. Appendix O lists the actual resource listings. Let the participants know that this is “just the tip of the iceberg” when it comes to resources on homeless education.

Look through the chapter beforehand, and identify sources that you have used in the past. If possible, have samples of materials on display that attendees can peruse upon arrival and during the break. If the workshop is conducted at tables, several resources could be placed in the center of each table. Let table members review 1–2 items and report out a brief description of the item(s) and how a local liaison may be able to use it. Ask participants if they have used any resources referenced or have additional items to suggest.

Be sure to provide the state's homeless education website address.

While reviewing the appendices, share materials that the state coordinator's office for homeless education has produced. Passing out order forms for materials and samples of posters and brochures would be appropriate.

Give each cooperative group a situation to resolve using the information and materials in the *Toolkit*, focusing primarily on the appendices. Ask the group to appoint a reporter. The reporter could be the person whose birth date is closest to the date of the workshop. Allow groups 5–10 minutes to identify a solution. Call time. Pass out the situation matrix. If you did not use all the situations, alert participants that there will be blanks. In the same order that the situations appear on the matrix, groups will report how they resolved the situations.



Thank You!

I am a resource for you.

Please contact me at
insert the state coordinator's address
phone/fax numbers
e-mail address

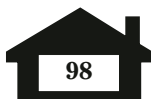
Wrap-Up/Evaluation (suggested time 7–10 minutes)

Be sure to add contact information to this slide.

Remind participants that you are a resource available to them if they encounter questions or challenges fulfilling their role as a local homeless education liaison.

Remind everyone of the evaluation forms. Have a clearly marked location or drop-off box for evaluations to be placed when completed.

Thank participants for coming, and wish them a safe journey home.



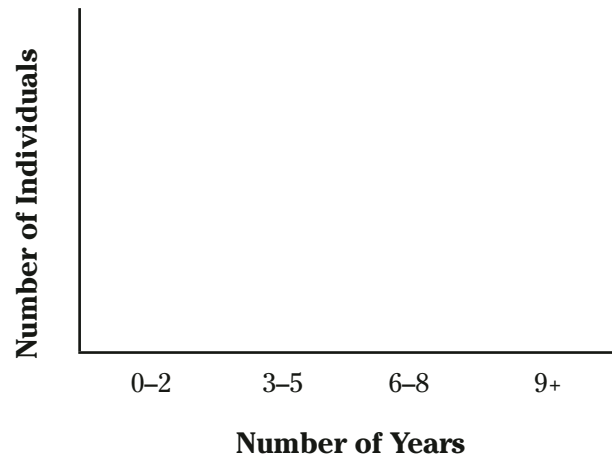
Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit Pre-Workshop Activity

1. Write your name on a post-it note.
2. Place it above the appropriate number of years you have served as a local liaison supporting the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness.



**Figure 1:
Sample Graph and Instructions**

Time Spent as a Local Homeless Education Liaison



Instructions:

As you arrive today, write your name on a post-it note, and place in on this graph in the correct column to identify the number of years you have been a local homeless education liaison.



Liaison and School District Responsibilities

Mark each question as true or false depending on whether or not the item is a role or responsibility of the liaison or school district.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Review local policies and procedures that may impact homeless children and youth, such as school enrollment and access to school programs (LEA requirement, and may be assumed by liaison). | T | F |
| 2. Revise local policies and procedures determined to be potential barriers for homeless children and youth (LEA requirement, and may be assumed by liaison). | T | F |
| 3. Ensure that homeless students are identified by school personnel. | T | F |
| 4. Ensure that homeless students enroll in, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in, the schools of the LEA. | T | F |
| 5. Ensure that homeless families, children, and youth receive the educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, Even Start, and preschool programs administered by the LEA, and referrals to health, mental health, dental, and other appropriate services. | T | F |
| 6. Ensure that parents or guardians are informed of educational and related opportunities that are available to their children and are provided meaningful opportunities to participate in their children's education. | T | F |
| 7. Assist with enrollment dispute resolution cases and ensure they are mediated in accordance with the state's enrollment dispute resolution process. | T | F |
| 8. Ensure that the parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including to the school of origin, and that assistance to accessing transportation services is provided. | T | F |



- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 9. Post educational rights of homeless children and youth in all schools. | T | F |
| 10. Post educational rights of homeless children and youth in the community at places where homeless families and youth might receive services. | T | F |
| 11. Assist unaccompanied youth in placement and enrollment decisions, including considering the youth's wishes in those decisions and providing notice to the youth of the right to appeal such decisions under the enrollment dispute provisions. | T | F |
| 12. Ensure that unaccompanied youth are immediately enrolled in school pending resolution of disputes that might arise over school enrollment and placement. | T | F |
| 13. Assist children and youth who do not have immunizations or medical records to obtain the necessary medical records or immunizations. | T | F |
| 14. Inform school personnel, service providers, and advocates who work with homeless families of the duties of the liaison. | T | F |

Strategies Worksheet

Target audience	Possible strategies
School district administrators	
School administrators	
Teachers	
Parents	

Getting the Message Out

How can Kenion, the local homeless education liaison, provide information about the McKinney-Vento Act to his school district?

Use Chapter 6, "Getting the Message Out," in the *Toolkit*, and share ideas from your school district.

School district personnel (transportation, teachers, administrators, school staff, central office personnel, etc.)	Community members	Parents of students experiencing homelessness

Situation Cards

Maribel has been at West Elementary for about three months when her mother comes and tells the school secretary that she needs her child's records. She needs to move to a transitional shelter across town. The school guidance counselor calls you and asks what can be done. Maribel is just starting to work well in the class, and her teacher would be sorry to see her leave now.

A father has come to enroll his sixth grader in Oceanside Middle School in September and asks if there is anything available for his four-year-old daughter in the school district. The school secretary calls you because she knows that the Head Start enrollment date has passed, but she does not know what else is available. She thinks that the man may be homeless since he gave the address of a low-cost motel.

The supervisor for pupil services left you a voice message asking if you would give a 10-to-15-minute presentation at the meeting for people assigned to do school enrollment in each building. This meeting is scheduled for the week before students return to school. What will be the high points that you want to get across, and what can you give them?

The phone rings and you pick it up. The high school assistant principal is on the line. A guidance counselor had called him about a 17-year-old student who wants to attend Southern Glen High School. The girl's parents live out-of-district. She is staying with a friend and only has a Social Security card. Is this youth homeless? What can be done?

An e-mail comes in from a shelter worker who is having difficulty facilitating the enrollment of some children in school. The school will accept the shelter as a place of residence but wants the children immunized and copies of the school records before enrolling. What can you do?

The transportation director is frustrated with bus routes—again. The school says it can't get a bus to the shelter just to pick up the Smith children. In addition, there has been a freeze on local spending, so bus tokens are out of the question. Where may there be money that can be used?

The school nurse contacts you because she is aware that many students in her school are from a local homeless shelter and cannot be sent "home" when they are ill. She wonders what she can do and what other illnesses she might expect to see, so she can be prepared.

You have just completed the state coordinator's survey about the school district's student-mobility rate. You filled in a blank about the number of identified homeless students. The numbers are growing, and you have no fiscal resources. Your superintendent told you to complete the reports and ensure students were enrolled. What possible support can you give these students with so little, when your position as homeless education liaison is just one of many responsibilities you have?

Situation Matrix

Identify the issue, and record the group's suggestions to addressing it.

Issue	Suggestions to address the issue
Homeless child moves to a shelter across town, and mom wants her records	
10-15 minute presentation to enrollment personnel	
Missing records	
Common illnesses associated with homelessness	
Homeless father with a preschooler	
Unaccompanied youth	
Need money for transportation	
No funds to help	

Directions: Complete column two by listing potential means of reaching and informing the targeted audiences of their rights and responsibilities. Feel free to use the experience in your group and the *Toolkit* for ideas.



Sample of Completed Form for Presenter Reference

Issue	Suggestions to address the issue
Homeless child moves to a shelter across town, and mom wants her records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise parent of educational options available (school of origin). • Prepare a parent pack with the important records for the parent, and fax copy to receiving school. • Alert teacher so he or she can prepare class for departure of a friend.
10–15 minute presentation to enrollment personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight key parts of the McKinney-Vento Act. • Note the state law regarding homeless students. • Share signs of homelessness. • Provide copy of flyer [with contact information] to post in the school. • Let personnel know how they can help. • Share which schools have the highest mobility rates in the district.
Missing records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the primary homeless education contact. • Talk to the enrollment person about the McKinney-Vento Act. • Get the student enrolled. • Refer the student to the county public health office for immunizations. • Ask the previous school to fax the records to the new school.
Common illnesses associated with homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See what community resources are available. • Share information on the common illnesses and outbreaks: flu, colds, and lice. • Inform school nurse that hunger, inappropriate clothing, lack of sleep, and poor hygiene are contributing factors. • Suggest that the nurse could help by keeping a clothes closet (a fair number of clothes are left at school and never claimed) as well as some personal grooming products on hand for these students.

Sample of Completed Form for Presenter Reference (continued)

Issue	Suggestions to address the issue
Homeless father with a preschooler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start and Even Start can reserve enrollment slots; see if one is available. • Homeless students can be put at the top of the waiting list.
Unaccompanied youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student is doubled-up and meets the definition of homeless. • The student can be considered homeless even if the parents are contacted and are willing to care for him or her. • Due to the homeless status, he or she has the protections of the McKinney-Vento Act and can be enrolled without scholastic records, proof of residency, or proof of immunization.
Need money for transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I funds could be used. • The school district must transport the students to school because the McKinney-Vento Act guarantees access.
No funds to help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a poster describing the rights of homeless students to each school. • Use the school district e-mail to send messages about what different groups can do to help these students. • Continue to enroll students, and be responsive to concerns. • Work with other departments to build awareness.



Introduction to the *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit* Workshop Evaluation

Please indicate the approximate percentage of time allocated to the position of local homeless education liaison in your school district:

___ less than 25% ___ 25%–50% ___ 50%–75% ___ 75%–100% ___ not an LEA Contact

Indicate other responsibilities:

_____ Title I _____ Student Services _____ Assistant Superintendent
 _____ Counselor _____ Social Worker _____ Other (*please list*) _____
 _____ Other Federal Program (*please name*) _____

Rate the following items by circling your response.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
1.	Overall, the workshop was relevant to my needs.	4	3	2	1	N/A
2.	The workshop was well-organized.	4	3	2	1	N/A
3.	I understand the McKinney-Vento Act.	4	3	2	1	N/A
4.	The section on strategies for meeting educational needs was beneficial.	4	3	2	1	N/A
5.	The section on developing collaborative efforts was beneficial.	4	3	2	1	N/A
6.	I was able to see how I could apply “Getting the Message Out” strategies in my school district.	4	3	2	1	N/A
7.	I will be able to use the resources reviewed today.	4	3	2	1	N/A
8.	The workshop was held in a good location.	4	3	2	1	N/A

Your comments/suggestions for improving the workshop are appreciated.

Please turn in the evaluation at the end of the workshop.



About SERVE

SERVE, directed by Dr. John R. Sanders, is an education organization with the mission to promote and support the continuous improvement of educational opportunities for all learners in the Southeast. The organization's commitment to continuous improvement is manifest in an applied research-to-practice model that drives all of its work. Building on theory and craft knowledge, SERVE staff members develop tools and processes designed to assist practitioners and policymakers with their work, ultimately, to raise the level of student achievement in the region. Evaluation of the impact of these activities combined with input from affected stakeholders expands SERVE's knowledge base and informs future research.

This vigorous and practical approach to research and development is supported by an experienced staff strategically located throughout the region. This staff is highly skilled in providing needs assessment services, conducting applied research in schools, and developing processes, products, and programs that inform educators and increase student achievement. In the last three years, in addition to its basic research and development work with over 170 southeastern schools, SERVE staff provided technical assistance and training to more than 18,000 teachers and administrators across the region.

SERVE is governed by a board of directors that includes the governors, chief state school officers, educators, legislators, and private sector leaders from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

At the core of SERVE's business is the operation of the Regional Educational Laboratory. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement, the Regional Educational Laboratory for the Southeast is one of ten programs providing research-based information and services to all 50 states and territories. These Laboratories form a nationwide education knowledge network, building a bank of information and resources shared nationally and disseminated regionally to improve student achievement locally. SERVE's National Leadership Area, Expanded Learning Opportunities, focuses on improving student outcomes through the use of exemplary pre-K and extended-day programs.

In addition to the Lab, SERVE operates the Southeast Eisenhower Regional Consortium for Mathematics and Science Education and the SouthEast Initiatives Regional Technology in Education Consortium (SEIR♦TEC). SERVE also administers a subcontract for the Region IV Comprehensive Center and has additional funding from the Department to provide services in migrant education and to operate the National Center for Homeless Education and the Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Homeless Education.



Together, these various elements of SERVE's portfolio provide resources, services, and products for responding to regional and national needs. Program areas include

- Assessment, Accountability, and Standards
- Children, Families, and Communities
- Education Leadership
- Education Policy
- Improvement of Science and Mathematics Education
- School Development and Reform
- Technology in Learning

In addition to the program areas, the SERVE Evaluation Unit supports the evaluation activities of the major grants and contracts and provides contracted evaluation services to state and local education agencies in the region. The Technology Support Group provides SERVE staff and their constituents with IT support, technical assistance, and software applications. Through its Publications Unit, SERVE publishes a variety of studies, training materials, policy briefs, and program products. Among the many products developed at SERVE, two receiving national recognition include *Achieving Your Vision of Professional Development*, honored by the National Staff Development Council, and *Study Guide for Classroom Assessment: Linking Instruction and Assessment*, honored by Division H of AERA. Through its programmatic, technology, evaluation, and publishing activities, SERVE provides contracted staff development and technical assistance in specialized areas to assist education agencies in achieving their school improvement goals.

SERVE's main office is at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, with major staff groups located in Tallahassee, Florida, and Atlanta, Georgia, as well as satellite offices in Durham, North Carolina, and Shelby, Mississippi. Unique among the ten Regional Educational Laboratories, SERVE employs a full-time policy analyst to assist the chief state school officer at the state education agencies in each of the states in the SERVE region. These analysts act as SERVE's primary liaisons to the state departments of education, providing research-based policy services to state-level education policymakers and informing SERVE about key state education issues and legislation.

SERVE Main Office • P.O. Box 5367 • Greensboro, NC 27435

800-755-3277 • 336-315-7400 • Fax 336-315-7457

John R. Sanders, Ed.D. • Executive Director

www.serve.org

