

The 2009 Annual McKinney-Vento Workshops

About the Workshops in Albany

Each workshop lasts one hour, except for “Introduction to the McKinney-Vento Act,” which lasts two hours. Some workshops will be repeated and therefore have multiple sessions listed.

Introduction to the McKinney-Vento Act

Presenter: Michelle Frank, NYS-TEACHS

Sessions 1 and 2 (this workshop is 2 hours long and will not be repeated)

This workshop will offer an overview of the McKinney-Vento Act, with a particular emphasis on the responsibilities of school districts and district liaisons. We will discuss the legal protections for students in temporary housing, and successful strategies to meet students’ needs. This workshop is designed for professionals and liaisons who are new to the field as well as seasoned staff who need a basic refresher about the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act and NYS Education Law § 3209. Topics will include:

- 1) Who is protected by the McKinney-Vento Act
- 2) Identification strategies
- 3) Students’ school selection choices
- 4) Enrollment rights
- 5) Transportation strategies
- 6) The dispute resolution process
- 7) The role of the Liaison

McKinney-Vento: Questions and Answers for the Experienced

Presenters: Patricia McGuirk, NYS Education Department

Jennifer Pringle, NYS-TEACHS

Jared Stein, NYS-TEACHS

Sessions 1, 2, and 3

This workshop is intended for those with a solid grasp of the McKinney-Vento Act who would like to discuss difficult or ambiguous scenarios. The workshop will be in Q&A format, so come prepared with your questions. Topics may include:

- 1) Eligibility of students living doubled up
- 2) Enrollment and problems related to documentation
- 3) Identification strategies (including the new enrollment form)
- 4) Unaccompanied homeless youth
- 5) Transportation – timeliness, appropriate arrangements
- 6) Potentially competing mandates faced by liaisons
- 7) Dispute resolution process

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McKinney-Vento and FERPA: The Intersection between Records, Privacy, and Seamless School Services

Presenter: Tom Kroll, Newburgh City School District

Session 1

This workshop will provide an overview of the ways in which the McKinney-Vento Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) work together. With a list of “do’s and don’t’s” for liaisons, and for other school personnel, participants will discuss best practices for verifying students’ living situations and residency. The workshop will examine problematic practices to avoid, and it will offer participants a chance to share strategies for verifying where students reside without violating their rights or jeopardizing their housing. The workshop will review past FERPA violations in the school system, and will highlight the importance of training a wide range of school personnel, including attendance officers, registration staff and others about the rights of students and their families. Last but not least, participants will discuss various ways to answer the common question, “How do you know when a student is no longer homeless?”

In Her Own Voice: A Conversation with Aruna Sukhu

Moderated by: Barbara Duffield, National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth

Session 1

Hear from our keynote speaker, Aruna Sukhu, about her experience being homeless, how she graduated at the top of her high school class, and struggled to stay in college (where she is now excelling!). This will be an informal discussion where participants will be able to ask questions about what helped Aruna succeed in school and overcome the barriers she faced.

Head Start Reauthorization: Improving Access to Head Start for Young Children in Temporary Housing

Presenters: Barbara Duffield, National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth

Carolyn Jarvis, Head Start of New York State Training and Technical Assistance Office

Sessions 2 and 3

The reauthorized Head Start Act contains many new provisions that protect young children in temporary housing. McKinney-Vento also protects pre-school aged children and requires liaisons to ensure that families and children have access to Head Start, Even Start, Pre-K, and other preschool programs sponsored by the LEA. However, many Head Start program staff may

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be unfamiliar with the implications of these provisions, including the definition of homelessness, strategies to identify and serve homeless children and their families, and existing networks of collaborative partners. The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth has a long history of working with school district homeless liaisons, state homeless education coordinators, community service providers, parents and youth in temporary housing, and NYS Head Start programs have begun implementing these important changes. In this workshop, we will offer an overview of the changes in the law, as well as useful information and strategies to help Head Start providers and liaisons connect young children with crucial programs.. Head Start Reauthorization gives liaisons and Head Start Agencies a great opportunity to build collaborative networks, to better coordinate programs and implement family outreach and support strategies.

This workshop will examine the new requirements that Head Start organizations face, and will explore strategies and opportunities for collaboration. The workshop is geared toward Head Start staff, new and experienced liaisons, and social service providers from community based organizations.

No Direction Home: Transportation Challenges and Solutions for Serving Students in Temporary Housing

Presenters: Michelle Cooper, Pupil Transportation Safety Institute

Sherri Demers, Ballston Spa CSD

Dawn Howk, Ballston Spa CSD

Sessions 2 and 3

This workshop will explore the challenges of transporting homeless students and discuss practical solutions and suggestions to meet those challenges. Recent updates and state and national resources for assistance will also be shared. The format will be interactive, with audience participation and exchange of ideas.

Goals include:

1. understanding the important role of the transportation director in removing barriers to education as identified by the U.S. Department of Education;
2. outlining who is responsible for providing and paying for transportation in different scenarios;
3. generating positive discussion among participants in order to share programmatic implementation solutions as well as strategies for dispelling resistance to compliance with McKinney-Vento's transportation requirements; and
4. giving participants new resources for research and assistance.

Professionals who would benefit most from this workshop are transportation supervisors, newer homeless liaisons, and district staff members who want to understand the law as it relates to homeless transportation, including new ways to solve challenges and meet the needs of homeless students.

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Legal Help for Low-Income New Yorkers with “LawHelp.org/NY”

Presenter: Lindsay Case, LawHelp.org/NY

Sessions 3 and 4

LawHelp.org/NY is a web-based resource to help low-income and other vulnerable New Yorkers find free legal help. In this workshop, participants will learn about the types of information included on the website and how to navigate the site. The workshop will discuss the ways in which the resources are kept up-to-date, and will provide an in-depth walk-through of the site. It will also offer tips on finding the resources needed to help clients, students and families with legal needs.

The LawHelp/NY website has legal referral information covering all 62 counties of New York State. It focuses on 15 different areas of the law including: Education, Housing and Homelessness, Family and Juvenile Issues (including Domestic Violence), Disability, Public Benefits, Health, Immigration, Consumer Law, and much more.

The website offers over 2,700 “Know Your Rights” and self-help resources in Spanish and English; multilingual resources are available in 34 other languages as well. The legal information on LawHelp.org is designed to be understandable by the public, as well as advocates. The LawHelp/NY website brings together in one place resources from many sources, including links to education websites and a full range of resources developed for clients of legal service programs throughout the state.

The Southern Westchester BOCES Homeless Student Program – Building Effective Partnerships

Presenters: Maria McGinty, Southern Westchester BOCES

Ann Rouchaud, Southern Westchester BOCES

Jeanne Kennedy, Southern Westchester BOCES

Session 3 and 4

This workshop will highlight the benefits of inter-organizational partnerships. Participants will have a chance to see how collaborations serve students in temporary housing by taking a closer look at the partnership between the Southern Westchester BOCES Homeless Student Program, local school districts, community service organizations and local Departments of Social Services. With its McKinney-Vento subgrant award, SWBOCES built a successful partnership with 5 school districts and has co-authored grants with community based organizations to:

- (a) expand after-school literacy programs in three sites,
- (b) provide after-school math, science and reading programs at 15 licensed and registered Day Care sites, serving 600 school-aged children,
- (c) maintain a computer tracking system to track student attendance and performance in cooperation with the Westchester County DSS, and
- (d) fund a part-time social worker, educational consultant and clerical support for the Homeless Student Program.

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The workshop will examine the structure of these programs and discuss how financial resources for students in temporary housing can be identified and grown through successful collaborations.

Educating Children Who Are Homeless: Roles and Responsibilities of Local Departments of Social Services and Shelter Providers

Presenter: Jan Ward, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

Session 4

Participants in this workshop will learn about relevant laws and policy related to the education of children experiencing homelessness and the associated responsibilities of Departments of Social Services. The workshop will address the obligations that are specifically required by law and provide interpretation of administrative directives. Staff from local Departments of Social Services and shelters would benefit from this workshop.

Serving the Youngest Homeless with the Parent-Child Home Program

Presenter: Andre Eaton, The Parent-Child Home Program

Session 4

Most homeless families have little or no access to any preschool education for their children age 0-5. Research shows the early years are crucial for later school success. The Parent-Child Home Program is a nationally recognized and research-based early literacy and parent support home visiting program that has been successful in addressing this need. In this workshop, enthusiasm, passion and extensive supportive materials will be presented for those interested in this model.

The Parent-Child Home Program brings new books and toys to families each week, for two to three years, wherever they are residing at the time. The program mentors the parent(s) to increase verbal communication through reading, conversation and play with their child, building the literacy and language skills that are the hallmarks of preparation for school readiness.

This workshop is for all who are interested in Early Education and reaching homeless children. Participants will walk away with a clear understanding of how to replicate this program model. Practical theory for why, demonstrations of how, and inspiration for the urgency of now will be key components and outcomes.

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McKinney-Vento and Establishing Credibility with Schools and Communities

Presenters: David Pace, South Colonie Central School District

Tom Kroll, Newburgh City School District

Session 4

Because McKinney-Vento determinations take into account different issues than residency and custody determinations, many liaisons struggle to synthesize the roles of registrar and liaison. There are important differences between basic registration protocol for permanently housed students and the protocols for students in temporary housing. Some professionals view the registrar/liaison as a “gate-keeper” while others see the liaison as an advocate and recruiter. This workshop will address some of the dilemmas that liaisons may encounter and will allow for group discussion. By collectively sharing experiences and practices related to student registration, a better understanding of the liaison’s role will emerge. Participants in this workshop will have a chance to describe their districts’ registration practices and the way that those practices affect students in temporary housing. Social Service Providers working outside the school will get an inside look at the difficulties associated with registration, and school personnel will have a chance to hear first-hand from social service providers about the impact that schools’ practices have on their clients.

Participants will come away from the workshop with a better understanding of appropriate procedures for enrolling students in school, and with tools to determine whether such practices ensure compliance with McKinney-Vento.