

The 2009 Annual McKinney-Vento Workshops

About the Workshops in Rochester

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 available 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 Residency Questionnaire)
- 4) Unaccompanied homeless youth
- 5) Transportation – timeliness, appropriate arrangements
- 6) Potentially competing mandates faced by liaisons
- 7) Dispute resolution process

The Southern Westchester BOCES Homeless Student Program – Building Effective Partnerships

Presenters: Maria McGinty, Southern Westchester BOCES
Ann Rouchaud, Southern Westchester BOCES

Session 1

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 (SWBOCES), Homeless Student Program, local school districts, community service organizations and the Westchester Department of Social Services (DSS). 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.

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.

McKinney-Vento in the City: Promising Practices from Rochester and Syracuse

Presenters: Roseann Kilduff, Rochester City School District
Debra Montroy, Syracuse City School District

Sessions 1 and 4

Participants in this workshop will learn about Rochester City School District's Program for Homeless Students and Families and Syracuse City School District's McKinney-Vento program. The workshop will highlight identification, transportation, attendance, enrollment, advocacy and referral procedures as well as concrete services offered. It will also cover the districts' outreach practices to meet the needs of students and their families and the community collaborations in place to support students.

Helpful Hints for New McKinney-Vento Liaisons

Presenter: Randy Carpenter, Kenmore-Tonawanda UFSD

Sessions 2 and 3

New liaisons face daily challenges in identifying, enrolling and advocating for children in temporary housing. This workshop will present strategies for meeting those challenges as well as suggestions for handling difficult situations within the scope of the McKinney-Vento Act. The workshop will include information on issues that often impact homeless children such as domestic violence, loss of insurance and mental health concerns. Participants will discuss the duties and responsibilities facing new liaisons and strategies to meet them. There will be an opportunity to discuss difficult situations that participants may encounter and share suggestions for handling them.

This workshop is appropriate for new liaisons, school staff and other school professionals.

REACH: Secure Education for Homeless Children of Incarcerated Parents

Presenter: Diane Nilan, HEAR US

Sessions 2 and 4

Frequently, children lose their housing when a parent goes to jail. Too often their education is needlessly disrupted because of homelessness. REACH, a new program of HEAR US, guides incarcerated parents and those who work with them to advocate for their children's McKinney-Vento homeless education rights. HEAR US, is a national nonprofit organization that gives voice and visibility to homeless children and youth.

REACH provides a fast-paced 11-minute training film to empower incarcerated parents to advocate for their homeless children's educational rights even from behind bars.

REACH exposes the issue of homelessness, and McKinney-Vento provisions, to people working with incarcerated families: child welfare workers, law enforcement officers, court personnel, and human service providers. Because of its empowerment nature, viewers will be encouraged to share the information with people experiencing homelessness, regardless of the reason for the loss of housing. It bridges the gap between schools and parents, guiding parents to assert their children's homeless education rights.

This workshop, for professionals working with at-risk families, will:

- explore incarceration-caused homelessness among families in their communities,
- brainstorm ways to publicize McKinney-Vento homeless education rights among affected populations,
- identify avenues within detention facilities, court systems, and child welfare authorities to raise awareness of homeless educational rights, and
- discuss how using REACH to empower disenfranchised parents increases involvement of homeless parents in their child's school activities.

In Her Own Voice: A Conversation with Aruna Sukhu

Moderated by: Diane Nilan, HEAR US

Session 3

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

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

Sessions 3 and 4

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 school district or BOCES. However, many Head Start program staff may 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. 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. In this workshop, 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 will be offered. This workshop will also 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.

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. This workshop will demonstrate how to successfully use the web-site to help clients. 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.

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 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.

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 hallmark 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.