

Supporting Students in Temporary Housing



Working with Parents Experiencing Homelessness

- Presented By:
- Wednesday, May 12, 2022
- 9:30am - 11:00am



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Housekeeping

- Links to publications, online resources, organizations, and studies mentioned in this presentation will be provided in the Resource List that accompanies this presentation.
- We will launch polls and ask for your thoughts periodically throughout the presentation and invite you to put your answers in the chat.
- We also invite you to pose questions in the chat; some of these questions requesting quick clarifications will be answered today, but others will be addressed in a Q&A document that will be developed after the webinar.
- For questions about specific situations, we welcome your Helpline calls to discuss these issues at 800-388-2014.
- The Helpline is open 24 hours a day. If you leave a message, you will be called back by the next business day.



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Webinar Format



- Today's session will be recorded.



- Your microphone will be automatically muted.



- Your camera will be automatically disabled.



- The in-webinar chat will be automatically disabled.



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Who Is In The Room? (Poll #1)

Are you a...

- New McKinney-Vento Liaison (1st Year)
- McKinney-Vento Liaison (2-4 years)
- McKinney-Vento Liaison (5 – 9 years)
- McKinney-Vento Liaison (10 + years)
- Other School/District Staff



Which region are you from?

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| * Western | * Capital |
| * Finger Lakes | * Hudson Valley |
| * Central | * New York City |
| * Southern Tier | * Long Island |
| * Mohawk Valley | * North Country |



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Your Presenter



Diana Bowman

- Former director of the National Center for Homeless Education; still on staff part-time
- 25+ years of experience in the field of homeless education

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What We Will Cover Today

- Parents* and the McKinney-Vento Act
- Challenges facing parents experiencing homelessness
- Building trust
- Helping parents in helping their children to be successful in school
- Strategies for de-escalating conflicts
- Strategies for a successful dispute process

** “Parents” used in this presentation to mean “parents and guardians.”*



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What You Will Be Able to Do


- Understand the rights of parents in the McKinney-Vento Act.
- Build trust with parents.
- Help parents be successful in helping their children.
- De-escalate adverse behaviors with parents.
- Manage the dispute process.



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Padlet 101 <https://padlet.com/dianabbowman/nwyerv659w6igkvg>

- Click the Padlet link in the Chat.
- For each column that you want to respond to, click the + sign at the bottom of the column.
- Click where it says "Subject," write your response, and click "Publish."
- You may click the  to like someone else's comment.
- To return to the Zoom meeting:
 - On a laptop, go to the Taskbar or Dock and click the Zoom icon.
 - On a mobile device, go to your home screen and click on the Zoom app.
- If for some reason, you exit the meeting accidentally, just click on the meeting link again.



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Premises for this Presentation

- Parents love their kids and want the best for them, including the best education; this is not impacted by homelessness.
- Parents experiencing homelessness should have the same consideration and opportunity for decision making for their child's education as any other parent.
- Many parents experiencing homelessness have great difficulty in working with schools and supporting their children's education.
- Local liaisons and schools can help parents become effective partners in their children's education.



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Parents and the McKinney -Vento Act



Provisions in the Law Related to the Rights of Parents



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Parents and the McKinney-Vento Act (Poll # 2)

How many times are parents mentioned in the McKinney-Vento Act?

- A. 15 times
- B. 35 times
- C. 50 times



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Parents and the McKinney-Vento Act – Key Provisions

- Provide **transportation to and from the school of origin**, at the request of a parent; ensure parents are informed of all transportation services.
- Presume that keeping a child or youth in the school of origin, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the child's or youth's parent; **give priority to the request of the parent** regarding school selection.
- If the LEA disagrees with the parent's request, the LEA **must provide a written explanation of the reasons and include information on the right to appeal the decision** according to the dispute resolution policy.



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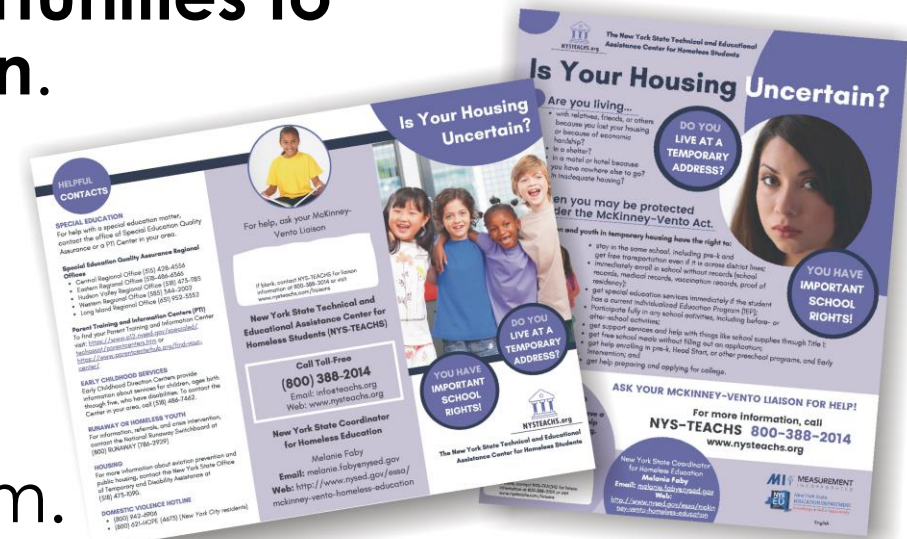
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Parents and the McKinney-Vento Act – Key Provisions

- Local liaisons must inform parents of children experiencing homelessness of educational opportunities for their children and **provide parents with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children.**
- **Post public notice of the educational rights** of children experiencing homelessness in locations frequented by parents or guardians in a form understandable to them.



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Barriers to Partnering with Parents



Difficult Behaviors



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What We Hear from Local Liaisons

I don't think the mom was even listening to me.

The parent insisted that we enroll her child in a school that wasn't the local school or the school of origin.

We arranged a bus pick up and the child wasn't there.

The dad barged into the office and told me off!

The mom lied about where they were staying.



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Why Parents Experiencing Homelessness May Be Difficult

What a Parent may Bring to the Table	Behaviors Demonstrated
Parent may have unmet basic needs; is stressed	Rudeness, lack of focus
Parent is embarrassed and defensive about homelessness; fearful of their child being removed	Rudeness, unwillingness to provide information, lying
Parent may have had bad experiences in school or other systems; mistrusts the liaison or any other administrator	Ready to fight for what they want (any means justifies the end); expectation that the liaison will provide barriers; confrontational and bullying



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Why Parents Experiencing Homelessness May Be Difficult

What a Parent may Bring to the Table	Behaviors Demonstrated
Parent feels hopeless and defeated	Unwilling to be an active partner, forgetful of what was agreed to, misses deadlines or appointments “client mentality”
Parents are unfamiliar with resources or what their educational rights are	Frustration over how to help their child or at how little the local liaison or school is willing to do
Parents may have mental illness or substance abuse problems	Inappropriate, aggressive, or confrontational interactions



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Barriers to Partnering with Parents



Trauma Impacts



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What is Trauma?

- Emotional response to a distressing event that overwhelms the person's ability to cope or integrate the emotions involved with the experience
- Results in intense feelings of fear and lack of control
- Leaves people feeling helpless
- Changes the way individuals understand themselves, the world, and others
- Can occur even if the event did not cause physical harm
- It is the person's experience of the event, not the event itself, that determines whether something is traumatic



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What is Complex Trauma?

- Chronic exposure to traumatic events
- Results are similar to PTSD
- Adversely affects attention, memory, cognition
 - Interferes with effective problem solving and planning
 - Results in overwhelming feelings of frustration and anxiety
- Can lead people to be suspicious and distrustful; over-react to minor disagreements or misunderstandings



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What is a Trigger?



- False alarm that reminds someone of a traumatic event
- Evokes a response as if the event were actually occurring
- Over activates the amygdala, which helps regulate how we respond to fear, and results in a survival response: flight, fight, or freeze



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Questions



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There is Always a Story Behind the Behavior

A key question to ask is, "What happened to you?"

Not, "What is wrong with you?"



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What are some possible stories (explanations) behind these behaviors? <https://padlet.com/dianabbowman/prrd8jhxvc86znks>

I don't think the mom was even listening to me.

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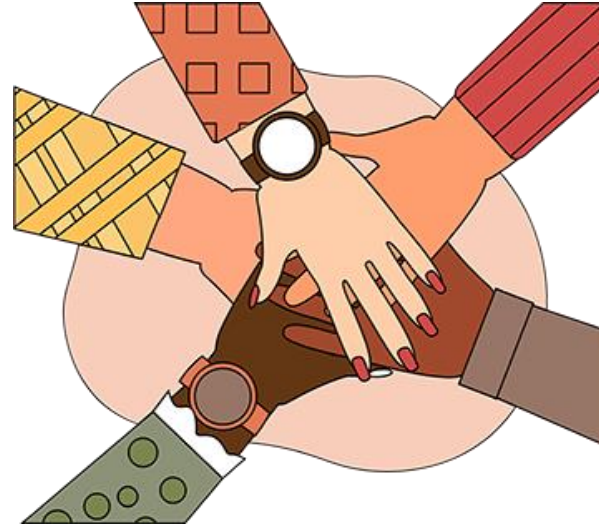
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Strategies



Supportive Partnerships with Parents



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Build a Relationship.

- Maintain frequent contact.
- Find common ground.
- Acknowledge that they are trying to be good parents; find something positive to say about their parenting, even if it's small.
- Provide a welcoming school environment.



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Be Respectful.



- Watch tone, body language, or other ways that reinforce a power differential.
- Avoid intimidation strategies.
- Make meetings and procedures convenient; be flexible with deadlines.
- Actively listen – find out what the parent is really angry about.



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Use Trauma-informed Strategies to De-escalate

- Use a calm, low voice.
- Don't rush the parent; suggest a moment to take a breath.
- Modulate your own trauma response: flight, fight, or freeze.



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Make Expectations Clear

- Provide a written handbook for parents who are new to the school district.
- Don't blindside parents, especially with written correspondence sent to them by mail or via their children.
- Be clear about what you can do and cannot do.
- Help parents understand the McKinney-Vento Act.



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Help Parents Be Successful



- Help keep them accountable (e.g., a parent contract for transportation to the school of origin, a phone call to remind them of a meeting).
- Help them advocate appropriately for their child and navigate complex systems in the LEA.
- Connect them to resources.



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Sometimes You Have to Draw the Line

- Know when to end a conversation – don't tolerate dishonest or abusive behavior but leave the path open to resolution or redemption (e.g., reschedule a meeting without judgment or threat).
- Have a third party available to facilitate a subsequent meeting.
- Initiate the dispute process.



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Use the **MV Dispute Process** as a Tool for Resolution

- Provide written notice (required by law).
- Review the dispute process with the parent – in person if possible.
- Be careful of what you say – be objective.
- Keep detailed notes of your conversations.
- Assist the parent in gathering evidence.
- If the dispute does not rule in the parent's favor, assist them and their child with any transitions.



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What Are Some Possible Strategies to Address These Situations?

<https://padlet.com/dianabbowman/wcnufuiz0gr1l2k1>

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Video:
Maria's Mom
"...She did it!"



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Wrap Up



**In the chat, complete the following sentence,
“Local liaisons are important to parents
experiencing homelessness because liaisons
can ...”**



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For Further Information

- Review the links in the Resource List that accompanies this presentation.
- Visit the NCHE website:
<https://nche.ed.gov>.
- Participate in training on trauma-informed care.



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Resources

More
Information



National Center for Homeless Education. (2020). *Homeless Liaison Toolkit*:
<https://nche.ed.gov/homeless-liaison-toolkit/>

- Appendix 7A, "Transportation Memorandum of Understanding"
- Chapter 8, "Dispute Resolution"
- Appendix 8B "Dispute Review Guide"
- Chapter 10, "Working with Parents"

[National Center for Homeless Education. Parent Involvement web page](#)

[National Child Traumatic Stress Network Core Curriculum on Childhood Trauma Task Force \(2012\). "The 12 core concepts: Concepts for understanding traumatic stress responses in children and families."](#)



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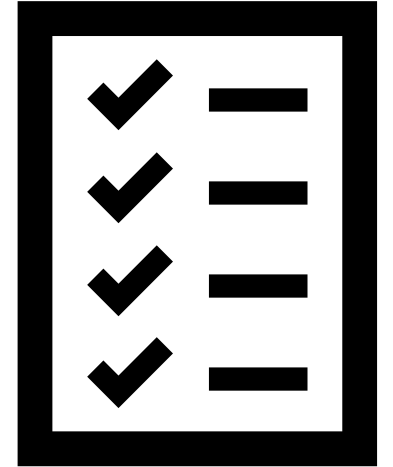


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Session Survey

Please take a few moments to complete our survey.

Survey Link: <https://mi-surveys.com/webinar-workingwithparents051222>



We appreciate your feedback! Responses are used in the planning of upcoming Professional Learning sessions.



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Contact Us



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- Help Line (800-388-2014)
- Website (<https://nysteachs.org>)
- Web-based Trainings

Next Webinar:

**Planning/Assessing Your School's
McKinney-Vento Program**

June 2, 2022

9:30am – 11:00am



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