

Back to School 2019

eBrief Sign-Up

If you know of others who would like to receive this eBrief, please share [this link](#) so they can be added to our mailing list.

New Module!

DPI EHCY staff is excited to announce a new training module focusing on Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY). This module is intended for homeless liaisons and other school staff to gain an understanding of the circumstances UHY experience and the requirements under McKinney-Vento to support these students.

[Unaccompanied Homeless Youth: Training and Guidance](#)

State Coordinator Corner

This summer the EHCY team has been planning new and exciting things for this school year. We have been adding resources and information to the EHCY website to provide you with additional technical assistance tools. In addition to releasing the UHY training module, we are working on another training module coming in 2020.

A new three-year grant cycle for the EHCY grant will begin in 2020. Watch for announcements about the application and the due date this spring!

Job Posting

There is an opening for an Early Childhood Outreach Specialist with a content focus area on early childhood homelessness now posted. This position is part of the [Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners](#) team and is for the southern region of WI. Additional information is on the [job announcement](#). This position collaborates with EHCY staff at DPI to provide information across the state regarding homelessness.

Resources

[DPI EHCY website](#)
[NCHE](#)
[NAEHCY](#)
[SchoolHouse Connection](#)
[McKinney-Vento Act](#)
[McKinney-Vento Non-Regulatory Guidance](#)

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New School Year Tips:

As the 2019-20 school year begins, this is a good time to review district practices to remove barriers and support students experiencing homelessness. Homeless liaisons must ensure to:

- Contact each family/youth who was in a homeless situation at the end of the 2018-19 school year to make a determination of eligibility based on their current living situation. Students should not automatically be identified as homeless for the new school year.
- Identify new students enrolling in the district that are eligible for services under McKinney-Vento. The district's enrollment process should include a way for families to self-identify as experiencing homelessness. The homeless liaison must make a determination of eligibility for those who self-identify. The DPI homeless website has many [sample forms](#) to help with the enrollment and identification process.
- Train all staff in your district on McKinney-Vento and the process to refer students to the homeless liaison. McKinney-Vento requires all staff to be trained at least annually. There are many creative ways to ensure this requirement is met.
 - The DPI EHCY webpage has a [short video](#) and a [training module](#) that can be used for staff training.
 - SchoolHouse Connection provides [resources for homeless liaisons](#), including tools to train staff.
- Provide awareness of youth homelessness in your school and community. The National Center for Homeless Education has [free resources](#) available.
- If your district receives Title I funds, talk about utilizing a homeless reservation to help with educational costs such as transportation and fees.

Additional best practices for homeless liaisons:

- Use person-first language on forms and other materials. Instead of referring to identified students as "homeless students", consider changing language to say "students experiencing homelessness" or "students in transition". This recognizes that they are students first, rather than students defined by their circumstances.
- Use the DPI EHCY [monitoring guidance](#) to ensure compliance with McKinney-Vento.
- Review your district data practices to ensure students experiencing homelessness are recorded correctly in your district Student Information System.
- The 2017 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) included two questions about homelessness. SchoolHouse Connection analyzed high school data in 17 states, including Wisconsin, and found that young people experience homelessness at an even higher rate than reported. The 2017 YRBS indicated that 4.9% of students surveyed in the 17 states experienced homelessness at some point during the 2016-17 school year. In contrast, public schools reported only 2.57% of their students as experiencing homelessness, which means public schools may only be identifying around half of students actually experiencing homelessness. Districts should look at their own YRBS data and evaluate district practices to ensure all eligible students are identified.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, students experiencing homelessness must be able to participate fully in educational activities, which includes opportunities offered through CTE. As students move into the district mid-year, it is imperative that systems are in place to connect students to CTE programs occurring in the district. Your district may receive funding through the Carl Perkins Act, which requires the recruitment and retention of students experiencing homelessness in CTE programs. We encourage all homeless liaisons to connect with their CTE coordinator, either within the district or through CESA, to consider accessibility of programs for mobile students.

Title I Homeless Reservation

Students experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible for Title I services, whether or not they attend a school that receives Title I funds. This automatic eligibility acknowledges that homelessness puts students at significant risk of academic failure, regardless of their previous academic standing. This also allows identified students who may not need academic support to receive additional education-related support services needed to succeed in school.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires districts to reserve a sufficient amount of their Title I funds to provide services to students experiencing homelessness throughout the district. The reservation funds can be used to provide comparable academic services to students experiencing homelessness who do not attend a Title I school. They may also be used to provide services to students, including those attending Title I schools, that are not ordinarily provided to other Title I students (Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 U.S.C. §6313(c)(3)(A)), such as additional academic support or additional services, like counseling or transportation.

Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, all districts must reserve Title I funds to support students experiencing homelessness. Throughout the 2019-2020 school year, technical assistance will be provided on how to determine a sufficient amount of funds. We encourage you to connect with your ESEA or Title I Coordinator to ensure an appropriate amount of Title I funds are reserved.

National Center for Homeless Education eBrief- [Serving Students Experiencing Homelessness Under Title I, Part A](#)

A PDF of this eBrief is available on the [DPI EHCY Webpage](#)
A Newsletter from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction,
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