



**TONY THURMOND**  
State Superintendent  
of Public Instruction

# Collaboration with Community Partnerships and Service Providers to Support Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

**MAY 2021**

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



# Presentation Outcomes

- Understanding the definition of homeless
- Building community partnership networks
- Definition differences
- Building a homeless network
- Best practices in interagency collaboration
- Resources

# Homeless Definition (1 of 6)

- Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence
  - Please note that the term awaiting foster care placement was eliminated on December 10, 2016

# Homeless Definition (2 of 6)

- Fixed, regular, and adequate are defined as:
  - A **fixed** residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.
  - A **regular** residence is one that is used on a normal, standard, and consistent basis.
  - An **adequate** residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.

# Homeless Definition (3 of 6)

- Examples of homelessness include children and youth living in:
  - Shared housing due to economic hardship
  - Motels or hotels
  - Public or private places not designed for sleeping

# Homeless Definition (4 of 6)

- Trailer parks or campgrounds
- Cars, parks, and abandoned buildings
- Shelters
- Emergency or transitional shelters

# Homeless Definition (5 of 6)

- Additional examples of homelessness include children and youth who are:
  - Migratory children who qualify as homeless
  - Abandoned in hospitals
  - Unaccompanied homeless youth

# Homeless Definition (6 of 6)

- To determine if a homeless child or youth lives in substandard living conditions consider:
  - Health and safety concerns
  - Number of occupants per square foot
  - Age of occupants
  - State and local building codes



# Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Definition

- Unaccompanied homeless youth is defined as a child or youth who meets the McKinney-Vento definition and is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian
- There is no age limit for an unaccompanied homeless youth

# Why Collaborate with Partner Agencies?

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

- Homelessness is a **community-wide problem** and requires a community-wide response
- Effective implementation of the McKinney-Vento Act **requires a community-based approach** to homelessness and education
- Collaborating with community organizations and agencies will make the **local educational agency (LEA) McKinney-Vento program stronger and more successful**

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *The Tools*

- **Getting started:** Identifying key players/stakeholders
- **Getting a seat at the table:** Joining community forums and inter-agency taskforces
- **Setting a new table:** Convening community forums and inter-agency taskforces
- **Getting prepared:** Designing a comprehensive disaster plan

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Identifying Key Players/Stakeholders (1 of 10)*

- Every member of the community is a stakeholder
- Consider agencies, organizations, and even individuals
- Consider social, identity, justice, and related networks
- Build connections wherever you go – never let anyone get away without talking to them about homeless kids

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Identifying Key Players/Stakeholders (2 of 10)*

- CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

- American Legion

[https://www.legion.org/?content=post\\_locator](https://www.legion.org/?content=post_locator)

- Boys' and Girls' Clubs Boys Scouts/Girls Scouts of America

<https://www.bgca.org/>

- Goodwill <https://www.goodwill.org/locator/>

- Junior League <https://www.ajli.org/>

- Kiwanis International <https://www.kiwanis.org/clubloc>

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Identifying Key Players/Stakeholders (3 of 10)*

- CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS (continued)
  - Knights of Columbus <https://www.kofc.org/en/index.html>
  - Lions Club <https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/start-our-approach/club-locator>
  - Rotary International <https://my.rotary.org/en/club-search>
  - Women's Clubs YMCA/YWCA <https://www.ymca.net/> or <https://www.ywca.org/>

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Identifying Key Players/Stakeholders (4 of 10)*

- FAITH-BASED COMMUNITIES AND CONGREGATIONS
  - In many communities, these organizations provide the bulk of social services including:
    - Shelter
    - Food
    - Mental and physical health support
    - Legal assistance, and other services



# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Identifying Key Players/Stakeholders (5 of 10)*

- SHELTERS FOR FAMILIES, YOUTH, AND SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
  - Most all counties have transitional shelters or family shelters that are supported through private funds, are faith-based, or public grants
  - Check the phone book or Internet site for local contact information

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Identifying Key Players/Stakeholders (6 of 10)*

- HUD CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC)
  - McKinney-Vento Act programs administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) **require communities to develop a CoC system**
  - CoC coordinates a **community-based process** of identifying and addressing homeless needs.

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Identifying Key Players/Stakeholders (7 of 10)*

- HUD CONTINUUM OF CARE (continued)
  - Members **include all agencies, organizations, as well as LEAs**, providing services to homeless people in the community
  - For local contact information:  
[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/coc](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/coc)

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Identifying Key Players/Stakeholders (8 of 10)*

- SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS (Food banks, employment agencies, subsidized day care providers, health and dental clinics, mental health clinics, etc.)
  - Check the phone book or Internet site of your town for local contact information
- HOMELESS COALITIONS
  - For local or state coalitions:  
<https://nationalhomeless.org/references/directory/>

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Identifying Key Players/Stakeholders (9 of 10)*

- YOUTH SHELTERS, INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS, DROP-IN CENTERS, AND STREET OUTREACH PROGRAMS
  - For local groups and programs, visit the Administration for Children and Families website: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/>

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Identifying Key Players/Stakeholders (10 of 10)*

- AMERICAN RED CROSS
  - To find your local chapter: <https://www.redcross.org/>
- VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER
  - Provides a venue for agencies to coordinate, collaborate, communicate, and cooperate on disaster planning, training and response. To learn more: <http://www.nvoad.org/>

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Joining Community Forums and Inter-agency Taskforces*

*(1 of 3)*

- LEA homeless education liaisons must prioritize networking
- Superintendents must recognize the need for and provide time to accomplish community engagement by LEA liaisons
- Strong collaborations are also the key to **gaining access to the people and activities** surrounding local and state disaster planning, response, and recovery

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Joining Community Forums and Inter-agency Taskforces*

*(2 of 3)*

- **Step One:** Introductions
- **Step Two:** Get to know each other
- **Step Three:** Address mutual interest and compatibility
- **Step Four:** Decide if a relationship is desirable
- **Step Five:** Negotiating how the relationship will work and keep it healthy and productive over time



# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Joining Community Forums and Inter-agency Taskforces*

*(3 of 3)*

- For an in-depth guide to building successful collaborations, download the National Center for Homeless Education's (NCHE) publication entitled, "Collaborations Between Schools and Social Service Agencies:"

[https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/collab\\_school\\_social.pdf](https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/collab_school_social.pdf)

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Convening Community Forums and Inter-agency Taskforces*

- In many communities, local homeless **coalitions, disaster planning committees, and interagency taskforces are already in place** and functioning well
- The LEA homeless education liaison's mission is to **work with these pre-existing groups** to engage in cooperative disaster planning and to maximize services for youth and families in homeless situations
- To the greatest extent possible, local liaisons should **work with pre-existing groups before attempting to establish a new forum**

# Developing Strong Community Collaborations

## *Designing a Comprehensive Disaster Plan*

- Every school district should have a **Safe School Plan**, that contains each phase, and individual schools should have corresponding plans
- California disasters often involve **fires and result in families and students becoming homeless**
- Check with your Safe School Plan development team to determine if your LEA includes community disasters that may result in families and students becoming homeless

# Comparing Definitions

## *Similarities*

- Both education and HUD agencies consider people who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence to be homeless, and includes:
  - Camping grounds, emergency shelters, transitional housing
  - Public or private places not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
  - Cars, parks, abandoned buildings, and bus or train stations

# Comparing Definitions

## *Differences*

### EDUCATION

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- Living in hotels, motels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodation

### HUD

- Individuals and families who will imminently (within 14 days) lose their primary nighttime residence
- Living in motel room paid for by charity or government

# Best Practices in Interagency Collaboration

## *HUD Point-In-Time Count*

- NCHE has suggestions for strategies on how schools can help ensure the most comprehensive and effective count of youth experiencing homelessness for the HUD's annual Point-In-Time count: <https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/PIT-Count-Fact-Sheet-FINAL.docx>
- SchoolHouse Connections reminds us of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/6-things-to-know-about-ferpa/>

# Best Practices in Interagency Collaboration

## *Partnering to Support Runaway and Homeless Youth*

- Another brief from the NCHE regarding partnering the McKinney-Vento Act and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act requirements. These cross-systems collaborations offer cross-systems strategies that support the education of runaway and homeless youth:  
<https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/rhy-lea-collab.pdf>

# Best Practices in Interagency Collaboration

## *Supporting In- and Out-of-School Youth Education and Workforce Partnerships*

- Another NCHE brief that is designed for education and employment services providers, which provides a brief overview of education and workforce programs that may serve youth experiencing homelessness, and suggests strategies for cross-system collaboration:  
<https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/labor-ed-collab.pdf>



# Best Practices in Interagency Collaboration

## *Supporting School Success for Homeless Children of Veterans and Military Service Members*

- Developed by NCHE and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for local VA staff, state McKinney-Vento coordinators, LEA homeless liaisons, educators, and other providers of services, to active members of the military and veterans, and their children. It provides basic information to assist school enroll and receive education services available to them
  - <https://www.va.gov/>
  - <https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/vet.pdf>

# Best Practices for Successful Partnerships (1 of 2)

- Share information and data on housing programs to increase awareness
- Invite CoC to local educational meetings and institute a recurring agenda item focused on housing
- Share in a protocol development for case managers and local liaisons to evaluate the best interest of the child in terms of school placement

# Best Practices for Successful Partnerships (2 of 2)

- Become familiar with housing challenges and requirements for HUD programs
- Identify ways to streamline referrals to housing programs
- Learn more about the particular housing services available in the community, such as housing voucher programs

# Considerations for Community Partnerships

- Continuum of Care
- State and Local Agencies
- Public Health
- Mental Health
- Child and Family Services
- Juvenile Hall
- Community Health Centers
- Law Enforcement
- Sheriff's Offices
- Missions
- Faith-based or community shelters
- Transitional Shelters
- Domestic Violence Shelters
- School Districts

# National Center for Homeless Education Resources

- NCHE's General Web Site:  
<https://nche.ed.gov/>
- Developing Strong Community Collaborations Toolkit:  
[https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/tool\\_1.pdf](https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/tool_1.pdf)
- California Department of Public Health:  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>
- Behavioral Health Services:  
<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/BHS.aspx>

# California Department of Education

## Resources

Contact the California Department of Education Homeless Education with homeless education program questions by phone at 1-866-856-8214 or by email at [HomelessEd@cde.ca.gov](mailto:HomelessEd@cde.ca.gov)