



CCHA – EDUCATION SERVICES POLICY

In compliance with federal law, it is the policy of the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA), acting as the primary decision-making group of the Chittenden County Continuum of Care (CoC), to support all homeless children and youth, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as most recently reauthorized in December 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), in accessing free, appropriate education.

The educational needs of homeless children and youth, and their families, will be supported within the Chittenden County CoC through the development of community collaborations between homeless providers and local homeless education liaisons that address the following:

- Identification
- Enrollment
- Transportation
- Trainings conducted by homeless providers and others
- Coordination
- Student Rights
- Parent Rights
- Dispute Resolution

The Chittenden County CoC, and all HUD CoC Program recipients, subrecipients and related service providers, will support the Vermont's Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program and local homeless education liaisons in addressing the needs and rights identified above, and will seek to ensure, to the maximum extent feasible, educational and housing stability for children and youth by:

1. Establishing policies and practices that are consistent with, and do not restrict the exercise of, the educational rights afforded to students experiencing homelessness under federal law.
2. For CoC-funded programs that provide housing or services to families, designating a staff person to ensure that children are enrolled in school and are connected to appropriate services within the community.
3. Taking the educational needs of children into account when families are placed in emergency or transitional shelter and, to the maximum extent practicable, placing families with children as close as possible to their school of origin so as not to disrupt such children's education.
4. Collaborating with schools to assist in the identification of children and youth experiencing homelessness and to ensure that these children and youth are informed of their eligibility for school-based McKinney-Vento services.
5. Seeking the continuing input of school homeless liaisons to make the CoC's coordinated entry process welcoming and easily accessible for youth and families with children.

Definitions

School of origin: The school that the child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled.

Enrollment: Attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

Homeless Children and Youth: See below.

Definition of the Term “Homeless Children and Youth”

The term “homeless children and youth” is defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act as:

- Children who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.
- Children and youth who are sharing the housing of others, with or without their parents, due to loss of housing (doubled up).
- Children living in motels or hotels or trailer homes due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
- Children living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- Unaccompanied youth includes youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.
- Migratory children and youth who are living in a situation described above.
- Children awaiting foster care placement.

Vermont's Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program (VEHCYP)

To find out more about education laws and resources to ensure that homeless children and youth are connected to schools, contact VEHCYP at the following website:

<http://education.vermont.gov/student-support/federal-programs/homeless-education>.

On the VEHCYP website, you can find resources such as:

- Vermont Homeless Education Liaison Contact List
- Homeless Education Liaison Toolbox
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act Information
- National Resources