



# NYS-TEACHS

NEW YORK STATE TECHNICAL AND EDUCATION  
ASSISTANCE CENTER FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

## Early Care and Education Programs for Young Children Experiencing Homelessness



Presented by Jennifer Pringle, NYS-TEACHS  
March 4, 2021

1

## About NYS-TEACHS

- Funded by the New York State Education Department and housed at Advocates for Children of NY
- Provides technical assistance on homeless education issues to school districts, social service providers, parents, youth, and other professionals.
- Services include: **Infoline(800-388-2014)**, website: [www.nysteachs.org](http://www.nysteachs.org); and webinars and trainings



**NYS-TEACHS**  
NEW YORK STATE TECHNICAL AND EDUCATION  
ASSISTANCE CENTER FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

2

2

## Poll

What best describes where you work?

- School district
- Early care and education provider
- Shelter provider
- Local department of social services
- Other



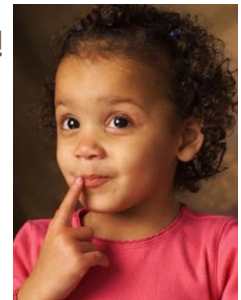
3

3

## Poll

Do you know who is the McKinney-Vento liaison in your school district?

- Yes
- No
- I am the McKinney-Vento liaison!
- I have no idea what you're talking about.



4

4

## Poll

Do you know who your local CCR&R is?

- Yes
- No
- I'm from a CCR&R.
- It's all alphabet soup to me.



5

5

## Learning Objectives

- Greater understanding of:
  - **Prevalence of homelessness among children**
  - **Importance of participation** in quality early childhood programs
  - **Available early care and education programs** in the community
  - **Special protections for children experiencing homelessness** in accessing early care and education programs and services
  - **Strategies for better connecting** young children experiencing homelessness with early care and education programs



6

6

## Poll

Approximately how many children under 6 experience homelessness in NYS?

- 1 in 100
- 1 in 50
- 1 in 25
- 1 in 9



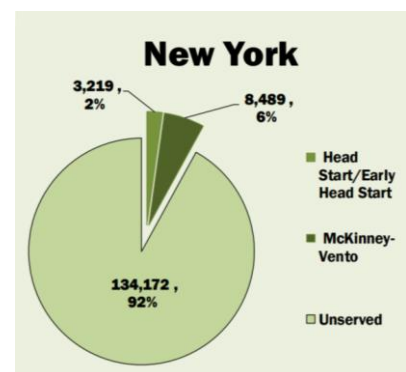
7

7

## Prevalence of Family Homelessness

- In NYS, an estimated:
  - 145,880 children under 6 were homeless in 2017-18. **1 in 9 children** under 6 experienced homelessness.
  - Of those children, **only 8% (11,708) were** enrolled in Head Start/Early Head Start or McKinney-Vento-funded ECE programs.

From "Early Childhood Homelessness: State Profiles," available at: <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/disadv/homeless/early-childhood-homelessness-state-profiles-2020.pdf>



8

8

## Poll

What percentage of a person's brain is developed by the time he or she is five years old?

- 10%
- 40%
- 70%
- 90%



9

9

## Poll

Children who attend high-quality preschool programs are less likely to...

- Be held back a grade in school
- Be placed in special education classes
- Drop out of high school
- All of the above



10

10

# Poll

What factor is most closely associated with young adult homelessness?

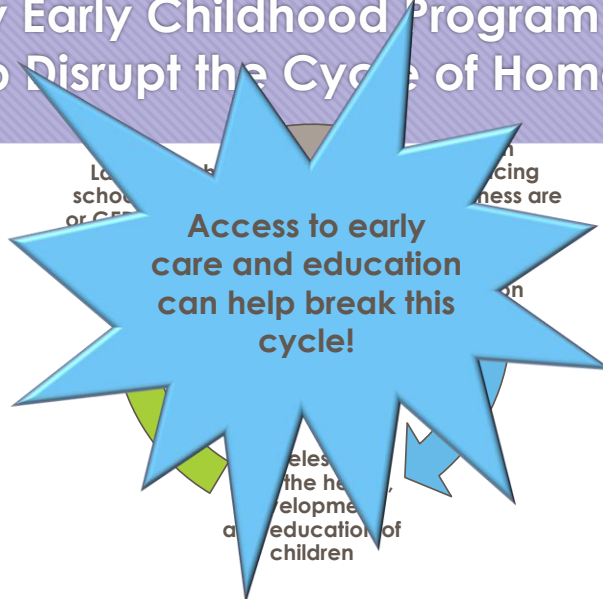
- Poverty
- Racial minority
- Lack of high school diploma



11

11

A Quality Early Childhood Program is a Tool that Can Help Disrupt the Cycle of Homelessness!



12

Research compiled from: SchoolHouse Connection's [Young Children Experiencing Homelessness: An Overview](#); Chapin Hall and Voices of Youth Count's [Missed Opportunities – Youth Homelessness in America](#); SchoolHouse Connection's [Preschool to Prevent Homelessness: Research, Rights, and Resources](#)

12

# Early Care and Education Services in New York State for Young Children Experiencing Homelessness



Use this tool to connect families! Available [here](#)

## BACKGROUND

**Did you know that participation in quality early care and education are especially helpful for families experiencing homelessness?**

High-quality early learning programs are very beneficial for young children experiencing housing instability; such programs stimulate cognitive development and readiness for school. They also provide stability to daily life and reduce the stresses of child care on families experiencing homelessness.

**Did you know that children who are homeless are less likely to participate in early childhood programs than children who are permanently housed?**

It's true. That's why it is critical that professionals working with families experiencing homelessness share information about available early care and education services and help them access those services. This resource will help you identify the early care and education services in your community and enable you to better connect parents who are homeless with the highest quality services for their young children.

## WHO IS CONSIDERED TEMPORARILY HOUSED OR HOMELESS?\*

Children living in many different types of temporary situations are considered homeless under federal law, including:

- **Shelters.** This includes stand-alone shelters as well as situations where the local department of social services arranges for a family to temporarily stay in a motel, hotel, or an apartment (referred to as a cluster site in NYC).
- **Temporarily staying with friends or relatives because the family lost their housing** (also referred to as "doubled-up").

For more information about which families may be considered homeless, contact **NYS-TEACHS** at **800-388-2014** or visit **[www.nysteachs.org](http://www.nysteachs.org)**.

## WHO SHOULD USE THIS DOCUMENT

- Child care providers
- Head Start and Early Head Start programs
- Local departments of social services
- Shelter providers
- Parents
- Staff from libraries, food pantries, and other organizations working with families experiencing homelessness.

- School district McKinney-Vento liaisons and other school district staff working with families in temporary housing (registration staff, guidance counselors, etc.)

Many of the people listed above are required to help children in temporary housing access early care and education programs, and this document can help them meet these responsibilities. For example:

- **SCHOOL DISTRICT MCKINNEY-VENTO LIAISONS** are required to ensure that young children experiencing homelessness have access to early care and education programs including Head Start, Early Head Start, Early Intervention, preschool special education, and Pre-K.
- **HEAD START PROGRAMS AND CERTAIN CHILD CARE PROVIDERS** must prioritize children who are homeless for enrollment.
- **CERTAIN SHELTER PROVIDERS KNOWN AS TIER II SHELTERS** must make sure that families have access to child care so that parents can look for work, look for permanent housing, attend school, or attend a training program.
- **FAMILY SHELTER PROVIDERS AND LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES** must refer infants and toddlers suspected of having or at risk of having a developmental delay or disability for an evaluation for Early Intervention services.

13

# Let's Dive In!

Overview Page 1

Description of Programs Pages 2-4

Customizable Chart Pages 5-6

## Early Care and Education Services in New York State for Young Children Experiencing Homelessness



### BACKGROUND

**Did you know that participation in quality early care and education are especially helpful for families experiencing homelessness?** High-quality early learning programs are very beneficial for young children experiencing housing instability; such programs stimulate cognitive development and readiness for school. They also provide stability to daily life and reduce the stresses of child care on families experiencing homelessness.

**Did you know that children who are homeless are less likely to participate in early childhood programs than children who are permanently housed?** It's true. That's why it is critical that professionals working with families experiencing homelessness share information about available early care and education services and help them access those services. This resource will help you identify the early care and education services in your community and enable you to better connect parents who are homeless with the highest quality services for their young children.

### WHO IS CONSIDERED TEMPORARILY HOUSED OR HOMELESS?\*

Children living in many different types of temporary situations are considered homeless under federal law, including:

- **Shelters.** This includes stand-alone shelters as well as situations where the local department of social services arranges for a family to temporarily stay in a motel, hotel, or an apartment (referred to as a cluster site in NYC).
- **Temporarily staying with friends or relatives because the family lost their housing** (also referred to as "doubled-up").

For more information about which families may be considered homeless, contact **NYS-TEACHS** at **800-388-2014** or visit **[www.nysteachs.org](http://www.nysteachs.org)**.

### WHO SHOULD USE THIS DOCUMENT

- Child care providers
  - Head Start and Early Head Start programs
  - Local departments of social services
  - Shelter providers
  - Parents
  - Staff from libraries, food pantries, and other organizations working with families experiencing homelessness.
  - School district McKinney-Vento liaisons and other school district staff working with families in temporary housing (registration staff, guidance counselors, etc.)
- Many of the people listed above are required to help children in temporary housing access early care and education programs, and this document can help them meet these responsibilities. For example:
- **SCHOOL DISTRICT MCKINNEY-VENTO LIAISONS** are required to ensure that young children experiencing homelessness have access to early care and education programs including Head Start, Early Head Start, Early Intervention, preschool special education, and Pre-K.
  - **HEAD START PROGRAMS AND CERTAIN CHILD CARE PROVIDERS** must prioritize children who are homeless for enrollment.
  - **FAMILY SHELTER PROVIDERS AND LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES** must refer infants and toddlers suspected of having or at risk of having a developmental delay or disability for an evaluation for Early Intervention services.

## EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION RESOURCES

Know the early care and education infrastructure in your community and access the highest quality services for young children experiencing homelessness!



### Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) Agencies

**Ages served:** n/a  
**Services:** CCR&R provide information and referrals to parents/caregivers about where to find and how to choose a child care provider. Also, they provide information, training, and support to child care providers. Anyone can contact a CCR&R for information about child care.

**Eligibility:** **Serving children who are homeless:** Provides information and training about the definition of "homeless" and the requirements early care and education programs have related to serving children who are homeless. <https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/ccr-and-referral-agencies>

**Website:** <https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/ccr-and-referral-agencies>

### Child Care Subsidies

**Ages served:** 4 weeks old up to 13 years old for 19 for children with disabilities)  
**Services:** Child care subsidies help parents/caregivers pay for some or all of the cost of child care services. Families receiving a child care subsidy can choose any eligible child care provider, such as: Day Care Centers, Small Day Care Centers, Family Day Care Homes, Group Family Day Care Homes, School Age Child Care Programs, or Non-licensed Informal Providers. Typically, homeless care for one to two children in addition to the provider's children). For more information about the different types of child care see: <https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/subsidies>

**Eligibility:** Parents must meet income eligibility requirements, and may need to meet work/childcare/child support participation requirements, if any (depends on the county). Contact your local department of social services to find out the eligibility requirements in your county. **NOTE:** There may be a waiting list for child care subsidies.

**Serving children who are homeless:**

- **Subsidy:** Parents who are homeless typically do not have to pay any fees. (Parents who are homeless must pay a fee if they choose child care that costs more than the market rate.)
- **Quick and easy to access:** Parents have up to 2 weeks from the day the child starts attending child care to get immunization records to the child care provider. If the parent does not have a copy of the child's annual physical (medical statement) when they enroll, the child care provider should submit a letter to DCH to give the parent more time to get the annual physical. The child can receive child care services while the parent is getting the record.
- **Outreach:** Contact your local CCR&R and department of social services to learn about outreach to families who are homeless.
- **Early enrollment:** Families who are homeless may get priority for child care subsidy to the extent that the local department of social services has funds available. For more information see your local child care plan: <https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/child-care-plans>
- **Transportable:** Local departments of social services pay homeless child care providers of about \$5, more for caring for a child who is homeless. <https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/transportable>

**Website:** <https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/subsidies>  
For NYC see: <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/about/early-care-for-children-who-are-homeless> and <https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/subsidies>

### Head Start and Early Head Start

**Ages served:** Infants and toddlers under 3 and women who are pregnant (Early Head Start), and 3-year-olds (Head Start) and their families.

Program	Serves birth-3 years old	Serves 3-4 years old	Statewide list of local/county contacts	What is this program called in my community?
<b>Child Care Resource &amp; Referral (CCR&amp;R)</b> (Provides information and resources only)	X	X	<a href="https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/ccr-and-referral-agencies">https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/ccr-and-referral-agencies</a>	
<b>Child Care Subsidies</b>	X	X	<a href="https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/subsidies">https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/subsidies</a>	
<b>Head Start/ Early Head Start</b>	X (Early Head Start)	X (Head Start)	<a href="https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/head-start/">https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/head-start/</a>	
<b>Pre-K</b>		X	<a href="https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/pre-k/">https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/pre-k/</a> 4-year-olds & certain school district programs for 3-year-olds For NYC, contact Pre-K Outreach: 718-935-2009	
<b>Early Intervention</b>	X		<a href="https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/early-intervention/">https://www2.nysed.gov/child-care/early-intervention/</a> a.interventions@nysed.gov	

14

## Information for Early Childhood Providers: Serving Children who are Homeless

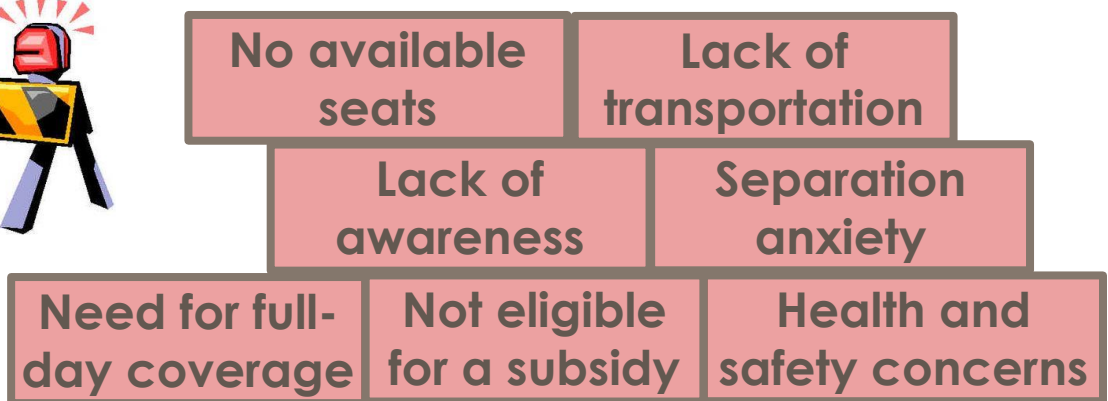
- All programs must:
  - **identify** children experiencing homelessness
  - **report data** on children experiencing homelessness who enroll
  - allow **enrollment without records** for children experiencing homelessness
- Head Start and Child Care must **prioritize enrollment** for children experiencing homelessness
- School districts must **provide transportation** to the preschool of origin

NYS-TEACHS - (800) 388-2014

15

15

## Barriers to participation in early care and education programs



16

16



## Poll

School district MV Liaisons must ensure that eligible children who are homeless have access to:

Check all that apply:

- Home visiting programs
- Early Intervention
- Head Start and Early Head Start
- Pre-K/UPK
- Preschool special education services



17

## Poll

Head Start programs must guarantee spots to preschoolers who are homeless.

True or False?



18

## Poll

School districts only have to provide transportation to a preschooler who is homeless if it buses other preschoolers.

True or False?



NYS-TEACHS - (800) 388-2014

19

19

## Poll

School districts must provide transportation to all children who are homeless to attend preschool.

True or False?



NYS-TEACHS - (800) 388-2014

20

20

## Questions?



21

21

## Poll

Approximately 45% of preschoolers living in shelters have at least one major developmental delay.

True or False?



22

22

## Young children who are homeless

- Approximately:
  - 75% - at least one major developmental delay
  - 40% - two or more major developmental delays
  - 35% - emotional or behavioral problems

NYS-TEACHS - (800) 388-2014

23

23

## Children with Disabilities

- **Early Intervention:**
  - Children ages **birth– up to 3 yrs old**
  - Administered by county, usually department of health
  - **Note to shelter staff:** you are required to refer children who you think may have a delay or disability, unless the parent objects.
- **Preschool Special Education:**
  - Children ages **3-5**
  - Administered by the school district and services provided by the county

NYS-TEACHS - (800) 388-2014



24

## Scenario



Maya and her family were recently placed in a shelter. Maya is 2 years, 11 months old. Her mother wants Maya to attend preschool next fall. Maya's mother thinks that Maya may have a speech and language delay.

### Which program(s) may Maya be eligible for?

- Early Intervention
- Early Head Start
- Head Start
- Pre-K/UPK
- Preschool special education services

NYS-TEACHS - (800) 388-2014

25

25

## Next Steps!

- **Complete this chart from the [Early Care and Education Services for Young Children Experiencing Homelessness](#) tool and share it with parents in temporary housing!**
- **Make sure parents know that:**
  - Participation in quality early childhood education programs has **long-term benefits**.
  - Children in temporary housing are **eligible** for Pre-K and Head Start.
  - All Pre-K, Head Start, and Child Care programs have rigorous safety and licensing requirements. Many parents experiencing homelessness are understandably reluctant to be separated from their young children. Validate those feelings and **share information about the safe and engaging environments local early care and education programs offer**.
  - Most programs are **FREE**.
  - Many programs offer comprehensive **family support services**.
  - Many programs are **full-day**.
- **Post visible outreach materials for parents** (hint: place in areas frequented by the community – laundromats, libraries, food pantries, grocery stores, shelters, office of MV liaison, etc.).
- **Encourage parents to participate in virtual/online open-house events** for local preschool programs.
- **Help parents in temporary housing complete applications.**



Program	Infants, birth-3 years old	Children 3-5 years old	Statewide list of local/county contacts	What is this program called in my community?
<b>Child Care Resource &amp; Referral (CCR&amp;R)</b> <small>(Provides information and resources only)</small>	X	X	<a href="https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/child_care/childcareagencyinfo.asp">https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/child_care/childcareagencyinfo.asp</a>	
<b>Child Care Subsidies</b>	X	X	<a href="https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/child_care/ccsubsidies.asp">https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/child_care/ccsubsidies.asp</a>	
<b>Head Start/ Early Head Start</b>	X <small>(Early Head Start)</small>	X <small>(Head Start)</small>	<a href="https://ebsc.ny.gov/act/program/center-locator">https://ebsc.ny.gov/act/program/center-locator</a>	
<b>Pre-K</b>		X <small>(If enrolled in a program, attend district programs for 3-year-olds)</small>	<a href="https://www.e12.nysed.gov/ed/earlychildhood/3yr.html">https://www.e12.nysed.gov/ed/earlychildhood/3yr.html</a> <small>For NYC, contact Pre-K Outreach: 718-935-2009</small>	
<b>Early Intervention</b>	X		<a href="https://www.health.ny.gov/topics/earlychildhood/childdevelopment/earlyintervention/early-intervention-services.htm">https://www.health.ny.gov/topics/earlychildhood/childdevelopment/earlyintervention/early-intervention-services.htm</a>	

26

26

## Recruitment Tips for Providers

Pre-K, Head Start, and Child Care providers should collaborate with:

- [McKinney-Vento Liaisons](#)
- Directors of Temporary Assistance at the [local department of social services](#) for information about local shelters:
- [Local domestic violence shelters](#)

NYS-TEACHS - (800) 388-2014

27

27

## Review

- **1 in 9 children** under six experience homelessness in NYS.
- Children who go to quality early childhood education programs are **better prepared for kindergarten** AND **more likely to graduate from high school**, hold a job, and have higher earnings.
- **MV liaisons are responsible for connecting** young children who are homeless to preschool programs like:
  - Pre-K/UPK,
  - Head Start,
  - early intervention,
  - preschool special education.
- Children who are homeless have special protections in accessing early care and education: for example, they are **categorically eligible for Head Start** and get **priority enrollment** for Head Start and child care.



28

28

## Additional Resources

- [Early Care and Education Services for Children Experiencing Homelessness in NYS](#) tool
- NYS [Head Start Tip Sheet](#) for Serving Children in Temporary Housing and [Housing Questionnaire](#)
- [Head Start/ECLKC Supporting Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness learning series](#), 15-minute videos
- [Sesame Street: Family Homelessness: Meet Lily!](#)
- [SchoolHouse Connection Early Childhood Resources](#): tip sheets and strategies for shelter providers, early care providers, and more
- [Developmental Milestones](#) from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, which can help parents track their children's development and act early if they have a concern
- [Early Childhood Self-Assessment Tool for Family Shelters](#) from U.S. HHS to help shelters become more safe and developmentally appropriate for young children
- [Change the First Five Years and You Change Everything](#), a video from Ounce of Prevention Fund that can raise awareness about the importance of quality early childhood programs

29

29

## Questions?



30

30

## NYS-TEACHS

Jennifer Pringle, Project Director  
(212) 822-9546  
jpringle@afcnyc.org

Infoline: 800-388-2014  
Email: [info@nysteachs.org](mailto:info@nysteachs.org)  
Website: [www.nysteachs.org](http://www.nysteachs.org)



**NYS-TEACHS**  
NEW YORK STATE TECHNICAL AND EDUCATION  
ASSISTANCE CENTER FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

NYS-TEACHS - (800) 388-2014

31