



NYSTEACHS

NEW YORK STATE TECHNICAL AND EDUCATION
ASSISTANCE CENTER FOR HOMELESS STUDENTS

Outreach and Family Engagement



Presented by the New York State Technical and Education Assistance Center for Homeless Students (NYS-TEACHS)

Housekeeping: Using the Control Panel

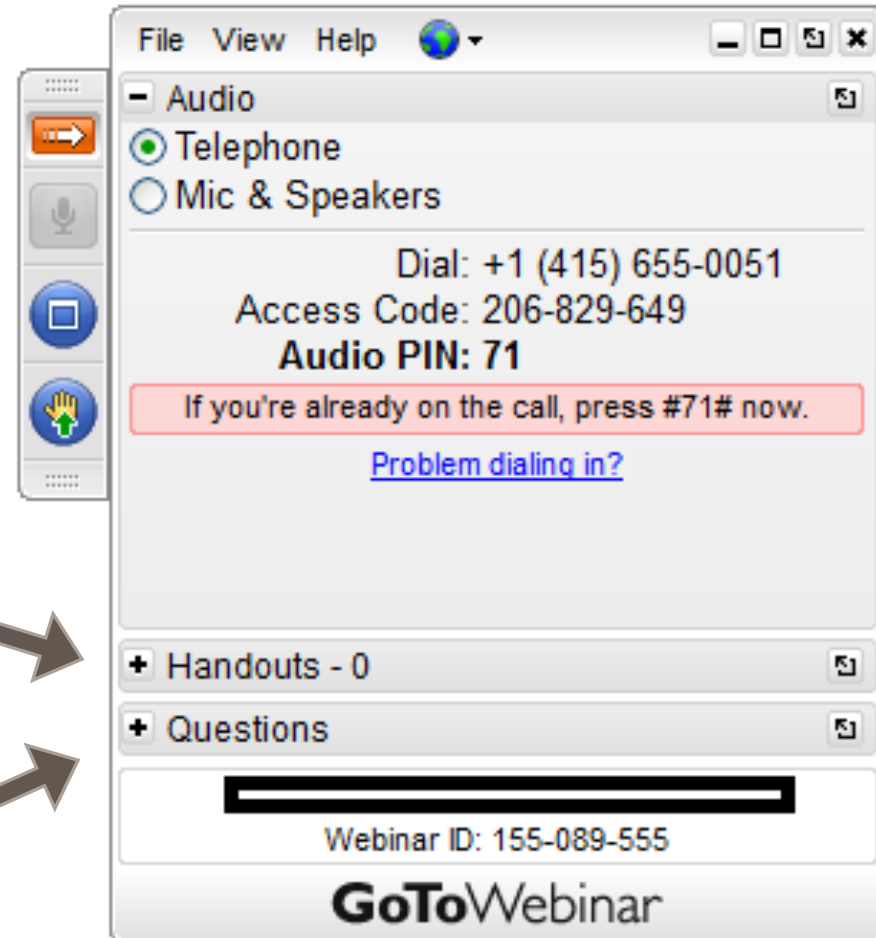
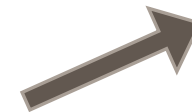
SHOW/HIDE your control panel using the orange arrow



HANDOUTS are available for download from the control panel



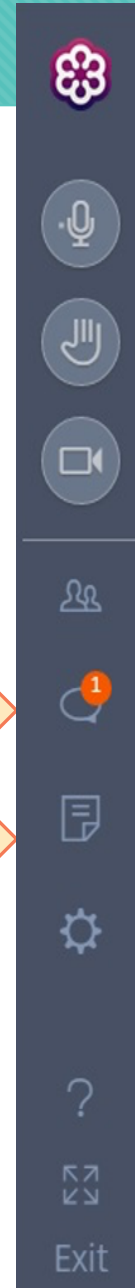
Ask QUESTIONS by typing them into the "Questions" box. Be sure to click "send."



Web View: Control Panel

Questions

Handouts



SESSION SURVEY

- A short survey will pop up on your screen after you exit the session
- The same survey will also be included in the follow-up email one hour later

*** You only need to complete the survey one time. ***

Recording



Google Custom Search

INFO BY TOPIC LIAISONS NEWS POSTERS & BROCHURES **TRAININGS** GRANTEES PARENTS & FAMILIES FAQ 800-388-2014

Trainings

NYS-TEACHS provides free trainings and webinars for school districts, social service providers, and other professionals about the educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

You can:

- ◆ Register for an upcoming event in [New York City](#) or [New York State](#) (outside NYC)
- ◆ View [training materials from past events](#) and watch recorded webinars
- ◆ Download materials to present a [turn-key training](#)

THINGS TO DO

[New York State Event Registration](#)

[New York City Event Registration](#)

[Annual Workshop Archive](#)

[Webinar Archive](#)

[Turn-Key Presentations](#)

 REMINDERS



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POLL

What is your role?

- A. McKinney-Vento Liaison
- B. Registration Staff
- C. Other School or District Staff
- D. Social Service Provider / Agency
- E. Community Organization

POLL

How are you feeling today?

- A. Happy/Hopeful
- B. Calm/Content
- C. Worried/Anxious
- D. Stressed/Burned-out
- E. Many different feelings

Goals

- Identify an activity you can use to **build McKinney-Vento awareness** in your school or greater community.
- Identify at least one new way to **engage parents and youth** in the school community.
- Reflect on your **communication process** with families.

Agenda



1

Raising Awareness: Outreach and Preparation

2

Engaging Families in School Communities

3

Navigating Sensitive Conversations with Families

Raising Awareness: Outreach and Preparation

Goal 1: Identify an activity you can use to **build McKinney-Vento awareness** in your school or greater community.

What is *Public Notice*?

- Liaisons are **responsible for posting *public notice*** about McKinney-Vento protections.
- SED-approved **posters and brochures available for free!**
 - Outreach materials should be posted in school buildings and registration offices, as well as community spaces.

Reminder: Available in 10 languages!

Reminder: Write in Your Contact Info.

IS YOUR HOUSING UNCERTAIN?

DO YOU LIVE AT A TEMPORARY ADDRESS?

YOU HAVE IMPORTANT SCHOOL RIGHTS!

ARE YOU LIVING...

- With relatives, friends, or others because you lost your housing or because of economic hardship?
- In a shelter?
- In a motel or hotel because you have nowhere else to go?
- In inadequate housing?

THEN YOU MAY BE PROTECTED UNDER THE MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT!

Children and youth in temporary housing have the right to:

- stay in the same school, including pre-k, and get free transportation even if it is across district lines;
- immediately enroll in school without records (school records, medical records, vaccination records, proof of residency);
- get special education services immediately if the student has a current Individualized Education Program (IEP);
- participate fully in any school activities, including before- or after-school activities;
- get support services and help with things the school supplies through Title I;
- get free school meals without filling out an application;
- get help enrolling in pre-k, Head Start, other preschool programs, and Early Intervention; and
- get help preparing and applying for college.

Ask your McKinney-Vento liaison for help!

DID YOU KNOW?

Every school district must have a McKinney-Vento liaison to help students in temporary housing.

FOR HELP:

- McKinney-Vento Liaison

#NYS-TEACHS
For more information call 800-388-2014 or visit www.nysteachs.org

New York State Coordinator for Homeless Education
Melanie Faby
Email: melanie.faby@nysed.gov
Web: www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/homeless

For more information, call
NYS-TEACHS 800-388-2014
www.nysteachs.org

NYS-TEACHS
NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE STATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE CORPORATION

Public Notice, Cont'd.



Other Tips:

- Post outreach materials on your district/school's registration website.
- Share outreach materials through digital platforms (i.e. Classdojo, Instagram, etc.)
- Send home information about McKinney-Vento supports in backpacks (where possible) or grab-and-go meals.
- Ask Principals and others to mention McKinney-Vento supports in Back-to-School letters and/or other community-wide notices.
- Reach out to a local news org or paper about supports the district/school is providing to families in temporary housing.
- Reach out to local organizations to provide outreach materials and/or suggest a training so that they can provide info to families and youth.

Use Resources and Referrals to Connect

- While schools are on remote or hybrid schedules, connecting with families may be more difficult.
 - Texting with resources can help (*we've heard from liaisons that they often have more luck with texting rather than calling*).
- Sharing names of key contacts and/or anecdotes from other families' experiences can personalize the referral.
 - When possible, use feedback from your community of families to inform other families.

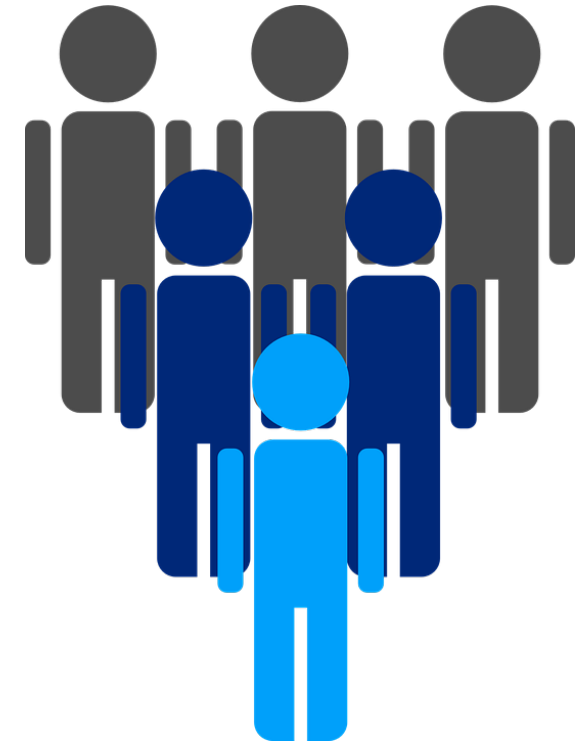


Key Resources:

- NYS-TEACHS [Referral Templates](#)
- NYS-TEACHS' Check-In Checklist: [Connecting with Families During COVID-19 Remote and Hybrid Instruction](#)
- SchoolHouse Connection's [Tips for Keeping in Touch](#)

You can't do it alone!

- **Emphasize identification** at district/school-wide McKinney-Vento training sessions.
 - Share signs of homelessness with staff, especially teachers, counselors, bus drivers, and others who have daily contact with students and families.
 - Mention situations like the end of the eviction moratorium as a “heads up” for staff.
 - TEACHS [Tip Sheet Series](#)
- **Prepare a simple ask** so that colleagues know when to refer students to you.
 - Student trust and consent should be included in your conversation.
- **Use examples from your experiences** with students and families and suggest protocol or policy changes.



FERPA: What you need to know

- A student's **homeless status is a protected educational record:**
 - Cannot be shared with others without parental consent (or the consent of the student if they are 18 or older)
 - Parents (or students 18 or older) can decide how homeless status information is shared.
 - FERPA *does allow* the sharing of educational records with internal school staff who have **a legitimate educational interest** in the information.
 - See: [6 Things to Know About Privacy, FERPA, and Homelessness](#)

Internal Info Sharing: Best Practices

Should a McKinney-Vento liaison tell school staff when a student becomes homeless?

Maybe!

- Explain why
- Be discreet
- Ask permission
- Keep communication lines open

+McKinney-Vento
Quick Tip Series

TIPS ON
INFORMATION SHARING AND
RESPECTING **PRIVACY** OF STUDENTS IN
TEMPORARY HOUSING

*Information about a student's housing status and other familial challenges is sensitive and should be confidential to the extent possible. However, there are times when sharing such information with select school staff may be appropriate in order to provide effective support. This tip sheet provides **strategies** and **conversations starters** for having sensitive conversations with students and families as well as tips for when and how to share the information with others.*

Should a McKinney-Vento liaison tell school staff when a student becomes homeless?

***If depends.** When deciding whether and how to share information about a student's housing status, the McKinney-Vento liaison should strive for a balance between respecting the family's and the student's privacy and the potential benefit of involving those who play critical role in a student's academic, social-emotional health, and transportation needs.*

When **SPEAKING WITH PARENTS AND STUDENTS** (depending on their age/maturity), you should...

- **Explain WHY you want to share** the student's housing status with staff at the school and how you would share that information. For example, "I would like your child's teachers to be aware of why your child may be more distracted or tired than usual. This information will help them better support your child."
- Reassure families that you will **be discreet** about their housing situation and only share information on a need-to-know basis and only in the context of the student's educational needs.
- **Ask for permission** to share information about the student's housing status and explain with whom you intend to share the information. There is a lot of stigma associated with housing loss, and no one wants sensitive personal information being shared behind their back. **To build trust and partnership with the parent and student, you should ask and receive**

NYS-TEACHS / [Tips on Information Sharing and Respecting Privacy of Students in Temporary Housing](#)

SchoolHouse Connection's Awareness-Raising Campaign



SchoolHouse Connection recently published awareness-raising resources for schools, service providers, and parents.

To better equip you with the right resources, please select your role.

Educator/Provider

Parent/Caregiver

Youth/Student



Point Source Youth's Video Library

Point Source Youth has a [library of free videos](#) related to youth homelessness.

Video Topics Include:

- Self-Care
- Structural Racism, Oppression, and Racial Justice
- COVID-19
- Interventions during quarantine

5-MINUTE VIDEOS

Working with experts, thought-leaders and youth advocates and activists to produce weekly, digestible videos with tips and information related to COVID-19. Check back each week for new videos and resources to support you and the communities you serve during the pandemic.

Self Care



Engaging Families and Youth in School Communities

Goal 2: Identify at least one new way to **engage parents and youth** in the school community.

A Few Ideas



Student or Whole Family:

- Evening read-aloud (i.e. Storytime) - various evenings in various languages if possible.
- Provide supplies to families such as craft boxes, calm-down kits, weekend food baskets, board games, etc.

Parent(s) / Guardian(s):

- Offer virtual and/or in-person information sessions for parents/guardians. Remember, they don't all have to be trainings; they can be more conversational in order to engage parents. Have parents submit questions before the session so you are sure to "hear them."
- Provide food or gift cards as incentives to attend.
- Continue the use of texting/messaging platforms even after we return to in-person learning.



Reminder:

- You can use **Title I funds** (or *MV Grant funds, if your district has them*) to pay for parent/family engagement programs and incentives.

Type your answer in the “questions” panel

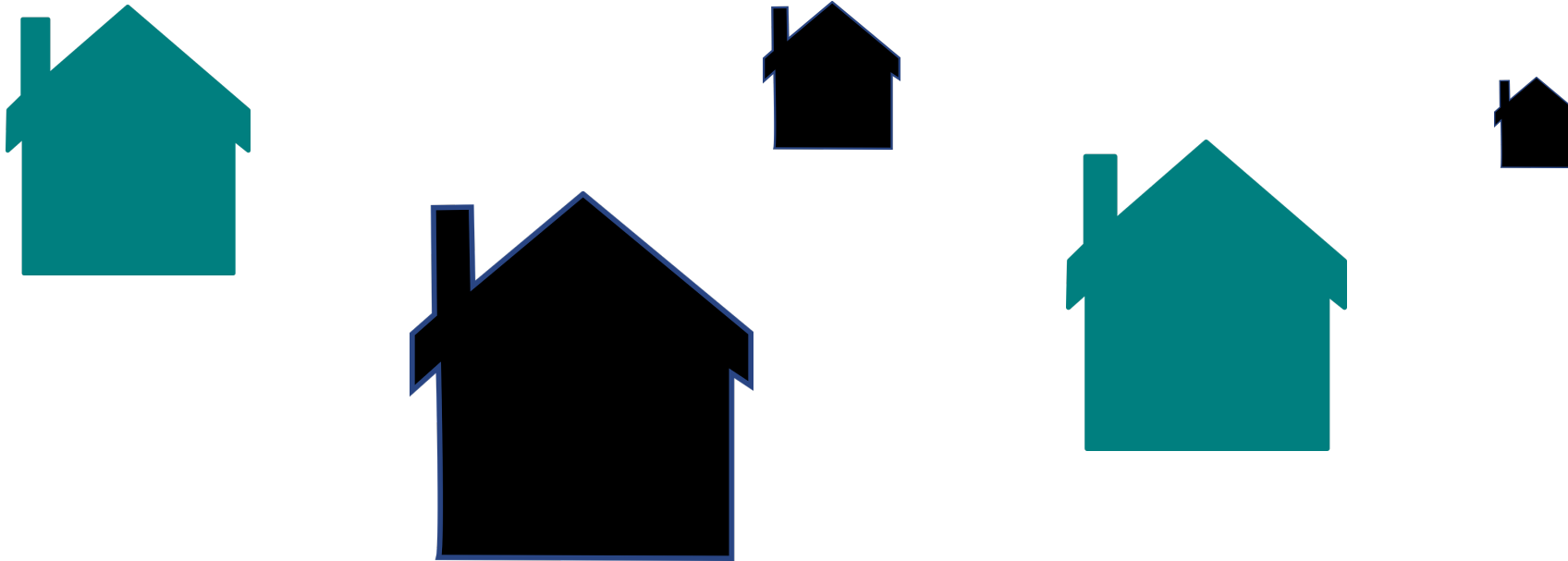
What is one way that you've engaged a student or family in the school community?

Navigating Sensitive Conversations with Families

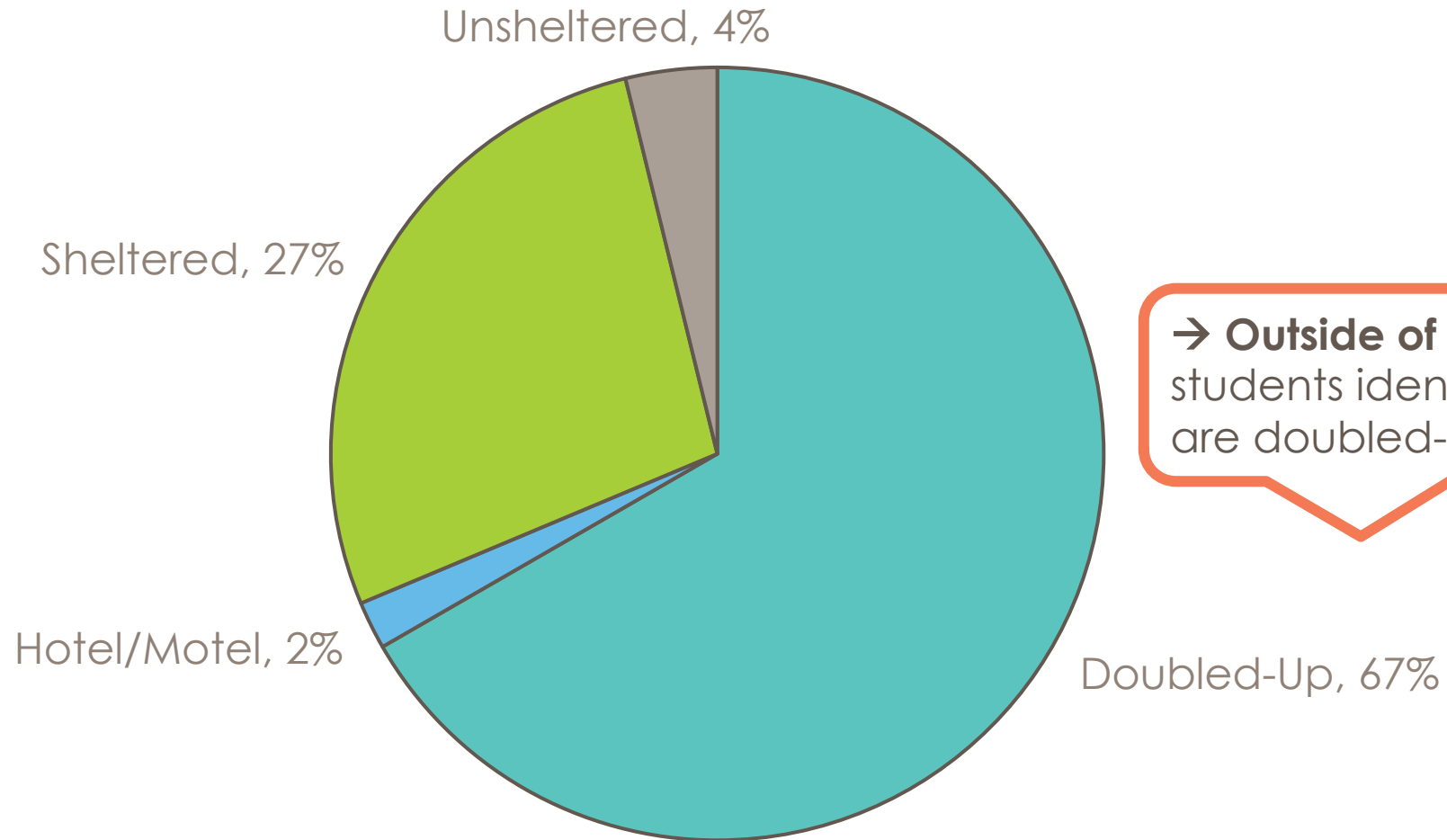
Goal 3: Reflect on your **communication process** with families.

Preparing and Navigating

- Through the summer and fall, there will likely be a **spike in family homelessness** and/or **increased questions about eligibility**.
- Having a plan and process in place can help to ease these conversations.

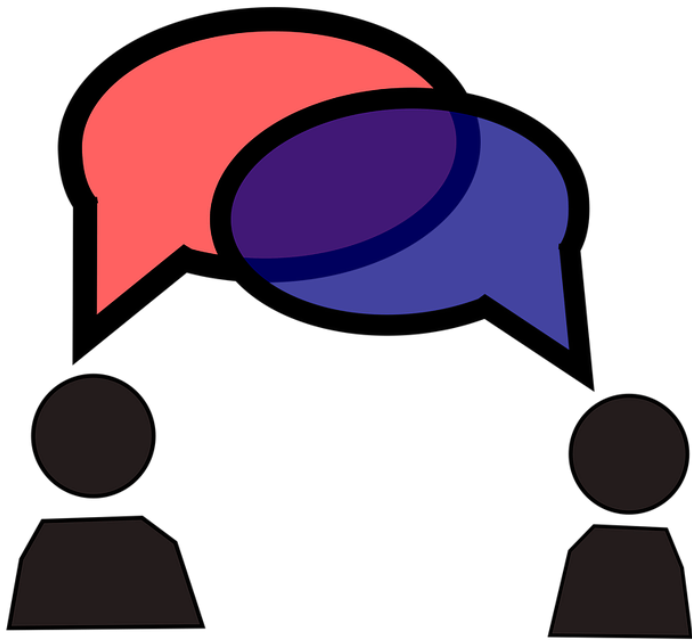


Student Homelessness in New York State



→ **Outside of NYC, 73%** of students identified as homeless are doubled-up.

Navigating Conversations about Housing



Making McKinney-Vento eligibility determinations requires:

- Asking sensitive questions
- Expressing empathy
- Cultivating trust

This can be really difficult for a multitude of factors.

Navigating Conversations about Housing

Conversations about housing can be uncomfortable for students, families, and liaisons.

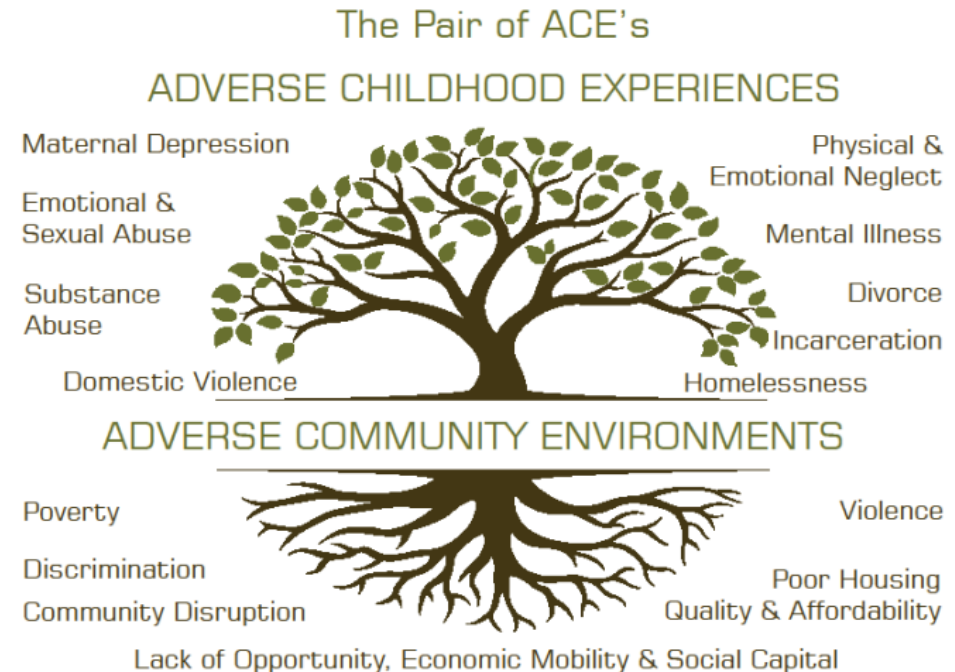
Why might this be?

- No prior relationship
- Feeling invasive
- Fear of disagreement
- Stressing over the “right answer”
- Underlying power dynamics
- Processing and/or healing from our own very stressful year

Let's Talk Housing

Centering Your Conversation in Trauma-Sensitive and Anti-Racist Practices

Anti-racism defined:
“A system in which we create policies, practices, and procedures to promote racial equity.”



Ellis, W., Dietz, W (2017) A new framework for addressing Adverse Childhood and Community Experiences: The Building Community Resilience (BCR) model. Academic Pediatrics. 17 (2017) pp. 986-993. DOI information: 10.1016/j.acap.2016.12.011

ResilientKern.org



Communications Guide for McKinney-Vento Liaisons:

Centering Anti-Racist Approaches to Conversations with Families and Colleagues



COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE FOR MCKINNEY-VENTO LIAISONS

Centering Anti-Racist Approaches to Conversations with Families and Colleagues

McKinney-Vento liaisons are responsible for the identification, enrollment, and the removal of educational barriers for students experiencing homelessness. McKinney-Vento liaisons can create meaningful change in their districts and the lives of students experiencing homelessness by providing internal trainings and connecting students to educational resources and community referrals.

Unfortunately, due to systemic racism across many aspects of American life, [Black, Latinx, Native American, and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities experience homelessness at disproportionate rates compared to White and Asian communities.](#) Systemic racism exists in schools; therefore, it is crucial for McKinney-Vento liaisons to reflect on school protocols and narratives that reinforce racial bias and inequity. Even small intentional changes, such as in our semantics, can have positive effects on family relationships and ultimately, the well-being and success of students.

We created the following tip sheet to help McKinney-Vento liaisons and other school staff reflect on their own communication styles, race, and how institutional racism impacts students and families.

SCENARIO	PROBLEMATIC APPROACH	WHY IS IT PROBLEMATIC?	HOW DOES THIS INTERSECT WITH RACE?
A family lost their housing and is temporarily living in your district. The parents decide to enroll their children in your district instead of continuing in their district of origin.	<i>"The liaison in your district of origin should have encouraged you to continue enrollment there. It would not be in your best interest to enroll here."</i>	Assumes the family hasn't considered what is in the best interest of their child. The statement may be interpreted as unwelcoming or exclusionary. Family may feel they have been turned away from enrolling locally.	Depending on the circumstance, pressuring a family to return to their district of origin can enforce school segregation: New York has the most segregated schools in the country. Black and Latino students often end up in intensely segregated schools with very low percentages of white students.

How to Ask Questions with Sensitivity & Intention



- **Meet in a private space** or ask about timing/privacy if on the phone
- **Use a pre-written list of questions or topics.** (e.g. NCHC's *Determining Eligibility* brief)
- **Prepare a comprehensive list of resources to hand to parents and youth** (You can use our template as a starting point)
- **Ask for permission.** (e.g. "Can I ask you some additional questions? Can I share your contact with...")
- **Acknowledge and empathize.** (e.g. "Thank you for sharing that. I recognize it is not easy to talk about your housing.")
- **Be transparent about your plans to follow up at the end of the year.**

Organize and Prepare for Conversations

Part I: Prepare

- Review McKinney-Vento definition of “homelessness”
- Learn about the effects of homelessness on children and families
- Adopt a strengths-based approach toward all families

Adapted from [Head Start's Determining Eligibility Module](#)

Organize and Prepare for Conversations

Part II: Dialogue

- Practice active listening skills to demonstrate compassion and respect
- Reflect and repeat back the student's/family's perspective
- Show sensitivity to student's/family's feelings
- Use person-first language and mirror language used by student/family
- Use an anti-racist framework

Adapted from [Head Start's Determining Eligibility Module](#)

Organize and Prepare for Conversations

Part III: Reflect

- Reflect on personal or professional experiences that may impact your practice
- Talk with a peer or supervisor about your questions or concerns

Adapted from [Head Start's Determining Eligibility Module](#)

Answer in the “questions” panel

Have you ever had a conversation with a family or youth that made you rethink your practices or assumptions?

Spotlight on NYS-TEACHS Resources: Tips for Navigating Challenging Conversations

Challenging Conversation Topics Include:

- Family providing **vague** or generalized answers to questions about where they are living
- Questions about **adequacy** of the living arrangement
- Questions about **continued eligibility** where the family has been doubled-up for an extended time
- Different **versions** of the story



Have questions, concerns, or hit a roadblock? **Call NYS-TEACHS.**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act is a federal law that protects the educational rights of students in temporary housing. It defines "homeless children and youths" as any student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.



Conversations about a family's housing situation can be tense, uncomfortable, or invasive. This tip sheet provides trauma-sensitive strategies and conversation starters for some of the most common conversations you will encounter with students, families, and district administration.

THE CHALLENGE	WHY IT'S CHALLENGING	TRAUMA-SENSITIVE STRATEGIES AND CONVERSATION STARTERS
When asked about a current address or living situation, the family gives only vague or generalized answers.	This is challenging because liaisons and/or district staff need specific housing information in order to make an informed decision about McKinney-Vento eligibility. Vague answers may be misinterpreted as a "false story," leading someone to make an incorrect determination. Additionally, a family may feel under attack or become upset as a result of numerous clarifying questions.	If you need more information from a family about their housing situation, first explain WHY you need housing details before you ask any additional questions. You may also want to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite the family to speak with you in a private setting. Avoid talking at the front desk or registration counter. • Explain your position/role and intentions. For example, "I am the McKinney-Vento liaison and my job is to connect students in temporary housing with educational supports and services." • Be clear about the goal of the conversation. Make clear that you are not trying to get them in trouble, but rather, want to make sure they receive all services for which they are eligible. • Avoid the word "homeless." Instead, talk about a temporary housing arrangement.
A family's housing situation seems to be fixed and regular, but you need to know if it is also adequate.	This is challenging because questions about housing adequacy can feel particularly uncomfortable and intrusive. Adequacy conversations are also challenging because families may be nervous that information shared about	It is important to take a very sensitive approach to this type of conversation. Before asking any questions about the adequacy of the housing arrangement, begin the conversation by reminding the family that students living in temporary housing situations have special education rights, which may be beneficial to the student and his/her family. Reassure them that your questions are intended to connect the student with appropriate supports and services.

Next Steps

- **Identify an activity you can use to build McKinney-Vento awareness in your school or greater community.** Examples:
 - Share an awareness video during a team meeting.
 - Send posters and brochures to community agencies with your contact information.
 - Create a McKinney-Vento page on your district/school's website.
- **Identify at least one new way to engage parents and youth in the school community.** Examples:
 - Hold virtual events in various languages.
 - Offer education-adjacent support such as weekend food or family board games along with the more typical supports like school supplies and school lunches.
- **Reflect on your communication process with families.** Examples:
 - Create a checklist for identification, providing services and referrals, and following up with each student/family.
 - Create an outline or informal script for eligibility conversations.
 - Jot down a few words or sentences after conversations with families to help with future conversations.

NYS-TEACHS

800-388-2014

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