

*Vermont Department of Education
& University of Vermont Center on
Disability and Community Inclusion.*

VERMONT HOMELESS CHILDREN & YOUTH PROJECT



**120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501
(802) 828-5148**

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What is the Vermont Homeless Children and Youth Project?

THE VERMONT HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROJECT (VHCYP) is a federally funded project administered through University of Vermont Center on Disability and Community Inclusion “(CDCI)” from the Vermont Department of Education to carry out the provisions of the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act. VHCYP provides technical assistance and support in six regions to ensure that children and youth experiencing homelessness will continue to receive educational services.

VHCYP staff members work with schools, community organizations, families, and youth to provide information on federal and state laws that address the special needs of homeless children and youth.

To ensure that homeless children and youth have the same access to a free appropriate public education, VHCYP staff members work with schools and community-based service providers to ensure homeless students have access to:

- 🍏 Transportation services
- 🍏 Educational services for which the student meets the eligibility criteria, (such as Title I, Special Education, Section 504 , English as a Second Language)
- 🍏 Preschool programs, including Head Start and Even Start Family Literacy Programs
- 🍏 Technical education
- 🍏 Gifted and talented programs
- 🍏 School meal programs

In addition to working with schools, VHCYP staff members work with agencies and programs that provide services to homeless children and youth and their families, including homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters, transitional housing facilities, runaway and homeless youth shelters, and transitional living programs for homeless youth.

The **VHCYP staff** can support your work with homeless by:

- 🍏 Answering questions and providing technical assistance
- 🍏 Developing training for school and agency personnel
- 🍏 Attending staff meetings and meetings with families and unaccompanied youth
- 🍏 Providing assistance in resolving enrollment disputes

The McKinney Vento Homeless

Assistance Act ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. This legislation requires that all homeless children and youth have the same access to a free, appropriate public education as other children and youth in Vermont. The goals of this legislation include:

- ◆ Identifying homeless children and youth
- ◆ Immediate enrollment and facilitation of enrollment disputes
- ◆ Ensuring access to school and appropriate educational services
- ◆ Reducing school transfers and supporting educational stability and continuity
- ◆ Increasing parental choice and involvement regarding school enrollment
- ◆ Ensuring the educational rights of unaccompanied youth, and
- ◆ Providing information about the rights of homeless children and youth

Vermont Homeless Children and Youth Project is funded by a grant from the Vermont Department of Education to the University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Inclusion. The Vermont Department of Education and the University of Vermont are committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public and that all activities and programs are nondiscriminatory in design, application and performance.

Who Is Homeless?

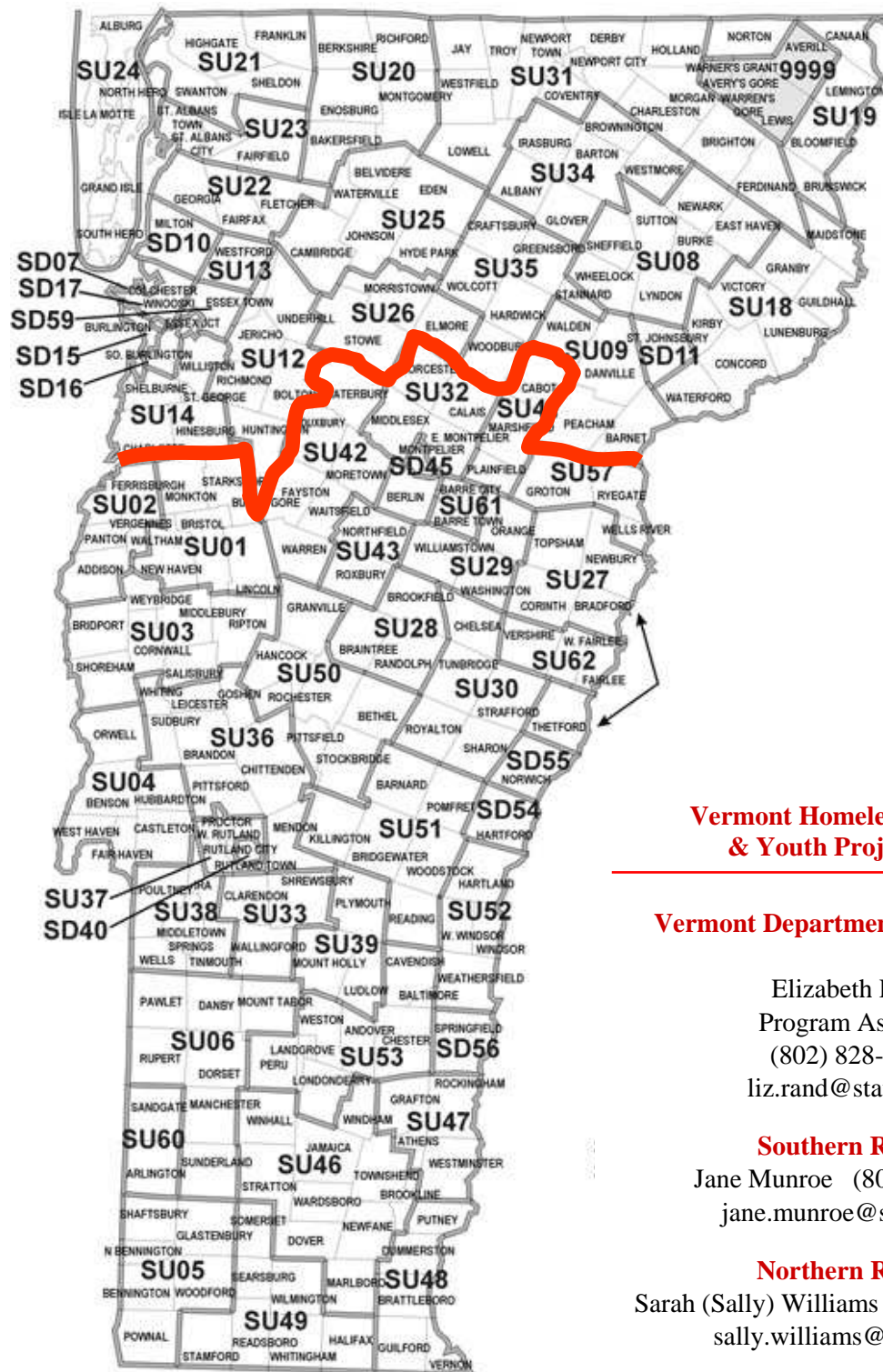
According to the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act, a homeless person is an individual who lacks a **fixed, regular** and **adequate** nighttime residence, including children and youth:

- ◆ Sharing housing due to loss of permanent housing, economic hardship, or similar reason
- ◆ Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate housing
- ◆ Living in emergency or transitional housing
- ◆ Abandoned in a hospital
- ◆ Awaiting foster care placement

This includes children and youth who:

- ◆ Have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodations
- ◆ Live in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing bus or train stations
- ◆ Migratory students meeting the descriptions above

An **unaccompanied youth** who is considered homeless is someone who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and who meets the above criteria.



For more information and additional resources on Education for Homeless Children and Youth visit:

http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_homeless.html



Vermont Homeless Children & Youth Project Staff

Vermont Department of Education

Elizabeth Rand
Program Assistant
(802) 828-3150
liz.rand@state.vt.us

Southern Region

Jane Munroe (802)483-2198
jane.munroe@state.vt.us

Northern Region

Sarah (Sally) Williams (802) 233-1832
sally.williams@state.vt.us

For additional information, contact:

Wendy Jill Ross
State Coordinator
Education for Homeless
Children and Youth
wendy.ross@state.vt.us
(802) 828-5148



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MONTPELIER, VERMONT
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