Technical Assistance Update
State Office for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
March 31, 2011

The McKinney-Vento Act:
Maintaining Educational Continuity for Homeless Children and Youth in Vermont

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1. New Education for Homeless Children and Youth State Coordinator: Wendy Ross, currently serving as the Homeless Education State Coordinator, has retired from the Vermont Department of Education to enroll in a Masters in Social Work Program at North Carolina State University. Mike Mulcahy will assume the position of State Coordinator on April 1st; Mike can be reached at 828-5108 or mike.mulcahy@state.vt.us. The Vermont Homeless Children and Youth Staff, Sally Williams (233-1832) in northern Vermont and Jane Munroe (483-2198) in southern Vermont will continue to provide technical assistance and training. The VHCYP brochure is in your information packet and online at:
http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_homeless/educ_homeless_brochure.pdf

2. 2010-2011 End of the Year Reporting: Homeless Education Liaisons are asked to report once a year on the number of homeless students served by grade level during the school year. In addition, Liaisons must report on where the student was residing when identified, e.g., doubled-up, motel, shelter, etc. Make sure to use your Liaison Worksheet to track information on each identified student to faciliate reporting at the end of the school year. The worksheet can be accessed at:
http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_homeless/toolbox/liaison_worksheet_0708.pdf

3. End of the School Year Verification of Homeless Status: It is important to review the status of students who are homeless prior to the end of the school year. You can reference enrollment guidance regarding summer status of homeless students in the McKinney Vento Law summary at:
http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_homeless/resources/key_provisions_summary.pdf

4. Identifying Homeless Students on School Registration Forms: Liaisons support the identification of homeless students using many types of strategies, including the addition of questions on school enrollment forms that flag the homeless status of students who are enrolling in school. Some options for use in your school enrollment materials include:

Are you having housing issues?

Is your current address a temporary living arrangement?

Are you an unaccompanied youth (not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian)?

Do you own or rent (lease) a house or apartment?
If no: Where is the student living? __shelter,__motel, car, or campsite___doubled up with family or friends,___moving from place to place,___with someone other than the parent or guardian.

Check what best describes with whom the student resides. ___Parent(s),____Legal Guardian(s),____Caregiver(s) who are not legal guardian(s) (examples: friends, relatives,parents of friends, etc.) ___Foster Parent(s), ___other.

Here are some examples of possible follow up questions if homeless status is established:

When did loss of housing occur?
How long have you been at current address?
What school did your child attend last?
Where you were last permanently housed? What school did student attend when last permanently housed?

5. Supporting Homeless Students in Accessing Higher Education: The National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE offers the following resources for supporting unaccompanied youth in accessing higher education opportunities. These resources can also be accessed at http://center.serve.org/nche

NCHE Higher Education Poster
This 8½ x 11 color poster, created in collaboration with the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) and based on the unaccompanied homeless youth provisions of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act, alerts unaccompanied homeless youth to contact the relevant authorities if they believe they may qualify for independent student status on the FAFSA due to lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The poster is appropriate for posting across high school and college campuses, in HUD-funded and RHYA-funded shelters, and in other community locations where unaccompanied homeless youth may congregate.
Download the poster.

NCHE Webinar: Supporting Unaccompanied Homeless Youth in Accessing Higher Education
This January 25, 2011, webinar, geared towards both the homeless education and higher education communities, will provide important information about FAFSA provisions allowing unaccompanied homeless youth to apply for federal financial aid for college as independent students. Topics include:
· A brief primer on the McKinney-Vento Act and unaccompanied homeless youth
· Determining independent student status for unaccompanied homeless youth filling out the FAFSA
· Building community collaboration to support unaccompanied homeless college students
Guest presenters include Jennifer Martin from the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, and Marcia Weston, from College Goal Sunday.
View the recorded webinar.

6. Young Children Without Homes Conference: The 6th Annual Young Children Without Homes National Conference will be held on June 20-21st in Washington, DC. This conference will focus on the issue of child and family homelessness and its effect on young children (0-5) and will offer information sharing, networking and collaboration, strategies and solutions for educators and service providers. For more information you can go to: http://www.horizonsforhomelesschildren.org/Programs-YCWH-National-Conference-2011.asp