
Supporting Immigrant and Migrant Students Experiencing Homelessness

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About SchoolHouse Connection

SchoolHouse Connection works to overcome homelessness through education.

We provide strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth.

WEBSITE:

schoolhouseconnection.org

NEWSLETTER:

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- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarships

Important Terminology

Multilingual Learner

- students who are come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds and are learning English as a second (or third) language.

Immigrant

- A person who moves to a country and plans to stay permanently.

Migrant

- Someone who moves because the student or family are involved in seasonal agricultural or fishing work.

Important Terminology

Refugees

People who have fled their home country due to fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, and are not in the U.S. while they are going through the initial immigration process.

- **Asylees:** Refugees who are in the U.S. when going through the initial immigration process.

Unaccompanied Alien Minors

Youth under age 18 who come to the U.S. without an accompanying parent or guardian. The term “unaccompanied” in this context refers to their immigration status, not their McKinney-Vento status.

- Unaccompanied homeless youth as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act are children and youth who lack fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and are also not under the care of a parent or legal guardian.

Educational Rights of Immigrant/Migrant Children and Youth

- Children and youth living in the United States **have the right to enroll in and attend** public schools, regardless of their immigration status.
- Schools and LEA-administered preschool programs **cannot ask about a student's or family's immigration status**, or take other actions that could discourage students from seeking enrollment.
- Schools and LEA-administered preschool programs **cannot require Social Security numbers** or immigration or citizenship documentation.
- Schools and LEA-administered preschool programs **cannot contact ICE or other law enforcement officials** about a student's or family's immigration status.

Educational Rights of Undocumented Children and Youth

- Undocumented children and youth living in the United States have **the right to participate fully in school, regardless of immigration status**
- For all McKinney-Vento eligible students, **regardless of immigration status**, schools must address barriers to full participation in school activities, including transportation.
 - Career and Technical Education (CTE) services may require Social Security numbers or employment authorization if required for an employment or internship opportunity.
 - Foreign travel as part of an activity is not advisable for undocumented students, as their ability to reenter the U.S. is not guaranteed.

The McKinney-Vento Act covers children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.



Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason.



Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.

The McKinney-Vento Act **also covers:**

- Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Living in a public or private place not designed for or regularly used as accommodations.
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
 - What is substandard? Check utilities; infestations; mold; dangers.
- Includes unaccompanied youth and migrant students living in those situations.

Unaccompanied Youth Under McKinney-Vento

A child or youth without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Youth run away from home due to abuse or neglect.

- 40-60% of unaccompanied youth were abused physically at home.
- 17-25% of unaccompanied youth were abused sexually at home.
- Research links parental substance abuse and youth running away from home.

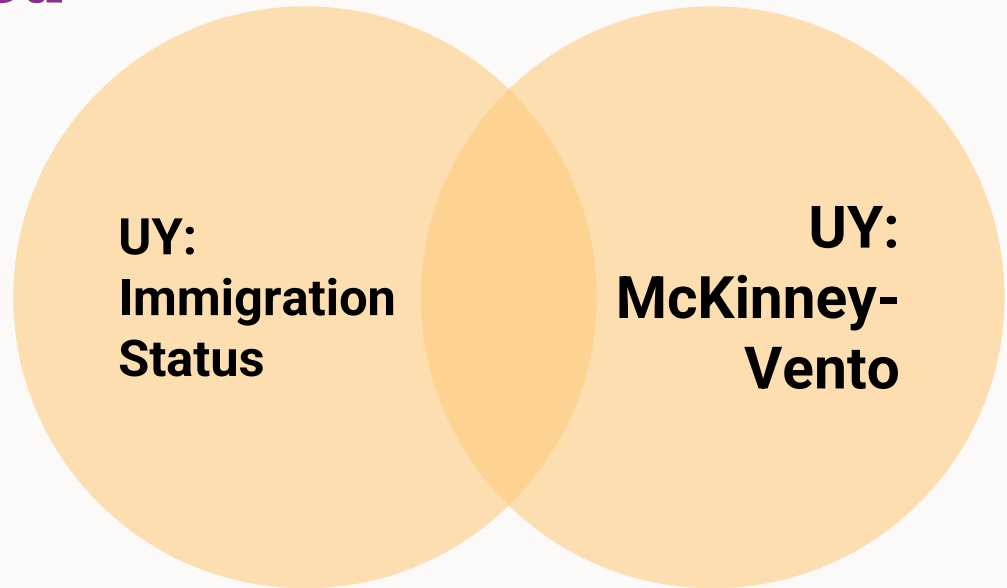
Parents force youth out of the home due to conflicts.

- Sexual orientation and gender identity
- Pregnancy

Unaccompanied Youth As an Immigration Status

- Children or youth coming to the U.S. alone, living with relatives, friends, or others.
- Some stay with a sponsor
- Sponsors do not have legal guardianship
- Living with a sponsor does not automatically mean fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence
- Often sponsors allow youth to stay with them under certain conditions such as paying back immigration expenses, contributing to household expenses, etc.
- Financial obligations may make it difficult for unaccompanied youth to attend and engage in school.

Unaccompanied Youth



Immediate enrollment for unaccompanied youth

Unlike most education laws, McKinney-Vento gives rights directly to unaccompanied youth, above the rights of their parents/guardians.

- To enroll and make decisions
- To choose between school of origin and local school
- To file disputes
- To participate in activities

This may require conflict mediation between the school, parent, and youth.

- Call in back-up when needed! Social workers, community resources, State Coordinator.

In some cases, a sponsor may not be an appropriate caregiver or emergency contact.

McKinney-Vento Eligibility of Immigrant and Migrant Children and Youth

- As with all McKinney-Vento eligibility determinations, each situation should be evaluated individually.
- Immigration or documentation status does not affect McKinney-Vento eligibility.
- The right to public education for immigrant children, including undocumented children, extends to preschool programs run by LEAs and/or state agencies.
 - Families may enroll their children in Head Start and Early Head Start programs regardless of their immigration status.
- Unaccompanied minors who are living with a sponsor do not necessarily have fixed, regular, and adequate housing. Sponsors are not legal guardians.

Shared Housing

- Is it due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason, whether in the US or another country?
- Family lost housing due to natural disaster, violence (war, gangs, coup), loss of employment or subsistence
- Where would they go if they had to leave where they are staying?
- Do they have any right to be there?
- Is the housing adequate?
- “Sponsors” don’t change the analysis.

To ask or not to ask:

- **Determining eligibility requires information about the student’s housing situation.**
- **Federal law says schools cannot ask any questions that might “chill” the right to enrollment for an undocumented student.**
- **Balance!**

Cultural Considerations of Doubled Up



- Shared housing or multigenerational living situations:
 - Who is included on the lease?
 - Who is contributing to household costs?
 - Does everyone have adequate space to sleep?
 - Is the living arrangement for everyone's mutual benefit?
 - Are any members of the household looking for their own place to live?
 - Was one family already living in the space and another family moved in?
- Just because multigenerational families may be cultural, homeless liaisons still must evaluate each situation individually

Strategies and Best Practices to Support Immigrant and Migrant Children and Youth

- 1 Identify Immigrant Families Experiencing Homelessness
- 2 Collaborate across Programs to Provide Wrap-around Services
- 3 Provide Families with Information and Support They Can Access
- 4 Remove Barriers for Immigrant Children, Youth, and Families
- 5 Build Relationships with Community Partners

Examples: New Philadelphia City Schools, Ohio, Metro Nashville Public Schools, Tennessee, Shakopee Public Schools, Minnesota

Strategies and Best Practices to Support Immigrant and Migrant Children and Youth

1

Building trust is essential

2

Identification

3

Accommodate unique circumstances

Example: New Philadelphia City Schools, Ohio

Additional Resources:

- Colorín Colorado: [How to Build Relationships with Immigrant Families](#)
- Colorín Colorado: [How Immigration Status Affects Students, Families, & Schools](#)
- Colorín Colorado: [Helping Students Heal Through Love and Trust: A Social Worker's Perspective on Serving Immigrant Youth](#)

Consider the Unique Needs of Migrant Families Experiencing Homelessness

- Train migrant recruiters on the McKinney-Vento Act, including basic understanding of eligibility.
- Establish a clear process for migrant educators to make referrals to the homeless liaison.
- For states with summer-only migrant programs, work with program staff or family liaisons to help transition students to sending states, including referring to the homeless liaison in the sending district.
- When working with migrant families experiencing homelessness who have young children (ages birth – six), [check to see if there is a Migrant and Seasonal Head Start program nearby](#).

[The Head Start Program Performance Standards and Homelessness](#)

Higher Education Opportunities for Undocumented Youth

- Undocumented youth can apply to public colleges and universities in every state, except Alabama and South Carolina.
- Youth with legal immigration status can apply for federal aid, even if their parents are undocumented, but undocumented youth are not eligible for federal financial aid.
- A number of states offer in-state tuition and/or state financial aid to undocumented students. [See what your state offers.](#)

(Please note that states are frequently updating and changing in-state tuition and financial aid information for undocumented youth. Please make sure to check this information your state)

Using ARP-HCY Funds

For more ideas about how to use ARP-HCY, take a look at SchoolHouse

Connection's Resources:

- [Allowable and Strategic Uses of ARP-HCY Funds](#)
- [ARP-HCY spotlights](#)

- Middletown, RI used ARP-HCY funds to hire a Family Services Coordinator to support multilingual families and contracts with Boys and Girls Clubs to provide wraparound services.
- New Philadelphia, OH used ARP-HCY funds to purchase bikes to support attendance of immigrant students within the LEA's walk zone.
- Grand Island, NE used ARP-HCY funds to hire a bilingual parent liaison to support families in the district's Early Learning Center access summer resources.
- Monte del Sol, NM used ARP-HCY funds to hire a bilingual benefits navigator to help families navigate housing in their native language.
- Shakopee Public Schools, MN is using ARP-HCY funds to provide mental health supports for immigrant high school students to navigate and manage the trauma of their immigration experiences.



Immigration Updates

A constantly changing
landscape

- Temporary Protected Status (TPS)
- Ukraine and Afghanistan
- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)
- Public Charge rule

Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

- Temporary immigration relief for people from countries impacted by natural disasters, civil war, epidemics, or other emergencies.
- Can include work authorization.
- Current eligible countries: Afghanistan, Burma, Cameroon, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Venezuela, Yemen

Ukraine



- “Uniting for Ukraine”
 - Displaced Ukrainian citizens and their immediate family members who are outside the United States can come to the United States and stay temporarily for up to two years.
 - **Must have a supporter** in the United States who agrees to provide them with financial support for the duration of their stay in the United States.
 - <https://www.dhs.gov/ukraine>
- [Support Those Fleeing Ukraine After the Russian Invasion | Center for Gender and Refugee Studies](#)

Afghanistan



- Special immigrant visas for Afghans employed by/on behalf of the U.S. government: 8,000 total approved last year.
- Humanitarian parole: Case-by-case
 - Eligible for public benefits and/or Refugee Cash Assistance (up to 8 months)
 - **Some** received refugee resettlement support
 - Some receive employment assistance
- [Benefits for Afghan Humanitarian Parolees](#)
- [Assistance for Afghans | Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc. \(CLINIC\)](#)

Status of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

- People who have received DACA in the past can and should [apply for renewals](#).
- People who have never had DACA status before can apply, BUT applications cannot be processed.
- Litigation on the future of the program is ongoing.
- It is not advisable for DACA applicants or recipients to leave the country, as Customs and Border Patrol officers can deny re-entry at their discretion.

“Public Charge” rule

- Receipt of public benefits is grounds to deny legal permanent residence, a visa, or admission to the US.
- Does not apply to asylees/refugees, T/U visa holders, others.
- Expansions enacted under the Trump Administration are no longer in effect.

- **Applicable timeline:** 12 aggregate months of benefits in a 3-year period.
- **Included:**
 - ✓ SSI, TANF
 - ✓ State/local general assistance
 - ✓ Long-term institutionalization at public expense (nursing home)
- **Not included:**
 - X McKinney-Vento services
 - X Any other education benefit, including free meals, Head Start and financial aid for college
 - X WIOA, WIC, CHIP
 - X Medicaid or other health care
 - X SNAP
 - X Public housing, Section 8

Questions



BOOKMARK THIS PAGE:

www.schoolhouseconnection.org/immigration

Additional Resources

- SchoolHouse Connection: [Strategies for Supporting Immigrant and Migrant Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- SchoolHouse Connection: [Immigrant Students Experiencing Homelessness: Liaisons' Strategies](#)
- SchoolHouse Connection: [Immigrant Students: How Schools Can Help](#)
- Sesame Street In Communities: [Supporting Families Resettling in the U.S.](#)
- Colorín Colorado: [Guides and Toolkits](#)
- National Immigration Law Center: [Basic Facts about In-State Tuition for Undocumented Immigrants](#)



Let's Connect!

Facebook: SchoolHouse Connection

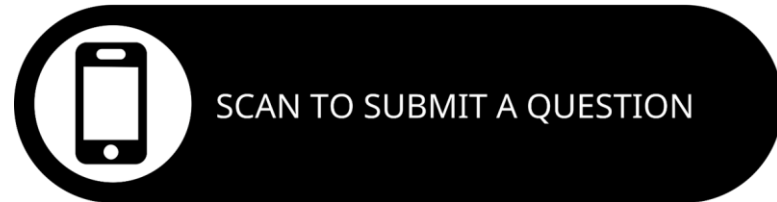
Facebook Group: Homelessness &
Education - A SchoolHouse Connection
Group

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**Have questions?
Scan the QR code
and submit them!**



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