

**Supporting Students  
Experiencing Homelessness**

Presented by Patricia A. Popp, Ph.D. –  
The College of William and Mary  
July 22, 2015

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- Who is considered homeless?
- How many children are there?
- What can we do?



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**Risk Factors**

- Housing
- Inconsistent and inadequate health care
- Inadequate nutrition
- Adolescent mothers
- Disrupted or limited family support
- Emotional stress or depression



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### **Poverty & Special Needs**

• *“Poverty and its attendant stressors have the potential to shape the neurobiology of the developing child in powerful ways...”*  
(Duncan, Ziol-guest, Kalil, 2010)

- Experiences build brain architecture
  - Connections and pruning



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### **Homeless and Special Needs**

“Compared to middle class peers and low-income children who are housed, young homeless children experience more developmental delays, emotional problems such as anxiety and depression, and behavior issues.”  
— Education Law Center, 2010



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### **Impact of Homelessness**

- Absenteeism is greater
- Developmental delays occur at 4 times the rate reported for other children
- Learning disabilities identified at double the rate
- Twice as likely to repeat a grade

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**McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act  
Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program**

Title X, Part C  
2001 Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

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**WHO IS HOMELESS?**

- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act - ESEA, Title X, Part C
- Same definition referenced in
  - IDEA 2004
  - Child Nutrition Act
  - Head Start Act
  - Higher Education Act



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**Defining homelessness**

An individual who lacks a **fixed, regular,** and **adequate** nighttime residence, including children and youth:

- **sharing housing** due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- living in **motels, hotels, trailer parks,** or **camping grounds** due to lack of alternative adequate housing
- living in emergency or **transitional housing**

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Including children and youth :

- abandoned in hospitals
- awaiting foster care
- having a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodations




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- living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations
- **migratory students** meeting the description
- **unaccompanied youth** meeting the description



How eligibility is determined by a liaison:  
[http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/det\\_elig.pdf](http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/det_elig.pdf)

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### Fixed, Regular, and Adequate

- **Fixed:** Stationary, permanent, and not subject to change
- **Regular:** Used on a predictable, routine, or consistent basis (e.g. *nightly*)
- **Adequate:** Sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments

**Can the student go to the SAME PLACE (fixed) EVERY NIGHT (regular) to sleep in a SAFE AND SUFFICIENT SPACE (adequate)?**




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**Tips for discussing**



- Avoid using “homeless”
- Focus on temporary nature of housing or being in transition

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**Homeless or NOT Homeless**

	Homeless	NOT Homeless
In a shelter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In a motel after an eviction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Living with grandparents to save money for a house down payment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In a motel while house is renovated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Living with aunt following a foreclosure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In an overcrowded trailer with 6 children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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**Children Experiencing Homelessness**

- One in 30 children (NCFH, 2014)
- 1,240,925 in SY 2012-2013 (USED, 2014)
- *Families with young children are the fastest growing subgroup*

National Profile




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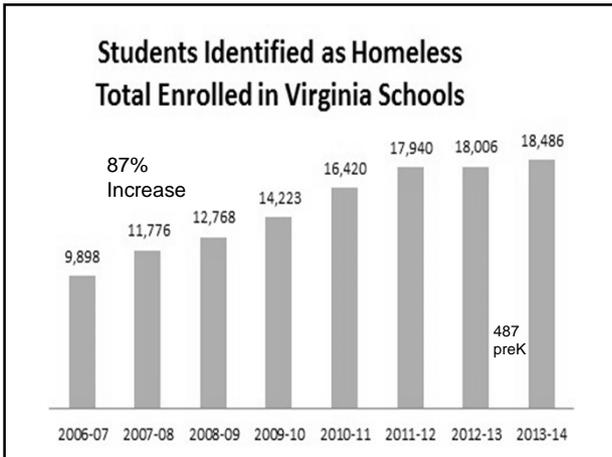
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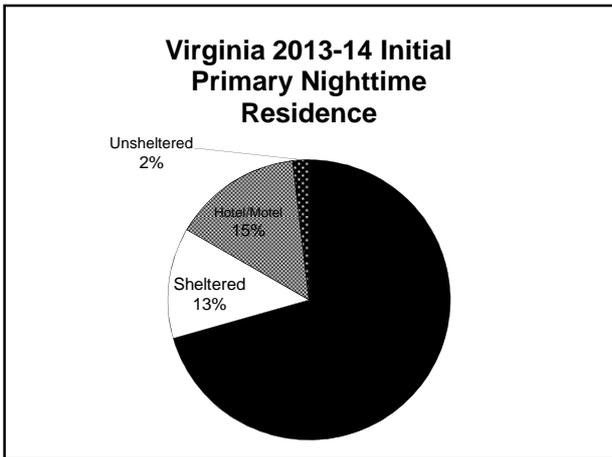
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### Young Children Experiencing Homelessness

- Nationally, more than half of all sheltered children were under age 6
- Virginia, 45% of children in homeless shelters under age of five. (3470 of 5552 in 2010)

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**Older Youth and Unaccompanied**

- About 1000/grade total homeless
- 8-12 grade – 2008 UHY
- 400 UHY Seniors



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*What can **WE** do?*



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**The child's classroom may be the only place where the child can experience quiet, interact with children his/her age, and experience success...**

*School is the most **normal** activity that most children experience collectively...For homeless children it is much more than a learning environment. It is a place of safety, personal space, friendships, and support.*

Oakley & King, 2000

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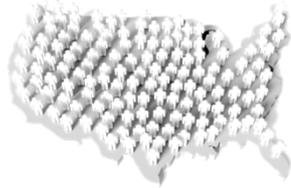
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### McKinney-Vento EHCY Requirements

- Appoint a local homeless education liaison in every school division
- For Virginia liaisons, visit: [www.wm.edu/hope](http://www.wm.edu/hope)




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### EHCY Requirements (school age)



- Enroll students *immediately* in local school OR
- Maintain student enrollment in the *school of origin* when feasible and in the student's best interest
  - Includes transportation
  - Even across school division lines

**Get the student enrolled and keep the student enrolled!**

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### McKinney-Vento Act: Immediate Enrollment

Requires public schools to immediately enroll students experiencing homelessness even when lacking documentation, such as:

- proof of residency
- guardianship
- birth certificates, school records, or other documents
- medical records, including immunization records
- uniform or dress code requirements

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**Unaccompanied Immigrant Youth**

- Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)
- Youth not detained at the border and undocumented
- In US for school purposes

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**Concerns Liaisons Have Identified**

- Trafficking
- Lack of Guardianship
- Health Needs
- Trauma, ELL, overall culture shock
- Impact on Graduation Rates

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**Responses**

- Interagency Partnership to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness
- Virginia Higher Education Network
- VDOE-VDH conversation on immunizations and health care
- Trafficking and trauma included in training
- June VDOE/VDH meeting (next slide)
- Others?

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**Recent VDOE/VDH Meeting**

- Develop best practice guidance based on current Code and regulations
  - Ex. Have a process to contact CPS when needed for health care
- Differential approach for youth
  - under 14
  - over 14 and under 18
- Explore Code of Virginia §54.1-2969(E)

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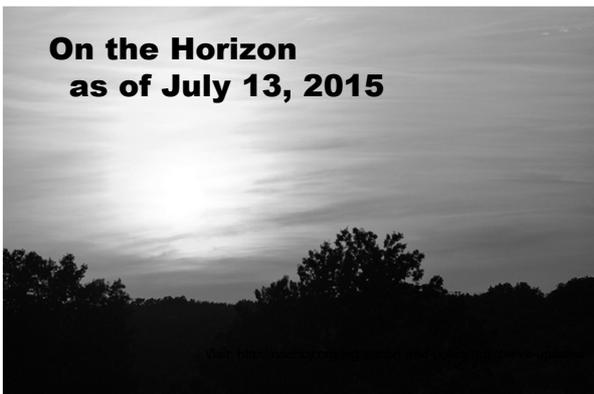
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**On the Horizon  
as of July 13, 2015**



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**Monitoring**



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**Senate FY2016 HUD Appropriations  
H.R. 2577 (Not in House Bill)**

- Passed out of Appropriations Committee on June 25, 2015
- Unprecedented new funding and policy language on youth homelessness

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**What's in the Bill?  
Balancing Priorities**

In awarding grants with homeless assistance funds, HUD would be required to ensure that incentives created through the application process "fairly balance" priorities for different populations, including youth, families, veterans, and people experiencing chronic homelessness

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**What's in the Bill?  
Eligibility/Documentation Barriers**

- Youth 24 and under waived from the requirement to provide third-party documentation to prove eligibility
- Unaccompanied youth aged 24 and under, or families headed by youth aged 24 and under, who are living in “unsafe situations” may be served by youth-serving providers who receive HUD funding

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**The Homeless Children  
and Youth Act  
H.R. 576/S. 256**

- Bipartisan, bicameral legislation
- To-date, supported by **402 organizations**, including 60 national organizations

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**The Homeless Children and Youth Act:  
What Does it Do?**

- Amends HUD’s definition of homelessness to include children and youth verified as homeless by school liaisons, RHYA programs, Head Start, Health Care for the Homeless programs, etc.
- Prohibits HUD from prioritizing one group over another; communities would be guided by local needs assessments
- Requires data from all federal homeless programs to be part of HUD’s Report to Congress

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**The Homeless Children and Youth Act:**

- Does *not* contain expensive new studies or data collection
- Does *not* take away funding and services from other homeless populations
- Does *not* “flood the system” and overwhelm existing resources

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**Elementary and Secondary Education Act Reauthorization: Current Status**

- “The Every Child Achieves Act of 2015,” S. 1177, introduced and being debated
- The “Student Success Act,” H.R. 5, passed by the House July 8
- In the following slides, an asterisk\* indicates provisions included in both bills

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
Title I Part A  
Provisions on Homelessness**

- Requires the State plan to describe how the SEA will comply with the McKinney-Vento Act
- Authorizes the amount of Title I set-aside to be determined based on a needs assessment, and to be used for services not ordinarily provided by Title I, including local liaisons and transportation to the school of origin
- Clarifies that the Title I set-aside is for all schools in an LEA (not just non-participating\*)

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
State Coordinators and Liaisons**

- State coordinators must be able to sufficiently carry out duties\*
- State coordinators must annually publish updated list of liaisons on SEA website\*
- State coordinators must monitor LEAs
- Local liaisons must have sufficient time and training to carry out duties
- As determined appropriate by State Coordinator, local liaisons must participate in professional development and technical assistance

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
School Stability Provisions**

- Enhanced school stability: presumption that staying in the school of origin is in the student's best interest, unless individual determination of best interest factors shows otherwise\*
- School of origin definition is amended to include feeder schools\*

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
Enrollment Provisions**

- Clarifies that homeless children and youth must be enrolled in school immediately, even if the student has missed application or enrollment deadlines during any period of homelessness\*
- Requires SEAs and LEAs to develop, review, and revise policies to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment, and retention of homeless students in school, including barriers related to fees, fines, absences, and credit accrual policies

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
Credit Accrual and Academic Support**

States must have procedures to ensure that homeless children and youth:

- are able to receive appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school
- have access to magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs, if such programs are available at the State or local levels

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
School Success and  
Extra-Curricular Activities**

SEAs and LEAs must adopt policies and practices to promote school success, including access to full participation in academic and extra-curricular activities that are made available to non-homeless students.

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
Unaccompanied Homeless Youth**

- Requires local liaisons to ensure that unaccompanied homeless youth:\*
  - are enrolled in school;
  - have opportunities to meet State academic achievement standards, including through the McKinney-Vento Act's credit accrual provisions; and
  - are informed of their status as independent students for financial aid and may obtain assistance to receive verification for the FAFSA.

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
Identification, Privacy, and Funding**

- Added emphasis on identification throughout
- Schools must treat information about a homeless child or youth’s living situation as a student education record, and may not release this information to persons not authorized under FERPA\*
- Authorizes “such sums as may be necessary” for FY2016-FY2021

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
Foster Care – State Title I Plans (1)**

State Title I Plans must describe the steps the SEA will take to ensure collaboration with the State child welfare agency to improve the educational stability of children or youth in foster care including assurances that:

1. Foster youth are enrolled or remain in their school of origin, unless a determination is made that it is not in their best interest;

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
Foster Care – State Title I Plans (2)**

- The determination must be based on best interest factors, including consideration of the appropriateness of the current educational setting, and the proximity to the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement
- When a determination is made that it is not in the best interest to remain in the school of origin, the child must be immediately enrolled in a new school

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
Foster Care – State Title I Plans (3)**

- The SEA designates a point of contact for the state child welfare agency, who will oversee implementation of the SEA responsibilities
- The SEA point of contact may not be the same person as the state coordinator for homeless children and youth under the McKinney-Vento Act

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
Foster Care – Local Title I Plans (1)**

- Within one year of enactment, LEAs must develop and implement plans for the transportation of foster youth to their school of origin, when in their best interest
- LEAs are required to provide transportation to the school of origin only if they are reimbursed by the child welfare agency, or if they agree to provide it

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
Foster Care – Local Title I Plans (2)**

- LEAs must designate a point of contact if the corresponding child welfare agencies notifies the LEA, in writing, that it has designated a point of contact for the LEA

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
Awaiting Foster Care Placement**

- Within one year of enactment, “awaiting foster care placement” is deleted from the definition of homelessness in the McKinney-Vento Act

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**Every Child Achieves Act of 2015  
State Report Cards**

- Current: State report cards include achievement, including specific subgroups
- S. 1177 maintains and adds homeless and foster children and youth to state assessments
- S. 1177 includes similar subgroup reporting for graduation rates and other indicators States use for accountability, but not homeless/foster
- Potential amendment to add homeless/foster to graduation rate disaggregation

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Virginia’s On-Time Graduation  
Rate:



**[http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics\\_reports/graduation\\_completion/cohort\\_reports/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/graduation_completion/cohort_reports/index.shtml)**

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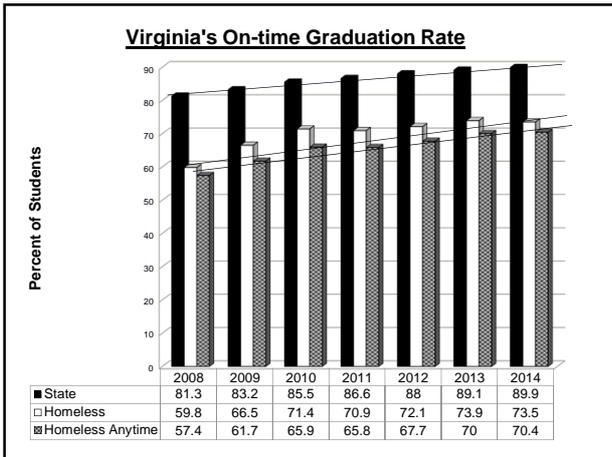
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### Helpful Websites

- Project HOPE-VA – [www.wm.edu/hope](http://www.wm.edu/hope)
- CoC – <http://www.hudhre.info>
- NCHE – [http://center.serve.org/nche/ibt/sc\\_preschool.php](http://center.serve.org/nche/ibt/sc_preschool.php)
- NAEHCY – [www.naehcy.org](http://www.naehcy.org)

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### “HOME”work

- Look for ways to share the story
- Fall trainings
- NAEHCY Conference
- Others??

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Project HOPE-Virginia  
The College of William & Mary  
P. O. Box 8795  
Williamsburg, VA 23187  
757-221-7776 877-455-3412 (toll free)  
757-221-5300 (*fax*)  
[homlss@wm.edu](mailto:homlss@wm.edu)  
[www.wm.edu/hope](http://www.wm.edu/hope)

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