

# The Faces of Youth Homelessness

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- You will be able to define homelessness under the McKinney-Vento Act
- You will be able to describe what makes a student “highly mobile”
- You will be able to describe how high mobility impacts a student's access to their learning
- You will be able to identify strategies that elevate learning for highly mobile students

# Today's outcomes

- Originally passed in 1987 to address the numerous barriers homeless children face in obtaining a Free, Appropriate, Public Education (FAPE) and reauthorized as Title IX Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act in 2016
- Outlines the responsibilities of public school districts to:
  - Provide school access, stability, and continuity
  - Provide support for academic success
  - Provide child-centered, best interest decision making in order to keep students in schoolfor students who are experiencing homelessness

What is the McKinney-Vento (MkV) Act?



## Students and families who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence

- Living with friends or relatives due to economic hardship (“doubled up”)
- Living in shelters, motels, hotels, or transitional housing
- Living in spaces that are not suitable for human habitation (cars, parks, or homes in disrepair, without utilities, or infested)
- Are migratory children living in the above circumstances
- Are unaccompanied youth

How does homeless define?



A youth who is qualified for McKinney  
not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian

- Vento and is



What is unaccompanied home?



- Uncertain rules and routines
- Personal conflict
- Overcrowding
- Barriers to completing homework
- Lack of restful sleep
- Resentment from those in the home
- Food insecurity



Why is “doubled up” considered home



- Lack of consistent access to medical, dental, and mental health care
- Food insecurity
- Higher rates of suicidal ideation
- Susceptibility to trafficking
- Stigmatization and stereotyping
- Chronic trauma
- Higher likelihood of experiencing homelessness as an adult

How does HOUSING Impact ATBI



- High mobility resulting in multiple school changes and interruption to academic and grade-level progress
- Crowded living situations and lack of space to do uninterrupted homework
- Denial of enrollment without required documentation due to misunderstanding of McKinney-Vento rights and services
- Lack of transportation to and from school
- Disproportionate exclusionary discipline practices
- Higher risk for chronic absenteeism, truancy, and dropout

How does HOUSING INSTABILITY education





- Access to a McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaison in their school district
- Immediate enrollment with full opportunity to succeed in school free of stigma and equal to their housed peers
- Choice between the neighborhood school or the school of origin (school last enrolled in or attended)
- Transportation assistance to the school of origin
- Immediate access to free school meals and educational services for which they are eligible

**What rights are afforded to students un**



- Mention of inadequate or unstable housing
- Not being in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian
- Lack of participation in field trips and after school activities
- Unmet medical and dental needs
- Chronic hunger or food hoarding
- Fatigue or sleeping in class
- Wearing the same clothes for several days
- Numerous absences or frequent tardiness



What are some red flags of housing instability?

# Statistics

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In January 2020, there were 580,466 people experiencing homelessness in America.

Families with children make up 30% of the homeless population.

Unaccompanied youth (under age 25) account for six percent of the larger group.

## In Colorado:

- 9,846 people are experiencing homelessness.
- 21,560 students are experiencing family homelessness.
- 2,646 Unaccompanied Youth are experiencing homelessness.

## References:

- Metro Denver Homeless Initiatives Point in Time Count, 2021.
- Colorado Department of Education, 2021.

- Adams County experiences the highest rate of student homelessness in the state, educating roughly 12% of Colorado's homeless students
- 4% of the overall student population of Adams 12 Five Star Schools is identified as homeless
- Adams 12 has the largest number of Afghan evacuee students in the state of Colorado

# In adams county



- Students who are experiencing homelessness
- Students who are involved with the child welfare system either in formal foster care or informal kinship care
- Students whose parents move from place to place looking for agricultural/seasonal employment
- Students who have fled from their country of origin and/or been resettled in the U.S.
- Students whose living circumstances put them at risk of multiple school moves

WHAT “HIGHLY MOTIVATED” STUDENTS



- Student turnover, especially during the school year, adversely affects student achievement not just of mobile students, but everyone in the school, as increased time is spent bringing all students to the same point in the curriculum, developing normal procedures, and integrating parents into school programs
- School transfers during kindergarten often cause students, to lag behind their peers in overall academic achievement and grade promotion throughout grade school
- Students who transfer schools three or more times during their academic careers are far more likely than their non-mobile peers to repeat a grade, be suspended or expelled from school, and experience emotional or behavioral problems

RESEARCH...

- Identify and remove barriers (transportation, food insecurity, lack of supplies, etc)
- Designate Single Points of Contacts at the school
- Connect students to tutoring and credit recovery
- Support students with opportunities for postsecondary readiness

What can schools do to academic progress HIG  
MOBILE students?

- Establish mentorship programs and intentional connections with trusted adults
- Connect students with recreational opportunities outside of school
- Support students with extracurricular activities at school
- Educate all school staff on the unique needs of highly mobile students

What can schools do to support the social-emotional well-being of HIGHLY MOBILE students?



- Connect families to community resources (housing, medical care, dental care, mental health care, legal services, laundry services, etc)
- Ensure eligible families have Medicaid, SNAP, and other public benefits
- Establish school-based resource rooms and direct provision of basic resources and school supplies

**What can schools do to support the families of the HIGHLY STUDENTS?**

We arrived in Broomfield unsure of how we would find housing after our lease ended in Clear Creek county and I was laid off due to the pandemic. We met a homeless outreach case worker when we were living in our pop \_\_\_\_\_ - up camper. She walked us through the enrollment process at the middle school. We never imagined how supportive a school could be. The homeless outreach staff at the school dispelled all of our fears about being in a new town and having absolutely no support. The McKinney \_\_\_\_\_ - Vento liaison and school staff made us feel like we were a part of the community and that we belonged, regardless of our housing status. The Refuge in Broomfield assisted us with Code Blue hotel vouchers for the severe winter nights. Broomfield FISH helped us with food during times when we were not yet connected with SNAP benefits. One day the McKinney \_\_\_\_\_ - Vento liaison introduced me to a caseworker from an agency called Almost Home. Before we knew it, we were housed. We were able to donate our pop \_\_\_\_\_ - up camper to another un \_\_\_\_\_ - housed family. It has been a beautiful season, despite the obvious difficulties. ***If we ever doubted that kindness and unconditional love are thriving in our community, we certainly experienced a warm and lasting embrace that has changed our lives forever.***

- Adams 12 Parent

When families supported they thrive

When I was in elementary school my mother and I moved from house to house and had regular stints of homeless. We eventually found a home and lived there for three years. It was pretty good except for my acting out. This is mostly because my mom was not the best mom. She would often leave spontaneously and I would be left alone and would have to fend for myself. One day in the eighth grade I came home, not to my mom, but to my uncle Phil who sat me down and said she had lung cancer. I just sat there and cried because I knew she smoked at least three packs a day but I thought my mom was invincible. I thought nothing could hurt her, that nothing could take her down. I remember thinking about the last time I saw her. We were in each other's face cussing each other out. I guess I was just venting because I hated being at my Uncles. I hated having to conform to his rules. I hated myself for being so selfish and hateful to my mom. I couldn't say any of that. All I could do was hold her hand and think about all the missed opportunities. I had a hard time with depression but eventually, I reached acceptance that my Mom was gone and the only thing I can do is be better than she could have ever imagined I could be.

*After being*

***passed around from family member to family member, I am on my own. I am a high school senior and my one goal is to go to college and make something of myself, so my children will never experience what I have.***

- Recipient of the Adams 12 Aim for the Stars Scholarship, and current student at Metro State

**Our students have a lot to teach**

- Find out who your district's McKinney-Vento liaison(s) is/are
- Make sure your school has McKinney-Vento information clearly posted
- Arrange a youth homelessness presentation for your school
- Write letters in support of more services and/or initiatives for Homeless Youth to city officials and legislators
- Seek out partnership with your district's Education Foundation
- Explore adding a resource room to your school or district
- Advocate for mentorship and tutoring programs
- Meet families where they're at...both literally and figuratively

**Believe in every student's potential**

**Get started**



I had a student once  
who entered college with  
a 1.2 GPA. She finished  
with honors and a full  
ride scholarship...She  
was the same person  
she was in high school,  
the only difference  
was that in college, for  
the first time in her life,  
she had a bed.

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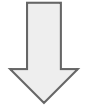
Heather Thompson Day  
**Professor**

edutopia

*November Is*



Scan here for  
Homeless Youth  
Awareness Month  
Toolkit, courtesy  
Colorado Department  
of Education and  
State McKinney-Vento  
Coordinator Patricia  
Gumina!



**Join us!**





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