



Spring 2007

The Beam

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- Write a feature about an issue that needs our attention!

Contact Jodi Mincemoyer regarding submissions at: jodim@naehcy.org

Deadline for the Back to School issue is July 16, 2007

Deadline for the Conference issue is October 4, 2007.

Inside this issue:

Immigrant	1
President's Update	2
Welcome Candace Sullivan!	2
Web-based Professional Development	3
Integrative Pre-Algebra For Everyone	4
Legislative Update	5
New From NCHE	7
19th Annual Conference	8
NAEHCY's Mission	8

Immigrants, Refugees, and Homelessness

By Jan Moore, National Center for Homeless Education

It can take immigrants 10-20 years to adjust to the culture of the United States.¹ Immigrant children are often caught between parents trying to retain their own traditions and peers living the American way of life. But schools in collaboration with community agencies can serve as stabilizers that significantly impact the assimilation of students and the entire family.

Role of Schools in the Lives of Immigrant Students

Despite opportunities to have a positive impact on children's future success, school districts also face significant challenges in serving these students appropriately. Lack of English fluency is one of the most obvious contributors to school failure that then puts students at a greater risk of dropping out of school.² English language learners generally require at least five years to catch up academically in English, although they may be conversationally fluent in two years.³ In addition to their need to learn English, many immigrant students also need extra academic instruction because schooling in their home country was limited or nonexistent.

Involvement of immigrant parents may be hindered by the lack of interpretation services, lack of transportation to schools, or their inability to take time off work. Unfortunately, many school administrators and teachers misinterpret this behavior as a lack of interest in the child's education.⁴ On the contrary, their own high ambition and the high expectations they have of their children make immigrant parents a huge motivating force in their children's academic success, which includes higher grades and higher probability of graduation.⁵

Immigrant students tend to have high mobility rates⁶ that are correlated with learning difficulties, academic failure, and increased drop out rates. As a result of their living situations and mobility, many immigrant students may be eligible for McKinney-Vento services that promote school stability despite frequent moves. The collaborative efforts of the school district homeless liaison can secure for students and their families access to needed school and community services such as allowing students to stay in their schools of origin, providing interpreters to facilitate parental involvement, explaining the school's expectations, and arranging transportation for school meetings. Medical, dental, and mental health problems are also issues that can be addressed through the liaison's collaboration with social service agencies.

Refugees

Refugees are a special subgroup of the immigrant population who may require additional services and coordinated efforts for stability and success. A refugee is an immigrant "outside of his or her country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion."⁷ Each refugee entering the United States is sponsored by a national voluntary agency (VOLAG) that works through a network of local refugee resettlement agencies to provide core services during the first 30 days a refugee is in the US,

continued on page 6

NAEHCY Update... *from the President*

Dear NAEHCY members,

I am writing this letter on a sun filled day flying high above the clouds on a plane heading from my home in Maine to Washington, DC. The elevated distance allows my thoughts to step back from the daily chores to a broader perspective of association work accomplished since the conference in November.

The Board's strategic planning session renewed commitment to keeping the NAEHCY mission and create efficient and effective pathways for ensuring that homeless children and youth have active advocacy ; that liaisons feel supported, trained, and have the resources to do the job set forth; and that members feel valued.

As my plane swings around for its descent into Washington, DC the point is not lost that this year much attention and focus has been paid towards what is happening in Congress with the upcoming reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act. As Barbara Duffield, Policy Director, leads the charge members have participated in focus groups providing input to making the McKinney-Vento law even stronger. Individual talks with our state congressional delegations, hearings, work sessions; meeting with partners in our cause is intensifying and will continue to be a central focus of NAEHCY over the coming months.

Meanwhile as my plane touches down and my feet hit the ground I am reminded that the minute to minute work across the country carries on. We are enlarging our circle of support by training and educating all school personnel, secretaries, school resource officers. We are collaborating with our health and human services, housing, corrections, labor, city halls and other service providers. We are recognizing and thanking those who partner with us in our work.

Do we recognize as NAEHCY members the immense power of our work? Thank you for the impact you have on other people's lives!

Sincerely,



President

NAEHCY's New Grant Writer: Candace Sullivan

NAEHCY welcomes consultant Candace J. Sullivan as our new grant writer. She will be working with NAEHCY's Board, staff, and members to develop its resources and ensure access to funding to sustain our mission and work in the field of homeless education.

Candace Sullivan has extensive experience in program development, materials development, and fund raising. Candace has authored proposals that have raised over \$2 million for a variety of education, health, and human services organizations. In addition, she has provided technical support to organizations that has enabled them to raise some \$1.5 million.

Candace spent eight years as Director of Program Development at the National Association of State Boards of Education. There she had lead responsibility for fund raising, oversaw a national program operating in four states and seven localities to put in place collaborative school and community programs, spearheaded

a national school health initiative funded by the Centers for Disease Control, and co-directed activities of the National Commission on the Role of the School and the Community in Improving Adolescent Health. She understands how membership associations operate and is responsive to member interests and needs.

Through all of her work, Candace has demonstrated a deep commitment to helping our most vulnerable children and youth. "I'm thrilled to be associated with NAEHCY," she writes, "to help it achieve its important mission of improving the education and life prospects of children experiencing homelessness." She is based in Seattle.

As we help Candace become familiar with NAEHCY, its mission and its members, we may be calling on our associates to assist by providing data and information. Please be ready to share your success stories, challenges and hopes for building a better future for the children and youth you serve!

Getting to Results: Web-Based Professional Development to Study Homelessness and High Mobility in Schools

By: Judith A. Martinez, National Center for School Engagement, CO

Web-based Professional Development (WBPD) leads to improvements in educational practices and improving educational outcomes for students experiencing homelessness and high mobility. Since 2003, WBPD has involved over 90 participants, 34 community teams, and eight states (Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Washington.) This accredited project is sponsored by the **National Center for School Engagement (NCSE)** and creates teams to address the needs of students experiencing homelessness and high mobility and their families. Each cycle of professional development is a year long and coincides with the school year (August to June). NCSE is currently accepting applications for the 2007-08 cycle of WBPD. Applications are due by Friday, May 25, 2007. Visit the NCSE website at for more details.

---- WBPD Results

Even though WBPD is a relatively new project, it has made significant contributions. To date, WBPD has achieved the following results:

- Nationally, 29 studies have been completed and are contributing to what we know about the impacts of homelessness and how to improve instruction and support for students who have faced difficult transition and multiple school changes. Studies are available on the NCSE web site.
- 24 schools and 15 school districts have benefited from action research to increase parent involvement, improve assessment of educational needs, and foster understanding of the strengths and challenges of students who are at high-risk of school failure.
- Over 6000 students have been affected as WBPD participants implemented programs and made improvements to create welcoming school climates.
- Over 1600 students experiencing homelessness and high mobility, and their families, have been directly impacted by the efforts of community teams.
- Over 34 rural, small towns, suburban, and urban areas have benefited by gaining a greater awareness of how homelessness touches the lives of children, youth, and families in their community.

A recent participant sums up her WBPD experience: *"I am better equipped to handle the academic achievement*

of a student population impacted by homelessness and high mobility. More over, I have sought out collegial collaboration on positively and effectively addressing those needs and issues through the process of action research. Finally, I gained personal knowledge that I have made, and will continue to make, a difference in the lives of the children.

States with WBPD teams have benefited in the following ways:

- Heightened awareness of homeless issues in the broader community.
- Received national recognition for contributing to the knowledge base of legislation related to students experiencing homelessness and high mobility (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and Title X of No Child Left Behind Act).
- Increased understanding of educational practices that support students experiencing homelessness and high mobility.

---- Approach

The WBPD approach to professional development integrates: 1) National Training; 2) Online Instruction; 3) Facilitated Peer Learning; 4) Participatory Action Research (PAR) to increase the academic achievement of students experiencing homelessness and high mobility; and 5) Dissemination of Best Practices.

Examples of Actions Implemented through WBPD Teams:

- A WBPD participant offered lunchtime tutoring (called *Lunch Bunch*), which improved academic achievement of participating students.
- WBPD team members worked collaboratively with families living in transitional housing to organize a parent/child homework club. This effort increased parental involvement.
- Protocols were developed and welcoming kits distributed to help students enrolling after the start of school. This type of welcoming process is now being replicated in other schools.
- Title I teachers tailored assessments to better track academic achievement of students experiencing homelessness and high mobility.

continued on page 7

Integrative Pre-Algebra For Everyone

Integrative Pre-algebra instructional techniques have been developed to enable *ordinary people* (e.g., parents, advocates, shelter providers, and other adults) to assist students to acquire pre-algebra knowledge and skills. Sixteen free PowerPoint presentations are available to be used as a guide for mathematics tutoring for students in grades one through eight. Teachers, homeless liaisons, parents, shelter providers, and volunteers will find this approach to math tutoring very useful since no mathematics background is necessary for the program. The PowerPoint presentations and the materials provide the resources required to influence the mathematics education of students in homeless situations.

Integrative Pre-Algebra (IP) is designed to lead students to construct pre-algebra relationships and communicate in the language of pre-algebra. The focus of the instructional approach is on active participation and involvement. Tutors facilitate students' construction of their own knowledge of pre-algebra through the use of manipulative materials.

Each PowerPoint presentation uses a manipulative device as a way to make abstract concepts understandable. The role of the teacher, parent or volunteer, using the IP presentation is to provide the conditions for active learning. Active learning provides the opportunity for the student to communicate and observe mathematical relationships. IP was developed from the belief that students learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. In most areas of mathematics, students reasoning can be aided and clarified by utilizing various kinds of drawings and diagrams. Summaries of seven of the sixteen Integrative Pre-Algebra PowerPoint presentations and their related manipulative devices follow.

- Understanding and applying the basic four operations with fractional quantities is a necessary prerequisite for the study of algebra. **IP Fractions** use fraction bars to illustrate and represent fractional concepts. As a result of the use of the **IP Fractions**, students often draw pictures of the fraction bars to solve a difficult problem.
- Adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing integers (positive/negative numbers) are the focus of the **IP Integers**. Two color counters (counters which are red on one side and yellow on the reverse side) are used to represent integers. For example, **IP Integers** provides a persuasive clarification of why adding the

By George W. Fair, Ph.D., The University of Texas at Dallas

opposite number is the most efficient method of subtracting integers.

- **IP Modeling Numbers** uses square number tiles to construct odd, even, square, prime, and composite numbers. This IP presentation guides the student to explore rectangles that represent these different types of numbers and how rectangles that represent these numbers can be interpreted to determine the factors and multiples of a number. Students need to have learned, at the concrete level, the process of determining the least common multiple and greatest common factor by the time they encounter algebra.
- Graphs and simple equations such as: $y = x + 1$, $y = 2x - 1$, $y = 3x$, are the most useful ways to show relationships between quantities and to help students use these relationships to solve problems. **IP Linear Relationships** uses a dry erase board to build simple tables and draw graphs of these relationships. The ability to represent relationships through tables, equations, and graphs – and to make connections among these representations – contributes greatly to a student's preparation for algebra.
- **IP Transforming Geometric Shapes** provides the student with the seven Tangram pieces (2 large right triangles, 2 small right triangles, one medium right triangle, one square, and one parallelogram) to build a rectangle, square, triangle, parallelogram, and trapezoid and draw them on a chart. Students are guided to construct these shapes by progressing from the use of two pieces to seven pieces.
- **IP Areas on a Geoboard** and **IP Angles on a Circular Geoboard** utilize a two sided geoboard and rubber bands. One side of the geoboard has 25 pegs in a 5 X 5 array and the reverse side has 12 pegs evenly spaced in a circle. These activities prepare the student for algebra application problems that involve area and angles.

Please visit the IP website: www.utdallas.edu/research/prealgebra to get a more detailed explanation of the IP project and download IP PowerPoint presentations. The manipulative devices can be purchased at most teacher stores, educational materials catalogs, or purchased from the project office. Manipulative materials for one IP presentation are available for \$8. Please send any comments or questions to the project email address: prealgb@utdallas.edu.

Legislative Update

By Barbara Duffield, Policy Director, NAEHCY

Contact information for Members of Congress may be found at www.house.gov and www.senate.gov. To find out if your Member of Congress has signed on to cosponsor one of the bills discussed, visit <http://thomas.loc.gov>. Comprehensive, regular legislative updates are available on the NAEHCY web site: <http://www.naehcy.org/update.html> or via an email action list. Contact Barbara Duffield directly at bduffield@naehcy.org to be added to this list. The NAEHCY web site (www.naehcy.org) provides further resources, such as talking points and specific measures included in proposed legislation.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE HEAD START ACT

On May 2, the US House of Representatives passed H.R. 1429, the "Improving Head Start Act of 2007," by a roll call vote of 365-48.

H.R. 1429 contains numerous provisions relating to homeless children and families, including prioritization for enrollment, planning, and coordination requirements. A PDF document summarizing these provisions is available on the NAEHCY web site at: <http://www.naehcy.org/dl/headstart050307.pdf>

The Senate Head Start bill (S. 556 - the "Head Start for School Readiness Act") also may reach the floor for a vote soon.

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### THE FAFSA FIX FOR HOMELESS KIDS ACT

#### H.R. 601

On Monday, January 22, Congresswoman Judy Biggert (R-13th/IL) and Congressman Rubén Hinojosa (D-15th/TX) introduced the "FASFA Fix for Homeless Kids Act," H.R. 601. This legislation would amend the Higher Education Act to expand the definition of independent student to include unaccompanied homeless youth.

As of May 3, twenty-seven Members of Congress have signed on to H.R. 601 as co-sponsors of the legislation.

**ACTION NEEDED:** The more co-sponsors who sign on to H.R. 601, the better the chances of the legislation passing this year! Please contact your US Representative and urge him or her to support H.R. 601.

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FY2008 FUNDING FOR EHCY PROGRAM

Congress is currently considering FY2008 funding for federal education programs. The EHCY program was funded at \$61.9 million in FY2006 and FY2007. The extremely limited resources available to the EHCY program have created challenges for schools in providing

comprehensive services to all children and youth experiencing homelessness.

ACTION NEEDED: Please write and fax your US Representative and US Senators and urge them to support \$70 million for the EHCY program in the FY2008 budget. A sample letter is available on our web site.

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### The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act (HEARTH) ACT

#### H.R. 840

On Tuesday, February 6, the "Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act (HEARTH)," H.R. 840, was introduced by US Representatives Julia Carson (D-7th/IN), Geoff Davis (R-4th/KY), Rick Renzi (R-1st/AZ) and Barbara Lee (D-9th/CA). The HEARTH Act reauthorizes the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Programs that are administered by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The HEARTH Act provides greater decision-making at the local level, more closely aligns the HUD definition of homelessness with other federal agency definitions (including the US Department of Education), expands resources for emergency shelter and supportive services, provides a framework for greater homeless prevention activity, and allows communities the flexibility to implement a range of housing solutions. As of May 11, fifty-nine US Representatives have signed on to H.R. 840.

**ACTION NEEDED:** Write and fax your US Representative and urge him or her to sign on to H.R. 840 as a co-sponsor. Please share this alert and ask community partners to write letters, too.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** A summary of key provisions, with an emphasis on those provisions of particular relevance to educators and family/child/youth advocates, is available at the Legislative Update Section of our web site.

## Immigrants, Refugees, and Homelessness, *continued from cover*

including appropriate housing, food, basic orientation, school registration for children, initial health screenings, and health care, if needed. Additional referrals for specialized services, such as mental health, may be made.

Refugees also receive services funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families/Office of Refugee Resettlement, mostly through state governments, that include cash and medical assistance; English as a Second Language (ESL) classes; employment services; and other specialized services, all geared to support their reaching self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.

Often, refugee children and youth are separated from family members as they flee persecution<sup>8</sup> and many become heads of households or unaccompanied youth due to the death of their parents or caretakers. Some live with related or unrelated families. (Although resettlement agencies encourage these families to apply for guardianship, cultural, language, and logistical barriers sometimes hinder this.) Whatever their experiences, many refugee children and youth have lost social stability and access to schooling.<sup>8</sup> Education is not only necessary for their future economic success but also for emotional healing<sup>9</sup> in their quest to overcome the trauma they have experienced.<sup>10</sup>

For more information and resources on identifying and serving immigrant and refugee children, youth, and families, visit the NCHE website at [http://www.serve.org/nche/ibt/sc\\_imm.php](http://www.serve.org/nche/ibt/sc_imm.php)

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### Determining McKinney-Vento Eligibility for Immigrant Students

As with all students, immigrant eligibility for services is determined by the local liaison on a case-by-case basis. A student is eligible if he or she lacks a "fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." (See the NCHE brief on determining eligibility at [http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/det\\_elig.pdf](http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/det_elig.pdf).) If more information is needed, here are some key questions to ask - with the help of an interpreter if needed. Be sure to explain beforehand that you're asking these questions in order to determine whether the child is eligible for additional services.

1. Is this a permanent living arrangement or just a temporary place to stay?
2. Are you are living with friends or relatives?
3. In how many places have you lived since you came to the United States?
4. Where did you live just before moving to your current place? How long were you there? Why did you leave?
5. How long have you been at your current place? How long do you plan to stay?
6. How many people live in the home? How many bedrooms and bathrooms are there?
7. Do you and your children share a room? How many stay in one room?
8. Does the home have electricity/heat/running water?

## New NCHE Publications

NCHE's new spring publications include:

*A McKinney-Vento Toolbox: Constructing a Robust and Rigorous Homeless Education Program, In Case of Disaster and Every Day* is designed to help school districts implement the McKinney-Vento Act fully, so they can address the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness on a daily basis and in times of disaster. The toolbox contains information and practical lessons learned and resources developed during the recovery process following the 2005 Gulf Coast hurricanes. Download the complete toolbox or individual sections at [http://www.serve.org/nche/products\\_list.php#toolbox](http://www.serve.org/nche/products_list.php#toolbox)

*Effective Teachers of At-Risk and Highly Mobile Students: A Review of the Literature* examines quality teaching through a framework of the special needs of students who are at risk of school failure because of high poverty or high mobility. First, the review defines the population of students that is a part of the study. Then it explores the personal qualities of teachers associated with effective teaching. The literature review is part of an NCHE research study that will be available in the fall of 2007. You can download the review at [http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/eff\\_teach\\_lit\\_rev.doc](http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/eff_teach_lit_rev.doc)

*Reading on the Go!* is a two-volume project that explores reading instruction for students experiencing high mobility as a result of high poverty.

*Reading on the Go! (Vol 1): Students Who Are Highly Mobile and Reading Instruction* reviews the characteristics of highly mobile students and provides a literature review of reading instruction focused on reading and high poverty. The aim is to help practitioners better understand the needs of highly mobile students and use research-based decisions to guide the selection and structure of programs.

*Reading on the Go! (Vol 2): A Handbook of Resources* discusses the implementation of reading programs. Volume 2 is based on the literature reviewed in Volume 1 but was also shaped by the voice of practitioners captured through focus groups and site visits. It focuses on supplemental instruction and children experiencing homelessness in preschool and elementary grades.

Download either volume in its entirety or individual chapters and appendices at [http://www.serve.org/nche/products\\_list.php#reading](http://www.serve.org/nche/products_list.php#reading)

## WBPD, continued from page 3

- Increased access to enrollment for students experiencing homelessness and high mobility students in after school programs by enhancing outreach efforts, which included establishing protocols to translate materials into alternative languages.
- Gave voice to how homelessness has an impact on the education of children and youth. For example, in Colorado: *Two high school students interviewed expressed how important it was that the school made them feel welcomed, that the teachers cared that they showed up, and that the school staff acknowledged their existence. The hardest part of staying in school for them was "getting there", and when at school, not knowing whether or not they had somewhere to go afterwards.*

### ~~~~~ Professional Development Outcomes

By the end of their WBPD project, team members achieve these outcomes:

1. Learn the parameters of McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title I and X of No Child Left Behind, and work to improve and implement services or supports for students experiencing homelessness and high mobility in their communities.
2. Study and implement research-based best practices in order to ensure that the team's efforts have the highest maximum potential to improve student level outcomes.
3. Learn and implement the cycles of **Participatory Action Research (PAR)**. Team members implement individual projects designed to improve student level outcomes in one or more of the *Three Domains* of practice, which encompass:
  - *Access to educational services;*
  - *Welcoming and inclusive school culture;*
  - *Flexible instructional strategies that meet the individual needs of the learner*
4. Work within the broader community that supports their school environment to ensure the comprehensive needs of homeless and highly mobile children are met. The goal is to assure maximum school readiness in order to increase the likelihood of student level outcomes across the three domains of educational practice.

Materials and resources can be found at [www.schoolen-gagement.org](http://www.schoolen-gagement.org).

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**Web ReLaunch**

In April, NAEHCY launched a new version of its website, designed by Christina Dukes. The site reorganizes some items and provides easier access to information. New features include artwork created by children experiencing homelessness and a section dedicated to the annual conference.

Christina and the web team will continue to address needs and wishes expressed by members and users through survey and feedback forms. We hope to unveil a search feature in the Fall 2007. Keep watching the site and send your comments and questions to Jodi Mincemoyer at [jodim@naehcy.org](mailto:jodim@naehcy.org).

NAEHCY, a national grassroots membership association, serves as the voice and the social conscience for the education of children and youth in homeless situations.

NAEHCY connects educators, parents, advocates, researchers, and service providers to ensure school academic achievement and overall success for children and youth whose lives have been disrupted by the lack of safe, permanent, and adequate housing.

NAEHCY accomplishes these goals through advocacy, partnerships, and education.

Everyone with an interest in supporting children and youth in homeless situations is encouraged to become a member of the Association by visiting our web site.

**ONLINE REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!**

**Visit: <http://www.regonline.com/128487>**

The 19th Annual Conference | Oregon Convention Center

November 10-13, 2007 | Portland, Oregon

Conference Hotel | Doubletree Lloyd Center

Reserve your room early! Preconferences and meetings will be held in the Doubletree.

Rates for NAEHCY group are \$134 for a double room. Use the NAEHCY acronym when booking.

Registration Rates: Members ~\$390 Nonmembers ~\$440

Preconferences (November 10) ~\$125

*Meet one of the Keynote Speakers*

**James L. Mason, Ph.D.**

James Mason is the Director of the Office of Multicultural Health for the Oregon Department of Human Services. He has worked in higher education as an administrator and as an educator. He has taught graduate and undergraduate courses at Portland State University since 1976 in the Graduate School of Social Work, the School of Urban and Public Affairs, and the University Studies Program.

He has been the Senior Project Consultant for the Georgetown University Child Development Center's National Center on Cultural Competence since its inception in 1996. Dr. Mason was an original member of the Georgetown University Multicultural Resource Committee that worked to develop and disseminate the Child and Adolescent Service System Program (CASSP) cultural competence model. He has applied the cultural competence concept to a variety of service disciplines including: public health, mental health, education, child welfare, maternal and child health, and alcohol and drug treatment. His work had included developing processes to assess cultural competence in human service workers and organizations.

Dr. Mason has been involved in service delivery research since 1984 including directing two national research projects focusing on improving services to culturally diverse communities. He has spoken to, consulted with, and provided assessment and training services to a variety of agencies and bureaucracies across the country. He has lived and worked in Portland, Oregon since 1975. He will address the NAEHCY conference on November 11, 2007.