



Winter 2007

The Beam

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- Share successful practices you have developed or helpful resources you have used.
- Submit a paper based on a conference presentation.
- Review a book or training tool.
- Present an interesting story about the success of a student or family in your program.
- Write a feature about an issue that needs our attention!

Contact Jodi Mincemoyer regarding submissions at: jaminc@wm.edu

Deadline for the Spring issue is April 16, 2007.

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

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Memorandum from M. Joycelyn Elders, MD

Date: 2/5/2007
To: National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth,
National Center for Homeless Education,
National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty
RE: Statement on Immunization Records

In November 2006, I had the privilege to speak before the annual conference of the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. Participants expressed concern that one of the chief barriers to immediate enrollment for homeless children occurs when homeless children arrive at school to enroll without their immunization records. This creates an unnecessary and harmful delay for children who have the greatest need for school enrollment and continuity.

For years, the federal McKinney-Vento Act has required schools to allow homeless children and youth to attend school while their immunization status is ascertained and while immunization and other health records and screenings are obtained. I would like to reinforce the importance and logic of this provision of the law, from my perspective as a health care professional and former Surgeon General of the United States.

Often homeless students cannot produce school records upon enrollment, due to the instability of their living situations. Therefore, the McKinney-Vento Act requires schools to enroll homeless students immediately while contacting and waiting for the former school to obtain records. The Act also requires school districts to work with parents to obtain immunization and other medical records and to arrange necessary immunizations or screenings. In the meantime, the student is to be attending school.

Most homeless students who are enrolling in school have been enrolled in school previously, received basic health care services, therefore have received all required immunizations and health screenings. For the few students who have not been immunized, school nurses and McKinney-Vento staff should work together to start the immunization process. Meanwhile, these students and the community are protected by the same natural public health controls that protect students who refuse immunizations for medical or religious reason (herd immunity). As a result, the McKinney-Vento Act's attendance requirements do not present a significant health risk to the student body or school community.

From a public health perspective, there is no reason for these children to be denied access to school. The health care schools provide is a critical resource for the overall good health of students and families, particularly those experiencing extreme poverty and homelessness. Not only does attending school allow children to work toward their educational goals, it also gives them access to school nurses, who are the backbone of health care services for young people in our country.

It is imperative that homeless children and youth across the country do not miss valuable school time due to paperwork requirements. I support policies and laws, such as the McKinney-Vento Act, that welcome children into school without delay, where they can access school nurses, health care service, eat nutritious lunches, study, play and learn. Schools are critical in ensuring the health of our youth who live in extreme poverty and increasing their chance to become healthy, happy adults. ■

NAEHCY Update... *from the Board*

The NAEHCY Board met in Portland, Oregon, January 18-19, 2007 to continue our efforts to align our goals and objectives with the 2006 Strategic Plan and to identify key strategic program and organizational issues for the upcoming year. The board of directors is comprised of volunteers who are committed to the mission of NAEHCY and the vision that every child and youth experiencing homelessness will be successful - academically, personally and socially. To that end, we organize the projects of the association to ensure that those working in the field have access to the resources, advocacy, and development necessary to build futures for the children they serve through educational pursuits.

NAEHCY is the expert in implementing the McKinney-Vento (MV) education legislation and advocates for awareness and best practices regarding MV implementation. In order to accomplish these goals through advocacy, partnership and education, we identified the following *key strategic program issues* for the association to focus on over the next several years along with appropriate goals to address the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Issue #1: Legislation (e.g., McKinney-Vento reauthorization, Title I, HUD McKinney-Vento, Head Start, Higher Education Act, HUD Homeless Assistance Programs)

Goals:

- Strengthen MV to improve school stability, access, and success, for children and youth.
- Ensure provisions to support homeless children in other Acts.
- Increase funding for McKinney-Vento Education programs.

Issue #2: Implementation (e.g., Special education, Child welfare/foster care, Unaccompanied youth, Early childhood, Title I)

Goal: Promote policies and practices to ensure that all children and youth will receive appropriate educational and support services.

Issue #3: Increasing awareness through media

Goal: Raise awareness of the existence of homeless children and youth, who they are, and what they need, in order to create public and political will to act on their behalf.

The following *key strategic organizational issues* facing NAEHCY over the next three to five years were identified

along with goals to address them.

Issue #1: Work structure

Goal: To be able to work efficiently, effectively and flexibly as a board dispersed around the country.

Issue #2: Communication

Goals:

- Increase awareness of NAEHCY as the voice in homeless education.
- Develop deliverables using key messages and mission.
- Create a structure for disseminating messages on a consistent basis.
- Develop a structure for collaboration with partners.

Issue #3: Funding

Goals:

- Focus resources on development.
- Raise money.
- Develop strong funding relationships.

Issue #4: Membership

Goals:

- Engage members.
- Increase membership value.
- Highlight the unique work of the association.

Issue #5: Research/data gathering

Goals:

- Collect and analyze available research and data.
- Ensure appropriate dissemination of and coordination with our key messages.

Action steps were designed to address tough questions on how to improve the board's operating effectiveness and efficiency of the board. Two committees were eliminated: the Education Committee was dissolved due to duplication of services, given the role of the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) at SERVE; the Legislation Committee chair's role also seemed redundant, since the association contracts with Barbara Duffield to fulfill such responsibilities. The board is comprised of the following committees:

- National Conference
- National Conference State Host & Local Advisory Council
- Communication
- Awards and Recognition
- LeTendre Education Fund
- Executive Committee (Comprised of the five elected officers of the board.)

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2005-2006 Federal Data Collection

For the first time, the US Department of Education required online submission of McKinney-Vento program data as part of the Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR), furthering its goal of state data collection through a single portal. Homeless Education data were submitted by all fifty states, Puerto Rico and the Bureau of Indian Education. Local Education Agencies (LEA) have had to adapt their data systems and are still transitioning to meet these new federal data collection requirements. Consequently, not all LEAs are represented in the data. Nevertheless, the data submitted provides an even more accurate picture of the state of homeless edu-

By Beth Hartness, National Center for Homeless Education

cation than has been previously available. Over 914,000 homeless students were reported enrolled by LEAs with and without subgrants (a 40% increase from 2004-05). Over 450,000 students were reported served by McKinney-Vento subgrants (a 28% increase). The increases can be attributed to both the stringent new data collection rules and to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The number of homeless students assessed in reading and mathematics reported by districts with subgrants in 2005-06 showed a marked increase (44% and 46% respectively). The number proficient increased from 44 to 49% in reading and from 42 to 45% in mathematics. ■

A total of over 914,000 homeless students were reported enrolled during the 2005-06 school year.

Improving Data Collection for Homeless Education Programs

By Diana Bowman, National Center for Homeless Education

In an effort to increase the capacity and expertise of local homeless education programs to collect data for program improvement, the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) launched its 2007 Data Collection Networking Group with an online survey to identify common skills and challenges. Most respondents reported that they are able to use data to impact program decisions and communicate with stakeholders. Yet, almost all identified time as the biggest challenge for data collection.

The 2007 Data Collection Networking Group will provide a forum for sharing ideas and providing information to improve data collection activities for homeless education programs. Building on the Standards and Indicators for Quality McKinney-Vento Programs pilot project that began in 2002 and has been conducted annually as an informal networking group since that time,

the 2007 group will offer several new features. In April and May, members will have an opportunity to participate in online trainings on a variety of topics, such as the Standards and Indicators for Quality McKinney-Vento Programs, planning for data collection, communicating data, and managing the data collection process. The group will also utilize an online classroom to access resources and discuss ideas.

New to the project is Dr. Kirk Knestis, SERVE evaluation and technology staff, who brings a wealth of experience in facilitating education program evaluation and technology projects. The group will also draw upon the expertise of its veteran members who will share their practical experiences in collecting and utilizing data.

If you would like more information on the 2007 Data Collection Networking Group, contact Diana Bowman, NCHE director, at dbowman@serve.org. ■

NAEHCY Annual Awards

Each year, NAEHCY recognizes the outstanding efforts of our colleagues across the country as they serve the educational needs of children and youth in homeless situations. Award recipients are chosen through a selection process overseen by a committee of state coordinators and other experts in the field. In 2006, all corners of the country were represented. Over the next few months, NAEHCY will post on our web site bios of the award winners and articles about them and the fascinating programs they represent and the work they are doing. We wish to acknowledge the extraordinary accomplishments of all the winners from 2006 and their contributions to improving the lives of students experiencing homelessness.

The nomination packet for the 2007 Annual Awards to be presented in Portland, OR, is available on the NAEHCY web site. The selection criteria for the categories listed below are indicated in the award packet. Nominees are measured against the *McKinney-Vento Standards and Indicators Guidebook*. Demonstration of commitment to ensuring the access to educational services for all students and success in school is critical to all categories. Completed nominations must be submitted by **August 10, 2007**. For more information, contact Melinda Dyer, Awards Chair, at Melinda.Dyer@k12.wa.us or (360) 725-4968.

Category I: Outstanding School-Based Program

Kenosha After-School Program, Kenosha Unified School District, Kenosha, WI

Category II: Outstanding Individual Working in a Program

Sub-Category: Staff/Non-Instructional

Carrie Grosz, Homeless Liaison, Bismarck Public School District, Bismarck, ND

Sub-Category: Teacher/Instructional

Jill Belch, Teacher, Virginia Beach City Public Schools, Virginia Beach, VA

Sub-Category: Administrator

Helen Fox, Director, Title I Homeless Projects, Albuquerque Public Schools, Albuquerque, NM

Category III: Distinguished Service and Leadership

**Marianne Argenio and Eileen Sandell
Pennsylvania Homeless Children's Initiative**

Category IV: Outstanding Student or Class

PACE Program, Waas Elementary School, Troy, MI

Category V: Outstanding Media Presentation

Pat Van Doren, Naperville, IL, Book Publication: *Where Can I Build My Volcano?*

Category VI: Sandra Neese Lifetime Achievement Award

Dr. Nancy Haas, Arizona State University, Phoenix, AZ

NAEHCY Annual Awards

The **Sandra Neese Lifetime Achievement Award** is named for a founding member of Nevada's homeless youth education office in 1988. Sandra was a child advocate at heart and a professor at the University of Nevada, Reno. She established a mentor program for student athletes that thrives to this day. In the fall of 1998, Sandra succumbed to cancer. She was a woman of courage who personified what it means to leave the world a better place.

The 2006 recipient of this award is **Dr. Nancy Haas**. She has dedicated a substantial portion of her time and energy to improving the lives of children, youth and families experiencing homelessness. In 1992 Nancy created the Pappas Foundation for Homeless Children to support the educational, social, health, recreational, and emotional needs of students experiencing homelessness. Originally, the foundation exclusively served students at the Thomas J. Pappas Regional Education Center, a separate homeless school in Phoenix, Arizona. In 1998, Nancy served as Vice President of the Pappas Foundation and she concluded that the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness reached far beyond the single site separate school in Phoenix. She led the Foundation's expansion to supporting ALL homeless children and youth in Maricopa County. This paradigm shift occurred prior to the 2001 reauthorization of McKinney-Vento.

Nancy also created a Teacher Grant Program to support local schools in serving their own students experiencing homelessness. Teachers working with homeless children could apply for grants for classroom projects that focused on student achievement, targeting dollars directly to the classroom. In addition, Nancy served as lead committee member of Project M.O.S.T., Mainstream Opportunities for Students in Transition. The goal of Project M.O.S.T. was to enable mainstream schools to better serve their homeless students by eliminating barriers to enrollment, attendance and educational success. Congratulations and warm regards to Nancy for all of her efforts to support homeless students.

Past winners in this category are

- 1998 - Rene Heybach, Chicago, IL
- 1999 - Yvonne Wittrich, Poudre School District, Poudre, CO
- 2000 - Thomas Norlen, Bucks County Homeless Children's Initiative
- 2001 - Dona Bolt, Homeless Coordinator, Oregon State Department of Education
- 2002 - Tim Stahlke, SHELTERS Program Director, Austin, TX
- 2003 - Gloria Bratiotis, Washoe County School District Liaison, Reno, NV
- 2004 - Shirley Abrams, Homeless Coordinator, Los Angeles County Office of Education
- 2005 - Cathy Henry, Ellicott City, MD

NAEHCY Board Update...

All committee chairs are full voting members of the board.

FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

NAEHCY's income derives from three sources: the annual conference, membership, and contributions. The conference is by far our largest source of funding and its annual success is critical to our continued work and growth. We are pursuing a fundraising and development plan to locate and seek sources of income that will support our work and enable us to grow, including a contracted Development Consultant whose responsibility will be to acquire additional financial support for NAEHCY's goals.

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NAEHCY will publish an abbreviated 2006 Annual Report, which will summarize that year's programmatic and strategic work plans and committee activity. We will continue to keep our members informed of the legislative, programmatic and operational decisions which impact the effectiveness of our organization on our web site and through our newsletter, The BEAM. As the board continues to evolve in their commitment to establish an awareness of NAEHCY as the voice in homeless education, we will continue to work toward our goals and objectives to establish policies and best practices in order to ensure that all children and youth receive appropriate educational and support services. We welcome your input and expertise to fulfill this mission. ■

Legislative Update

McKinney-Vento/NCLB Reauthorization

As part of the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act, Congress will begin considering the reauthorization of Subtitle VII of the McKinney-Vento Act (the Education for Homeless Children and Youth program) this year. Reauthorization offers a unique opportunity to shape the legislation to incorporate lessons learned from the past four years of implementation.

Over the past months, NAEHCY has worked with our national partners (the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, and the National Center on Homeless Education) to conduct focus groups on all aspects of the legislation, including academic achievement, school selection, transportation, enrollment, liaisons, dispute resolution, funding, preschool children, unaccompanied youth, children and youth in foster care, Title I Part A, and data collection. In addition, we collected surveys at our 18th annual national conference. Drawing from these focus groups, surveys, and our experience working with homeless children and youth in public schools across the nation over the past seventeen years, we will provide recommendations and legislative advocacy to strengthen the McKinney-Vento Act and Title I, Part A.

Our position papers, as well as legislative analyses and updates, will be available from the legislative section of the NAEHCY web site.

President's FY2008 Budget Released: More Support Needed for Homeless Children's Education

On Monday, February 5, President Bush released his FY2008 budget proposal. The President's budget includes \$61.9 million for the McKinney-Vento Act's Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program. This is the same amount as FY2006 and FY2007, and a slight decrease from the FY2005 level.

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. Last year, over 900,000 students K-12 were identified as homeless and enrolled in public schools. This is an increase of 50% from the 2003-2004 school year. Approximately half of the identified students were enrolled in school districts that receive McKinney-Vento subgrant funding. This lack of funding means that

By Barbara Duffield, Policy Director, NAEHCY

many homeless students are not receiving all of the services they need to participate and achieve in school, thus compromising their future success.

Please write or meet with your legislators and/or their staff to educate them about the needs of homeless children and youth, the importance of the EHCY program, and why funding should be increased to the full authorized amount of \$70 million in the FY2008 budget. Ask your community and coalition partners to assist in arranging and attending meetings. More information is on NAEHCY's web site.

The time to act is now.

"FASFA Fix for Homeless Kids Act" Introduced

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.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) requires most students to provide financial information from their parents or guardians in order to determine student eligibility for aid. The application also requires a parental/guardian signature. H.R. 601 would address barriers to higher education by allowing unaccompanied homeless youth to be considered independent students upon verification of their living situation by a McKinney-Vento Act school district liaison, a shelter director, transitional shelter, or independent living program, or a financial aid administrator.

Please contact your U.S. Representative and urge him or her to co-sponsor H.R. 601.

Head Start Act Reauthorization

Legislation has been introduced in both the House (H.R. 1429 the "Improving Head Start Act of 2007") and the Senate (S. 556 the "Head Start for School Readiness Act") to reauthorize the Head Start Act. Both bills contain numerous provisions pertaining to homeless children and families. For example, both bills require Head Start grantees to identify and prioritize homeless

Contact information for Members of Congress may be found at www.house.gov and www.senate.gov. Comprehensive, regular legislative updates are available on the NAEHCY web site: http://www.naehcy.org/legislative_update.html or via an email action list. Contact Barbara Duffield directly at bduffield@naehcy.org to be added to this list.

children for enrollment, allow homeless families to apply to, and enroll in, Head Start programs while records are obtained, and coordinate individual Head Start center and programs with efforts to implement the McKinney-Vento Act. A complete summary of homelessness-related provisions in the Head Start bills are available at www.naehcy.org/headstart.html.

HEARTH Act Introduced: Amends HUD Definition of Homeless, Improves Support For All Homeless Populations

On Tuesday, February 6, the “Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act (HEARTH),” H.R. 840, was introduced by U.S. 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 U.S. 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. A summary of key provisions, with an emphasis on those provisions of particular relevance to educators and family/child/youth advocates, is included below.

KEY HEARTH ACT PROVISIONS SUMMARY:

Consolidates all HUD McKinney-Vento housing programs (except Emergency Shelter Grants) into one competitive program with a broad set of eligible activities, including homelessness prevention, permanent or transitional housing for any homeless population, and supportive services.

Codifies principles of local control over HUD homeless assistance grant funding, by writing the Continuum of Care (CoC) process into law. Allows CoCs to priori-

tize particular housing and services initiatives based on demonstrated need in their communities, not because of rigid “one size fits all” priorities set by HUD in Washington, D.C.

Aligns the HUD definition of who is homeless more closely with the definition used by the U.S. Department of Education by including people who are living in doubled-up situations or in hotels/motels.

Requires that community homeless assistance planning boards include the participation of local school district homeless education liaisons, or their designee.

Requires that community homeless assistance planning boards include data on homeless children, including infants and toddlers with disabilities, as well as children who are participating in preschool programs, in annual performance reports.

Requires that CoC applications include assurances that project sponsors will establish policies and practices that are consistent with, and do not restrict the exercise of, the educational rights of homeless children and youth, and place families with children as close to possible to their school of origin so as not to disrupt children’s education

Protects victims of domestic violence by prohibiting the disclosure of any information collected by a housing or social service provider that could identify them, and by permitting victims of domestic violence who may be in danger to immediately move to a safer living situation.

Does not codify a definition of “chronic homelessness” or a set of incentives designed to end “chronic homelessness.” Allows communities to set their own priorities for housing and services.

Requires a 25% match for all housing and supportive services, but permits the match to be met either in cash or with an in-kind contribution.

Includes administrative provisions beneficial to grantees.

ACTION NEEDED: Please urge your U.S. Representative to sign on to H.R. 840 as a co-sponsor. Share this alert and ask community partners to write letters, too. ■

School Collaborations with Continuums of Care

By Patsy Williams, Supervisor, Homeless Children and Youth Program, Lafayette Parish Schools

In 1993 Lafayette Parish School System received a McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grant to cover three parishes in our area. During the first year of the project, I made contact with our regional homeless coalition, Acadiana Regional Coalition on Homelessness and Housing (ARCH), which serves eight parishes, to connect agencies and individuals who were serving a common population. Homelessness is still a major problem in our area, and our program is still the only one that focuses on the needs of homeless children and youth.

Our participation in ARCH always keeps the issues of children and youth on the table. I think over the last 14 years that although the primary focus of agencies may be homeless adults; they now realize that provisions need to be made and issues need to be addressed for children that accompany those adults into the shelters. Our McKinney-Vento program now serves all eight parishes in our CoC and we collaborate with all of the agencies and shelters in ARCH.

Our program has also been able to access HUD funds through the CoC. We operate two HUD grants totaling \$150,000 per year to provide case management services to homeless families and educational services to homeless children and youth. With these two grants we do have to limit our assistance to individuals who meet

the HUD policies and the definition of homelessness. We keep separate records and have some separate personnel to work with the different populations. Of course, we wish that all of our clients could receive HUD services, but at this time it is not possible.

ARCH works as a true coalition should. We meet monthly and try to address issues that affect all ages of our homeless population. We expect everyone in the coalition to work for the good of all agencies and parishes in our organization. Projects are prioritized and voted on each year based on need and gaps in services. I have served as secretary, vice-president, and president of ARCH. I am currently the chair of the Planning & Development Committee. The homeless coordinator for our McKinney-Vento program is the vice-president.

Being an active member of a CoC is a great benefit for all liaisons and personnel working with homeless children and youth. Our participation has enabled us to provide wrap around services for our families. A phone call can access almost any service our families or our children and youth need in any of the eight parishes. Everyone knows us, our program and what services we can provide to them, as well as what services we need from them. When we come together as a CoC, all service providers that you need to know are at one table working on a common goal of ending homelessness.

By Camille Castillo, El Paso Coalition for the Homeless

In order to receive McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth (M-V EHCY) funds in Texas, schools must participate in the local or regional continuum of care. The Homeless Children's Program Coordinator for our local Education Service Center, Region 19, serves as a board member for the El Paso Coalition for the Homeless, and she meets regularly with the homeless liaisons from each school district.

Each year the CoC identifies housing facilities that serve homeless children under the age of 18 so they can communicate with schools about the students they are serving. Our region includes 10 emergency shelters, 15 transitional living centers, 6 permanent supportive housing projects, a Safe Haven for homeless persons with mental illness and two Shelter Plus Care programs.

Over the past three years the El Paso Coalition for

the Homeless and local leaders have developed new tools for preventing and ending homelessness while seeking to reduce the costs to public systems, including schools, foster care, prison facilities, emergency rooms, and hospitals. HUD has established a pilot program in El Paso to assist the homeless who qualify for the EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit). During the month of January we had several conference calls between the Coalition, HUD officials and IRS officials. The average return to our homeless families is approximately \$2,000.

Recently, funding cuts in the federal M-V EHCY budget meant cuts for Region 19. This has been a blow to the educational support and activities and tutoring services we have been able to provide to homeless students residing in six school districts in rural and urban areas of El Paso County. ■

Making Educational Supports Available to Young Homeless Children

By Grace Whitney, CT Head Start Collaboration Director and Louis Tallarita, CT State Coordinator for Homeless Education

Early intervention, when indicated, and early childhood education are quickly becoming universal necessities for any child who is expected to be ready for school. Unfortunately, homeless families with children, age birth to five, often face multiple and ongoing barriers to accessing the resources that will give their children a fair chance to succeed. Over the past several years, the Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) Director and the State McKinney-Vento Liaison (SMVL) in Connecticut have been working closely to highlight the educational needs of young homeless children. Beginning with cross-training events and offering to read one another's plans and proposals, this collaboration has grown to, this year, include the joint design and funding of a statewide survey of needs and a small grants program to strengthen local partnerships to increase enrollment of sheltered young children into programs to meet their health and learning needs.

Last year, the HSSCO and SMVL approached the state's School Nutrition Program and the State Child Care Administrator about pooling funds to learn more about the needs of shelters serving families and the needs of the families themselves. Together, with the assistance of a consultant, a statewide survey was designed and conducted to determine how familiar programs staff and families were with education, nutrition, health and social services in their community, especially those aimed at meeting the needs of the homeless, to find out if children were actually receiving available services, and, if not, what barriers might they be facing. Shelter staff and families were interviewed in person. A total of 15 shelters and 30 families participated. Shelters were chosen from a list of all homeless and domestic violence shelters in the state as well as residential substance abuse treatment programs for women and their children.

Results of the survey showed that school-aged children were attending school but that young children were typically not attending early care and education programs and often were not identified by service agencies as needing assistance. Families were typically connected with nutrition programs, both those in the schools and WIC. Both shelters and families were somewhat, though not fully, informed about the rights of children through the McKinney-Vento Act and many were confused about eligibility for community resources outside the schools. It was determined that educational presentations about various community resources and their eligibility re-

quirements and brochures and other materials available in shelters would be helpful.

To encourage active outreach to families of young homeless children, small grants were made available through an RFA process for Head Start and Early Head Start programs to strengthen partnerships with shelters in their community. As a result of the grants, Head Start programs have established ongoing planning committees, sponsored cross training events, created referral protocols, and translated materials for parents to explain how to access community supports to meet their needs. Staff from three of the funded Head Start programs received scholarships through the HSSCO to attend the 18th Annual NAEHCY Conference in Little Rock, AR in November to present on a Head Start 101 panel and to learn more about homeless education.

The state's Coalition to End Homelessness recently brought together all of the grantees and their partners, as well as others, for a joint training and planning event to share what is happening in each community and to plan further how to optimize their own local resources. Trainers from Horizons for Homeless Children in Newton, MA assisted in facilitating the day and the Head Start program staff who presented in Little Rock, made presentations at the event to their state colleagues. This winter, the State Education Resource Center sponsored another event with NAEHCY's Barbara Duffield and speakers from Horizons and local Head Start.

Another round of small grants to Head Start programs is anticipated in the coming months to continue to strengthen partnerships among local early care and education, shelter and housing providers. At the state level, the CT Coalition to End Homelessness, supported with HSSCO funds, will coordinate activities of the HSSCO, the SMVL, the CT Coalition to End Domestic Violence. The Coalition will bring constituencies together to develop policy recommendations and to ensure alignment of early care and education efforts with programming for supportive housing and local ten-year plans. Though funds have continued to be limited, each year our small steps forward have led the way to stronger and more meaningful partnerships to assist families experiencing homelessness. Our goal is that all young children who experience homelessness arrive at the schoolhouse door, side by side with their housed peers, eager and ready to succeed. ■

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UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS:

Tuesday, April 10 -

Executive Committee

Tuesday, May 8 -

Full Governing Board

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.

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

Online registration will open in mid-April.

Find the REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS posted on the conference page of the NAEHCY web site.

Share your challenges and successes! Consider submitting a proposal to present at the 19th Annual Conference. Deadline for submissions is June 1, 2007.

Nominate your hard working colleagues for a NAEHCY AWARD.

See the full list of awards offered each year on page 4. The nomination packet can be found in the "19th Annual Conference" section. Deadline for submissions is August 10, 2007. For inspiration, read about past winners of NAEHCY awards in the "Examples of Success" section of the web site. More coming soon!

PROMOTE the 19th Annual Conference among your colleagues, at trainings, and events.

Materials that can be distributed are posted to the "19th Annual Conference" page of the NAEHCY web site.

Share the NAEHCY magic with the youth you serve through the LETENDRE EDUCATION FUND.

Offer the **LeTendre Scholarship Application** to your students. LeTendre Scholars are awarded a scholarship and receive a trip to the annual conference. See the "LeTendre" section of our site for more information. Application deadline is September 21, 2007.

Join the NAEHCY board.

Elections for officers will be held at the annual conference. Board member roles and responsibilities and nomination forms will be available this summer under the "About NAEHCY" section of our web site.

Become a MEMBER.

Members receive a discount on the conference registration rate and know that they are helping to fund NAEHCY's advocacy and outreach to every corner of the country.