

Guidance Counselors

Support the access and success of children and youth experiencing homelessness in school

Be familiar with common characteristics of children who are homeless so you can recognize them. Common signals are:

- Gaps in learning
- Transportation problems
- Lack of preparedness for class
- Chronic hunger or tiredness
- Erratic attendance at schools
- Attendance at multiple schools
- Poor grooming or clothing that draws attention
- Statements from family when enrolling, such as:
"We've been having a hard time lately." "It's a new address. I can't remember it." "We move a lot and are staying with friends until we find a place."

Introduce yourself as someone who works as an advocate for the child's success in school.

Ask if the child participated in any after-school activities or had special classes at a previous school, then work to connect the child with similar resources if they are available.

Ensure that the student has every opportunity that a non-homeless student has for afterschool activities and in-school programs.

Let parents know of their child's educational rights.

Coordinate with your key building contact to refer students to CIT/H.

Offer support for the physiological needs of the student (food, clothing) as well as the social/ emotional needs (safety, security, and belonging).

Train peer buddies to orient students to the school.

Show that you care about the student!