

School Nurses

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:

- Chronic hunger or tiredness
- Erratic attendance at schools
- Attendance at multiple schools
- Poor grooming or clothing that draws attention
- Lack of immunization record
- Parent who seems confused when asked about the last school attended
- 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."

For homeless students, follow ASD policy when verifying immunization records.

Refer the student to the local health department or family's medical provider for needed vaccinations.

Contact CIT/H if transportation assistance is needed to obtain additional vaccinations.

Observe and alert the principal to any serious medical concern.

Ask about glasses; the child may need them but not have any.

Assist parents with the completion of medical records.

Remember that sending a sick child "home" may not be a safe or stable place for a child who is experiencing homelessness. Help families determine options for their children, if ill.

- Contact the school district homeless liaison so that additional services can be coordinated.
- Follow-up with children sent to obtain immunizations or physicals.
- Develop reliable, accessible resources for medical, dental, and eye care.
- Sponsor a PTA health night.
- Show that you care about the student!