

California DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WestEd

Responsive Early Education for Young Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness

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Pictures by Diane Nilan
HEAR US Inc.
<https://www.hearus.us/>

CPIN, February 27th, 2020

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Early Learning and Care Division Resources

<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/cddpublications.asp>

Early Education Resources

- The Department of the California Preschool Learning Foundations with Play, Early Education Resources
- The online publication about the connections that the five domains of the preschool learning foundations have with the content of other important resources.
- Best Practices for Planning Curriculum for Young Children**
 - Early Childhood and Quality (EC&Q)
 - The publication provides information on authors' shared or individual experiences at home, and helps teachers use those experiences as building blocks for teaching and learning in early education settings.
 - The publication illustrates the use of play, learning, and curriculum work together in early education, and describes the relationship created for early learning and the role of the teacher in supporting children's active engagement in learning.

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Meet Maggie

A young child experiencing homelessness

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Responsive early childhood education for children experiencing homelessness

- NO LONGER INVISIBLE: LEARNING ABOUT THE EXTENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD HOMELESSNESS
- KEY DEFINITIONS USED IN FEDERAL AND STATE POLICY, WHO IS INCLUDED IN SERVICES
- LEARNING ABOUT THE DIVERSITY OF EXPERIENCES OF HOMELESSNESS, DISRUPTING DEFICIT BELIEFS AND STEREOTYPES
- WHAT ELSE CAN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROVIDERS DO? A LOT!

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Children under age 6
Total population?
23,977,152

Estimated number experiencing homelessness?
1,455,537
or
1 in 16 children

Source: Early Childhood Homelessness State Profiles; Data Collected in 2017-2018 (US Department of Education, 2020)

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Two Main Definitions of Homelessness

<p>Department of Housing and Urban Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeless Assistance Programs (HUD) Emergency Food and Shelter (Homeland Security) Department of Veterans Affairs (all programs) Department of Labor (all programs) 	<p>The McKinney Vento Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head Start Act (HHS) Child Nutrition Act (USDA) Violence Against Women Act (DOJ) Elementary and Secondary Education (ED) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (ED) Higher Education Act (ED)
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HUD

An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence:

- Car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
- Supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements

Note: Homeless Children and Youth Act of 2009 -2020 might change this definition

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McKinney-Vento

Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason ("doubled-up");
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters; or
- Abandoned in hospitals;

Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;

- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless

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WHAT IS MEANT BY "DOUBLING UP"?

<p>"Doubled Up" Experiencing Homelessness</p> <p>Loss of Housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eviction: unable to pay bills • Serious damage to home • Unhealthy conditions: pest infestations, domestic violence, drug/alcohol abuse in home <p>Sharing due to Hardship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No legal right to be in the home; host can be evicted • Can be asked to leave at any time without legal recourse • Moved into the home as an urgent measure to avoid being in shelters or on the street • Living situation is intended to be temporary 	<p>Shared Housing Not Experiencing Homelessness</p> <p>Fixed, Regular, Adequate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used on a regular, nightly basis • Family has keys to residence and is free to come and go as they please • Enough space for everyone <p>Sharing Housing as a Choice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intent of sharing is a long-term arrangement for cultural or economic reasons • Moved in together to share a home and expenses • Sharing home equally—not just guests in home • Family not in fear of being asked to leave/kicked out
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<p>Title 1 ESSA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amends McKinney-Vento Salaries for local liaisons Transportation costs Addition of "preschool" 	<p>Early Head Start-Head Start</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Automatically eligible even if family does not meet income guidelines Prioritize for enrollment (3%) Enroll and attend for up to 90 days without required documentation Coordinate with McKinney-Vento LEA homelessness liaison and other community partners 	<p>IDEA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevalence of developmental delays A priority group for early intervention LEA homelessness liaisons can coordinate comprehensive services <p>Child Care and Development Block Grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grace period for needed documentation Homeless data point for tracking Training on identifying and serving homeless children Outreach to families experiencing homelessness
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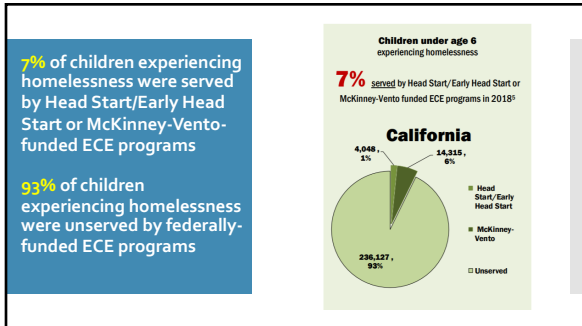
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<p>California Department of Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact information for homeless liaisons across the state of California is listed at https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/lhs/. • Homelessness was added to the California <i>Education Code</i> as a criterion of eligibility for federal- and state-subsidized child development services (Section 8263) • July 2018, the Early Learning and Care Division (ELCD) Management Bulletin (https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/ci/mb1804.asp)
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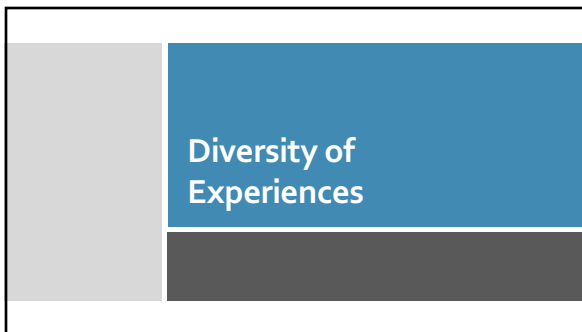
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<p>California has one of the highest percentages of young children experiencing homelessness under age 6 across the nation</p>	<p>Children under age 6</p> <p>Total population² 2,938,209</p> <p>Estimated number experiencing homelessness³ 254,490</p> <p>or 1 in 12 children</p> 
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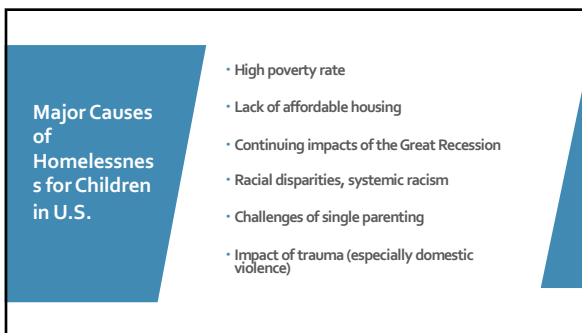
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Nationally, what age group is the most likely to experience homelessness?

- A) Infants
- B) Toddlers
- C) Preschool
- D) Kindergarten
- E) Over 6 years old

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- B) Toddler-age
- C) Preschool
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Where do the majority of families with young children experiencing homelessness live?

- A) In vans or cars
- B) Shelters
- C) Doubling-up
- D) Outside/on the street

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Common Barriers Preventing Access to Early Learning Programs include....

Talk with a partner to identify as many barriers as you can think of together:

What prevents young children experiencing homelessness from accessing and participating in early learning programs?


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Common Barriers Preventing Access to Early Learning Programs include....

- ✓ Subsidies for child care
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Documentation/enrollment procedures
- ✓ Invisibility
- ✓ Mobility
- ✓ Reluctance to share information
- ✓ Lack of outreach by teachers/providers
- ✓ Others?

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**Homelessness is not abuse or neglect and is not reportable.
Lack of housing alone is not legal grounds
to remove a child from a family.**




The following warning signs of neglect could also be signs of homelessness:


- Clothes that are ill-fitting, filthy, or inappropriate for the weather
- Hygiene that is consistently bad (a child who is unbathed, has matted and unwashed hair, or has a noticeable body odor)
- A child who is frequently late or missing from school
- Untreated illnesses

Source: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/ap/childabusereportingguide.asp>


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**NO LONGER INVISIBLE: LEARNING ABOUT THE
EXTENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD HOMELESSNESS**



**KEY DEFINITIONS USED IN FEDERAL AND STATE
POLICY, WHO IS INCLUDED IN SERVICES**



**LEARNING ABOUT THE DIVERSITY OF EXPERIENCES OF
HOMELESSNESS; DISRUPTING DEFICIT BELIEFS AND
STEREOTYPES**



WHAT ELSE CAN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROVIDERS DO?

Dominguez-Pavito, Network CAPPA Joint Annual Conference 2019

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**Reflective practice &
inquiry stance**

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**Increasing
access and
participation**

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**Responsive
Family
Relationships
and
Partnership**

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Understanding Trauma
**Implementing Trauma
Informed Practices**
Housing-sensitive

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Self-Awareness & Self-Reflection

An underlying challenge for providers working with families experiencing homelessness is that talking about homelessness ... brings up their past issues, and they don't want to talk about it because it hits too close to home. I've had adults start to cry during meetings and need to leave the room to calm down. So part of the trainings that I've started to offer include how to engage in self-care for the early childhood educators. We need to be able to look at how our own life circumstances shape the ways that we think about children and families experiencing homelessness. We need to know when to take a break from the work, when to hand a situation over to someone else. But we also need to think about how much it would have meant if someone had stepped up for us when we faced similar circumstances. It's a balancing act. – Aaminah, Homeless liaison

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Building Cross-sector Partnerships


Collaboration across Systems

Learn about your community

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Supporting Maggie and Her Family

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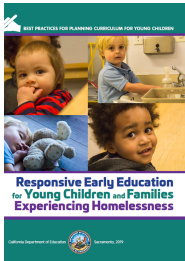


Thank you!

Questions?

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Book Organization


Chapter 1: Definitions and Policies Related to Homelessness
 Chapter 2: Learning about the Families with Young Children Experiencing Homelessness
 Chapter 3: The Impact of Homelessness on Young Children's Development and Learning
 Chapter 4: The Important Role of Early Childhood Programs in Supporting Children Experiencing Homelessness
 Chapter 5: Responsive Relationships and Partnership with Families
 Conclusion, glossary, references, recommended children's books that discuss the topic of homelessness in a sensitive and respectful manner, and f resources

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RESOURCES

- On "Doubling Up"
 - "Other people's places: Doubled up (Eleanor) and her son with special needs. <https://youtu.be/fVs7WNpITB4>
 - Bush, H., & Shinn, M. (2017). Families' Experiences of Doubling Up After Homelessness. *Cityscape (Washington, D. C.)*, 29(3), 331-356
 - Hear US "Worn Out Welcome Mat": <https://www.hearus.us/projects/wovwm.htm>
- Homeless and Doubled up by Vicky Dill: <https://www.wased.com/publications/education/education/issue/2017/10/issue9/homeless%20and%20doubled%20up>
- The Homeless Children and Youth Act of 2019 (H.R. 2001)
 - <https://www.ny.gov/youth-act-policy-and-advocacy/hcya/>
 - <https://www.congress.gov/bills/116/house/congress-house-bill/2001/text>

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HOT OF THE PRESSES:

Early Childhood Homelessness State Profiles: Data Collected in 2017-2018 (2020) compiles data from multiple sources from the 2017-18 school year to provide information on the extent of early childhood homelessness and the availability of federally-funded early childhood education for young children experiencing homelessness across the United States.

<https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/disadv/homeless/early-childhood-homelessness-state-profiles-2020.pdf>

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What is a Preschool "School of Origin" in the McKinney-Vento Act? (Schoolhouse Connection, 2017b)

- Publicly funded program for children (aged birth to five) for which an LEA is a financial or administrative agent or is accountable for providing early childhood education¹
- Preschool program and service operated, administered, or funded by an LEA through the use of Title 1 or similar government grants
- Head Start program receiving LEA funding or for which an LEA is the grant recipient
- Preschool special education service operated or funded by an LEA or mandated under IDEA
- Home-based early childhood service funded and administered by an LEA

<https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/flow-chart-to-determine-preschool/>

Dominguez-Pantoja, Network CAPPA Joint Annual Conference 2019

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RESOURCES

- Think. Teach. Transform., also known as the T3 approach, by the Center for Social Innovation has resources on race and homelessness: <http://us.thinkt3.com/blog/homelessness-is-a-symptom-of-racism>

Dominguez-Pantoja, Network CAPPA Joint Annual Conference 2019

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