CHILD AND YOUTH HOMELESSNESS AND THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT

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About Us

Barbara Duffield
Executive Director
Barbara@SchoolhouseConnection.org

Alleanne Anderson
Policy and Outreach Associate
Alleanne@SchoolhouseConnection.org

Darla Bardine
Executive Director
Darla.Bardine@NN4Youth.org
HAVE A QUESTION?

This webinar is for you. Enter your questions in the questions pane and click ‘Send’.

RECORDING & HANDOUTS

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If you’ve signed up for this webinar, you will receive a link to the recording in an email after the webinar is over.
Today’s Agenda

● Education and Early Childhood
● Tax Credits
● Stimulus Payments
● Early Childhood and Resources
● Food and Nutrition Support
● HUD Homeless and Housing Funds
● Youth Suicide Prevention
● What’s Next for Congress?
K-12 Education

- $800 million to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness, provide them with wrap-around services in light of COVID-19, and with assistance to attend and participate fully in school.

- Remaining $121 billion: 90% to LEAs

- Three state education agency setasides that include homeless students:
  - Learning loss (5%)
  - Summer programs (1%)
  - Afterschool programs (1%)

- 20% LEA setaside for learning loss that includes homeless students

$122.5 billion for SEAs/LEAs
LEAs must develop and make publicly available a plan for reopening within 30 days of receiving funds, and offer a public comment period.

- **Opportunity:** work to ensure the thoughtful inclusion of MV students to ensure they are prioritized

IES study on learning loss, including students experiencing homelessness

- $3 billion for special education
  - $2.58 IDEA Part B
  - $200 million Section 619 Prek
  - $250 million Part C (infants and toddlers)
K-12 Education: What Has Yet to Be Determined

- Formula for $800 million to flow to state education agencies
- Method for $800 million to flow to local education agencies
- Partnerships with community organizations
- Use of funds - “wrap around services”
- Timing and duration of funds
- Guidance/directives from ED on inclusion of homelessness and other marginalized students in ESSER III
- Coordination with ESSERS III and ‘regular’ EHCY + Title I funds
K-12 Education: Preparing for Funds

● Consider needs, and how to maximize and leverage funds
  ○ Liaison capacity + staffing for outreach and identification
  ○ “Navigator” type positions to help families and youth access to all the benefits of COVID packages, inside and outside of school (including housing), and file their taxes so they can receive stimulus payments
  ○ Community partnerships
  ○ Advocate for homeless students in summer and afterschool funds from previous COVID packages and ESSERS II
  ○ Early childhood homelessness specialists and connections
  ○ Student success coaches for transition to higher education

SHC Resources: How to Make ESSER II Work for Your McKinney-Vento Students
Higher Education

- Close to $40 billion for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund
  - Half of this funding to go directly to emergency financial aid for students to prevent hunger, homelessness, and hardship
- Estimated allocations for institutions of higher education
Higher Education: **Best Practices for Reaching Homeless Students**

- Conduct outreach to all students, and targeted outreach to students experiencing homelessness
  - Utilize mass text messages in addition to emails
- Prioritize students experiencing homelessness to receive funds, and provide them with the maximum amount
- Simplify application process (if there is an application to fill out)
- Ensure speedy process for fund rollout

SHARE SHC RESOURCE https://schoolhouseconnection.org/back-to-college-and-training-2020/
Tax Credits

- Extension of Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) to unaccompanied homeless and foster youth at the age of 18.
  - Allows foster and homeless youth to claim the EITC even if they are full-time students and working (currently law prohibits full-time students from claiming EITC).

- Child Tax Credits temporarily expanded to up to $3,600 per child under 6 years old, and $3,000 between 6 and 17 years old
  - The IRS will pay part of this in monthly installments of $250 or $300 from July through December.
Stimulus Payments

Economic Stimulus Payments

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS TO ACCESS THESE FUNDS

Tip Sheet for Providers

- Includes another round of direct stimulus checks:
  - $1,400 for individuals making up to $75,000 a year.
  - $2,800 for joint filers making up to $150,000 (families are also eligible for $1,400 per dependent child under 17).

Access our tip sheet.
**Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS)**
TAS is an independent office within the IRS that helps taxpayers navigate and address unresolved tax issues causing economic hardship, including Economic Impact Payments (EIP).

TAS provides helpful links, answers to frequently asked questions, and access to local tax advocates.

There is no minimum or maximum income threshold for TAS services.

Due to COVID-19, in-person TAS offices are currently closed and cases may be delayed due to high volume. If you have tried repeatedly to contact the IRS, but have been unable to get meaningful assistance, you can also try filing Form 911, Request for Taxpayer Advocate Service Assistance.

**Low Income Taxpayer Clinics (LITCs)**
LITCs assist low-income taxpayers with tax disputes with the IRS.

LITCs can represent you before the IRS or in court on audits, appeals, tax collection matters, and more.

Services are typically provided for free or for a small fee.

To qualify for LITC services, income should be below a threshold (250% of poverty line for 2020) and the amount in dispute less than $50,000.

Some sites may have reduced operations due to COVID-19.

**Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)**
VITA provides free basic income tax return preparation services for taxpayers making $56,000 or less.

Most VITA sites operate February through April each year, but due to COVID-19, some have extended services through July for the 2020 filing season.
IRS Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN)

An IP Pin is a number assigned to identity theft victims to prevent the misuse of their social security numbers on fraudulent tax returns. The IP PIN must be entered on your tax return for it to be processed. IP PINs are reissued annually by mail to the taxpayer's last reported address.

To obtain an IP PIN, you must register for an IRS online services account. If you lose or fail to receive your annual IP PIN, you may retrieve it by logging into your IRS online services account and verifying your identity. If you cannot retrieve the IP PIN, then you must mail in your tax return (no electronic filing) and any refund due may be delayed due to extra processing.

- Registration for an IRS online services account requires the following information: email address, social security number (SSN) or individual tax identification number (ITIN), tax filing status and mailing address, one financial account number linked to your name (credit card, student loan, mortgage or home equity loan, home equity line of credit, or auto loan), and a mobile phone linked to your name or current mailing address.

IRS Whistleblower Program

The IRS Whistleblower Program provides taxpayers the opportunity to report tax fraud and noncompliance to the IRS. If the information results in the collection of additional taxes, the informant could receive a percentage of the amount collected.

NOTE: The IRS rarely investigates whistleblower complaints where the amount of tax allegedly owed is less than $2 million.
Early Childhood Support

- $15 billion for the Child Care Development Block Grant
  - $24 billion for child care providers
- $1 billion for Head Start
- $1 billion for home visiting programs

**Remember:** Children experiencing homelessness under the education subtitle of the McKinney-Vento Act must be prioritized for Head Start and federally-funded child care.
Early Childhood: Strategies and Resources

- **Five Ways to Protect Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers During COVID-19**
- **Find your partners to begin discussions now:**
  - Head Start and Early Head Start
  - Child care programs
  - Child care administrators
  - Home visiting programs
  - State PreK Programs
**Food and Nutrition Support**

- Extends Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer program to school-age and young children for the summer and through the end of the COVID-19 health crisis
  - [New Resource: Helping Homeless and Foster Children Access P-EBT](#)
- Extends eligibility for healthy Child and Adult Care Food Program meals at homeless and youth-serving shelters to young adults up to 24 years old
- Extends the 15 percent boost to SNAP benefits through September 30, 2021
Housing and Homelessness Assistance

- **Eligible persons:**
  - HUD definition of homelessness
  - HUD’s definition of at-risk of homelessness
  - Persons fleeing or attempting to flee situations of domestic abuse, trafficking, or stalking
  - Populations for whom supportive services would prevent the family’s homelessness or having a high risk of housing instability.

- **Uses:**
  - Tenant-based rental assistance, affordable housing development, supportive services for those not already receiving services, acquisition and rehabilitation/development of non-congregate shelters which may be used as shelter or converted to permanent affordable housing.

$5 Billion for Homelessness Assistance

$5 billion for Homelessness Assistance through the HOME Investment Partnerships Program
Emergency Housing Choice Vouchers

Eligible persons:
- HUD’s definition of homelessness
- HUD definition of at-risk of homelessness
- Persons fleeing or attempting to flee situations of domestic abuse, trafficking, or stalking
- Populations for whom supportive services would prevent the family’s homelessness or having a high risk of housing instability.

Uses:
- Rental payments
- Rental arrears
- Utility costs
- Utility arrears
- Housing stability services

$5 Billion for Emergency Housing Choice Vouchers
Emergency Rental Assistance

Eligible populations:

- HUD’s definition of homelessness
- HUD’s definition of at-risk of homelessness
- Persons fleeing or attempting to flee situations of domestic abuse, trafficking, or stalking
- Populations for whom supportive services would prevent the family’s homelessness or having a high risk of housing instability.

$21.5 billion in emergency rental assistance
HUD Assistance: What Has Yet to Be Determined

- Which local agencies will administer the new HUD Homeless Assistance (through HOME program)
- **HUD’s definition of “at risk of homelessness”**
  - Will HUD stick to the statutory definition of “at risk,” which includes education definition, or impose more requirements and documentation?
  - How will “at risk” families access vouchers and other assistance?
  - Will HUD keep its current prioritization or limit access to categories that aren’t HUD definition of homelessness?
- **Supportive services**
  - Will HUD impose limitations on amount for supportive services?
  - How will grantees determine if a family or youth is already receiving services?
Youth Suicide Prevention

$20 billion for youth suicide prevention through Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Resources:
- Sign up for grant award opportunities from SAMHSA
- SAMHSA grants page: www.samhsa.gov/grants
- Additional Information: https://youth.gov/youth-topics/youth-suicide-prevention
Questions and Comments
What Comes Next for Congress?

- Infrastructure package-- Build Back Better
- FY22 Appropriations
Upcoming Action Alert:
A “Dear Colleague” Letter on EHCY/RHYA Appropriations

- This is a request from EHCY/RHYA Congressional champions to other Members of Congress asking them to sign on to a letter to show support for increased funding.
- The letter goes to the Chair and Ranking Member of Appropriations Committees.
- The more members who sign on, the more support it signals to the chairs.
- Stay tuned!
Register: https://nn4youth.org/events/2021-summit

Breakout tracks for this year’s Summit include:

- Advanced Practice Track: Hot topics for those who have been doing the work for several years.
- Nonprofit CEO Track: Peer-to-peer learning on topics that nonprofit CEOs are grappling with.
- Education Practice Track: Early childhood, K-12, and higher education co-convened with SchoolHouse Connection
- Prevention Track: Strategies to prevent experiences of homelessness among youth
New Resource

[Download here](#)

You can also [watch this video](#) which covers how to schedule and prepare for your congressional meetings.
Educating the New Congress: Step-by-Step Advocacy Training Series for Homeless Educators and Service Providers

- **Part I**: Getting Grounded: Advocacy in the New Congress
- **Part II**: How to Effectively Communicate with Congress
- **Part III**: What Does Successful Advocacy Look Like? Learning from Peers
- **Part IV**: Shining a Light: Using Media (and Social Media) to Boost Legislative Advocacy
- **Part V**: How To Engage Parents and Youth with Lived Experience in Advocacy
- Next Tuesday, 3/23, **Part VI**: How to Apply These Lessons Closer to Home
Contact Us!

- Alleanne Anderson, alleanne@schoolhouseconnection.org
- Barbara Duffield, barbara@schoolhouseconnection.org
- Darla Bardine, darla@nn4youth.org