

Using ARP Funds to Support Children Experiencing Homelessness

About SchoolHouse Connection

SchoolHouse Connection works to overcome homelessness through education. We provide strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth.

- Website:
<http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org>
- Newsletter:
<https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up/>
- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarships

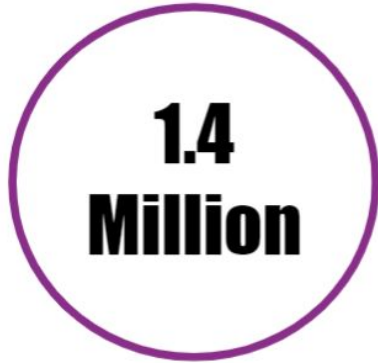


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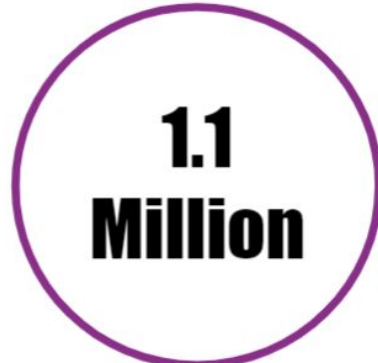
Today's Webinar

- What does the **American Rescue Plan Act** provide for children experiencing homelessness and early childhood programs?
- How can **federal relief funds** be used to support young children and families experiencing homelessness?
- How are **states and programs** planning to use various relief funds?

Pre-Pandemic: Children Experiencing Homelessness



Young Children
(Under Age 6)



Children born to young
parents experiencing
homelessness
(under age 25)

10%

Of young children experiencing homelessness are estimated to be enrolled in federally funded early childhood programs.

American Rescue Plan Act Funding

American Rescue Plan Funding for Young Children

- \$150 million for **home visiting programs**
- \$1 billion for **Head Start**
- \$15 billion for the **Child Care Development Block Grant**
- \$24 billion to stabilize **child care providers**

In addition:

- \$123 billion for Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (**ARP ESSER**)
- \$800 Million for **Homeless Children and Youth (ARP HCY)**, the American Rescue Plan Act:



**SUPPORTING YOUNG
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS WITH
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN
ACT FUNDS**

Navigating Other ARP Funds for Children & Families Experiencing Homelessness: SHC Tool

1. **Access to School and Learning:** ESSER
2. **Early childhood:** child care, Head Start, Home Visiting
3. **Higher Ed:** Emergency Financial Aid Grants
4. **Housing Assistance:** HOME Investment Partnership Program, Emergency Housing Choice Vouchers, Emergency Rental Assistance
5. **Technology and Connectivity:** E-Rate, Emergency Broadband Benefit
6. **Food:** National School Lunch Program, Pandemic-EBT, SNAP
7. **Health/Mental Health:** ESSER, Federal Insurance Market Place
8. **Income Support:** Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Stimulus Payments

American Rescue Plan Funding for Head Start

- ARP \$1Billion + CARES \$750 million + CRRSA \$250 million = **\$2 Billion**
- Current grantees are eligible to receive “funds proportional to current enrollment levels”
- Grantees are encouraged to use funds for:
 - Prioritizing additional weeks of instruction, including summer programming
 - Reaching more families
 - Getting facilities ready for in-person learning
 - Supporting Head Start Employees

Strategies to Support Children & Families Experiencing Homelessness

Identification, Enrollment, & Participation

- Conduct outreach to ensure families experiencing homelessness are aware of opportunities
- Provide multiple points throughout the year to identify children & families
- Provide transportation, including to and from summer learning opportunities

Support for Children & Families

- Partner with community-based providers across housing, health/mental health, employment services, etc.
- Upgrade facilities to provide access to laundry and other hygiene needs

Professional Supports

- Provide [training about McKinney-Vento](#) to ALL school staff - teachers, administrators, front office staff, bus drivers, etc.
- Ensure staff know the [signs of homelessness](#), and who to talk to if they suspect a student is experiencing homelessness

Using ARP Head Start Funds to Support Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness

Prioritizing additional weeks of instruction, including summer programming

- Pay for **transportation** (buy vans, hire additional drivers, etc.) to ensure children can access programming
- Offer **additional instruction sites** to make access easier for families experiencing homelessness
- Provide onsite medical staff to ensure that children are able to receive necessary screenings, vaccinations, etc in order to remove barriers to participation

Reaching more families

- Clarify your **enrollment information and questions** about housing, including paying to have materials translated into multiple languages
- Hire a **homeless outreach and identification specialist**
- **Develop materials** about programming to share in hotel/motel lobbies, physician offices, housing authorities, and other places where families experiencing homelessness are likely to visit
- Create a **Public Service Announcement**/comms campaign to reach a wider audience in your community
- We have an [app for that!](#)

Using ARP Head Start Funds to Support Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness

Getting facilities ready for in-person learning

- Make sure you can **provide masks** and other required items to children and families free-of-charge
- Install a **washer/dryer** (and/or other hygiene equipment) in program facilities so that families experiencing homelessness have a place to wash clothes if needed
- Be mindful of the **trauma** children will carry into the classroom with them - offer family counseling referrals, hire a mental health specialist, etc.

Supporting Head Start Employees

- Offer **training** specifically about McKinney-Vento, identification of families, trauma-informed practice, etc.
- **Raise wages** and salaries to ensure that [employees who might be experiencing homelessness](#) have more support
- Hire a **systems navigator/specialist** who can help Head Start staff refer families to other services they might need, like housing, healthcare, SNAP, etc.

America Rescue Plan

Homeless Children and Youth [ARP HCY] Funding

Appropriation specifically for children and youth experiencing homelessness = **\$800 Million**

ED retaining \$1 million = **\$1 Million**

Rest going out to states in two batches

\$199,750,000
available as of May (“ARP Homeless I”)

\$599,250,000
later this summer
 (“ARP Homeless II”)

Accessing ARP HCY for Head Start Programs

- The Office of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth must administer the funds.
- SEAs can retain up to 25% for state-level activities, LEAs receive the rest.
 - *Are you in contact with your state McKinney-Vento Coordinator?*
 - *Are your current LEA program grantees aware of how to access funds?*
 - *Do non-LEA grantees know they can apply for funds through the LEA too, as a partner?*

Opportunity Point for ARP HCY: Community Partnerships

- Both SEAs and LEAs are encouraged to “award contracts to community-based organizations that are well-positioned to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness in historically underserved populations such as:
 - rural children and youth,
 - Tribal children and youth,
 - students of color,
 - children and youth with disabilities,
 - English learners,
 - LGBTQ+ youth, and
 - pregnant, parenting, or caregiving students, and
- connect them to educationally-related support and wraparound services”



Questions?

Center for Transforming Lives

Tarrant County, Texas



Center for
Transforming Lives

From Poverty to Prosperity. Together.



Center for Transforming Lives

- Creating cycles of emotional and financial well-being for mothers and children through two-generation, integrated services, including homeless services, early childhood education, clinical counseling and economic mobility
- Early childhood education services include Early Head Start, Head Start and traditional childcare.
- CTL operates four independent locations, partners with four community-based child development providers and local school districts



Impact of the Pandemic

- Decrease in percentage of children experiencing homelessness enrolled in services (from 30% to 15%)
- Other providers, i.e., shelters, stopped allowing children to attend on-site care and disallowed on-site enrollment
- Fewer families entering the homeless services system, as a result of eviction moratorium and fears of shelter conditions
- Increased stress and emotional difficulties for children and adults
- Technology difficulties made it harder to maintain contact with families, especially those living in motels or doubled-up

What has been helpful?

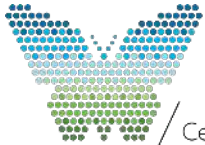
- Providing technology, including devices, hotspots, training, to families to help them remain engaged
- Visiting apartment complexes, safely, to provide education kits, food, diapers, cleaning supplies, which also allows for wellness checks
- Emphasizing trauma-informed care practices and approach
- Expanding mental health supports for children, parents and families
- Community partnering within homeless services Continuum of Care agencies to support relationships between educators and homeless service providers
- Educating providers about EHS/HS and the prioritization of homeless children as well as McKinney Vento services at districts
- Engaging early childhood system with homeless services system

Needs moving forward

- Adding COVID impact as Adverse Childhood Experience
- Creative, grass-roots family engagement
- Continue community engagement, fostering system integration
- Continuous outreach to locations where homeless families are present
- On-site vaccination clinics, emphasizing overall wellness
- Emphasis on well-being and support for personnel and families
- Activities, equipment and supplies that maintain health and safety
- Learning acceleration activities for children who experienced more out of center care

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Questions?

Reflections



Dr. Deborah Bergeron
National Head Start Association



Gracie Branch
**National Association of Elementary
School Principals**



Questions?

SchoolHouse Connection Early Childhood Resources

- [Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness: Coordination Guidance for Integrating Homelessness into Working Agreements and MOUs between Head Start Grantees and Local Educational Agencies](#)
- [Young Children Experiencing Homelessness: An Overview](#)
- [Online Training on Homelessness for Head Start and Child Care Providers](#)
- [Head Start and Homelessness: Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Homelessness and Education: A SchoolHouse Connection Group](#)

COVID-19 Recovery:

[School Reopening and Recovery: Considerations for Serving Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#)

[How to use ARP Funds to Support Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#)

Thank you!