Connecticut Head Start on Housing Pilot Program
We provide strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth.

**About SchoolHouse Connection**

SchoolHouse Connection works to overcome homelessness through education.

**WEBSITE:**
[schoolhouseconnection.org](http://schoolhouseconnection.org)

**NEWSLETTER:**
[schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up](http://schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up)

- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarships
Overview
Young Children & Families Experiencing Homelessness

1.3 MILLION babies, toddlers, and young children under age 6 experienced homelessness in 2018-2019

(USED 2018-2019 Profiles)

44% of young women (age 18-25) and 18% of young men experiencing homelessness are current or expectant parents to over young children

1.1 MILLION young children

(Chapin Hall, University of Chicago)
Young Children & Families Experiencing Homelessness

15.4%
Of infants and toddlers live in crowded housing, which is known to jeopardize child development. 2.9% of babies and toddlers have moved three or more times since birth.

State of Babies Yearbook 2022 (Zero to Three)

Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Black Babies

Have a higher incidence of living in crowded housing, and low-income babies are nearly three times more likely to live in crowded housing.
Young Children & Families Experiencing Homelessness

Infancy is the period of life when a person is most at risk of living in a homeless shelter. (HUD Annual Report to Congress)

Homelessness is more than a housing problem; it has many systemic drivers and complex causes, as well as far-reaching consequences for child development.

Families experiencing homelessness face multiple barriers to accessing quality early childhood programs that can provide comprehensive support and connections.
Homelessness Has Serious Consequences for Young Children

Homelessness in infancy has been found to be associated with delays in language, literacy, and social-emotional development, putting children at risk for later academic problems.

The younger and longer a child experiences homelessness, the greater the cumulative toll of negative health outcomes.

The impacts of homelessness on young children are long-lasting, even once families are housed, including on children’s school readiness.
TODAY’S PANEL

Barbara Duffield, SchoolHouse Connection

Dr. Deborah Bergeron, National Head Start Association

Elena Trueworthy, Connecticut Head Start Collaboration Office

Jaclyn Valley, Enfield Public Schools Head Start & CT Head Start Association

Jennifer Jones, CT Office of Early Childhood

Steve DiLella, CT Department of Housing

Ruth White, National Center for Housing and Child Welfare
Head Start on Housing
A platform for educational and economic success for Connecticut’s families

SchoolhouseConnection Presentation October 12, 2022
HSH capitalizes on the multi-faceted approach of Head Start Agencies nationwide

- NCHCW sought to create and expand priority access to Housing Choice Vouchers for Head Start agencies tap on behalf of families.
- The impressive variety of education, family well-being, and economic security efforts of HS and Early HS professionals are enhanced when families have access to permanent, stable housing.
- Let’s take a look at how the state of Connecticut made this happen!
Overview of Head Start on Housing Pilot

The Connecticut Department of Housing earmarked 25 Rental Assistance Program (RAP) vouchers for families whose children are participating in CT’s Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) programs.

In June 2022, Governor Lamont and the state agencies announced an additional 35 Section 8 vouchers for this initiative.

Supporting and aligning with the current Coordinated Access Network (CAN) system with the goal of ending family homelessness in Connecticut.
Pilot Partners

- Connecticut Department of Housing
- Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
- National Center for Housing and Child Welfare
- Connecticut Head Start Association
Head Start Programs

- Alliance for Community Empowerment, Bridgeport
- LULAC Head Start, New Haven
- ACES Early Head Start, Middletown
- Stowe Early Learning Center, Enfield
- ECHN, Manchester/Vernon
- More programs currently getting on boarded
Roles and the Flow of the Referrals

**HS/EHS RTGs**
- Determine need, prepare application materials, select & send complete packet(s)
- Establish POC staffer, meet regularly with ECHO RTG sites, help train co-workers

**OEC ECHO**
- Regularly convene RTGs, establish productive relationship with DOH
- Vet packets, assure HCV/RAP eligibility, bundle packets and provide to DOH/JDA, work with all parties on landlord recruitment events

**DOH JDA**
- Successful move into housing and ongoing services to help families move towards self-sufficiency.

National Center for Housing & Child Welfare Presentation 2022
The Commitment of State Leaders can make the difference

Department of Housing Commissioner Mosquera-Bruno and Office of Early Childhood Commissioner Bye meeting at LULAC Head Start June 2022
A HEAD START ON HOUSING
FOR CT FAMILIES

Families love stability. When you rent to a family with young children, you’re looking at years of long-term tenants with little turnover.

WHY RENT TO HEAD START FAMILIES?

◆ Head Start is a national program that promotes school readiness for infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children
◆ Programs support the whole family with resources and mentors to be successful
◆ Rental assistance guarantees reliable, on-time payments

Interested in finding families to rent to? Would you like to be a part of this initiative? Call Betsy (XXX)XXX-XXXX.
Making the case that HS families are a great investment

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• Make this case to Landlords as well as your potential housing authority partner!
What’s Next for Connecticut?

• Facilitating housing search and successful lease-up of identified HS families
• Expanding pool of landlords and recruitment efforts
• Continue to add more Head Start programs to receive vouchers and support families
• Phase 2 – Currently expanding access to Section 8 with the Department of Housing administration plan revision and additional 35 vouchers
• Extend the Head Start on Housing model to families identified by McKinney-Vento Liaisons
How do I make this happen in my community?
Setting up the partnership step-by-step

• Tap the expertise and reach of the State HS Collaborative Office
• Start a conversation with your public housing agency directors
• Build the approach in phases
• Start with the “Ready to Go” Head Starts and then help them teach and support other centers with less need (or expertise)
• Secure resources for landlord recruitment – this will involve real estate agents (who act as brokers), perhaps a campaign (more on that in the next slide)
• Secure funding for transitory housing costs
• Meet regularly, evaluate, adjust, repeat…
NCHCW recommends that each Head Start Agency establish a point person on housing. We refer to these folks as “Early Childhood Housing Outreach” professionals or “ECHO”. Once established, these staffers can work in tandem with Coordinated Entry or directly with the public housing authority staff to make referrals.

Soon, we would like to extend this network out in order to include McKinney-Vento Liaisons, staff within hospitals, and well, any professionals who are working with families.
Early on in 2022, all areas HS and EHS sites will be involved. Over time, McKinney-Vento liaisons and health care professionals will also be involved. Also, families on the "by name" list can be referred to ECHO throughout Phase One and Two if they are unable to access housing through the CANs.
Learn more

https://headstartonhousingct.com/
www.nchcw.org
info@nchcw.org
Questions?
SchoolHouse Connection’s Early Childhood Priorities

- Practical assistance
- Data, research, and tools (check out our Referral App for Children Experiencing Homelessness)
- Policy advocacy
- Strategic partnership

WEBSITE: schoolhouseconnection.org

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