Ensuring Access to Food Resources for Students Experiencing Homelessness

May 24, 2023
General Housekeeping

- Webinar will last approximately 1 hour
- Audio is muted - please ask questions through Q&A
- Session is being recorded
- Follow-up email after the session will include the recording, powerpoint, and resources
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: schoolhouseconnection.org

NEWSLETTER: schoolhouseconnection.org/sign-up

- Federal and state policy advocacy
- Q&A from our inbox
- Webinars and implementation tools
- Youth leadership and scholarships
Overview of Homelessness & Food Insecurity
Food Insecurity

At times during the year, these households were uncertain of having or unable to acquire enough food to meet the needs of all their members because they had insufficient money or other resources for food. Food-insecure households include those with low food security and very low food security.

- 10.2 percent (13.5 million) of U.S. households were food insecure at some time during 2021.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food Insecurity and Homelessness

Source: NCHE Access to Food for Students Experiencing Homelessness

1. Families facing homelessness often face additional barriers to accessing food due to high mobility and transportation.

2. The National School Lunch Act establishes students experiencing homelessness as categorically eligible for free school meals, without an application.

3. Once a student is certified as eligible for free school meals, eligibility remains in effect for the duration of the school year and 30 days into the new school year.
USDA policy permits liaisons and shelter directors to obtain free school meals for students by providing a list of names with effective dates.

It is the homeless liaison's role to ensure that school nutrition staff are notified when a student is identified under McKinney-Vento so free meals can begin immediately.

Notifying nutrition staff through email is allowable and many district liaisons or building points of contact communicate via email when students are identified.
EBT Benefits
Kelsey Boone
Senior Child Nutrition Policy Analyst
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Summer Nutrition

Kelsey Boone
Who We Are
FRAC is the leading national nonprofit organization working to eradicate poverty-related hunger and undernutrition in the United States.

What We Do
- Conduct research to document the extent of hunger and identify effective solutions
- Advocate for federal, state and local public policies that protect and strengthen the federal nutrition programs
- Provide coordination, training, technical assistance, and support on hunger-related issues
Agenda

• Summer Pandemic EBT: 2023
• Summer EBT: 2024 and Beyond
• Best Practices for Reaching Students Facing Homelessness
• Summer Nutrition
Summer Pandemic EBT- 2023

• Provides an EBT card with benefits to purchase food at retailers that accept SNAP
• Designed to provide nutrition resources to families to replace school meals when schools are closed during summer break
Pandemic EBT Impact

• 53 billion dollars has been distributed in benefit through this program with 15.6 billion being distributed in FY 22 alone.

• Reduced the share of households that stated they was sometimes or often did not have enough food by 28 percent in school year 2020-2021.

• In Summer of 2021, states estimated that they could reach over 29 million school age students.

• According to the Brookings Institute, in states that distributed significant summer P-EBT benefits, food insecurity was greatly diminished.
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023

- Passed on December 22, 2023
- Established a permanent, nationwide Summer EBT program
- Program begins the Summer of 2024 and continues for subsequent years
- All states and territories, as well as Tribal organizations that participate in WIC can participate
Summer EBT Program Structure—2024

• Families will receive $40 a month per eligible child, totaling $120 per child per summer period
  • This amount will be adjusted based on inflation in 2024 and beyond

• All states will run the program under the SNAP program or the nutrition assistance program in territories, tribal organizations will run the program under a WIC model

• States must issue benefits using automatic issuance for eligible children and must provide an application for those who were not certified during the school year
Summer EBT Eligibility—Students Facing Homelessness

• Categorical Eligibility, Direct Certification
• Automatic issuance to all students who are facing homelessness, no application should be necessary
• CEP schools, direct certification students need not apply
Best Practices to Distribute Benefits

• Work with McKinney-Vento district homeless liaisons to share information on Summer EBT with the district’s homeless families and youth. Resources should include information on the program, how to update addresses, and how to get replacement cards if their card was sent to the wrong address.

• Allow McKinney-Vento district homeless liaisons to deliver Summer EBT cards to students and families if an address is not readily available.

• Issue Summer EBT cards in the student’s name to ensure unaccompanied youth have access to Summer EBT benefits.

• Create an easy way for families and youth to update address information or allow them to request that the card be delivered to the school district.

• Share information about the program with homeless youth via email, text, and social media.
The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is a federally-funded, state-administered program.

Children 18 years and younger may receive free meals and snacks through SFSP.

At most sites, children receive either one or two reimbursable meals each day. Certain camps and sites may be approved to serve up to three meals to each child, each day.

Find a meal service site near where you live by using USDA’s Summer Meals Site Finder. You may also text “Summer Meals” to 914-342-7744. or call 1-866-348-6479 to find a site near you.
Summer Meals Benefits

- Ensures children receive the nutrition they need when the school year ends.
- Many summer meal sites provide educational, enrichment or recreational activities that keep children learning, active and safe when school is not in session.
- Allows program providers to stretch their budgets and for sponsors to strengthen their overall operations by operating year-round.
Best Practices & Strategies
School District McKinney Vento
Homeless Liaison Support - access to food resources

Christi DeChamps
School Social Worker
District McKinney Vento Homeless Liaison
Appleton Area School District
Wisconsin
dechampschrist@aasd.k12.wi.us

AASD Homeless Student Support webpage:
Homeless Student Services - Appleton Area
School District (aasd.k12.wi.us)
The Appleton Area School District (AASD) is the 6th largest school district in Wisconsin (total enrollment 15,000+) in a suburban community with a city population of 74,000

School district programming includes:
- Birth-to-Five outreach, Early Childhood, Title 1 Preschool
- Community 4K (22 sites)
- 16 elementary schools (K-6th)
- 4 middle schools (7-8th)
- 4 high schools (9-12th)
- 14 charter schools, 3 alternative school programs

McKinney Vento Homeless data:
- 2022 - 2023: 500 student identified as homeless
- Increase in students experiencing homeless over past 4 school years (up from 300 students in 2019-2020)
- Trends: lack of affordable housing options, increase in non-renewals of leases, increase of families residing in hotels, increase in fluid nature of temporary living situations, longer wait lists to access crisis housing/shelters
Basic Needs Support

School/Education needs

- Backpacks, school supplies, WiFi hotspot access for homework on school chromebooks, before/after school wraparound care

Basic Needs Care Packages

- Hygiene care packages (bath/shower, dental, deodorant, diapers, wipes, lotion, hair care, etc)
- Household care packages (toilet paper, laundry detergent, dish/hand soap, cleaning supplies, etc)
- Gift cards/vouchers for community support agencies (Good Will thrift store, Community Clothes Closet, St. Vincent de Paul, local laundromat voucher)
Food Support

Food Care Packages

- Free Little Pantry cupboard outside MKV Liaison’s district office - stocked with non perishable food courtesy of a local food pantry - families are welcome to take what they need
- Community donation - food bags (local church group packages up gallon zip lock baggies with microwavable food and snacks - easy cook for hotel families or place to place)
- Student Service Group Project - Ready-to-go cake recipe (box cake mix, soda, frosting, candles, pan to bake in)
Enhancing school district McKinney Vento webpage to include links to community resources and programs (tabs at bottom of webpage have live weblinks to community agency programs and support)

Homeless Student Services - Appleton Area School District (aasd.k12.wi.us)

McKinney Vento flier with QR code that links directly to the school MKV district website
Linking to Community Resources - Resource Guide & Folders

McKinney Vento Resource GUIDE
with printed fliers and community resource Information
Linking to Community Resources

Research local resources

- Supply families with enough basic info to be helpful (hours, address, how to access - register as a client, walk-in, drive up, etc)
- Contact local food pantries for fliers/brochures

St. Joseph Food Program - family food/grocery needs
https://www.stjoesfoodprogram.org/
1465A Opportunity Way, Menasha (920)734-3324
DRIVE THROUGH STYLE FOOD PICKUP: Mon, Wed, Fri: 9am-11am, Monday Night: 5pm-6:15pm. New clients or expired St. Joe's card, complete application on website or call (920)734-9461 x309 to set up a phone interview

Salvation Army Fox Cities - food pantry & box lunches to go
https://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/foxcities/feeding-our-community/
130 E North St. Appleton (920)734-3324
Drive through style lunch: Mon - Sat 11:30am-12:30pm - boxed lunch and a drink
Drive through style pantry: Monday - Friday from 8:00 - 11:30am

Kaukauna Library - Little Free Pantry
https://kaukaunalibrary.org/little-free-pantry/
207 Thilmany Rd, Kaukauna, WI 54130
(920)766-6340 (library)
*Free food & basic care items stocked in a section of the library for community access, open during library hours (during school year Mon - Thurs 9am - 8pm, Fri 9am - 5pm, Sat 9am - 1pm)
Assess universal food supports for students in your school district:

School Meals Program over SUMMER - share info with MKV families about how to access

Community - School partnerships - refer MKV students to school-site support lists

St. Joe’s Backpack Food Assistance Program supplies ready-to-eat or easy-to-heat weekend food to over 1,500 students in nine school districts in the Fox Valley area each week. Students are identified by school counselors, teachers, or staff. The program runs throughout the school year.
Using TEXT technology to share resources with families

School District Cell phone can save you time and create easy resource sharing tools

- Use NOTES feature on iPhone to create “template” messages
- Share easily with any parent who expresses a need for a certain resource (ie. food), texts can contain basic info as well as live links to community agency websites

Food Resources

Food Pantry Locator: https://feedingamerica礼貌.org/find-help/pantry-locator/

Feeding America Mobile Food Pantry:
https://feedingamerica礼貌.org/events/

St. Joseph Food Program - family food/grocery needs:
https://www.saintjosephfoodprogram.org/14658OpportunityWay,Menasha(920)234-2324

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Become familiar with Federal/State/County resources

MKV Homeless Liaisons can be a “go-to” for families as well as staff about how to access County and State assistance

- What is available
- Who is eligible
- How to apply
- Time sensitive changes
- What agencies can assist with the application/enrollment

School Pandemic EBT 2022-2023: Food Benefits for Students

Food benefits for students whose learning was affected by COVID-19

Health Insurance Enrollment

Need health insurance? We can help!

Our team of enrollment experts is dedicated to helping you get the coverage you need. They are knowledgeable about insurance and healthcare policy changes, and can connect you to local food pantries, housing assistance, employment assistance, and other support services.

We can help with:
- Medicaid (BadgerCare++) enrollment and renewal assistance
- Health Insurance Marketplace (HealthCare.gov) enrollment assistance
- FoodShare applications
- Referrals to community resources
- Financial Hardship assistance

Call 920-882-6420 to talk with one of our enrollment experts.

BadgerCare Plus renewals are back!

The annual renewal process for BadgerCare Plus and other Medicaid programs was suspended for the past three years. Renewals are now back, and all members will need to complete one at some point over the following year. The last renewals will be due at the end of May 2024.
What questions do you have?
Families experiencing homelessness are more likely to face food insecurity. Liaisons play an important part in supporting nutrition.

1. Connect families with Summer EBT benefits to help support nutrition and food security during summer months.

2. Know what resources are available in your community, county, and state, as well as how to connect families to these resources.
Let’s Connect!

Facebook: SchoolHouse Connection

Facebook Group: Homelessness & Education - A SchoolHouse Connection Group

Instagram: @SchoolHouseConnection

Twitter: @SchoolHouseConn

Linkedin: SchoolHouse Connection

YouTube: @SchoolHouseConnection
Sign up for our Mailing List!

Get on the list for important legislative updates, useful resources, webinar announcements, and news related to homelessness and education.