

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT HOMELESS RESOURCES

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: When I move, should I keep my child in the school of origin or transfer my child to the local school?

A: *Moving from one school to another can be very upsetting for children. They have to leave the friends and teachers they know and get used to new friends, teachers, and classes. Because of this, it is usually best for your child to stay in his/her same school (the school of origin), even if you move to a different area.*

Here are some questions to think about when deciding whether your child should stay in the same school or move to the new school where you're living:

- How old is your child?
- How permanent is your current living arrangement?
- Do you plan to move back close to the school of origin or do you think you'll stay near your current living arrangement?
- Would changing schools be overwhelming?
- Would changing schools cause your child to fall behind in school and receive bad grades?
- Is this a good time of year for your child to change schools?
- How much time would your child have to spend going back and forth to the school of origin?
- Are there safety issues to think about in choosing which school your child should attend?



HOMELESS RESOURCES for Students and their Families



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MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT:

If you lost your housing and now live in a shelter, motel, vehicle, camping ground, on the street, doubled up with family or friends, or in another type of temporary or inadequate housing, you or your child might be able to receive help through a federal law called the McKinney-Vento Act.



WHAT IF THE SCHOOL AND I DISAGREE ON WHERE MY CHILD SHOULD GO TO SCHOOL?

If you and the school disagree, the school district has to tell you in writing why it thinks your child should go to a different school than the one you want. The district also has to tell you in writing how you can appeal this decision. Your child can still enroll in, attend, and participate fully in the school you think is best for him or her while the disagreement is being settled.

WHOM CAN I CONTACT TO HELP WITH MY OR MY CHILD'S EDUCATION?

Every school district has a local homeless education liaison. This person can help you decide which school would be best for your child and communicate with the school. The local liaison also can help your child get school supplies, supplemental services, and free school meals; set up transportation to and from the school of origin; and help you find community supports.

When you enroll your child in a new school, you should ask to meet his/her teacher(s). You should also talk to your child's teacher(s) every so often to talk about how he or she is doing. Know at least one teacher at your child's school well enough to ask questions about your child's schoolwork and to give him or her information that will help your child learn.

The school counselor can help your child deal with changes and challenges. Share with this person any information about how your child is acting at home or things he or she is dealing with that might affect his/her schoolwork.

Other good people to know are the school principal, attendance officer, bus driver, school social worker, and school nurse.

WHEN YOU MOVE, YOU SHOULD DO THE FOLLOWING:

Contact the school district's local liaison for Homeless Education, for help in enrolling your child in a new school or arranging for your child to continue in his or her former school. Contact the school and provide any information you think will assist teachers in helping your child adjust to new circumstances. Ask the local Liaison for Homeless Education, for assistance with clothing and supplies, if needed.

IF YOUR FAMILY IS HOMELESS...

Your children have the right to:

- *Go to school, no matter where you live or how long you have lived there.*
- *Continue in the school they attended before you became homeless or the school they last attended, if that is your choice and is feasible.*
- *Receive transportation to the school they attended before your family became homeless or the school they last attended, if you or a guardian request such transportation.*
- *Attend a school and participate in school programs with children who are not homeless.*
- *Enroll in school without giving a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay school enrollment.*
- *Enroll and attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records or any other documents required for enrollment.*
- *Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other children served in these programs.*
- *Receive transportation to school and to school programs.*