



**Los Angeles County
Office of Education**



November 2023

Resources & Information Toolkit

November is National Homeless Youth Awareness Month!

On July 11, 2007 the United States Congress established November as National Homeless Youth Awareness Month. Since then, the resolution has been adopted by many national organizations and school districts across the country.

In October of this year the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) Board adopted a resolution that recognize the month of November 2023 as **National Homeless Youth Awareness Month** in order to empower students and families experiencing homelessness through educational advocacy and support, and promote awareness and greater support for homeless students in schools and the community. As of June 2023, over to 58,000 homeless students have been identified across the 80 public school districts and 370 plus charter schools in Los Angeles County; 4.3% of students or 1 out of every 20 students currently resides in a homeless situation in LA County.

Novembers is also considered National Runaway Prevention Month (NRPM) which is spearheaded by the [National Runaway Safeline \(NRS\)](#), with support from the [Family and Youth Services Bureau \(FYSB\)](#). They have a ton of resources that can complement National Homeless Youth Awareness Month and a comprehensive toolkit including social media clips and Zoom Backgrounds. Found here: <https://www.1800runaway.org/prevention-education/nrpm>

Below are activities and/or information that you can share during the month of November to help bring awareness to the issues which students experiencing homelessness face each day.

Toolkits for Homeless Liaison

- Homeless Liaison Toolkit: <https://nche.ed.gov/homeless-liaison-toolkit/>
- Awareness & Training Resources from Schoolhouse Connection: <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/training-resources/>

Homeless Fact Sheets, Resources and other info:

- **NEW:** LACOE Data Sheet: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1a0HHkdKidfPyCzLXQtfh8zIjic-qH9rg/view?usp=sharing>
- Frequently asked questions: https://naehcy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2017-10-16_NAEHCY-FAQs.pdf
- SchoolHouse Connection Fact Sheet: <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/fy24-ehcy-fact-sheet/>

Homeless Education Organizations (the big FIVE)

- Homeless Education Information & Rights: <https://nche.ed.gov/>
 - NCHE Homeless Education Helpline: 1-800-308-2145
- SchoolHouse Connecting Information: <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/>
 - TONS of resources from early childhood to post-secondary
<https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/resources/>
- National Center for the Education of Homeless Children & Youth:
<https://naehcy.org/>
- **NEW:** California Homeless Youth Project:
<https://www.library.ca.gov/crb/homeless-youth/>
- **NEW:** Homeless Education Technical Assistance Center Website & Resources:
<https://www.hetac.org/>
 - **Homeless Youth Awareness Month page:**
<https://www.hetac.org/resources/youth-awareness>

Youth & Children Homelessness Facts:

- <https://www.nga.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/SchoolHouse-Connection-Quick-Facts-and-Resources-for-Governors-2021.pdf>
- <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/five-facts-educators-need-to-know-about-student-homelessness/>
- <https://safeharborcenterinc.org/not-my-roof/facts-about-youth-homelessness/#:~:text=CONSEQUENCES%20OF%20YOUTH%20HOMELESSNESS&text=29%25%20of%20homeless%20youth%20report,system%2C%20in%20jail%20or%20detention>
- <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/young-children-experiencing-homelessness-an-overview/>

Research & Data:

- Learning Policy Institute Article:
https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Students_Experiencing_Homelessness_BRIEF.pdf
- Chapin Hall: <https://www.chapinhall.org/research/education-youth-homelessness/> & <https://voicesofyouthcount.org/brief/missed-opportunities-education-among-youth-experiencing-homelessness-in-america/>
- <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2022/06/16/improving-how-we-identify-and-support-students-experiencing-homelessness/>
- Suspension rates & Homeless Students:
<https://publicintegrity.org/education/unhoused-and-undercounted/homeless-and-suspended-in-california/>
- HOMELESS YOUTH PROJECT PUBLICATIONS (many about higher education):
<https://www.library.ca.gov/crb/homeless-youth/publications/>
- NCHE: <https://profiles.nche.seiservices.com/StateProfile.aspx?StateID=6>
- CDE: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sg/homelessyouth.asp>

- UCLA:
 - <https://luskin.ucla.edu/research-finds-homeless-students-understudied-and-overlooked>
 - <https://transformschoools.ucla.edu/research/state-of-crisis/>

Other Resources:

- **NEW:** Innovative and Promising Practices from CDE, HIP Grantees: [Homeless Innovative Program Toolkits - Homeless Education \(CA Dept of Education\)](#)
- California Department of Education/Homeless Education Program: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/>
- Homeless Unaccompanied Children and Youth in America: <http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/homeless-unaccompanied-children-and-youth-in-america>
- John Burton Foundation (JBAY) offers resources and does great work with FAFSA. The FAFSA is changing and JBAY will be providing support:
 - John Burton is sponsoring a student's experiencing homelessness FAFSA Challenge (similar to the Foster Care version). Sign up here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScWGllwwKpEglJUow69neJ8UdeXs_1-TvYhgeY70q_kl4hNCg/viewform
 - <https://jbay.org/college/expanding-financial-aid/>
 - LACOE is also offering a FAFSA Support Group for FAFSA – flyer here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/14HI1jHOH3pICzhHHLTsZppKNxg0J-xH9/edit?usp=drive_link&ouid=105774745664428170606&rtpof=true&sd=true
 - FAFSA Information: <https://studentaid.gov/help-center/answers/article/fafsa-simplification-act>
- Organization created by for Homeless Liaison, Diane Nilan: <https://www.hearus.us/>
- There is no better way to understand homelessness than listening to the children and youth who have been through it. Listen to what they have to say.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPp-1y55EuE>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BCW7mD-P5g>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CX4TzWdDAFY>
 - <https://vimeo.com/582680514>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJun5ZtcPgY>
 - Other Awareness Videos from HETAC: <https://www.hetac.org/resources/awareness-videos>
 - SchoolHouse Connection Videos (also try Googling “YouTube Homeless Videos by SchoolHouse Connection – they have a ton) :
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iKA4tsHSZpo>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OLvt7i6tfbk>
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Owwwztk2pQ>
- <http://calyouth.org/advocacy-policy/californias-homeless-youth/> --CA Coalition for Youth has some great information and awareness strategies!
- Great resource tips/sheets produced by Brown University: https://annenbergbrown.edu/sites/default/files/EdResearch_for_Recovery_Brief_5.pdf

- Possible lesson plans for teaching about poverty and student homelessness. Please review prior to using:
 - <https://www.learningtogive.org/resources/homelessness-and-poverty-toolkit>

District or School Site Activities

- **NEW:** Honor those who do this work both on your campus or within your district and/or community
- **NEW:** Learn about and visit your local shelters, food bank, CES Access point, or housing facilities
- **NEW:** Create a community collaboration of partners who can help serve this population within your district or on your campus
- **NEW** Use social media to make people aware of National Homeless Youth Awareness Month. The National Runaway Prevention Month offers great social media clips
- **NEW** Change your Zoom or meeting background to bring awareness to students experiencing homelessness both HETAC and National Runaway Prevention Month have great backgrounds to pick from
- Work with your school district or city to create a National Homelessness Awareness Proclamation
- Encourage school staff and students to wear green in honor of Homeless Youth Awareness Month (see flyer)
- Pull together former homeless youth to speak on a panel
- Create or distribute green bracelets or ribbons to raise awareness.
- Essay contest
- Poster contest
- Write letters of support for homeless issues to your local government representative
- Coordinate a drive for non-perishable food, backpacks, school supplies or hygiene items
- Create holiday food baskets to share with families in need
- Host a drive for prom dress donations, clothing – especially jackets, new sock and shoe drive
- “Sponsor” a family for the holidays for gifts
- Education through the visualization by using the following websites:
 - US State Census Website: <https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/library/visualizations.html>
 - California Homeless Youth Project has great visual data here: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/7227e954a08a4d2cb990949a029275d/>
 - GIS Map provided by the California Department of Education here: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/4f1a91a665a34cac983ad48c8948f78d>
- Invite LACOE’s Homeless Education Coordinator to provide professional development about homeless education. Email Kottke_Jennifer@lacoedu.edu for more information

- Train staff, parents, and community members about the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act.
- Make sure your school/district website is in place per AB 27.
- Learn or share about the What I Need (WIN) App. The WIN App is an excellent way to serve and support students experiencing homelessness and their families. You can obtain posters for the WIN App by reaching out to LACOE. Check out their website, sign up for their newsletter and listen to their youth presentations under the Team WIN section of their website:
<https://oclawin.org/find-help/win-app-online/>
- Learn about trauma informed practices and how to help reduce the effects of trauma for students experiencing homelessness. A great website for resources:
<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/> or
<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/facts-trauma-and-homeless-children> or NCHE’s trauma website: [Trauma-Informed Care | Trauma-Specific Services – National Center for Homeless Education](#)
- Hold a Green Ribbon event by tying green ribbons throughout the school campus in honor of National Homeless Youth Awareness Month
- Learn the facts. Take time to research the needs of the system, and the numbers of children, youth, and families impacted. The more you know, the more you can positively and factually educate others
- Connect high school students to post-secondary support at local college campuses. Many college campuses have resources on campus including a Basic Needs Coordinator. More information can be found here:
<https://jbay.org/college/basic-needs/>
- Help a student in care prepare for next steps by assisting them with the FAFSA. You can even host a FAFSA event. Learn more about FAFSA events at:
<https://www.cash4college.csac.ca.gov/>
- Post homeless education rights posters across your district and campuses.
English:
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/cy/documents/homelesspostereng.pdf>
Spanish: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/c8/documents/homelessposterspa.pdf>
Other translation:
<https://inet2.cde.ca.gov/cmd/translatedparentaldoc.aspx?docid=9959-9965>
- Explore issues of equity and housing in this video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGUwcs9qJXY>

Webinar Training Locations

- <https://nche.ed.gov/self-paced-online-training/>
- <https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/learn/webinars/>
- <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/cy/> (under “Training Modules”)
- <https://www.hetac.org/resources/hetac-resources> (under “HETAC Archived Website”. Also check the calendar for future trainings)

Recommended Videos

- Homestretch - The Homestretch follows three teens experiencing homelessness as they fight to stay in school, graduate, and build a future. Each of these smart, ambitious teenagers - Roque, Kasey and Anthony - will surprise, inspire, and challenge audiences to rethink stereotypes of homelessness as they work to complete their education while facing the trauma of being alone and abandoned at an early age. Through haunting images, intimate scenes, and first-person narratives, these teens take viewers on their journeys of struggle and triumph. As their stories unfold, the film connects viewers deeply with larger issues of poverty, race, juvenile justice, immigration, foster care, and LGBTQ rights.
<http://www.homestretchdoc.com/>
- Project 16:49 -Before Project 16:49 was a non-profit organization, it was a program created by educators in Beloit and Janesville when the number of students identified as homeless reached alarming levels. This led to the 2010 documentary film, Sixteen Forty-Nine, featuring three homeless Beloit Memorial High School students. Directed by R.E. Burgos and produced by Robin Stuht, Sixteen Forty-Nine premiered at the Beloit International Film Festival in February 2011. This film generated so much awareness and response that the community stepped forward to help us form our organization to address the problem.
<https://project1649.org/>
- 60 Minutes-Hard Times Generation Part 1 (Old, but still issues are families are struggling with)
Not far from Disney World in Florida there is a very different world of budget motels filled with homeless families -- people for whom lost jobs and foreclosures have put their families at risk. It's estimated that the poverty rate for kids in this country will soon hit 25 percent, and this will impact their education, their home-lives, and their future. Scott Pelley talks with some of these children and their parents. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dK_RnxYdrqU
- 60 Minutes-Hard Times Generation Part 2 (Old, but still issues are families are struggling with) Scott Pelley brings "60 Minutes" cameras back to central Florida to document another form of family homelessness: kids and their parents forced to live in cars. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2hzRPLVSm4>
- Jamal Speaks recently took to the football field for his first game in two seasons. He had been ineligible to play because he didn't have a permanent address. Now his future is looking bright. CBS News senior national correspondent Jim Axelrod has his story. <https://www.cbsnews.com/video/homeless-high-school-football-player-earns-college-scholarship>
- Homeless to Harvard: The Liz Murray Story
At 15, Liz Murray finds herself living on the streets after her mentally ill, drug-addicted parents falter in their attempts to keep their family together. Instead of crumbling, the troubled teen clings to hope and determination, and works her way up out of homelessness— all the way to Harvard University.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0vblvUSVaA>

- Pursuit of Happiness (movie, 2006)
The movie is based on Chris Gardner's nearly one-year struggle with homelessness. A series of circumstances left Gardner jobless and homeless at age 30, living in a bathroom at a San Francisco train station with his son. Despite the negative situation, Gardner continued to fight toward his goal of becoming a broker, and would eventually become a self-made millionaire.
- The Soloist (movie, 2009)
Los Angeles Times columnist, Steve Lopez, discovers Nathaniel Ayers, a mentally ill, homeless street musician who possesses extraordinary talent. Inspired by his story, Lopez writes an acclaimed series of articles about Ayers and attempts to do more to help both him and others in similar homeless situations. Lopez's good intentions run headlong in the hard realities of the strength of Nathaniel's personal demons and the larger social injustices facing the homeless. They must find a way to conquer their deepest anxieties and frustrations to support Nathaniel's transition out of homelessness.
- The Blind Side (movie, 2009)
The movie is based on the Tuohy family who takes in a homeless teenage African-American, Michael "Big Mike" Oher. Michael has no idea who his father is and his mother is a drug addict. Michael has had little formal education and few skills to help him learn. When he expresses an interest in football, she goes all out to help him, including giving the coach a few ideas on how best to use Michael's skills. They provide him with a loving home, and hire a tutor to help him improve his grades which allows him to qualify for an NCAA Division I athletic scholarship. Michael Oher was the first-round pick of the Baltimore Ravens in the 2009 NFL draft.
- All Together Now (2020)
An optimistic, talented teen clings to a huge secret: she is homeless and living on a bus. When tragedy strikes, can she learn to accept a helping hand? This is a movie about some of the realities of difficult home life situations and difficulties of being an unaccompanied homeless student.

Organizations

- The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) is a national membership association dedicated to educational excellence for children and youth experiencing homelessness. Through state and federal policy and technical assistance to members, students, and the public, NAEHCY works to change systems so all children and youth can learn, succeed academically, and achieve their dreams. <http://www.naehcy.org/>
- SchoolHouse Connection is a national organization promoting success for children and youth experiencing homelessness, from birth through higher education. The organization engages in strategic advocacy and provide technical assistance in partnership with early care and education professionals (including school district homeless liaisons and state homeless education coordinators), young people,

service providers, advocates, and local communities.

<https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/>

Books

- Animals Are Out of This World! A Poetry Compilation by Verses for the Voiceless – 100% of the cost of this book goes to organizations supporting homeless youth in our local Los Angeles area.
- An Invisible Thread by Laura Schroff and Alex Tresniowski
- Journeys Out of Homelessness by Jamie Rife & Donald Burns
- Through Our Eyes (Reflections from students and stories of homeless individuals here in Cincinnati)
- Lives Turned Upside Down: Homeless Children in Their Own Words and Photographs by Jim Hubbard (Children’s book)
- A Shelter in Our Car by Monica Gunning and Elaine Pedlar (Children’s book)
- The Lady in the Box by Ann McGovern and Marni Backe (Children’s book)
- Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen by DyAnne DiSalvo (Children’s book)
- Fly Away Home by Eve Bunting and Ronald Himler (Children’s book)
- No Fixed Address by Susan Neilson (5-6th grade reader)
- Evicted by Matthew Desmond
- Invisible Child by Andrea Elliott
- Top 16 books about homelessness by Dennis Lehane Books:
<https://dennislehanebooks.com/books-about-homelessness/> (please review prior to using).

FOCUS: Chronic Absenteeism

- Understand what chronic absenteeism is and is not. Also understand the importance of working with the families of our students experiencing homelessness to ensure they are in school every day and why it is important.
<https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/chron-absent.pdf>
- Attendance Works if featuring several articles on chronic absenteeism:
<https://www.attendanceworks.org/>
- Supporting attendance for students experiencing homelessness article by Schoolhouse Connection: <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/supporting-attendance/>
 - Video about attendance and homelessness by SchoolHouse Connection: Attendance:
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKliuLHdt_o
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSDYOrsMpOE> (missing bus)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mb-OnfBrZWY>

NEW: Check out our LACOE Homeless Education Google Drive to access some items mentioned above and a few supplemental items listed here:

- Planning Calendar
- Proclamation used by LACOE – to be approved
- Action Calendar – daily activities to bring awareness to students experiencing homelessness

- Activity to honor those who are serving as your Homeless Liaison or other staff supporting students experiencing homelessness

We would love to hear from our districts, schools, and communities on ways that they celebrated and highlighted National Homelessness Awareness Month. Please send any stories to kottke_jennifer@lacoed.edu.

Thank you for all that you do for our students experiencing homelessness!





NOVEMBER IS
NATIONAL
HOMELESS YOUTH
AWARENESS MONTH

**Join us in wearing GREEN on
Fridays in November!**

*Join us in supporting our fight to end child
and youth homelessness!*