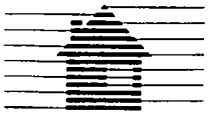

National Coalition for the Homeless

BARBARA DUFFIELD

Director, Homelessness Information Exchange

1612 K St. NW #1004, Washington DC 20006

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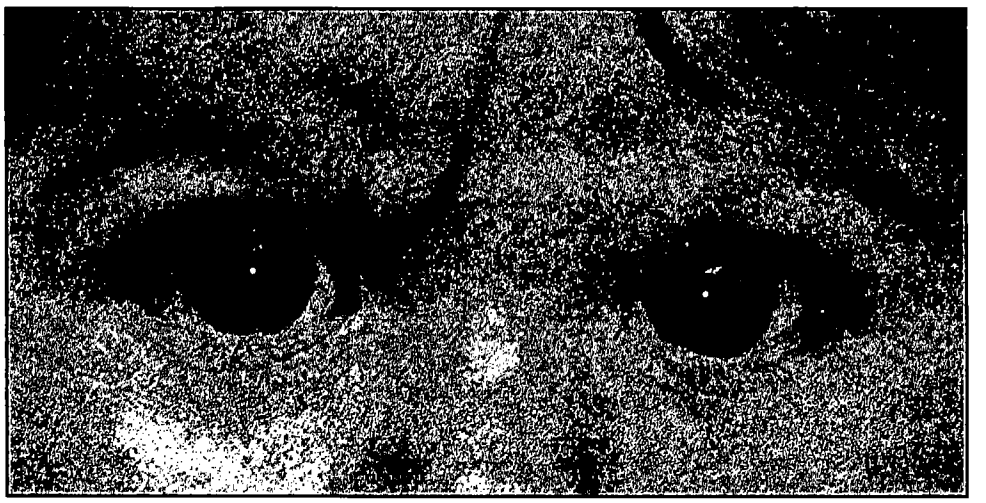
America's Homeless Children



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Will Their Future Be Different?

A Survey of State Homeless Education Programs

July 1997

National Coalition for the Homeless
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About the National Coalition for the Homeless

The National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) is a national advocacy network of homeless persons, activists, service providers, and others committed to ending homelessness. Toward this end, NCH engages in public education, policy advocacy, grassroots organizing, and technical assistance.

Public Education -

NCH staff provide information to thousands of people each year, including practitioners, community groups, researchers, government staff, the general public, and the media. We publish reports and fact sheets, field many phone calls and email, and speak at conferences and workshops around the country. NCH maintains an extensive library and database on research and maintains a comprehensive home page on the World Wide Web at http://nch.ari.net.

Policy Advocacy -

Since NCH provided leadership in the successful effort to pass the Stewart B. McKinney Homelessness Assistance Act in 1987, we have continued to monitor the reauthorization and appropriations process. Over the years, we've helped ensure that billions of dollars have been made available for McKinney programs such as emergency shelter grants, health care for the homeless, and education for homeless children. NCH works for services and legislation in many areas.

Grassroots Organizing -

NCH has contributed to the development of dozens of state and local coalitions, and works with them on efforts such as National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day (December 21), the "You Don't Need a Home to Vote" campaign, and other activities. We provide technical assistance and support through written materials, field visits, and phone consultations, and work to empower homeless people, whose voices are essential to the public policy debate.

NCH Board-

The 34-member Board of Directors is diverse ethnically and geographically. Members include service providers, academics, and organizers; 29% of the board are men and women who have been homeless. All are advocates.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was written primarily by Barbara Duffield. Research assistance, editing, and additional writing were provided by Lindsay Martin and Lynsey Wood.

NCH would like to thank all of the state coordinators who provided us with information. We are extremely grateful for your cooperation and especially for your continuing efforts to improve the lives of homeless children.

Commentary by David Davidson, President
National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth

The summer of 1997 marks the 10th anniversary of the enactment of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act. At such times we often give pause to reflect and project.

It hardly seems possible that ten years have passed since America officially recognized and responded to the millions of people lingering in its streets and doorways, parks and transportation terminals, cars and campgrounds, with no place to call home. But passed they have and seemingly along with them, so has the disgust and disdain of the American people and our policymakers for the socioeconomic conditions and public policy making at the root of this homegrown tragedy.

For indeed, over this last decade characterized by the unceasing growth and deepening of homelessness we have witnessed the landmark enactment of McKinney, as the embarrassment of worn, ragged images in the media hovering over steam grates or pushing shopping carts along our roads became too much for our collective eyes to bear. Still too, as those images, of mostly.single men and women, gave way to that of children and families starving and dying at our margins and mainstream, we've also stood witness to a steady retreat from McKinney and a host of other policies critical to the elimination of homelessness and poverty.

The public and our policy makers are deeply implicated in homelessness. Policy created it. Policy maintains it. And the public condones it.

So as we stand poised to recognize McKinney at age ten, maybe it is not so ironic that the issue at the heart of homelessness in 1987 remains its central and most inadequately addressed issue in 1997. That would be HOUSING. Nor is it surprising that in ten years many of its ancillary issues have also widened in scope and significance.

Our piece in this puzzle of course is education for children and youth. This report profiles the efforts and successes of states and local schools to ensure a free, appropriate public education to ALL of our children. It also documents the stiff challenges we've faced and still encounter in our efforts. While the 1995 Report To Congress by the U.S. Secretary of Education documented a 300% plus increase in homelessness among children, funds to support local school efforts to facilitate their enrollment, attendance and success were reduced by 22%. The McKinney Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program has yet to be fully funded although its authorization level has been reduced from 50 million to 30 million dollars -- this failure still in spite of the documented growth in the population and the deepening of the resultant needs of these most vulnerable children. The findings in the report provide ample evidence that states and local schools can and have made significant progress in meeting the educational and support needs of children and youth who experience homelessness. However, without adequate resources and policy, that progress is seriously threatened. The minds, faces and needs of the children we serve in increasing numbers today are real. And so is the need to convince local, state and federal policymakers that they are.

In our efforts to collect data and remove barriers in support of homeless children, we must not forget or fail to realize the critical need for us as educators to remain connected to and work jointly with our colleagues in housing, employment, social services, health care and hunger to better coordinate these efforts AND our collective advocacy for the elimination of homelessness. Our children and youth cannot afford for us to work in isolation.

The tenth birthday of McKinney requires us as citizens, policy makers and people to remember in the midst of this policy and budget making season that, policy is made by people and can be changed by people. Let us be about this task.

Thank you Doctor

Thank you for fixing my glasses. now I don't have to sit in front of my Class.

your friend,
Carlos

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Ten years ago, Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in response to the growing crisis of homelessness in the United States. Among the many disturbing features of homelessness documented at that time was the presence of large numbers of homeless families with children.

Today, families with children represent the fastest growing segment of the homeless population, constituting approximately 40% of people who become homeless (Shinn and Weitzman, 1996). A 1996 survey of 29 U.S. cities found that children accounted for 27% of the homeless population (Waxman and Hinderliter, 1996). These proportions are likely to be higher in rural areas: research indicates that families, single mothers, and children make up the largest group of people who are homeless in rural areas (Vissing, 1996).

Families who become homeless are often forced to move frequently. Length-of-stay restrictions in shelters, short stays with friends and relatives, and/or relocation to seek employment make it difficult for homeless children to attend school regularly. In addition, guardianship requirements, delays in transfer of school records, lack of a permanent address and/or immunization records often prevent homeless children from enrolling in school. Homeless children and youth who are able to enroll in school frequently face another obstacle: inability to get to their school because of lack of transportation. Homeless families may not have a family car or money for public transportation, and many shelters are unable to provide transportation. Children who miss school frequently fall behind very quickly. Without an opportunity to receive an education, homeless children are much less likely to acquire the skills they need to escape poverty as adults.

EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH: THE FEDERAL RESPONSE

Reports issued in the mid-1980s indicated that an estimated 50% of homeless children and youth were not attending school regularly. In response to these findings, Congress passed the McKinney Act in 1987. Title VII, Subtitle B of the McKinney Act requires states to remove barriers to homeless children's education and to provide homeless children and youth access to a free, appropriate public education.

The Education of Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program is one of the most successful of the original McKinney Act programs. Recent evaluations have documented significant improvement in school access and enrollment: approximately 86% of homeless children and youth now attend school regularly (Anderson et al., 1995). In addition, most states have enacted laws and revised policies in order to remove barriers to homeless children's education. A 1995 survey of family shelter service providers found that a large majority of respondents reported that residency and guardianship requirements were no longer barriers to homeless children's education (National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, 1995). Local homeless programs have made tremendous strides toward helping homeless children and youth succeed in school (National Association of State Coordinators for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, 1997).

Despite increasing homelessness among families with children, federal funding for the EHCY program was recently cut by 20%. The simultaneous increase in homelessness among families with children and reduction in federal funding for the EHCY program now threatens the progress that states and local communities have made in helping this nation's most vulnerable children enroll, attend, and succeed in school.

Findings from a survey of state administrators of homeless children's education programs reveal that the recent budget cuts have reduced educational opportunities for homeless children and youth and further restricted the ability of states to meet the increasing demand for services. The survey polled all State Coordinators for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. Forty states (80%) responded.

FINDINGS

States are responding to the reduction in EHCY funding in a variety of ways. The impact of these cuts, in the form of elimination of local programs and reduced services, was felt in many states during the 1996-1997 school year. A number of states, however, were able to maintain or expand services for the 1996-1997 school year through the use of carry over, administrative, or non-McKinney funds. Several of these states are now in the process of scaling back or eliminating programs for the 1997-1998 school year due to lack of alternative funding. The 14 states that receive minimum funding ($100,000) were not affected by the reduction in funding.

- **In the states surveyed, at least 41 local homeless education programs have been or will be eliminated, resulting in a loss of services to 12,806 homeless children and youth.** California, Connecticut, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Missouri, Minnesota, New York, Virginia, and West Virginia were all forced to fund fewer Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) in the 1996-97 school year. Iowa and New Jersey, which did not eliminate programs in 1996-1997, will be forced to eliminate programs next year.

- **Many states funded the same number of local programs, but reduced grant sizes by 20-22%.** Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, South Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin awarded diminished grants to previously funded LEAs. **Smaller grant awards resulted in 2,884 fewer children served.**

- **Reduced funding prevented many states from expanding services to meet needs.** At the current funding level, schools and other service providers are able to serve only a small proportion of the children estimated to be homeless in their state. On average, the states responding to the survey provide direct educational services to 24% of their estimated population of homeless children. Only 4% of LEAs nationwide receive McKinney funding.

- **Loss of funding forced 63% of the states responding to the survey to reduce tutorial hours, transportation, school supplies, and coordination of services.** For example, in Colorado, there was a decrease in staff hours for tutoring and outreach in all funded programs, and almost all support services and materials were cut, such as eye glasses, school supplies, and books at home. In Washington state, the distribution of school supplies to homeless children and youth was reduced in both quality and quantity, and summer programs were eliminated.

- **Many states report that changes in welfare programs have increased, or are expected to increase, the number of homeless children in their schools.** Twenty-five percent of states responding to the survey believe welfare reform has already impacted their homeless education programs; 27.5% have not yet seen an impact on their programs but expect to see increased numbers of children; 27.5% believe it is too early to tell what the impact will be on homeless children and youth in their state; and 7.5% believe welfare

reform has not impacted the EHCY program. Twelve and one half percent of the states responding to the survey did not comment on welfare reform.

- **Lack of funding has restricted the efforts of several states to provide services to homeless pre-schoolers.** Minnesota, Michigan, Nebraska, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington all cited examples of loss of services, or inability to expand services, to homeless preschoolers. In Wisconsin, all pre-school programs were eliminated. In West Virginia, plans to offer programs for preschool children were canceled. A forthcoming report by the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty on the enrollment of homeless children in public preschool programs supports the assertion that the demand for preschool enrollment by disadvantaged children far exceeds the availability of such programs. Lack of funding is identified as the chief cause of inadequate preschool resources.

- **Despite the formidable progress that states have made in reducing barriers to homeless children's attendance and success in school, significant challenges remain.** Identification of homeless children, lack of transportation, and lack of public awareness were frequently cited as the most serious obstacles to the education of homeless children and youth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The waning commitment of this nation's leaders to the Education for Homeless Children and Youth program -- and therefore to the future of homeless children -- is shameful. In the short term, it is the children who will pay the price for unjustifiable budget cuts. Ultimately, however, we will all be diminished by our failure to ensure that homeless students have the tools they need to climb out of poverty. Rather than attempt to balance the budget on the backs of this nation's most vulnerable children, we must invest in programs that are proven to work.

- Congress should fully fund the Education for Homeless Children and Youth program, as well as Headstart and other programs which assist homeless children and youth.

- Federal, state, and local education, housing, and health agencies must increase collaboration in order to enhance homeless children's access to needed services.

- Strong national leadership is needed on the issue of homelessness now more than ever. A White House Commission should be appointed to examine policies which produce homelessness and develop a strategic plan to ensure adequate housing, income, health, and social services.

CONCLUSION

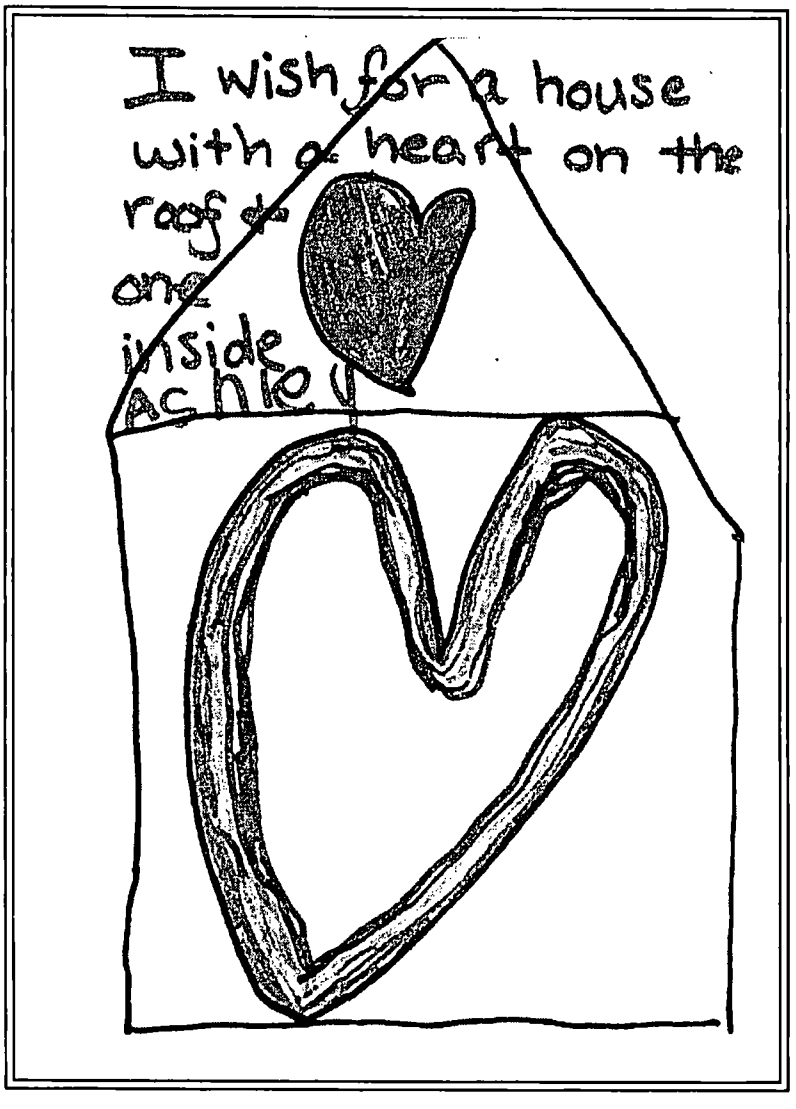
Inadequate funding of the McKinney Education for Homeless Children and Youth program threatens the many achievements that states have made over the past ten years. States have not been able to keep up with the increasing numbers of homeless children, and recent budget cuts have caused losses in services to thousands of homeless children and youth. Budget cuts have resulted not only in fewer homeless children receiving the help they need to get to school, but also in less support to help homeless children and youth succeed in school. Lack of funding is thus undermining the intent of the law, that "each child of a homeless individual and each

homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youth."

What homeless children need most of all is a home. However, until homelessness is ended, homeless children desperately need to remain in school. The McKinney Education for Homeless Children and Youth program is the **only** federal program that provides outreach to homeless children and youth and helps them enroll in and attend school. No other program or law requires states and schools to identify and eliminate barriers to enrollment, attendance and success in school. The McKinney program targets those children most isolated and in need and brings them into the mainstream school environment -- one of the few stable, secure places in their lives.

Ten years of increasing homelessness is a national disgrace. We have seen the worn eyes of too many children trapped behind the walls of poverty. Locked behind these walls, children face a future of uncertainty and limited opportunity. We can, and we must, renew our efforts to end homelessness.

State and Local Profiles



By Ashley
Shelter Resident, Reno, NV

ALASKA

Contact:	Carole Green / Kathi Wineman
Phone:	(907) 465-8706
Fax:	(907) 465-3396
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	7
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,000
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	7
ENumber of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,200
Estimated number of homeless children in Alaska:	2,000 - 2,500*

*1997 estimate from the Alaska Department of Education

Accomplishments

- Raising public awareness. Recently, the McKinney grant money funded a forum of 150 members of 30 different service agencies collaborated to discuss furthering public awareness of homelessness. This effort was successful and the state plans to extend the forum to include private businesses next year.

Challenges

- Accommodating for poor public transportation. The poor bus system forces programs to rely on cab vouchers to transport the children to their school of origin; however, the cab fares have recently increased 50%.

- Reaching schools outside the Title I network. Because Alaska receives minimum funding from the McKinney program, many programs for homeless children and youth rely on Title I. However, of the 78 elementary and secondary schools in Alaska, only 16 receive Title I funding. Alaska lacks the resources to extend services to homeless children who attend non-Title I schools.

- Providing follow-up services. Current funding does not allow Alaska's service providers to keep track of children after they are housed, therefore limiting long-term improvement and denying services during this important psychological adjustment period.

- Devising a method for school districts to identify their homeless students.

ARIZONA

Contact:	Gary Fortney
Phone:	(602) 542-3267
Fax:	(602) 542-3050
Total Grant FY95:	$411,642
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	7
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	2513
Total Grant FY96:	$404,416
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	7
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	2069
Estimated number of homeless children in Arizona:	11,914*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- The ability to assist in the provision of the physical needs of the students.

Challenges

- Unmet needs due to reduced funding. One school district was unable to serve 600 homeless students; another school district left 374 students unserved.
- Unable to serve 1,936 homeless students who attend schools which do not receive McKinney funding, and therefore are ineligible for services.
- Self-identification as homeless. Many parents are unwilling to identify themselves and their families as homeless because of the social stigma attached to the label.
- Documentation requirements for immunizations and birth certificates. Many school districts require proper documentation for enrollment; this creates problems for many homeless children.
- Helping students achieve high academic standards.

CALIFORNIA

Contact:	Doug McDougal
Phone:	(916) 657-2926
Fax:	(916) 657-5301
Total Grant FY95:	$3,046,964
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	33
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	21,903
Total Grant FY96:	$2,390,864
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	19
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	15,000
Estimated number of homeless children in California:	137,037*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Tutorial programs offered at shelters, instructional materials being distributed to the children to assist them in keeping up with their work, and collaborative efforts with various agencies to promote and provide support for the needs of homeless children and their families.

- At some sites, the Program Facilitator monitored student attendance through a computerized system of daily attendance data collection. Individual families were contacted when their children missed school, and a need for further assistance in encouraging an increased consistency in school attendance was ascertained.

- Parental involvement in LEA programs increased. Parenting classes were offered and parents were able to assist in after school tutoring of their children, thereby building self-esteem and self-confidence.

Challenges

- In FY96, funding for California's Education for Homeless Children and Youth program was cut by 21%. This loss of resources resulted in 14 fewer LEAs being funded and 6,900 fewer children being served. California also saw a reduction in supplemental services provided to children and youth who are homeless. At the current funding level, the EHCY program is only able to provide direct services to approximately 11% of California's estimated 137,037 homeless children and youth.

- Adjusting to increased numbers of homeless children and demand for services. Betty Randle, homeless coordinator for the Compton Unified School District, commented that state welfare reform efforts and other cuts to social services have begun to impact the EHCY Program with an increase in referrals for services to homeless children and youth. Referrals for educational services have increased from approximately five referrals per month to five referrals per week. Concerns for children and youth living in families of undocumented immigrant status remain an issue. Shelters are at full capacity.

- Homeless families have difficulty meeting basic needs for shelter, food, adequate clothing, health care and safety, thus forcing the educational needs of the children as a low priority.

- Community agencies, school staff and program regulations, including registration and qualification for services, are not sensitive to the needs of homeless families and children.

LOCAL PROFILE

Santa Cruz County Office of Education
809 Bay Avenue, Suite H
Capitola, CA 95010-2199
Phone: (408) 479-5246
Fax: (408) 476-5294

Santa Cruz County is a coastal community located in the central area of California on the Monterey Bay about 75 miles south of San Francisco. The county is predominately rural and ranks 28th in agricultural income. The city of Santa Cruz, the county seat, has a population of about 50,000, while the city of Watsonville is the center of the county's agricultural activity.

Due to the October 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake and destructive flooding in 1982 and 1995, the county has suffered economically. Commercial areas that were damaged or destroyed are still in the process of being rebuilt. Homelessness is a dramatic consequence of the shifting social and economic realities of this area. Local service providers estimate that there are 3,000 homeless individuals in Santa Cruz County. The county has a 12% rate of unemployment (17% in the south county area of Watsonville) and a severe shortage of affordable housing. A report on the 1990 census by the Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County, Inc., indicates that Santa Cruz County residents living in poverty grew to 23,770, an increase of 1,559 people. In Santa Cruz County, children constitute the largest population living in poverty. Thirteen percent of all children under six years old and 11.4% of all children between six and seventeen live below the poverty line. In Watsonville, one out of four children is poor.

Most homeless children in Santa Cruz County are living in a transient state of moving from shelter to shelter, motel to motel, friend to friend, or vehicle to shelter or motel, often having to enroll in three or four different schools over the course of a year. Approximately 5% are in some transitional living program with their families getting additional assistance toward self-sufficiency. Data gathered from interviews and surveys of shelter providers and local school districts indicate that there are approximately 890 children and youth living in homeless conditions while attending school.

The Santa Cruz County Office of Education Homeless Education Outreach Program provides assistance to the homeless children and youth of Santa Cruz County in accessing their right to free, appropriate public education, by providing support services that remove the barriers that prevent homeless children and youth from accessing educational opportunities; bridge the gap between schools and service providers; increase community awareness regarding the issues of homeless children and youth; and provide additional academic and job search assistance to empower homeless children and youth to succeed in school and in their future endeavors.

The Santa Cruz County Office of Education estimates that roughly 300-350 homeless children receive services. The services include community awareness campaigns; special community projects, such as Project Write Start, a back-to-school back pack program; after-school outreach tutorial services; after-school extended day programs for homework assistance and remedial support; academic, social and emotional needs assessments; case management (enrollment assistance, records search, school support service linkages, social service linkages and advocacy); independent living skills for homeless unaccompanied youth; linkages and support for homeless youth to access GED programs and Independent Study Programs; and transitional services for homeless youth.

COLORADO

Contact:	Karen Connell
Phone:	(303) 866-6903
Fax:	(303) 866-6785
Total Grant FY95:	$275,580
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	7
Number of children served 1995-96:	2,100
Total Grant FY96:	$217,546
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	7
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,900
Estimated number of homeless children in Colorado:	4,356*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- The funded projects reported more collaboration with other agencies and less duplication of services.
- There was more family involvement through the personal contact of school personnel. More parents were found to be reading to their children through the book loan programs.
- Colorado was also able to achieve a more intense involvement with transportation in the hopes of solving the needs at the local level.

Challenges

- As a result of FY96 budget cuts, each of the seven LEAs received 25% less funding and 200 fewer children were served. In addition, the State Coordinator's time was cut by 10%; two local homeless coordinators were cut; there was a decrease in staff hours for tutoring and outreach in all funded programs; and almost all support services were cut, such as glasses, school supplies, and books at home.

CONNECTICUT

Contact:	Alan White
Phone:	(860) 638-4247
Fax:	(860) 638-4231
Total Grant FY95:	$218,572
Number of LEAs funded:	13
Number of children served 1995-1996 school year:	1,385
Total Grant FY96:	$172,544
Number of LEAs funded:	12
Number of children served 1996-1997 school year:	980
Estimated number of homeless children in Connecticut:	5,090*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Connecticut was able to reprint "Helping Homeless Children in the Classroom," and update the publication of "Parents: How to Keep Your Child in School." The publication is also available in Spanish.

Challenges

- As a result of FY96 budget cuts, Connecticut is only funding 12 LEAs for the 1996-97 school year. It is estimated that four hundred fewer children are being served by Connecticut LEAs. The remaining LEAs also suffered reduced funding.
- Although it is still too early to see the impact of welfare changes on local projects in Connecticut, there will most likely be a rise in the number of children needing services as an increasing number of families are thrown into homelessness.
- Helping school districts understand the right of school choice and the responsibility for payment.

LOCAL PROFILE

Vernon Public Schools
30 Park St., P.O. Box 600
Vernon, CT. 06066-0600
Phone: (860) 870-6026

This McKinney grant enables the Vernon Public Schools to provide educational and supportive services to homeless children and youth who are at risk of dropping out of school through failure or non-attendance. Students who are identified by community and school personnel (including guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, teachers, administrators, Neighborhood Resource Center staff, TriTown Shelter employees, and Rockville General Hospital staff) are tutored for up to ten hours per week individually or in small groups. The tutor coordinates his/her efforts with the students' classroom teachers.

While receiving individualized tutoring, students are provided with a nutritionally balanced snack to assist with concentration and to ensure proper nutrition. Students who are unable to afford school supplies are provided with notebooks, pencils, graph paper, rulers, crayons, etc. Supplemental tutorial and educational materials which the tutor deems helpful and necessary for student achievement are provided at no cost to the students. Students' transportation needs are met by providing students with city bus tokens. The McKinney funds also provide educationally enhancing materials such as paper, pencils, crayons, books, coloring and activity books, and puzzles to the TriTown shelter for use by the homeless children.

In addition to tutoring, students receive supportive services through counseling and referral to community agencies. Homeless youth meet regularly with a coordinator who offers supportive counseling and who teaches students necessary self-advocacy skills such as budgeting, resource management, and daily living skills (such as how to take public transportation, how to fill out applications for services, and how to seek employment). Homeless children meet regularly with the coordinator for counseling and to learn and review independent living skills which might help students better negotiate their environment and provide a high degree of self-reliance. The coordinator refers students and/or their families to appropriate community services and facilitates their use of community services.

While receiving counseling, community referral services and self-advocacy training, high school students have the opportunity to use washing and drying machines located in the school to do their laundry. Laundry detergent is provided to students at no cost. Students are also provided with personal toiletry articles (such as shampoo, soap, feminine hygiene articles, deodorant, toothpaste, etc.) if they are not able to afford them.

GEORGIA

Contact:	David Davidson
Phone:	(404) 656-4431
Fax:	(404) 656-6637
Total Grant FY95:	$702,261
Number of LEAs funded 1995-95:	22
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	9,000
Total Grant FY96:	$557,000
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	22
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	10,000*
Estimated number of homeless children in the state of Georgia:	9,482**

*Due to administrative change in Georgia's grant award cycle, the state was able to offset the impact of the 22% reduction in funding.

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Georgia expanded the reading and family literacy projects through the public library system. The program "Project Horizons" provides print-rich environments and technology in shelter settings for homeless families and children. The project also makes extensive use of professional storytellers to introduce, teach and model reading behaviors for parents and children. The project was expanded from 3 to 7 LEAs statewide.

Challenges

- The largest challenge proved to be the coordination with Title I programs in LEAs. The different program categories (school wide & targeted assistance) and orientation for McKinney and Title I coordinators was delayed. The delay was due in part to the State Consolidated Plan being challenged and provisionally approved for that year. Administration changes and reorganization also hampered progress with Title I.

- Due to administrative change in Georgia's grant award cycle, the state was able to offset the impact of the 22% reduction in funding. As a result Georgia did not experience any reduction in services or loss of LEA projects. In anticipation of the budget cut however, Georgia had examined the likely impact which would have meant a loss of 3-4 LEA projects serving as many as 2,000 students.

IDAHO

Contact:	Zan Payne
Phone:	(208) 332-6903
Fax:	(208) 334-4664
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	10
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,273
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded: 1996-97	10
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,700
Estimated number of homeless children in Idaho:	5,155*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Idaho has worked to bring greater awareness to school personnel about the extent of homelessness and the potential needs of homeless children. Many school districts appear to be unaware of the existence of homeless families; these districts still think of the old stereotypical homeless person.

- By networking with Idaho Housing, Community Action Agencies, shelter providers, and the Department of Health and Welfare, Idaho's state coordinator for homeless children's education has been able to furnish contacts, numbers, and descriptions of need that confront the limited exposure of school personnel. Idaho's homeless education program has provided staff in-service with information to be shared with school secretaries and counselors on the needs and potential barriers of homeless children. Idaho's new McKinney grants are creative, excellent examples of community collaborations.

Challenges

- Adjusting to the recent welfare changes. There is a great deal of uncertainty and apprehension among service providers and current recipients in regards to the changes in welfare. Concerns have been similar to those reported nationally: people are afraid there will be unintended consequences for children and families because of Idaho's two year limit. There is the worry that there will not be jobs for welfare clients to take, which is already a reality in the many parts of Idaho that have a limited economic base. Child care and medical care are also concerns.

- Transportation to school continues to be a barrier to accessing education. The State will not reimburse Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) for transporting homeless children to their previous school. The Idaho homeless education program has worked with the Deputy Attorney General and Idaho State Department of Education Transportation Office, but demands on public school transportation are high. At this time, Idaho is using McKinney funds and Title I monies to meet transportation needs.

- Lack of awareness and identification of homeless children. Because Idaho is sparsely populated, homeless families are only visible in the five largest cities. Schools are generally unaware of the families that camp within their boundaries or transient families that move frequently because they lack housing. There are vast differences between the numbers of homeless children schools recognize and the numbers of families seeking shelter or services from community agencies.

LOCAL PROFILES: IDAHO

Twin Falls School Supplies Project
The Twin Falls Community Action Agency and Magic Valley School Districts provide school-related supplies: notebooks, calculators, book fees, immunizations, book bags, locker fees, activity cards, etc. to homeless children.

Boise Stand Down for Homeless
This event was sponsored by the Idaho Division of Veterans Services and 38 agencies and community organizations. The Stand Down is held at a local school with medical and dental services, clothing, food, information and referrals. Information on schools, enrollment information, school calendars and homeless education liaisons for each were provided, along with school supplies for each child. Three hundred homeless came to the most recent Stand Down, and of these 50 were school aged children.

Community House & Boise School District
Boise's homeless shelter had 1,000 children apply for assistance. When other resources were not available, transportation and laundry money have been provided. Summer school fees have been supplied to enable children to participate in educational programs offered by the schools and community education programs.

Pocatello School District & Bannock Youth Foundation
Counselors, case managers and tutorial support has been provided for homeless youth in Pocatello. Educational training and counseling has been provided for parents and students, in addition to school supplies and school fees. Collaborative partners include Aid for Friends, the YWCA, and local law enforcement groups.

Boise School District
School social workers and school counselors at 47 sites access McKinney funds to meet specific student needs that will encourage students to stay in school. The school liaisons are integral to each school system and sit on management teams. In addition to providing supplies, counseling, and referrals, these liaisons meet with parents of homeless students and community service providers.

Ada, Boise, Canyon County Schools & Boise State University
Senior level psychology students have recruited homeless families to help them connect with community resources and schools. Family and school interviews have been conducted to learn more about the needs of homeless families and the school success of homeless children. Homeless parents have been provided with information on child development and parenting skills. Books and school supplies have been given to children. Teachers and the community have been supported with information on the educational needs of homeless children. The project coordinator has taken an active and visible community role in advocating for the needs of homeless children and families.

Lewiston School District & the YWCA
The project is a component of a larger community effort to support the needs of high-needs-families. In addition to a school-based liaison, summer school, birth certificates, immunization records, transportation, and tutoring are provided to children in the domestic violence shelter and the transitional housing project for homeless families.

ILLINOIS

Contact:	Dan Miller
Phone:	(217) 782-3370
Fax:	(217) 782-9224
Total Grant FY95:	$1,347,872
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	14
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	4,100
Total Grant FY96:	$1,057,820
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	16
Estimated number of children served 1996-97 school year:	4,200
Estimated number of homeless children in Illinois:	33,000-45,000*

*1996 data from the Illinois Coalition to End Homelessness

Accomplishments

- The Homeless Children and Youth Program is now one of the eleven different programs in the Community and Family Partnership's Division. Representatives from all of these programs participate in Area Planning Councils at the local level to assure that the best possible services are available to those most in need. Through this system-building process at the local level, Homeless Children and Youth Programs partners with other providers to assure high-quality services that are designed to meet the needs of entire at-risk families.

Challenges

- Illinois received a 22% cut in funding this past year. For the current school year, the Illinois Department of Education was able to increase educational services to homeless children by adding two new programs; however, all grant awards were smaller and children were served less comprehensively. For example, tutorial services do not adequately meet requested needs, less transportation is provided for homeless children, and new shelters cannot be added to the existing network.

- Adjusting to greater demand. Illinois' homeless population, including children, continues to increase. Although an estimated 33,000-45,000 children experience homelessness in Illinois, 4,200 receive direct educational services through the McKinney Education for Homeless Children and Youth program.

- Funding cuts have caused Illinois to rethink how funds are distributed. More emphasis has been placed on providing high quality awareness-building efforts potentially to all schools in Illinois.

INDIANA

Contact:	Barbara Lucas
Phone:	(317) 232-0590
Fax:	(317) 232-9121
Total Grant FY95:	$455,368
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	14
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	5,000
Total Grant FY96:	$358,640
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	10
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	2,065
Estimated number of homeless children in Indiana:	15,302*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Due to the funding cuts, local community support has increased significantly to help meet the needs of homeless children.
- Indiana's greatest accomplishment may be the increased awareness among community organizations and schools, which has resulted in greater local efforts to provide assistance.

Challenges

- Due to a 20% reduction in funding, 3,000 fewer children received services during each of the past two years. The greatest reductions have been in direct services to children and in-service training for teachers and school administration. Funding cuts resulted in the loss of 4 programs which had always provided assistance to large numbers of children.
- Indiana has witnessed an overwhelming increase in the number of homeless children due to the initiation of the 2 year welfare time limit in Indiana. According to all indicators, the homeless population is now increasing at a rapid rate than before, and the average age continues to fall. Funding cuts at the federal, state and local levels have taken away the necessary services for the homeless and other indigent people. At least twice as much money is needed than is currently available to provide services for children who have already been identified as homeless in Indiana.
- Homeless families are experiencing greater difficulty meeting basic needs for shelter, food, adequate clothing, health care, and safety, forcing the educational needs of children to be an extremely low priority.

IOWA

Contact:	Dr. Raymond Morley
Phone:	(515) 281-3966
Fax:	(515) 242-6025
Total Grant FY95:	$213,285
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	8
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	2,382
Total Grant FY96:	$168,438*
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	11
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	2,835
Estimated number of homeless children in Iowa:	9,849**

*Total grant was awarded to LEAs as a result of a one-time carry over of administrative funds
**1996 data from the Iowa Department of Education

Accomplishments

- Iowa established an on-line access to information on homelessness via the internet through William Penn College. The information page can be accessed by all Iowa schools for information on Iowa and the nation. Over 2,000 contacts were experienced via the network this past year. It serves as an immediate resource for educators and other agencies.

Challenges

- Iowa was able to fully fund previous LEAs and to add three more local programs due to a one-time only carry over of administrative dollars. This carry over was made possible by delaying for one year the comprehensive count survey and by using At Risk dollars. **However, for the 1997-98 school year, there will be a loss of at least four, and possibly five, local programs, with approximately 1,100 fewer children served.** Programs to be eliminated include Ames, Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, and Davenport. Reductions for 1997-98 will also include staff development on awareness of homelessness; research on needs and counts estimates; linkages with other funding resources; and curriculum guides.

- At the current funding level, the EHCY program is only able to provide direct services to approximately 29% of Iowa's estimated 9,849 homeless children and youth. Last year Iowa was able to fund only two-thirds of the applications from local schools.

- Serving older homeless children. Junior high and high school aged youth are much more difficult to identify, and therefore much harder to serve. Twenty-five percent of homeless adolescents in Iowa do not attend school.

- Welfare reform. Although it is unknown at this point what effect the recent welfare changes will have on Iowa, many homeless service providers believe that there will be an increase in children and families needing access to educational and other support services.

KANSAS

Contact:	Norma Cregan/ Amy Beck
Phone:	(913) 296-4906
Fax:	(913) 296-7933
Total Grant FY95:	$219,924
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	5
Number of children served for the 1995-96 school year:	1,147
Total Grant FY96:	$173,114
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	5
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,250
Estimated number of homeless children in Kansas:	8,236*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- The Wichita Public Schools homeless education program was able to develop an extensive summer program called OASIS (Outstanding Activities for Students in Shelters) which was sponsored by the Wichita Public Schools McKinney Grant, Title I, and the Wichita Children's Home/First Step for Families and Teens. This summer program was offered to homeless children and youth at no cost during the months of June and July.

- In addition to the summer program, numerous cooperating agencies provided services or offered donations to assist in the coordinated effort offered to homeless children and youth. Seven shelters in the Wichita metropolitan area used this service. The children engaged in a variety of activities which encompassed crafts, drama, physical education activities, fun academics, lifeskills, and computers.

Challenges

- Lack of awareness and identification of homeless children remain large barriers to ensuring access to education. This is a particular problem among the rural communities in which school district officials appear to be unaware of the homeless population in their schools and communities.

- Designing methods to estimate the number of homeless children and youth. As a typically transient population which frequently desires to remain inconspicuous, the number of homeless families in Kansas is difficult to accurately calculate. Thus, targeting services to homeless families most in need often proves to be a formidable task.

- Adjusting to changes in welfare programs. It appears that more families are homeless.

KENTUCKY

Contact:	Dale Niswonger
Phone:	(502) 564-3791
Fax:	(502) 564-6721
Total Grant FY95:	$522,219
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	14
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	2,985
Total Grant FY96:	$409,785
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	10
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	2,860
Estimated number of homeless children in Kentucky:	5,781*

*1997 data from the Kentucky Department of Education

Accomplishments

- Kentucky's homeless education program was able to collaborate with Feed the Children to send three tractor trailer loads of school supplies, clothes, and non-perishable goods to three different school districts in the state.
- The state published a manual describing the practices of exemplary programs which has been helpful for programs in the incipient stages.

Challenges

- In FY96, funding for Kentucky's homeless education program was cut by 21%. Consequently, the number of local educational agencies funded in Kentucky was decreased from 14 districts to 10 districts. Reduction of local programs resulted in the loss of services to approximately 125 children. Although approximately 5,781 homeless children and youth have been identified in Kentucky, reduced funding means that educational services can only be provided to 2,860 children.
- Less assistance is available for emergency supplies such as eye glasses.
- Adjusting to changes in welfare programs. Many of Kentucky's poor, single-parent families who were becoming established and getting into housing are now being pushed back into homelessness.

LOCAL PROFILE

Jefferson County Public Schools
3332 Newburg Road
Louisville, KY 40232-4020
Phone: (502) 485-3650

The Jefferson County Public School District (JCPSD) homeless education program: 1) assists preschool children with their development; 2) assists school-aged children and youth enroll in and attend school; 3) provides supportive instructional activities and materials to enable children to complete academic work at their shelters and at school; 4) provides school transportation services to enable preschool through high school students to enroll in and attend school; 5) and pays school tuition for participation in two Jefferson County/City of Louisville enrichment programs. The program also assists families in the placement of their children in appropriate educational programs in the school district and assists parents in obtaining needed social services.

Children served in the Jefferson County School District primarily reside in 12 shelters and transitional housing sites for homeless families and in shelters for runaway youth. Despite many in-kind contributions and extensive community collaboration, the JCPSD program was only able to serve a quarter of the 4,000 homeless children and youth estimated to be living in the city of Louisville and Jefferson County. In March 1996, 300 children in Louisville and Jefferson County were turned away from shelters due to a lack of shelter space. Homeless children and youth are at risk of school failure because of the mobility associated with homelessness, lack of advocacy and educational support services, and lack of food, shelter, and school supplies. School transportation and the need for student counseling services are two of the biggest problems that homeless students face in Jefferson County.

LOUISIANA

Contact:	Luke Chiniche, Jr.
Phone:	(504) 924-2827
Fax:	(504) 342-3448
Total Grant FY95:	$794,047*
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	15
Number of children served 1995-1996 school year:	13,000
Total Grant FY96:	$603,000*
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	15
Number of children served 1996-1997 school year:	15,000
Estimated number of homeless children in Louisiana:	13,546*

*Louisiana was able to fully fund its LEAs by using Title I funds to make up the difference of the cut.
*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Increased awareness statewide. Louisiana worked with all state agencies to build awareness of the McKinney program. A statewide video was produced to increase awareness.
- A statewide 1-800 number became available for homeless children and youth.
- The McKinney program coordinated with shelters statewide in order to place homeless children and youth.
- Louisiana was able to provide summer camps for homeless children confined to the shelter system.

Challenges

- Due to the welfare changes, the number of homeless children and families is going to increase as people coming off welfare will have little, if any, insurance or home.
- Finding shelters to take in children living on the streets, especially those between 15 and 18 years of age.
- Getting legislators to understand that homelessness is a serious and real dilemma in Louisiana.

MAINE

Contact:	Frank Antonucci, Jr.
Phone:	(207) 287-5111
Fax:	(207) 287-5927
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	2
Number of children served 1995-1996 school year:	156
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	2
Number of children served 1996-1997 school year:	200
Estimated number of homeless children in Maine:	8,337*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Consolidating McKinney under Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) coordinated state and local plans.

Challenges

- Maine was able to fully fund both of its LEAs by using less administrative funds to allow projects to stay in operation. The danger is that administrative funds will have to be used to carry out the census counts of homeless students as required in the new law, thus eliminating funds available for services.
- We should reduce the need to have McKinney funds to assure that all schools make provisions for all students to succeed in school; getting their foot in the door is not good enough. Homeless children must be served by the schools, and the communities must help the schools meet their needs.

MARYLAND

Contact:	Walter Varner
Phone:	(410) 767-0282
Fax:	(410) 333-8148
Total Grant FY95:	$359,785
Number of LEAs funded 1996-1997:	7
Number of children served 1995-1996 school year:	5,000
Total Grant FY96:	$284,526
Number of LEAs funded 1996-1997:	7
Number of children served 1996-1997 school year:	3,949
Estimated number of homeless children in Maryland:	10,994*

*1996 data from the Maryland Department of Human Resources, Office of Transitional Services

Accomplishments

- The funding of parental education classes for homeless families.
- The creation of a children's resource center in one of the shelters. This resource center provides tutorial assistance and is equipped with computers.

Challenges

- In FY96, funding for Maryland's Education for Homeless Children and Youth program was cut by 21%. As a result, each of the 7 local education programs were forced to cut back services to homeless children, and 1,051 fewer children were served. In Prince George's County, for example, two of the eight shelters that had been receiving tutorial services were dropped from the program, and educational services are provided to homeless youth only one day a week (see Local Profile).
- Transportation to school continues to be a barrier to accessing education, in urban and rural areas of the state. Transportation to the original school is critical to limiting the disruption of education caused by homelessness, but is costly.

"I've been in four schools this year. It's rough. Always having to move and change and get used to people and make new friends. It takes a little while. And right when I get it, then right when I get friends and get used to stuff, then we have to move again."

Ryan
Public Justice Center: A Dream Deferred: A Report on Barriers to Education for Homeless Children and Youth in Maryland

LOCAL PROFILE

Prince George's County Public Schools
Division of Pupil Services
14201 School Lane
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-9983
Phone: (301) 952-6362

The Prince George's County Public Schools homeless program facilitates homeless children's enrollment, attendance, and success in school; provides after-school tutoring at three locations; and procures and distributes school supplies to homeless children. The homeless education program also collaborates with other school programs to insure that homeless children receive the support necessary for academic success. Most of the children served through the homeless education program are residents of Prince George's County living at a variety of shelters, including the Family Crisis Center, a shelter for battered women and children; Shepherd's Cove Shelter, a shelter for women and children; the Family Emergency Shelter, a short-term shelter for families; the Transitional Housing Program, housing for families selected from the emergency shelters; or Second Mile and Guide, two short-term shelters for 12-17 year old children.

Prior to the FY96 reduction in funding, the Prince George's County homeless education program provided direct funding for school supplies and tutoring for 8 area shelters. As a result of the cuts, only 6 shelters now receive services. In addition, the position of Homeless Shelter Teacher and Coordinator was reduced from a full-time position to a 60% position. Consequently, less educational support and coordination between shelters and schools are possible. Prince George's County Schools had been providing a full-time employee to work with youth in short-term shelters. As a result of budget cuts, educational services are now provided to these youth only one day a week. Most of the 250 youth in the short-term shelters are from Baltimore, but are placed in 2-4 week programs in PG County because there are not enough spaces in Baltimore youth programs or foster care placement. Because these students are under severe emotional stress and are not in the county long enough to enroll in school, a shelter-based program is deemed more appropriate. Reduced funding for the homeless education program has left these young people with almost no educational opportunities.

Challenges

- Limited funds are available for transportation and school supplies. Although funding for these purposes is supplemented with school-wide drives for donations, transportation cannot be guaranteed for all homeless children. As a result, homeless children are forced to transfer schools more frequently, thus disrupting their education. School transfers and transportation problems also delay the enrollment of homeless children in school.

- Tutorial services have a direct impact on homeless children's success in school. In Prince George's County, however, the homeless education program is only able to fund tutoring at three facilities, two days per week. With additional resources, more shelters -- and therefore more homeless children and youth -- could benefit from tutorial services.

- Coordination between shelters and school programs is essential to eliminating barriers to education and insuring academic success, yet current funding only allows the Homeless Shelter Teacher and Coordinator to spend two days per week on coordination of services. A restoration of funds would enable hiring of more personnel to insure that policies are carried out, that records are transferred in a timely fashion, and that children have access to other programs, like Head Start or Special Education.

MASSACHUSETTS

Contact:	Susan Farb
Phone:	(617) 388-3300 X 382
Fax:	(617) 388-3394
Total Grant FY95:	$504,998
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	12
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,258
Total Grant FY96:	$398,112
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	12
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,561
Estimated number of homeless children in Massachusetts:	9,087*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Program in-service for staff in schools to promote awareness. Schools, community and shelter personnel became more effective in tracking homeless students.
- Collaboration with Boys and Girls Clubs.
- Identification of pre K-children. Integrated early childhood programs.
- School-based tutoring programs.

Challenges

- Summer programs eliminated. Homeless children in Massachusetts are left without any structured activities for three months of the year.
- Transportation to school. Families in Massachusetts may be relocated up to 50 miles away from their original home, making transportation to schools of origin a difficult task. The loss of this service harshens the disruption of children's lives as they move to shelters.
- After-school educational/tutoring programs eliminated. Tutoring programs were among Massachusetts' greatest achievements from 1995-96; however, due to recent funding reductions, many of these programs were eliminated.
- Lack of stability and security for children and parents. This population has been severely traumatized; however, no support services are available due to funding shortages. The delayed child development must also be addressed.

MICHIGAN

Contact:	Linda Brown
Phone:	(517) 373-3921
Fax:	(517) 335-2886
Total Grant FY95:	$1,275,326
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	16
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	4,137
Total Grant FY96:	$1,002,142
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	17
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	4,500
Estimated number of homeless children in Michigan:	139,555*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- The Department of Education was able to personally visit 15 of the 17 LEAs and monitor all 17. These visits provided the State office with a good understanding of the needs, problems, and accomplishments of each site. They also enabled Department of Education staff to share information between grantees about what is working and how to address issues.

- Michigan is currently working on written guidance for school districts regarding enrollment, residency, immunizations, transportation and services for homeless children and youth in their area. This is a joint effort of Department staff and school district personnel. The Department will also be issuing a revised brochure regarding the McKinney Act to all schools in Michigan.

Challenges

- Reduction in services as a result of budget cuts. In order to fund more projects serving children 14 of the McKinney renewal projects had their budgets reduced by 25%. Every program had to reduce the scope of services they planned on providing. For example, summer programs were cut, tutoring services were reduced or eliminated, LEAs were unable to provide follow-up services.

- Transportation remains the largest challenge to homeless children attending school. Public schools in Michigan are not required to provide transportation to school, except for Special Education Services. However, many districts do provide transportation by using their general funds. This financial situation prevents most school districts from meeting the transportation needs of homeless children.

- Preschool Services. Although the McKinney Act was amended in 1994 to include services for preschool age children, Michigan has been unable to provide these services thus far.

- Michigan law regarding enrollment and residency has created barriers to students who are homeless. The Department of Education and districts have been working to revise our laws and policies and publish guidance for all schools regarding enrollment, residency, and services to homeless children and youth. However, it remains an unseen barrier. If a child/family is turned away at school by an unaware secretary or principal, they will most likely not return until they meet the district requirements. If the parent or representative does not pursue the issue, the child may be denied access. The Department of Education continues to educate and raise awareness, but this still remains a challenge.

MINNESOTA

Contact:	Tom Gray
Phone:	(612) 296-4322
Fax:	(612) 297-2495
Total Grant FY95:	$343,617
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	12
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	6,628
Total Grant FY96:	$271,255
Carryover dollars added:	$328,603
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	10
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	7,200
Estimated number of homeless children in Minnesota:	20,802*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- The Improving America Schools Act (IASA) reauthorization brought an increase in funding for homeless students in Minnesota. The Title I program required LEAs with significant homeless children populations to set-aside Basic funds to provide opportunities for homeless students to reach the State's challenging standards. In Minnesota, an estimated $750,000 dollars of Title I Basic Funds have been set aside each year for homeless students. The McKinney-funded programs were also required to set aside Title I funds; it is likely that these program set aside more Title I funding than if they had not received McKinney funding.

Challenges

- Funding cuts resulted in the loss of two programs; in addition, all the funded programs were reduced from the previous year. Had these programs not been eliminated or cut, Minnesota would have been able to serve 1,000 more homeless students.

- All of the projects did the best that they could with the available resources. Most prioritized enrollment and reduced attendance. The area that suffered was academic success, especially in assisting homeless students with the Basic and High standards as outlined in the Improving America Schools Act.

- The homeless youth population continues to grow, with less county and city intervention and prevention services for youth twelve years of age and older.

- The homeless population keeps growing. Minnesota estimates that it is serving only one-third of the eligible homeless children population.

LOCAL PROFILE

Minneapolis Public Schools
Minneapolis, MN

Minneapolis received $90,000 in McKinney funding in 1995-1996. It received $60,000 in 1996-1997. The Local Educational Agency (LEA) set aside approximately $250,000 dollars of Title I Basic funds and $50,000 in general funds for the operation of the program, and has also been generous with transportation for homeless children and families.

However, the issues of homelessness in Minneapolis is enormous. The LEA identified 3,119 homeless students in 1995-1996. Most of these children were elementary aged. During this period, the elementary population was approximately 21,000 students. Imagine, approximately 10% of an LEA's elementary population is homeless at some point during the year! Further, with the amount of funds available, the LEA has targeted elementary-aged learners, 25% of whom are three grades behind in school, according to the University of Minnesota. There are at least as many homeless pre-schoolers that could benefit from early childhood services. Older runaway and homeless youth are also a significant problem. Probably 700-1,000 youth are homeless in the Metro area on a given night. Most of the youth are in the Minneapolis area.

Lack of funding is a serious issue for the homeless education program in Minneapolis. First of all, there is not enough funding to reach the pre-school children and the runaway and homeless youth. Second, the challenge of enrolling or keeping homeless children in their school or origin is immense and costly. Third, most of the students are behind in school -- according to the Wilder Research Institute, 40% of the elementary-aged homeless children in Minnesota are at least one grade behind. Unfortunately, it at this point that the lack of funds begins to show. Homeless students need accelerated learning opportunities if they are to reach the State's high standards. Minneapolis needs more, a lot more, funding to establish academic and support services for the elementary schools to which these children transition. With the cuts in funding, this part of the Minneapolis homeless education model did not receive the necessary funding to provide homeless students enough opportunities to assist them towards the attainment of the challenging State standards.

Submitted by the Minnesota Department of Education
Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

MISSOURI

Contact:	Karen Hinton
Phone:	(573) 751-8310
Fax:	(573) 526-6698

Total Grant FY95:	$480,510
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	13
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	5,570
Total Grant FY96:	$379,321
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	11
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	6,500
Estimated number of homeless children in Missouri:	8,000*

*1996 data from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Accomplishments

- Missouri's local homeless education programs responded to dramatically increasing numbers of homeless children and youth.

Challenges

- Missouri was only able to fund 11 of its 13 LEAs due to the cut in funding. In addition, each of the 11 LEAs received only 72% of the money requested. LEAs were forced to target services for transportation and coordination of services, and districts spent all of their own funding for tutoring, school supplies, etc. before using McKinney money. The dramatic increase in the number of homeless children in Missouri resulted in programs serving more children, but less comprehensively.

- Serving the increasing population of homeless children. **The number of homeless children and youth in Missouri increased 262% from 1993 to 1996.** Sixty-eight percent of Missouri's homeless children are under age 12. At its current funding level, Missouri is not able to help all of its homeless children and youth enroll, attend, and succeed in school.

- Based on data from Missouri schools, family mobility, lack of communication between parents and schools, and the lack of records from previous schools are the most significant barriers in identifying the special needs of homeless children and youth.

MONTANA

Contact:	Terry Teichrow
Phone:	406-444-2036
Fax:	406-444-3924
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	3
Number of children served for the 1995-96 school year:	210
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	3
Number of children served for the 1996-97 school year:	285
Estimated number of homeless children in Montana:	2,028*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Tutoring programs have caused an undisputed increase in reading levels and attendance. These programs provide staff who are able and willing to help homeless students.

Challenges

- Continuing to collaborate funds with the other programs after their funding reductions.
- The $50,000 for operation of minimum-funded state programs is no longer sufficient.

"It's like we're angels on a pin. No one wants to hear us, no one believes they can see us, and no one wants to know how many we are."

Rachel, homeless unaccompanied 17 year old; Arlington Heights, Illinois
Clary, Joseph P. And Diane D. Nilan: People Just Like You: A Report on Homelessness in Suburban Cook and the Collar Counties

NEBRASKA

Contact:	Judy Klein
Phone:	(402) 471-2478
Fax:	(402) 471-0117
Total Grant FY95:	$116,337
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	4
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	850
Total Grant FY96:	$101,449
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	4
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1298
Estimated number of homeless children in Nebraska:	6,101*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- School districts in Nebraska have begun including Title I money in their homeless children's education programs. This has allowed the programs to expand the number of children served. For example, a program which was formerly only able to concentrate on serving children in the area's youth shelter is now able to serve children in a domestic violence shelter.

Challenges

- Administrative time cuts to the education of homeless children. As a result of the recent reduction of funding, the State Coordinator's time was cut in half in order to maintain the four existing local projects.
- Nebraska needs to fund two more local projects; however, the funds are depleted on continuation of the four existing programs.
- Providing developmental activities for the growing numbers of pre-school age children. The first quarter of Nebraska's 1997 homeless count showed a great increase in the number of pre-school age children. However, due to long waiting lists, Nebraska's Headstart program does not serve shelter children.
- Ensuring transportation services to the school of origin. The ambiguity of language in the McKinney Act has allowed the attorneys for local school districts to claim that transportation services are not required. Therefore, many school districts will not provide transportation to the school of origin.
- Strict enrollment policies are interfering with enrollment of homeless children. Nebraska's local schools are facing new spending lids and in order to cut costs, many are returning to strict enrollment policies. Some school districts now require residency, immunization, birth certificates, and legal guardianship.

NEVADA

Contact:	Shaun Griffin
Phone:	(702) 847-9311
Fax:	(702) 847-9335
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	7
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	300
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	7
Number of children served for the 1996-97 school year:	300+
Estimated number of homeless children in Nevada:	1,596*

*1996 data from the Nevada Office for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth

Accomplishments

- The Roger Corbett Elementary School developed an after school program for homeless youth and severely at-risk students which focuses on academic achievement, self-esteem, and self confidence. This program owes its success, in part, to Americorps mentors from the neighboring university who provided special one-on-one attention to the students.

- Kate Smith Elementary School organized Reading Chains, in which each student joins a small group of five to nine other students to read for 30 minutes every day. This program fostered greater excitement about reading and increased reading ability as much as 1.7 grade levels.

- One of the best achievements of 1995-96 year was the special "The Lives of the Children," which aired on National Public Radio in September of 1995. It was a very strong oral portrait of life on the streets for young people, particularly adolescents. Copies were distributed to all grant-funded projects.

Challenges

- Adjusting to the recent changes in welfare. Although there is no exact number for how many families in Nevada went unserved in the 1996-1997 year, it is clear that several hundred Nevada families now will fall through the cracks. There was little or no safety net before the legislative changes, now there is no net for these families.

LOCAL PROFILE

Project Hope: End of the Year Report
Orr Elementary School
Las Vegas, Nevada

This has truly been a banner year for Project Hope; whereas last year we focused on strengthening students' academic skills, the 1996-1997 school year saw us placing an emphasis on life skills as well as academics. In addition to the two project facilitators, various classroom teachers regularly provided their time and talents to ensure their project's ongoing success. By meeting for an hour after school three days a week (Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays) and by offering a vast variety of skill-developing activities, we were able to maintain an appreciably regular attendance by most of the students in the program. Moreover, statistics from the attendance office substantiate that students in Project Hope this year actually improved their over-all attendance as well as reduced their number of RPC's and suspensions.

Some of the activities the children participated in included cooking, crafts, reading, storytelling, a career survey, watching videos that helped with coping skills, making self-expression 'me' collages, strengthening speaking and listening skills, and engaging in numerous computer games that involve reading, math, and critical thinking. Students furthermore were involved in numerous discussions and role playing wherein peer pressure, family problems, anger, and stress were the major topics. In addition to the hour get-togethers after school, students were encouraged to meet in one-on-one counseling sessions as well as participate in student outlook groups. A documented 47 students met in the outlook groups as of May 27, 1997, and 65 received individual counseling. As with last year, the students were able to take advantage of individual tutoring in each of their academic subjects as needed.

One student in particular, Eugene, rose to the top with help from Project Hope. Eugene, who just finished the eighth grade, comes from an abusive, one-parent household where he receives absolutely no support or guidance. His middle school career has mostly been one of painful encounters in which he earned mostly D's and F's in the sixth and seventh grades. Due to his regular involvement in Project Hope, Eugene has been able to turn himself around incredibly. This year he earned nearly straight A's in all subjects and was recently accepted to attend Southern Nevada Vocational Technical Center in the fall.

Another hearty measure of Project Hope's success was parent involvement. By communicating with parents and guardians and keeping them apprised of their children's progress and needs, we were able to sustain interest on the home front. The crowning event was our school-sponsored Night of Hope, held in the library on March 12, 1997, during which 37 parents were in attendance. On that occasion, parents were treated to refreshments, prizes, and a host of handouts informing them of helpful agencies in the community, geared to their needs. Judging from the resounding response to the parent questionnaires we sent out afterwards, the event was an unqualified success, one we certainly intend to repeat. As important as anything else, parents had the opportunity to discuss with us, and with one another, in a relaxed environment, some of the common problems and concerns in rearing children.

For the 1997-1998 school year, we anticipate bountiful tidings. In addition to the above stated activities, we have added to our roster by enlisting the volunteered services of more teachers, to include Industrial Arts, Physical Education, and Drama. It is our eventual goal to involve the entire school. As Orr is identified as an at-risk school, it follows that much of our student population falls into the homeless category, and that is problem to be addressed not by just a few, but by one and all.

NEW JERSEY

Contact:	Anne Corwell
Phone:	(609) 633-1304
Fax:	(609) 633-6874
Total Grant FY95:	$584,789
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	9
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,550
Total Grant FY96:	$461,640
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	9
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,550
Estimated number of homeless children in New Jersey:	17,132*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Homeless students have received such services as before- and after-school tutoring, summer classes, assessment and diagnostic services, transportation, counseling, health care, school supplies, clothing, and family support services.

Challenges

- A continuation grant allowed the state to fund 9 agencies for the 1996 -1997 year. However, because the upcoming school year is a new competitive grant cycle, the real impact of the reduction in funding in New Jersey will occur during the 1997 - 1998 cycle. Funding is insufficient to fund the applicants that received passing scores; therefore, between 5 and 7 grants will be funded.

"The school won't send a bus for my kids to go to school... Sometimes I think they really don't want my kids in their school."

Desiree; Elgin, Illinois
Clary, Joseph P. And Diane D. Nilan: People Just Like You: A Report on Homelessness in Suburban Cook and the Collar Counties

NEW YORK

Contact:	Margretta Fairweather
Phone:	(518) 474-5807
Fax:	(518) 486-7290
Total Grant FY95:	$2,558,330
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	44
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	22,000
Total Grant FY96:	$2,012,483
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	42
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	22,000
Estimated number of homeless children in New York:	22,776*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Broad based distribution of services, information and money to those children in need whether in rural upstate school districts or large city environments.

Challenges

- It is too early to tell, yet it appears that EHCY will be impacted by an increase in the number of homeless children. The block granting of funds to local social service offices does not specifically designate money for homeless services. This may prove problematic.

- The continued need to educate the public and those in school environments regarding the needs of and responsibilities to homeless children and families.

"It's hard being homeless and going to school. People make fun of you and tease you... I love to read and learn, so that month was hard on me. I really missed school... They (school officials) should be on our side and help us get to school... They shouldn't try to ruin the one chance we've got."

Kendrick Williams is a homeless boy who was excluded from Washington D.C. schools for one month while officials searched for his records. This quote is from his testimony before the Congressional Subcommittee on Employment and Productivity of the Senate Comm. on Labor and Human Resources, May 22, 1990, reprinted in, Herr, supra note 3, at 378.

NORTH CAROLINA

Contact:	David Bryant
Phone:	(919) 715-1643
Fax:	(919) 715-1897
Total Grant FY95:	$544,629
Number of LEAs funded:	14
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,900
Total Grant FY96:	$332,665
Number of LEAs funded:	10
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,500
Estimated number of homeless children in North Carolina:	6,274*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- North Carolina's primary accomplishments are centered around the innovative programs of the local school systems. The state has also taken major steps in focusing on an interagency approach to addressing the needs of the homeless, especially school-age youth.

Challenges

- Identification of homeless students. The school districts must be able to identify their homeless students in order to serve them.
- Providing funding for the local education agencies. The requests from local education agencies are unable to be met by the state. The state is also unable to completely fund the budget requests by some LEAs which receive grant monies.
- Transportation to school. North Carolina continues to struggle with transporting homeless children to their school of origin due to funding reductions.
- Major reductions in services.Academic tutorial services, program coordinators, and coordination of services among schools and agencies were all reduced as the result of funding cuts.

LOCAL PROFILES: NORTH CAROLINA

Pasquotank County

Project Roots provides tutors small groups of homeless or at-risk students two to three times a week for a minimum of six weeks. Students are tested before and after tutoring programs to monitor academic progress. The focus of tutoring varies depending on the needs of individual schools. The program also offers summer programs to provide enhanced educational opportunities for homeless and at-risk youth. Enrichment opportunities offered include academic tutoring, horseback riding, animal care, water safety, bicycle riding and care, physical fitness and team building.

Robeson County

Public schools in this county target academic deficiencies and poor social skills through skill streaming, a structured-learning approach to teaching pro-social skills. Weekly training sessions are held at Robeson House, a shelter for homeless children and youth. A weekly tutorial program will be provided to all students in the program, as needed. Consultation with school personnel encourages enhanced service for these students to help them maintain academic success during a traumatic and stressful time.

McDowell County

Project Compass is a critical support program for students who are currently homeless, previously homeless or in danger of seeing present living arrangements disrupted. Tutoring, primarily by teachers, is offered at elementary schools before and after school, as well as throughout the summer. Students receive necessary school supplies, assistance with clothing, food and medical care, and access to a range of community services through community and private resources. The project coordinator visits each school regularly to monitor and document students' progress and family needs.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg

A Child's Place is a nonprofit agency which collaborates with Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools to provide homeless or at-risk elementary school students with a stable, appropriate education. Generally, the schools provide for the instructional needs of identified students and A Child's Place provides social services to the families and leverages community resources to provide supplemental services such as tutors, mentors, medical and dental services, food and clothing, and enrichment activities and programs. Together, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and A Child's Place personnel advocate on the behalf of homeless and at-risk children and their families to the larger community.

OHIO

Contact:	Charles Kozlesky
Phone:	(614) 466-4161
Fax:	(614) 752-1622
Total Grant FY95:	$1,260,234
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	11
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	8,829
Total Grant FY96:	$984,000
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	11
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	10,000
Estimated number of homeless children in Ohio:	27,416**

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- First statewide mailing of application materials to superintendents. Dissemination of brochures and education materials to all school districts.
- Increased the awareness of homeless education through state and local in-service presentations.
- Coordinated efforts with Title I. Title I is presently supporting several of Ohio's LEA tutorial projects.
- Implementation of the Americorps Vista Program in Cleveland, and the possible expansion to several other LEAs.
- All 11 LEAs were reviewed and provided technical assistance that encouraged collaboration with all Education and Supportive Agencies.

Challenges

- For the current school year, the Department of Education was able to increase educational services to homeless children by using state administration funds. However, without increased appropriations, services may have to be reduced for the next school year.
- Adjusting to greater demand. Ohio's homeless population, including children, continues to increase. Ohio's local education for homeless children and youth programs indicate presently that there are 24,049 homeless children living in the 11 funded LEA areas. Thus, Ohio is serving less than half of the estimated number of homeless children in these areas, and an even smaller number of the homeless children (estimated to be 27,416 in 1993) in the state.
- Coordinating provisions of the McKinney Act with the enrollment process as detailed in the Ohio Revised Code.

LOCAL PROFILE

Cleveland Public Schools
The Office of Adult and Continuing Education
Phone: (216)574-8203
Fax: (216) 574-8477

The Cleveland Public Schools' Project ACT provides direct instructional and support services for children and youth residing in temporary or transitional shelters. A comprehensive, holistic approach is used to deliver direct instructional and support services necessary to facilitate the transition of homeless children and youth into school and to ensure the children's success and ongoing participation in the educational system. Support services include all that is necessary to accomplish the goal of meeting physical, social and emotional needs and empowering parents to support their children in this endeavor. Last year the program served 2,199 students.

- 24 Hour help line for shelter providers with instant access to the Cleveland Public Schools, Dept. of Student Assignments, to register students, obtain school assignments, and transportation services for homeless children and youth.
- Programming for Early Childhood, School-Age and Adolescents at 14 sites incorporating homework assistance, tutoring, educational enrichment and support services.
- Transportation and access to community health care facilities for medical needs and assistance.
- Identification and referral of special needs children for early childhood screening and intervention services.
- Publication of a "Family Facts" book for parents which consolidates the documentation of immunization records, birth certificate, social security number and other important family information. This book enables the parent to maintain the child's records in an organized folder.
- Libraries in the shelters and new books to all children and youth residing in homeless and domestic violence shelters.

Participating Shelters:

Eastside Catholic Shelter, Family Transitional Housing, Harbor Light Shelter, New Day Program, Health Care For the Homeless, YWCA, Safe Space Station, GRADS-Teen parents, Salvation Army, Templum House, Westside Catholic Shelter, Women Together I, Women Together II, Zelma George Shelter, Angeline Christian Home

OREGON

Contact:	Dona Bolt
Address:	255 Capitol Street NE Salem, OR 97310
Phone:	(503) 378-3606 ext. 600
Fax:	(503) 373-7968
Total Grant FY95:	**$276,792**
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	12
Number of children served in 1995-96 school year:	3,800
Total Grant FY96:	**$220, 222**
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	18
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	7,500*
Estimated number of homeless children in Oregon:	20,682**

*This increase represents use of both McKinney and Title IA set-aside funds.
**Oregon Housing and Community Service Department

Accomplishments

- The Title IA set-asides initiative for serving homeless students has definitely broadened the scope of Oregon's efforts. Four times more support is being targeted than if the state's programs relied only on McKinney. McKinney projects serve as models for districts starting homeless education projects with Title IA funds.

Challenges

- Reductions in funding have challenged existing projects as well as reduced incentive to start new programs. The 1995-96 suffered anywhere from 10%-50% reduction in funds, and new projects received only nominal start-up grants.

- Inspiring the LEAs to do more with less McKinney funding. Without the necessary public funding inferior substitutes for regular school programs, such as segregated schools for homeless children, can gain a stronger foothold.

- McKinney grant requirements are too cumbersome for the small amount of funding available. Two LEAs (which previously received $5000) decided not to reapply due to the competitiveness of application process, and therefore the homeless children in these two areas will not be served.

- Inability to meet need. Oregon recently received three excellent applications for projects in new areas, each deserving of at least $25,000. However, the lack of funds only allowed $10,000 for all three programs ($3,300 for each).

- Welfare reform implementation problems. Some clients believe that they no longer qualify for welfare and have not followed through on the requirements. Other families must now feed the same number of children on far fewer food stamps and/or pay weekly motel rates on motel rooms with far less money. Welfare caseloads are being reduced by decreasing the number of people eligible by changing the guidelines. It is not a true reduction in poverty. Work requirements are not in line with job availability. Housing availability for low income families is not keeping pace with population growth. Shelter counts show increasing numbers; homelessness among children and youth is still growing.

LOCAL PROFILE

Step-Up Homeless Education Program
Klamath Falls, OR 97601-5812
(541) 885-4929

The Step-Up Homeless Education Program is a collaborative effort of the Klamath Union and Mazama High School District, the Klamath Falls Elementary School District, the Klamath County School District, and Integral Youth Services, a non-profit social service agency. The program serves all of the schools in Klamath County, an area which includes seven high schools, seven junior high schools, and twenty elementary schools, with approximately 11,200 students. The county is a large geographical area, with the farthest of these schools a one-and-a-half hour drive from Klamath Falls.

Klamath County is a predominantly rural, low socio-economic area which historically depended heavily on the timber industry for its economic base. The area is beginning the transition to a different economic base, but there are still many displaced families left from the downturn of the timber industry.

The most recent large-scale survey of homelessness in Klamath County (taken in the spring of 1995) indicated that there were 334 homeless children, ages birth to 17, living in the county. The survey counted only "resident" homeless children (those whose families have lived in the area for two years or more) and did not include any mobile families or homeless migrant agricultural workers.

There are no family shelters in Klamath County. The Klamath Falls Gospel Mission operates a men's shelter and an emergency shelter for four women and their children under the age of twelve years. Exodus House, a short-term youth shelter, provides space for sixteen youth between the ages of 10 and 17 years.

The Step-Up Homeless Education program assists homeless families in enrolling their children in school, provides school supplies and transportation assistance for homeless students, assists homeless families in obtaining school-based special services for their children, and assists the families in accessing social services and securing housing. In addition, the Step-Up program operates an after-school homework club and tutoring program each afternoon from 3:00-5:00 p.m.

PENNSYLVANIA

Contact:	Leslie Peters
Phone:	(717) 772-2813
Fax:	(717) 783-6617
Total Grant FY95:	$1,274,166
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	11
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	9,444
Total Grant FY96:	$1,001,636
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	13
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	9,844
Estimated number of homeless children in Pennsylvania:	17,782*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Each of the 500 school districts in the Commonwealth has identified a contact person (a homeless liaison) for homeless children and youth. 103 school districts are supported by 13 grants.
- The state project has designed both a Statewide Directory of School District Contacts for Homeless Students and a Statewide Family Shelter Directory to serve as resource tools in coordinating services to homeless children and their families.

Challenges

- By utilizing carry-over state administrative funds, reducing the grant for state support, and eliminating the statewide newsletter, Pennsylvania was able to increase the number of funded LEAs from 11 to 13. Carryover state administrative funds were available due to a large portion of the state coordinator's time and salary being allocated to Title II federal funding for Early Childhood Initiatives. The lack of statewide awareness activities resulted in less informational support for both funded and unfunded sites.
- Accommodating increased demand for services. It has been estimated that one in seven children in the state of Pennsylvania lives in poverty. More families will experience homelessness, and family mobility continues to be the greatest barrier to school success.
- Continuing the expansion of educational opportunities for homeless children. If the funding continues at this reduced level or is further reduced, the amount allocated to each funded site may not be sufficient to support a full-time educational liaison and the direct services needed for homeless children to succeed in school. The educational liaison is critical to the success of Pennsylvania's model; this position is a link between the school districts in their service area and the human service agencies at the local level.

LOCAL PROFILE

Allentown School District
31 South Penn Street, P.O. 328
Allentown, PA 18105
610-821-2671

On May 22, 1997, during the school day, there was a fire in an Allentown apartment complex which displaced several families including several school-aged children. The Central Elementary School principal, Christopher Yeager, immediately went to the location of the fire because he knew several of his students resided there. When he saw that the fire was severe, he returned to his school building and called me (Homeless Liaison) because he realized the families would be unable to return to their apartments.

I went to the fire scene and spoke with the families of school children about assisting with clothing, school supplies and school issues. I then contacted the Red Cross about these and other families affected by the fire. For several years, the Homeless Initiative has worked with the Red Cross on disasters involving school-aged children. I am a member of the Red Cross Emergency Advisory Council.

I went to the school of one of the older students, told her about the fire and transported her to her family at her mother's request. At the end of the school day, I picked up the other students and brought them to the emergency shelter for meetings with the Red Cross. The Red Cross was able to find a Center City hotel to place the families in. I informed the schools and the Migrant Education Worker who worked with one of the children.

The following day, Friday, May 23, all of the children who were affected by the fire were in school. I spoke with the children and their families about their needs and offered the Central School clothing room as a resource. Both schools were on stand-by if additional needs developed.

On Tuesday, May 27, the families entered the 6th St. Shelter. The children still did not miss one day of school. On Friday, May 30, the Red Cross helped one family with 5 school-aged children find an apartment. I could not find suitable public bussing to transport the children to their original schools, so I made arrangements o transport the children for the remainder of the school year myself.

On Monday, June 2, umbrellas and rain ponchos were provided for the children for what promised to be wet weather. School supplies and some cleaning supplies were given to the families. On Wednesday, June 4, still no student had missed school. I assisted one child with a lunch ticket problem, paid for a pair of glasses for one child, and made sure all the children could attend an end of the year school activity. On Friday, June 6th, still not one student had missed a day of school.

Submitted by:
Russell Valentini
Homeless Liaison
Allentown School District

RHODE ISLAND

Contact:	Virginia Bilotti
Phone:	(401) 277-4600 ext. 2332
Fax:	(401) 277-4979
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	3
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	185
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	3
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	195
Estimated number of homeless children in Rhode Island:	1,500-2,000*

*1996 estimate from the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless

Accomplishments

- Coordination of services with Child Opportunity Zones and Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) programs.

Challenges

- Rhode Island continues to struggle with barriers to school enrollment, especially transferring school records and transportation issues.

"You think you know what homeless mean but you don't know nothin' 'bout homeless. You think homeless mean you ain't got no apartment, you ain't got no bed for yourself, ain't got no place to wash off when you soil or you be sweaty. Well, bein' homeless mean more than all that.

It mean you don't got no next-door neighbor, no best friend no more. You don't got no favorite place to play or hide your candy money. You don't even got your own seat in your own classroom, you be movin' so many time. Don't know the teacher name. So who care? She don't know your name either.

You ain't got no good memories of holidays or the movies or even rides.

You ain't even got yourself bad memories. You know why? You bet you don't! 'Cause one shelter look like the next, and soon you can't remember how long you been in this one or that one. Anyway, it don't make no difference. Not after a whiles it don't. You know why? 'Cause you be doublin' up so many nights in the same bed covers, sharin' the same potty so many nights, that one mornin' you wake up and you ain't sure who you is anymore. Maybe you still you, maybe you turn into the other person.

So don't tell me you knows 'bout homeless kids. And don't ask me if I understand what happenin' to my family bein' we got no home. They invisible and so is me. I not here anymore. I died three year ago. Hey, you wastin' your time talkin' to a dead person."

An eleven year old girl approached by a social worker at an emergency shelter, Seattle, WA
Quint, Sharon: Schooling Homeless Children

SOUTH CAROLINA

Contact:	Frank E. White, Jr.
Phone:	(803) 734-8458
Fax:	(803) 734-5685
Total Grant FY95:	$384,280
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	12
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,950
Total Grant FY96:	$301,853
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	12
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,250
Estimated number of homeless children in South Carolina:	5,307*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Project PASS (Parents and Students Succeed) in Richland County became fully operational through a grant of $65,000. PASS served homeless students in 5 homeless shelters. These students were tutored, and, when necessary, received assistance in securing school records and other documents needed to enroll in school. The program also sponsored a 3-hour graduate course with the University of South Carolina to help teachers better understand and reach homeless students. PASS collaborated with 14 other local agencies to better meet the needs of homeless students and their families.

Challenges

- Funding cuts for the 1996-97 school year resulted in 8 LEAs receiving cuts, and 4 of the 12 programs received grants of $5,000 each to operate six months. As an example, a program receiving $35,492 in 1995-96 and which provided, among other things, 120 homeless and transient students with academic tutoring and counseling, received only $5,000 for 1996-97 and will serve only a fraction of that number.

- Helping local school district administrators understand that homeless students can go to their original school whether or not the students actually have a local address.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Contact:	Janet Ricketts
Phone:	(605) 773-4437
Fax:	(605) 773-3782
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	2
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	406
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	2
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	406*

*At least as many as 1995-1996; probably more by the end of Summer 1997 projects.

Estimated number of homeless children in South Dakota: 1,455**

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Coordinating efforts with migrant, bilingual and Title I programs, which resulted in the production of awareness materials and the insurance that homeless children and their needs were not overlooked in the state's challenging state content standards workshops.

Challenges

- Maximizing services with minimal funds in a large state. The size of the state forces administrators to examine whether to continue funding Sioux Falls and Rapid City projects at their current levels, or reduce their grant allocations (thus resulting in fewer services for homeless children in those districts) in order to provide a limited amount of dollars for smaller districts.

- The state is receiving requests from more districts for funds, but at the current funding level, cannot expand the program.

TENNESSEE

Contact:	Kay Nixon
Phone:	(615) 532-4726
Fax:	(615) 532-7860
Total Grant FY95:	$512,243
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	11
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	5,500
Total Grant FY96:	$401,917
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	12
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	5,900
Estimated number of homeless children in Tennessee:	1,372*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- The program in Memphis was able to combine with a free enterprise zone, therefore allowing the program to expand its services through more funds. As a result of this collaboration, a system was established to comprehensively track the progress of students in the program.

Challenges

- Identifying the population. The programs in Tennessee could be strengthened by educating the LEAs on how to identify their homeless population. Many school districts are either unaware or choose to ignore the fact that they have homeless students.
- Successful programs to increase awareness to the needs of homeless people are now struggling due to decreased funding.
- Tennessee's past successes were facilitated by money that had carried over year to year; however, that money has depleted. As the number of homeless children and youth continue to grow, the state must make difficult choices about which activities to support.

"I've been to twelve schools counting this one. I don't like it, because you get real close to somebody and all of a sudden it's like boom, you got to go and you get really uncomfortable around meeting people. 'Oh that's the new girl.' That's how it is."

Lisa
Public Justice Center: A Dream Deferred: A Report on Barriers to Education for Homeless Children and Youth in Maryland

TEXAS

Contact:	Barbara James (Wand)
Phone:	(512) 475-9708
Fax:	(512) 971-6193
Total Grant FY95:	$2,425,860
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	15
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	15,059
Total Grant FY96:	$1,899,325
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	15
Estimated number of children served 1996-97:	n/a*

*The actual number will not be available until projects are ended on August 31, 1997

Estimated number of homeless children in Texas: 123,738**

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Texas was able to increase the number of LEA subgrants from 12 to 15, bringing services to more communities than ever before.

Challenges

- Despite the reduction in funding in 1996, Texas was able to maintain all 15 LEAs between the years that the funding was reduced. However, the scope of the services was cut back in many of the subgrants. The reduction in funding was buffered for many of the LEA subgrants because of the use of carry-over funds that were available from previous years; however, the availability of these funds is temporary and all will be depleted after the 1996-97 school year.

- Funding cuts have made it very difficult to expand the EHCY program to communities that have never received this type of funding. For the 1997-98 school year, Texas will address increased statewide needs by funding 5 additional LEAs; however, grant awards for existing LEAs will be reduced by 10-50%. Texas currently provides direct educational services to only 12% of its estimated population of homeless children.

- Acquiring funding to transport students to schools and programs that are in their best interest remains one of the most persistent and intractable problems in serving children and youth in homeless situations. It would be possible to devote all the homeless education funding that Texas receives to transportation services alone.

- Developing a statewide system for identifying and meeting the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness, and, in particular, junior high and high school children is riddled with difficulties, especially in a state as large and diverse as Texas. Older homeless children are much more difficult to identify, and therefore much harder to serve.

LOCAL PROFILE

San Antonio Independent School District
San Antonio, Texas

The San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) Transitions Program provides has nine objectives. The first objective is to provide tutoring and/or other direct educational services to homeless students. In 1996, 466 students received tutoring, and 284 students were able to receive school supplies within the six service sites in San Antonio. Of the students who actively participated in counseling, tutoring, or both, nearly 50% improved in conduct, grades or both, and 32% made the honor roll. The program also provides education and training to the parents/caretakers of homeless children and youth about the rights of and resources available to their children. Parents are given appropriate referrals for such services as housing, shelter, food, clothing, medical, educational, dental, and/or mental health needs. Ensuring that homeless children and youth themselves are aware of district programs that may address their needs is also a concern of the program. The McKinney Act is designed to make sure that homeless children and youth also have prompt access to needed evaluation services for special programs. Participants have been given referrals to community agencies and/or have received direct service assistance from the Transitions Program. Over 535 hours have been provided to families through social services. Approximately 208 families have been assisted with social services and have had follow up contact made.

Approximately a year ago, a homeless mother with three children requested services from the Transitions Program. The family was doubling up with relatives in public housing. The two school-aged children were demonstrating academic and behavioral difficulties, the mother was quite stressed over the living situation and the family was a target for gang violence. The Transitions Program assisted the mother with housing, clothing, food, furniture, and medical assistance and the two students received counseling and tutoring services. After five months of participation with the program and services, the mother was able to locate housing and the two students improved in their academics and behavior at home and school. Two-hundred forty-nine other students received counseling services similar to these two children during the 1996 school year.

The Transition Programs works to make sure that homeless students are able to regularly and safely get to school, as well as have access to essential school supplies and other extraordinary or emergency assistance that is necessary to enable homeless children and youth to attend school. Bonham Elementary is a school in the SAISD that has two homeless shelters in its boundaries. Before the SAISD incorporated Bonham Elementary into the Transitions Program, the children from these shelters had to walk to school each day in a very dangerous and high traffic area. The Transitions Program advocated for, and obtained, bus transportation for the shelter. Since this bus has been provided the attendance of the students requiring the transportation has improved dramatically.

Due to the tutoring and mentoring that students receive in the Transitions Program, self-esteem has improved for some students as reported by parents and teachers, grades have improved for some students, and attendance has increased as reflected in their attendance reports. By providing academic enhancement and counseling to students, children are given the opportunity to succeed in school during their homelessness.

UTAH

Contact:	Laurie Lacey
Phone:	(801) 538-7501
Fax:	(801) 538-7991
Total Grant FY95:	$107, 266
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	6
Number of children served for the 1995-96 school year:	n/a
Total Grant FY96:	$107,329
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	37*
Number of children served for the 1996-97 school year:	20,232

*A new funding pattern was established in 1996; thirty-seven districts received small amounts of homeless funds, instead of the six more amply funded districts in 1995.

Estimated number of homeless children in Utah: **9,969***

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Continued growth in acceptance of homeless students and willingness to provide appropriate services.
- A new funding pattern was established in 1996; thirty-seven districts received small amounts of homeless funds, instead of the six more amply funded districts in 1995 .The redistribution of Mckinney funds allowed smaller districts to establish at least a basic program, which has increased awareness of, and the sense of responsibility for, homeless youth in districts throughout the state. The increase in the number of programs has been made possible by an increase in the amount of state funding for the education of homeless children and youth. While state funding alone is insufficient to meet the needs, the ability to supplement state funding with federal dollars determines whether programs will even exist, no matter how small, in many parts of the state.

Challenges

- Coordination with other service providers and increased awareness of programs better designed to meet the needs of homeless students.
- The reduction of McKinney funds, combined with a new method for allocating funds to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), meant a significant reduction in the amount of funds available to those LEAs with the largest numbers of homeless children. Lost federal funds were supplemented with state funds, so no drastic reduction in services was required. However, programs were not afforded the funding to significantly expand their programs to meet needs.
- McKinney funds amount to approximately $2.80 per identified homeless student. When McKinney money is combined with state funding*, the amount per identified homeless child increases to approximately $52.00 per student. Neither amount is adequate to meet the needs of homeless students in Utah.

*State funding is available for services to homeless and disadvantaged minority students. The figure per student cited assumes 100% of available funds went to serve homeless students - an assumption known to be false. This is a very exaggerated reflection of the funds available to meet the needs of homeless students.

VERMONT

Contact:	Gail Taylor
Phone:	(802) 828-5158
Fax:	(802) 828-3140
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	3
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	75
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	3
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	135
Estimated number of children in the state of Vermont:	726*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- At the end of 1996, Vermont decided to channel some of the homeless administrative funds through an existing network of regional educational advocates in order to support homeless families and children in accessing all appropriate educational services.

- The Education Coordinator for the Burlington School District/Spectrum Youth Programs Collaboration became a school district employee (not a Spetrum employee), which allowed her to serve as an advocate for homeless students within the education system.

Challenges

- There is an increase in youths under the age of 18 not being taken into custody. These youths are considered "on their own" and are left in very marginal situations.

VIRGINIA

Contact:	James H. Stronge, Ph.D.
Phone:	(757) 221-4002
Fax:	(757) 221-2988
Total Grant FY95:	$418,374
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	16
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,616
Total Grant FY96:	$331,441
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	14
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	2,346
Estimated number of homeless children in Virginia:	14,178*

*1995 data from the 1995 Shelter Provider Survey by the Virginia Coalition for the Homeless

Accomplishments

- A major emphasis of the program was to reach out to other agencies on behalf of homeless children. A tangible example of that effort was participation in an interagency legislative study team which made recommendations to the Commission on Youth regarding the global needs of homeless children. Four of ten recommendations highlighted in the report were education initiatives and a follow-up study which specifically addresses the educational needs of homeless children is currently underway.

Challenges

- The number of divisions receiving grants was reduced from 16 in 1995-96 to 14 in 1996-97. And as a result of reduced funding, the project was able to fund only 14 out of 18 worthwhile and appropriate applications for funds.
- Services to homeless children were substantially reduced as a result of the budget cut (see local profile below).
- A continuing challenge is in using shrinking dollars to increase public awareness of the educational needs of homeless children and youth, and to facilitate educational opportunities for them in the 120 Virginia school system without subgrants.

Local Profile
Fairfax County, VA

The original grant proposal to Fairfax County requested $44,064 to provide a homeless liaison (15 hours/week), educational supplies, tutors for two shelters, and summer tuition for homeless students. Even with this large request, only two shelters would have received tutorial services. Given budgetary constraints, the state awarded Fairfax $20,000. This drastic cut means that tutorial services were slashed by a factor of three (from $29,450 to $9,600). There was no preschool teacher, one less assistant tutor, and far fewer nights of tutorial support during fewer weeks of the year. The liaison position was also cut by a third, so that there will be no liaison during the summer months when the FY97-98 application for funds will be due and the requests for financial reimbursement will be made. In this case, the program has been gutted and the administration has been reduced to the point that the program may not survive.

WASHINGTON STATE

Contact:	Melinda Dyer
Phone:	(360) 753-3302
Fax:	(360) 664-3575
Total Grant FY95:	$413,072
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	10
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,762
Total Grant FY96:	$325,572
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	10
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,762
Estimated number of homeless children in Washington:	16,471*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Successes have occurred at the local level where school districts awarded McKinney grants are free to develop and implement specific services to assist homeless children.

Challenges

- Working with the limited resources that resulted from the 1996 budget cut. The numerous services which were reduced include: staff (including elimination of a student coordinator position who identified high school students to serve as tutors and mentors), family support services, tutoring programs, enrichment programs and activities, and parent education workshops. The distribution of school supplies to homeless children and youth reduced in both quality and quantity. Summer programs were eliminated.

- At the district level, the biggest challenge remains transportation.

- At the state level, the biggest challenge has been the continued fight for financial support within the state's budget. Washington continually struggles for funding homeless children and youth educational programs and services.

- As a result of reductions in funding, Washington cannot fund additional school sites in the state. At its current funding level, Washington is providing direct educational services to 11% of its estimated population of homeless children and youth.

WEST VIRGINIA

Contact:	Dr. Marsha Carey
Phone:	(304) 558-2546
Fax:	(304) 558-1613
Total Grant FY95:	$293,335
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	25
Number of Children Served 1995-96:	930
Total Grant FY96:	$229,637
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	23
Number of Children Served 1996-97:	890-910 (approximately)

Estimated number of homeless children in West Virginia: 5,298*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Piedmont Elementary School established the PRO-Kids program with a $7,500 subgrant. This program organizes more than 60 volunteers from churches, social and service organizations, colleges and businesses to provide after-school tutoring programs and basic educational services for the 25% of the student body who are homeless. These services have demonstrated their success by improving grades, CTBS scores, attitude and school attendance.

- Kanawha County Schools are now funding a full-time counselor and social worker to assist students and their families in the transition into the school community.

Challenges

- As a result of a 22% funding cut in FY96, two local homeless programs were eliminated. In addition, the amount of money received by each LEA was reduced from approximate allocations of $10,000 to $7,500. This loss of funds resulted in most schools and shelters reducing the amount of tutoring, counseling, and enrichment activities they offered to the children. Most sites also reduced the number of days and hours for student services.

- Adjusting to increased demand. At the current funding level, the homeless education program is only able to provide direct services to approximately 17% of West Virginia's estimated 5,298 homeless children and youth. Although the state of West Virginia would like to expand the homeless education program to the many communities that have families who qualify for additional student services, it is unable to do so.

- Because services were reduced at each LEA site, West Virginia had to forgo plans to offer programs for preschool children.

WISCONSIN

Contact:	Barbara A. Bitters
Phone:	(608) 299-9609
Fax:	(608) 267-1052
Total Grant FY96:	$515,895
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	9
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	2,097
Total Grant FY96:	$403,811
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	9
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	2,013
Estimated Number of Homeless Children in Wisconsin:	8,245*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Programs have had the chance to develop for three to four years.
- Integration with Improving America's Schools Act programs is beginning at the state and local levels.

Challenges

- As a result of FY96 budget cuts, each of the nine local educational agencies received a 20% cut in funding. There was also a reduction of staff, staff hours, and instructional hours and tutorial assistance. Transportation services for homeless children were reduced as well as parent and staff development and training. Summer programs were cut back or eliminated, and all pre-school programs were eliminated. Other reductions in services include the printing cost related to outreach and public information on the educational needs of homeless students, and reduction in emergency student supplies, materials, and resources.
- The number of homeless students is expected to rise in Wisconsin with the implementation of welfare reform policies in the fall of 1997. Shelter providers in the welfare transition program "Pay for Performance" reported increases in numbers of homeless families seeking assistance.

Local Profile
Kenosha Unified School District

The Kenosha Homeless Education Project promotes enrollment and continuity in school placement to ensure that homeless children and youth have equal access to all available educational services and programs. Program components include raising awareness through staff development; reviewing district policies that act as barriers to enrollment; coordinating outreach services and access to existing programs; providing tutoring in the Shalom Center shelter; and coordinating existing service agencies with Kenosha County Prevention Services.

As a result of budget cuts, in the 1996-1997 school year the Kenosha program was forced to reduce the homeless teacher's time from full time to 70% and to reduce outreach staffing from full-year to operating only through April of 1997. The summer program was eliminated and funds for student transportation were reduced.

WYOMING

Contact:	Paul O. Soumokil
Phone:	(307) 777-7168
Fax:	(307) 777-6234
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	2
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	140
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	2
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	185
Estimated number of homeless children in Wyoming:	1,474*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Accomplishments

- Casper Community College and Seton House collaborated to provide additional transitional housing and support services to homeless single parent families. Seton House serves the largest number of homeless children of any agency in Casper, housing an average of 25 children and their single parents on a daily basis. A case manager provides services to those families through a case plan and identifies specific goals and objectives to assist them more toward self-sufficiency.

  A Children's Services Coordinator arranges tutorial services to 25 homeless children and provides services to ensure that there are no barriers in attending school due to transportation, immunization, or residency.

Challenges

- The collaboration of various community service agencies in order to provide a continuum of services to the homeless.

"I can't think if anything worse than living like this: watching your husband and kids sleep in a car, and worrying that they might freeze to death. Even dying isn't worse than that."

Emilia; Carpentersville, Illinois
Clary, Joseph P. And Diane D. Nilan: People Just Like You: A Report on Homelessness in Suburban Cook and the Collar Counties.

STATE	Estimated Number of Homeless Children (1993*)	Number of Homeless Children Receiving Direct Services, 1996-97 School Year	% Homeless Children Receiving Direct Educational Services
ALASKA	2,000-2,500**	1,200	48 - 60%
ARIZONA	11,914	2,069	17%
CALIFORNIA	137,037	15,000	11%
COLORADO	4,356	1,900	44%
CONNECTICUT	5,090	980	19%
GEORGIA	9,482	10,000	---
IDAHO	5,155	1,700	33%
ILLINOIS	33,000-45,000***	4,200	9 -13%
INDIANA	15,302	2,065	13%
IOWA	9,849****	2,835	29%
KANSAS	8,236	1,250	15%
KENTUCKY	5,781*****	2,860	49%
LOUISIANA	13,546	15,000	n/a
MAINE	8,337	200	2%
MARYLAND	10,994******	3,949	36%
MASSACHU-SETTS	9,087	1,561	16%
MICHIGAN	139,555	4,500	3%
MINNESOTA	20,802	7,200	35%
MISSOURI	8,000*******	6,500	81%
MONTANA	2,028	210	10%
NEBRASKA	6,101	1,298	21%
NEVADA	1,596********	300	19%
NEW JERSEY	17,132	1,550	9%
NEW YORK	22,776	22,000	---

NORTH CAROLINA	6,274	1,500	24%
OHIO	27,416	10,000	36%
OREGON	20,682*********	7,500	36%
PENNSYLVA-NIA	17,782	9,844	55%
RHODE ISLAND	1,500-2,000**********	195	89%
SOUTH CAROLINA	5,307	1,250	23%
SOUTH DAKOTA	1,455	406+	28%
TENNESSEE	1372	5,900	---
TEXAS	123,738	15-16,000	12-13%
UTAH	9,969	20,232	---
VERMONT	726	135	19%
VIRGINIA	14,178**********	2,346	17%
WASHINGTON	16,471	1,762	11%
WEST VIRGINIA	5,298	890-910	17%
WISCONSIN	8,245	2,013	24%
WYOMING	1,474	185	13%
TOTALS	**782,263**	**189,485**	**24% (average)**

* 1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program.
** 1997 estimate from Alaska Department of Education.
*** 1996 data from the Illinois Coalition to End Homelessness
**** 1996 data from the Iowa Department of Education
***** 1997 data from the Kentucky Department of Education
****** 1996 data from the Maryland Department of Human Resources
******* 1996 data from the Missouri Department of Education
******** 1996 data from the Nevada Office for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
********* 1996/97 data from the Oregon Housing and Community Service Department
********** 1997 estimate from the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless
*********** 1995 data from the Virginia Coalition for the Homeless

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PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

Appendix: State Coordinators' Survey 1996-97 School Year

State: **Name:**

Phone: **Fax:**

1. Basic Program Information

Total Grant FY96:

Number of LEAs Funded: Children Served 1995-96 School Year:

Estimated Number of Children Served 1996-97 School Year:

2. Impact of 20% Reduction in Funding (if applicable)

Fewer LEAs funded? If so, how many?

Fewer children served? If so, how many?

Reduction in services, if any (please give general description and at least one local example):

Other impact of funding cuts?

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

Have state welfare reform efforts impacted the EHCY program? If so, how?

Greatest Achievement 1995-96:

Biggest Challenges and Unmet Need:

Please return to Barbara Duffield at NCH: fax (202) 775-1316, email: nch@ari.net, phone: (202)775-1322.

Preliminary Report on the McKinney Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

1996-1997 State Survey

National Coalition for the Homeless
1612 K Street, NW #1004
Washington, DC 20006
Voice: 202.775.1322 | Fax: 202.775.1316 | Email: nch@ari.net
http://nch.ari.net

Summary of Findings

Ten years ago, Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in response to the growing crisis of homelessness in the United States. Among the many disturbing features of homelessness documented at that time was the presence of large numbers of homeless families with children. Reports issued in the mid-1980s indicated that an estimated 50% of homeless children and youth were not attending school regularly. Thus, Title VII, Subtitle B of the Mckinney Act was written with the intent of removing barriers to homeless children's education so that homeless children and youth would have access to a free, appropriate public education.

The Education of Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program is today one of the most successful of the original McKinney Act programs. Recent evaluations have documented significant improvement in school access and enrollment: approximately 86% of homeless children and youth are now believed to attend school regularly (Anderson et al., 1995). In addition, most states have revised laws and policies to remove barriers to homeless children's education, and local homeless programs have made tremendous strides toward helping homeless children and youth succeed in school.

However, the combination of dramatically increasing homelessness among families with children and simultaneous reduction of Federal funding for the EHCY program now threatens the progress that states and local communities have made in making sure that this nation's most vulnerable children enroll, attend, and succeed in school. Preliminary findings of a survey of 32 states reveal that the recent budget cuts have reduced educational opportunities for homeless children and youth and further restricted the ability of states to meet the increasing demand for services. Among the findings of the survey, the following stand out:

- States are responding to the 20% cut in funding enacted by the 104th Congress in a variety of ways. Many states felt the impact of these cuts, in the form of elimination of local programs and reduced services, during the 1996-1997 school year. A number of states were able to maintain or expand services for the 1996-1997 school year through use of carry over, administrative, or non-McKinney funds; however, several of these states are now in the process of scaling back or eliminating programs for the 1997-1998 school year due to lack of alternative funding. States that receive minimum funding ($100,000) were not affected by the reduction in funding.

- At least 39 local homeless education programs have been or will be eliminated in the states surveyed, resulting in a loss of services to a total of 11,806 homeless children and youth. California, Connecticut, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Missouri, New York, Virginia, and West Virginia were all forced to fund fewer Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) in the 1996-97 school year. Iowa and New Jersey will be forced to eliminate programs next year.

- Many states funded the same number of local programs, but reduced grant sizes by 20-22%. Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, South Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin awarded diminished grants to previously funded LEAs. Smaller grant awards resulted in 2,884 fewer children served.

- Loss of funding forced 72% of the states surveyed to reduce tutorial hours, transportation, school supplies, and coordination of services. For example, in Colorado,

there was a decrease in staff hours for tutoring and outreach in all funded programs, and almost all support services and materials were cut, such as eye glasses, school supplies, books at home, etc. In Wisconsin, transportation services for homeless children were reduced, summer programs were cut back or eliminated, and all pre-school programs were eliminated.

- Reduced funding prevented many states from expanding services to meet needs. At the current funding level, schools and other service providers are only able to serve a small proportion of the children estimated to be homeless in their state. On average, the surveyed states provide direct educational services to 26% of their estimated population of homeless children. Only 4% of LEAs nationwide receive McKinney funding.

- Many states report that changes in welfare programs have increased, or are expected to increase, the number of homeless children in their schools. Thirty-one percent of states surveyed believe welfare reform has already impacted their homeless education programs; 25% have not yet seen an impact on their programs but expect to see increased numbers of children; and 44% believe it is too early tell what the impact will be on homeless children and youth in their state.

- Despite the formidable progress that states have made in reducing barriers to homeless children's attendance and success in school, significant challenges remain. Identification of homeless children, lack of transportation, and lack of public awareness were frequently cited as the most serious obstacles to the education of homeless children and youth.

Conclusion

Lack of resources for implementing the McKinney Education for Homeless Children and Youth program threatens the many achievements states have made over the past ten years. States have not been able to keep up with the increase in numbers of homeless children, and recent budget cuts have caused the loss of services to thousands of homeless children and youth. Budget cuts have resulted not only in fewer homeless children receiving the help they need to get to school but also in less support to help homeless children and youth succeed in school. Lack of funding is thus undermining the intent of the law, that "each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youth."

Ten years of increasing homelessness is a national disgrace. We can, and we must, marshal our efforts to end homelessness. In this era of balanced budgets and fiscal constraints, it is increasingly important to prioritize resources according to need. Homeless children and youth are among this nation's most vulnerable children; without access to school and support services, they are more likely to remain poor and at risk of homelessness as adults. Rather than attempt to balance the budget on the backs of these children, this nation must invest in programs that are proven to work.

The McKinney Education for Homeless Children and Youth program is the **only** federal program that provides outreach to homeless children and youth and helps them enroll in and attend school. No other program or law requires states and schools to identify and eliminate barriers to enrollment, attendance and success in school. It deserves the full support of Congress, the President, and school districts and communities across the country.

State Profiles

ALASKA

Contact: Rosemary Hagevig; after June 30: Carole Green or Kathi Wineman
Phone: (907) 465-8715; after June 30: (907) 465-8706
Fax: (907) 465-3396

Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	7
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1000
Total Grant FY96:	**$100,000**
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	7
Estimated number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1200
Estimated number of homeless children in Alaska:	2,000 - 2,500*

*1997 data from the Alaska Department of Education

Challenges

- **Accommodating for poor public transportation.** The poor bus system forces programs to rely on cab vouchers to transport the children to their school of origin; however, the cab fares have recently increased 50%.

- **Providing services to the most rapidly increasing population of ages 13 -19.** Alaska targets middle school-age adolescents for the greatest change because it has found that as a child's independence increases, opportunities for educational gains decrease. Alaska also faces the challenge of providing services to teen parents and their children, as the Title I age limit prevents many of the children of teens from receiving services.

- **Reaching schools outside the Title I network.** Since Alaska's programs for homeless children and youth rely on Title I, in order to better meet the needs of the entire population, funding must extend to the children who attend schools which do not meet the requirements for Title I. Of the 78 elementary and secondary schools in Alaska, only 16 receive Title I funding.

- **Providing follow-up services.** Current funding does not allow Alaska's service providers to keep track of children after they are housed, therefore limiting long-term improvement and denying services during this important psychological adjustment period.

- **Raising public awareness.** Recently, the McKinney grant money funded a forum of 150 members of 30 different services agencies collaborated to discuss furthering public awareness of homelessness. This effort was successful and they plan to extend the forum to include private businesses next year.

- Devising a method for school districts to identify their homeless students.

ARIZONA

Contact:	Gary Fortney
Phone:	(602) 542-3267
Fax:	(602)542-3050
Total Grant FY95:	$411,642
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	7
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	2513
Total Grant FY96:	$404,416
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	7
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	2069
Estimated number of homeless children in Arizona:	11,914*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- **Unmet need due to reduced funding.** One school district was unable to serve 600 homeless students; another school district left 374 students unserved.
- **Documentation requirements for immunizations and birth certificates.** Many school districts require proper documentation for enrollment; this creates problems for many homeless children.
- **Unable to serve 1936 homeless students.** These students attend schools which do not receive McKinney funding, and therefore are ineligible for services.
- **Helping students achieve high academic standards.**
- **Self-identification as homeless.** Many parents are unwilling to identify themselves and their families as homeless because of the social stigma attached to the label.

CALIFORNIA

Contact:	Doug McDougal
Phone:	(916) 657-2926
Fax:	(916) 657-5301
Total Grant FY95:	$3,046,964
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	33
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	21,903
Total Grant FY96:	$2,390,864
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	19
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	15,000
Estimated number of homeless children in California:	137,037*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- In FY96, funding for California's Education for Homeless Children and Youth program was cut by 21%. This loss of resources resulted in 14 fewer LEAs being funded and 6,900 fewer children being served. California also saw a reduction is supplemental services being provided to children and youth who are homeless. At the current funding level, the EHCY program is only able to provide direct services to approximately 11% of California's estimated 137,037 homeless children and youth.

- Adjusting to increased numbers of homeless children and demand for services. Betty Randle, homeless coordinator for the Compton Unified School District, commented that state welfare reform efforts and other cuts to social services have begun to impact the EHCY Program with an increase in referrals for services to homeless children and youth. Referrals for educational services have increased from approximately five referrals a month to five referrals a week. Concerns for children and youth living in families of undocumented immigrant status remain an issue. Shelters are at full capacity.

- Homeless families have difficulty meeting basic needs for shelter, food, adequate clothing, health care and safety, thus forcing the educational needs of the children as a low priority.

- Community agencies, school staff and program regulations, including registration and qualification for services, are not sensitive to the needs of the homeless.

COLORADO

Contact:	Karen Connell
Phone:	(303) 866-6903
Fax:	(303) 830-0793
Total Grant FY95:	$275,580
Number of LEAs funded:	7
Number of children served 1995-96:	2100
Total Grant FY96:	$217,546
Number of LEAs funded:	7
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1900
Estimated number of homeless children in Colorado:	4356*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- As a result of FY96 budget cuts, each of the seven LEAs received 25% less funding and 200 fewer children were served. In addition, the State Coordinator's time was cut by 10%; two local homeless coordinators were cut; there was a decrease in staff hours for tutoring and outreach in all funded programs; and almost all support services were cut, such as glasses, school supplies, books at home, etc.

CONNECTICUT

Contact:	Alan White
Phone:	(860) 638-4247
Fax:	(860) 638-4231
Total Grant FY95:	$218,572
Number of LEAs funded:	13
Number of children served 1995-1996 school year:	1,385
Total Grant FY96:	$218,572
Number of LEAs funded:	12
Number of children served 1996-1997 school year:	980
Estimated number of homeless children in Connecticut:	n/a

Challenges

- As a result of FY96 budget cuts, Connecticut is only funding 12 LEAs for the 1996-97 school year. It is estimated that four hundred fewer children are being served by Connecticut LEAs. The remaining LEAs also suffered reduced funding.
- Although it is still too early to see the impact of welfare changes on local projects in Connecticut, there will most likely be a rise in the number of children needing services as an increasing number of families are thrown into homelessness.
- Helping school districts understand the right of school choice and the responsibility for payment.

IDAHO

Contact:	Zan Payne
Phone:	(208) 332-6903
Fax:	(208) 334-4664
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded:	10
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,273
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded:	10
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,700
Estimated number of homeless children in Idaho:	5155*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- **Adjusting to the recent welfare changes.** There is a great deal of uncertainty and apprehension among service providers and current recipients in regards to the changes in welfare. Concerns have been similar to those reported nationally: people are afraid there will be unintended consequences for children and families because of Idaho's two year limit. There is the worry that there will not be jobs for welfare clients to take, and this is already a reality in many parts of Idaho that have a limited economic base.

- **Transportation to school** continues to be a barrier to accessing education, in urban and rural areas of the state. The State will not reimburse LEAs for transporting homeless children to their previous school. The Deputy Attorney General and Idaho State Department of Education Transportation Office say that demands on public school transportation are high. At this time the LEAs are using McKinney funds and Title I monies to meet transportation needs.

- **Lack of awareness and identification** of homeless children. Because Idaho is sparsely populated, homeless families are only visible in the five largest cities. Schools are generally unaware of the families that camp within their boundaries or transient families that move frequently because they lack housing.

ILLINOIS

Contact:	Dan Miller
Phone:	217-782-3370
Fax:	217-782-9224
Total Grant FY95:	$1,347,872
Number of LEAs funded FY95:	14
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	4,100
Total Grant FY96:	$1,057,820
Number of LEAs funded FY96:	16
Estimated number of children served 1996-97 school year:	4,200
Estimated number of homeless children in Illinois:	33,000-45,000*

1996 data from the Illinois Coalition to End Homelessness

Challenges

- Illinois received a 22% cut in funding this past year. For the current school year, the Illinois Department of Education was able to increase educational services to homeless children by adding two new programs; however, all grant awards were smaller and children were served less comprehensively. For example, tutorial services do not adequately meet requested needs, less transportation is provided for homeless children, and new shelters cannot not be added to the existing network.

- **Adjusting to greater demand.** Illinois' homeless population, including children, continues to increase. Although an estimated 33,000-45,000 children experience homelessness in Illinois, only 4,200 receive direct educational services through the McKinney Education for Homeless Children and Youth program. Thus, Illinois is only able to serve 9-13% of the estimated number of homeless children in the state.

- **Lack of awareness and identification** of homeless children remain large barriers to ensuring access to education, despite awareness through staff development, site visits, and dissemination of public education materials. Funding cuts have caused Illinois to rethink how funds are distributed. More emphasis has been placed on providing high quality awareness-building efforts to potentially all schools in Illinois.

INDIANA

Contact:	Barbara Lucas
Phone:	(317) 232-0590
Fax:	(317) 232-9121
Total Grant FY95:	$455,368
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	14
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	5,000
Total Grant FY96:	$358,640
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	10
Estimated number of children served 1996-97 school year:	2,065
Estimated number of homeless children in Indiana:	15,302*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- Due to a 20% reduction in funding, 3,000 less children received services. The greatest reduction in services was in staffing of direct services to children and the in-service training for teachers and school administration. Funding cuts resulted in the loss of 4 programs which had **always** provided assistance to large numbers of children. At least twice as much money as available now is needed to make any progress in the future.

- Indiana has witnessed an overwhelming increase in the number of homeless children due to the initiation of the 2 year limit in Indiana. Most funding cuts at the federal, state and local levels have taken away the necessary services for the homeless and those in greatest need. Due to the funding cuts, a lot of community support has been utilized to provide local funding for meeting the needs of homeless children.

- Homeless families have difficulty meeting basic needs for shelter, food, adequate clothing, health care and safety, thus forcing the educational needs of the children as a low priority.

IOWA

Contact:	Dr. Raymond Morley
Phone:	(515) 281-3966
Fax:	(515) 242-6025
Total Grant FY95:	$213,285
Number of LEAs funded:	8
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	2,382
Total Grant FY96:	$168,438*
Number of LEAs funded:	11
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	2,835

*(Total grant was awarded to LEAs as a result of a one-time carry over of administrative funds)

Estimated number of homeless children in Iowa: 9,849**
**1996 data from the Iowa Department of Education

Challenges

- Iowa was able to fully fund previous LEAs and to add three more local programs due to a one-time only carry over of administrative dollars. This carry over was made possible by delaying for one year the comprehensive count survey and by using At Risk dollars. **However, for the 1997-98 school year, there will be a loss of at least four, and possibly five, local programs, with approximately 1,100 fewer children served.** Programs to be eliminated include Ames, Waterloo, Iowa City, and Washington. Reductions for 1997-98 will also include staff development on awareness of homelessness; research on needs and counts estimates; linkages with other funding resources; and curriculum guides.

- **Adjusting to increasing demand.** At the current funding level, the EHCY program is only able to provide direct services to approximately 11% of Iowa's estimated 9,849 homeless children and youth. Last year Iowa only was able to fund two-thirds of the applications from local schools.

- **Serving older homeless children.** Junior high and high school aged youth are much more difficult to identify, and therefore much harder to serve. Twenty-five percent of homeless adolescents in Iowa do not attend school.

- **Welfare reform.** Although it is unknown at this point what effect the recent welfare changes will have on Iowa, many homeless service providers believe that there will be an increase in children and families needing access to educational and other support services.

KANSAS

Contact:	Norma Cregan
Phone:	(913) 296-4906
Fax:	(913) 296-7933
Total Grant FY95:	$219,924
Number of LEAs funded:	5
Number of children served for the 1995-96 school year:	1,147
Total Grant FY96:	$173,114
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	5
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,250
Estimated number of homeless children in Kansas:	8,043*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- **Lack of awareness and identification** of homeless children remain large barriers to ensuring access to education. This is a particular problem among the rural communities in which school district officials appear to be unaware of the homeless population in their schools and communities.

- **Designing methods to estimate the number of homeless children and youth.** As a typically transient population which frequently desires to remain inconspicuous, the number of homeless families in Kansas is difficult to accurately calculate. Thus, targeting services to homeless families most in need often proves to be a formidable task.

- **Adjusting to changes in welfare programs.** It appears that more families are homeless.

KENTUCKY

Contact:	Dale Niswonger
Phone:	(502) 564-3791
Fax:	(502) 564-6721
Total Grant FY95:	$522,219
Number of LEAs funded:	14
Number of children served for the 1995-96 school year:	2,985
Total Grant FY96:	$409,785
Number of LEAs funded:	10
Number of children served for the 1996-97 school year:	2,860
Estimated Number of Homeless Children in Kentucky:	5,600*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- In FY96, funding for Kentucky's homeless education program was cut by 21%. Consequently, the number of local educational agencies funded in Kentucky was decreased from 14 districts to 10 districts. Reduction of local programs resulted in the loss of services to approximately 125 children. Although approximately 5,600 homeless children and youth have been identified in Kentucky, reduced funding means that educational services can only be provided to 2,860 children.

- Less assistance is available for emergency supplies such as eye glasses.

- Adjusting to changes in welfare programs. Many of Kentucky's poor, single-parent families who were becoming established and getting into housing are now being pushed back into homelessness.

LOUISIANA

Contact:	Luke Chiniche, Jr.
Phone:	(504) 924-2827
Fax:	(504) 342-3448
Total Grant FY95:	$794,047*
Number of LEAs funded:	15
Number of children served 1995-1996 school year:	13,000
Total Grant FY96:	$603,000*
Number of LEAs funded:	15
Number of children served 1996-1997 school year:	15,000

*Louisiana was able to fully fund its LEAs by using Title I funds to make up the difference of the cut.

Estimated Number of Homeless Children in Louisiana: 13,546*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- Due to the welfare changes, the number of homeless children and families is going to increase as people coming off welfare will have little, if any, insurance or home.
- Getting legislators to understand that homelessness is a serious and real dilemma in Louisiana.

MAINE

Contact:	Frank Antonucci, Jr.
Phone:	(207) 287-5111
Fax:	(207) 287-5927
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded:	2
Number of children served for the 1995-1996 school year:	156
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded:	2
Number of children served for the 1996-1997 school year:	200
Estimated number of homeless children in Maine:	8337*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- Maine was able to fully fund both of its LEAs by using less administrative funds to allow projects to stay in operation. The danger is that administrative funds will have to be used to carry out the census counts of homeless students as required in the new law, eliminating funds available for services.

- We should reduce the need to have McKinney funds to assure that all schools make provisions for all students to succeed in school; getting their foot in the door is not good enough. Homeless children must be served by the schools, and the communities must help the schools meet their needs.

MARYLAND

Contact:	Walter Varner
Phone:	(410) 767-0282
Fax:	(410) 333-8148
Total Grant FY95:	$359,785
Number of LEAs funded 1996-1997:	7
Number of children served for the 1995-1996 school year:	5,000
Total Grant FY96:	$284,526
Number of LEAs funded 1996-1997:	7
Number of children served for the 1996-1997 school year:	3,949
Estimated number of homeless children in Maryland:	10,994*

*1996 data from the Maryland Department of Human Resources, Office of Transitional Services

Challenges

- In FY96, funding for Maryland's Education for Homeless Children and Youth program was cut by 21%. As a result, each of the 7 local education programs were forced to cut back services to homeless children, and 1,051 fewer children were served. In Prince George's County, for example, two of the eight shelters that had been receiving tutorial services were dropped from the program, and educational services are provided to homeless youth only one day a week.

- Transportation to school continues to be a barrier to accessing education, in urban and rural areas of the state. Transportation to the original school is critical to limiting the disruption of education caused by homelessness, but is costly.

MASSACHUSETTS

Contact:	Susan Farb
Phone:	(617) 388-3300 X 382
Fax:	(617) 388-3394
Total Grant FY95:	$504,988
Number of LEAs funded 1995-96:	12
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1483
Total Grant FY96:	$398,112
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	12
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1561
Estimated number of homeless children in Massachusetts:	9087**

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- **Summer programs eliminated.** Homeless children in Massachusetts are left without any structured activities for three months of the year.
- **Transportation to school.** Families in Massachusetts may be relocated up to 50 miles away form their original home, making transportation to schools of origin a difficult task The loss of this service harshens the disruption of children's lives as they move to shelters.
- **After-school educational/tutoring programs eliminated.** Tutoring programs were among Massachusetts' greatest achievements from 1995-96; however, due to recent funding reductions, these programs were eliminated.
- **Lack of stability and security for children and parents.** This population has been severely traumatized; however, no support services are available due to funding shortages. The delayed child development must also be addressed.

MISSOURI

Contact:	Karen Hinton
Phone:	(573) 751-8310
Fax:	(573) 526-6698

Total Grant FY95:	$480,510
Number of LEAs funded:	13
Number of children served for the 1995-96 school year:	5,570
Total Grant FY96:	$379,321
Number of LEAs funded:	11
Number of children served for the 1996-97 school year:	6,500
Estimated Number of Homeless Children in Missouri:	8,000*

*1996 data from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Challenges

- Missouri was only able to fund 11 of its 13 LEAs due to the cut in funding. In addition, each of the 11 LEAs received only 72% of the money requested. LEAs were forced to target services for transportation and coordination of services, and districts spent all of their funding for tutoring, school supplies, etc. before using McKinney money. The dramatic increase in the number of homeless children in Missouri resulted in programs serving more children, but less comprehensively.

- Serving the increasing population of homeless children. The number of homeless children and youth in Missouri increased 262% from 1993 to 1996. Sixty-eight percent of Missouri's homeless children are under age 12. At its current funding level, Missouri is only able to provide direct educational services to 80% of its homeless children and youth.

- Transportation to school continues to be a barrier to accessing education, in urban and rural areas of the state. Transportation to the original school is critical to limiting the disruption of education caused by homelessness, but is costly.

NEBRASKA

Contact:	Judy Klein
Phone:	(402)471-2448
Fax:	**(402)471-0117**
Total Grant FY95:	$116,337
Number of LEAs funded:	4
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	850
Total Grant FY96:	$101,449
Number of LEAs funded:	4
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1298
Estimated number of homeless children in Nebraska:	6101*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- **Administrative time cuts to the education of homeless children.** As a result of the recent reduction of funding, the State Coordinator's time was cut in half in order to maintain the four existing local projects.

- **Nebraska needs to fund two more local projects;** however, the funds are depleted on continuation of the four existing programs.

- **Providing developmental activities for the growing numbers of pre-school age children.** When Nebraska requested help in providing stimulation for the homeless children, they were told to use the Headstart program. However, due to long waiting lists, Headstart does not serve shelter children in Nebraska.

- **Ensuring transportation services to the school of origin.** The ambiguity of language in the McKinney Act has allowed the attorneys for local school districts to claim that transportation services are not required. Therefore, many school districts will not provide transportation to school of origin.

- **Strict enrollment policies are interfering with enrollment of homeless children.** Nebraska's local schools are facing new spending lids and in order to cut costs, many are returning to strict enrollment policies. Some school districts now require residency, immunization, birth certificates, and legal guardianship.

NEVADA

Contact:	Shaun Griffin
Phone:	(702) 847-9311
Fax:	(702) 847-9335
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded:	7
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	300 by McKinney grants (1,257 total served)
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded:	7
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	300 by McKinney grants (1,596 total served)
Estimated number of homeless children in Nevada:	954*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- **Adjusting to the recent changes in welfare.** Although there is no exact number for how many families Nevada will be served in the 1996-97 year, it is clear that several hundred Nevada families will now fall through the cracks. There was little or no safety net before the legislative changes, now there is no net for these families.

NEW JERSEY

Contact:	Anne Corwell
Phone:	(609) 633-1304
Fax:	(609) 633-6874
Total Grant FY95:	$584,789
Number of LEAs funded:	9
Number of children served for the 1995-96 school year:	1550
Total Grant FY96:	$461,640
Number of LEAs funded:	9
Number of children served for the 1996-97 school year:	1550
Estimated number of homeless children in New Jersey:	17,132*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- Despite a 20% reduction in funding, there was not a decreased amount of LEAs being funded during the 1996-97 year. New Jersey has a continuation grant which allowed the state to fund the 9 agencies for the 1996-97 year. However, the real impact of the reduction in New Jersey will occur during the 1997-98 cycle. The upcoming school year will be new competitive grant cycle. The funds will be insufficient to fund the eight applicants that received funds in the past. The state anticipates that between 5 and 7 grants will be funded.

NEW YORK

Contact:	Margretta Fairweather
Phone:	(518) 474-5807
Fax:	(518) 486-7290
Total Grant FY96:	$2,558,330
Number of LEAs funded:	44
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	22,000
Total Grant FY96:	$2,012,483
Number of LEAs funded:	42
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	22,000
Estimated number of homeless children in New York	22,776*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- **Adjusting to the recent changes in welfare.** It is too early to tell, yet it appears that EHCY will be impacted by an increase in the number of homeless children. The block granting of funds to local social service offices does not specifically designate money for homeless services. This may prove problematic.

- **The continued need to educate the public** and those in school environments regarding the needs of and responsibilities to homeless children and families.

NORTH CAROLINA

Contact:	David Bryant
Phone:	(919) 715-6143
Fax:	(919) 715-1897
Total Grant FY95:	$544,629
Number of LEAs funded	14
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,900
Total Grant FY96:	$332,665
Number of LEAs funded:	10
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,500
Estimated number of homeless children in North Carolina:	6,274*

*1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- **Identification of homeless students.** The school districts must be able to identify their homeless students in order to serve them.
- **Providing funding for the local education agencies.** The requests from local education agencies are unable to be met by the state. The state is also unable to completely fund the budget requests by some LEAs which receive grant monies.
- **Transportation to school.** North Carolina continues to struggle with transporting homeless children to their school of origin due to funding reductions.

OHIO

Contact:	Charles Kozlesky
Phone:	(614) 466-4161
Fax:	(614) 752-1622

Total Grant FY95:	$984,000
Number of LEAs funded:	11
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	8,829

Total Grant FY96:	$984,000
Number of LEAs funded:	11
Amount awarded to LEAs:	$1,250,000*
Estimated number of children served 1996-97 school year:	10,000

*The amount awarded to LEAs includes all state administration funds, plus prior year money.

Estimated number of homeless children in Ohio: 27,416**

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- For the current school year, the Department of Education was able to increase educational services to homeless children by using state administration funds. However, without increased appropriations, services may have to be reduced for the next school year.

- Adjusting to greater demand. Ohio's homeless population, including children, continues to increase. Ohio's local education for homeless children and youth programs indicate presently that there are 24,049 homeless children living in the 11 funded LEA areas. Thus, Ohio is serving less than half of the estimated number of homeless children in these areas, and an even smaller number of the homeless children (estimated to be 27,416 in 1993) in the state.

- Coordinating provisions of the McKinney Act with the enrollment process as detailed in the Ohio Revised Code.

OREGON

Contact:	Donna Bolt
Phone:	(503) 378-3606 ext. 600
Fax:	(503) 373-7968
Total Grant FY95:	$276,792
Number of LEAs funded:	12
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	5,412
Total Grant FY96:	$220, 222
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	18
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	7,500*

*This increase represents use of both McKinney and Title IA set-aside funds.

Estimated number of homeless children in Oregon: 20,682**
**1996/1997 data from Oregon Department of Education

Challenges

- **Reductions in funding have challenged existing projects as well as reduced incentive to start new programs.** All of the 1995-96 projects suffered anywhere from 10%-20% reduction in funds, and new projects received only nominal grants.

- **Inspiring the LEA's to do more with less McKinney funding.** Without the necessary public funding, inferior substitutes for regular school programs, such as special schools for homeless children, fill service gaps and gain a stronger foothold.

- **McKinney grant requirements are too cumbersome for the small amount of funding available.** Two LEAs (which previously received $5000) decided not to reapply due to the competitive application process, and therefore the homeless children in these two areas will not be served.

- **Inability to meet need.** Oregon recently received three excellent applications for projects in new areas, each deserving of at least $25,000. However, the lack of funds only allowed $10,000 for all three programs ($3,300 for each).

- **Confusion over welfare reform.** Some clients believe that they no longer qualify for welfare and have not followed through on the requirements. Other families must now feed the same number of children on far fewer food stamps and/or pay weekly motel rates on motel rooms with far less money.

PENNSYLVANIA

Contact:	Leslie Peters
Phone:	(717) 772-2813
Fax:	(717) 783-6617
Total Grant FY95:	$1,274,166
Number of LEAs funded:	11
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	9,444
Total Grant FY96:	$1,001,636
Number of LEAs funded:	13
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	9,844
Estimated number of homeless children in Pennsylvania:	17,782*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- By reducing the amount of funds allocated to statewide awareness activities and utilizing carry over funds, Pennsylvania has been able to increase the number of funded LEAs from 11 to 13. Carryover state administrative funds were available due to a large portion of the state coordinator's time and salary being allocated to Title II federal funding for Early Childhood Initiatives. The lack of statewide awareness activities resulted in less informational support for both funded and unfunded sites.

- Accommodating increased demand for services with a lack of funding. It has been estimated that one in seven children in the state of Pennsylvania live in poverty. The Pennsylvania Homeless Children's Initiative has revised its key publications and developed new ones so that local projects can continue to serve as centers for program development and information dissemination. Each of the 500 school districts in the Commonwealth have identified a contact person (Homeless Liaison). The state project has designed both a Statewide Directory of School District Contacts for Homeless Students and a Statewide Family Shelter Directory to serve as resource tools.

- Continuing the expansion of educational opportunities for homeless children. Support staff at the state and local level have been greatly reduced or eliminated. There have been few opportunities for professional development and support services. If the funding continues at this reduced level or is further reduced, the amount allocated to each funded site may not by sufficient to support a full-time educational liaison and the direct services required for homeless children to succeed in school.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Contact:	Frank E. White, Jr.
Phone:	(803) 734-8458
Fax:	(803) 734-5685
Total Grant FY95:	$384,280
Number of LEAs funded:	12
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,950
Total Grant FY96:	$301,853
Number of LEAs funded:	12
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,250
Estimated number of homeless children in South Carolina:	5307*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- Funding cuts for the 1996-97 school year resulted in 8 LEAs receiving cuts, and 4 of the 12 programs received grants of $5,000 each to operate six months. As an example, a program receiving $35,492 in 1995-96 and which provided, among other things, 120 homeless and transient students with academic tutoring and counseling, received only $5,000 for 1996-97 and will serve only a fraction of that number.

- Helping local school district administrators understand that homeless students can go to their original school whether or not the students actually have a local address.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Contact:	Janet Ricketts
Phone:	(605)773-4437
Fax:	(605)773-3782
Total Grant FY95:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded:	2
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	406
Total Grant FY96:	$100,000
Number of LEAs funded:	2
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	406+
Estimated number of homeless children in South Dakota:	1455*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- Maximizing service with minimal funds. The size of the state forces administrators to examine whether to continue funding Sioux Falls and Rapid City at their current levels, or reduce their grant allocations, thus resulting in fewer services for homeless children in those districts, in order to provide a limited amount of dollars for smaller districts.

- The state is receiving requests from more districts for funds, but at the current funding level, cannot expand the program.

TENNESSEE

Contact:	Kay Nixon
Phone:	(615) 532-4726
Fax:	(615) 532-7860
Total Grant FY95:	$512,243
Number of LEAs:	11
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	5,500
Total Grant FY96:	$401, 917
Number of LEAs funded 1996-97:	**12**
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	5,900
Estimated number of homeless children in Tennessee:	1372*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- Identifying the population. The programs in Tennessee could be strengthened by educating the LEAs on how to identify their homeless population. Many school districts are either unaware or choose to ignore the fact that they have homeless students.

- Successful programs to increase awareness to the needs of homeless people are now struggling due to decreased funding.

- Tennessee's past successes were facilitated by money that had carried over year to year; however, that money has depleted. As the number of homeless children and youth continue to grow, the state must make difficult choices as to what activities to support.

TEXAS

Contact:	Barbara James (Wand)
Phone:	(512) 475-9708
Fax:	(512) 971-6193
Total Grant FY95:	$2,425,860
Number of LEAs funded:	15
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	15,059
Total Grant FY96:	$1,899,325
Number of LEAs funded:	15
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	15,059

Estimated number of homeless children in Texas: 123,738*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- Despite the reduction in funding, Texas was able to maintain all 15 LEAs between the years that the funding was reduced. However, the scope of the services was cut back in many of the subgrants. The reduction in funding was buffered for many of the LEA subgrants because of the use of carry-over funds that were available from previous years; however, the availability of these funds is temporary and all will be depleted after the 1996-97 school year.

- Funding cuts have made it very difficult to expand the EHCY program to communities that have never received this type of funding. For the 1997-98 school year, Texas will address increased statewide needs by funding 5 additional LEAs; however, grant awards for existing LEAs will be reduced by 10-50%. Texas currently provides direct educational services to 12% of its estimated population of homeless children.

- The state welfare reform efforts have not yet impacted the EHCY program. The Texas Legislature is in session from January through May 1997. Most legislation passed, including any welfare reform efforts, won't go into effect until the first of September. However, we do anticipate that the homeless education programs will be affected by the state welfare reform efforts.

- Acquiring funding to transport children and youth without homes to schools and programs that are in their best interest. Transportation remains one of the most persistent and intractable problems in serving children and youth in homeless situations. It would be possible to devote all the homeless education funding that Texas receives to transportation services alone.

- Developing a statewide system for identifying and meeting the needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness, and, in particular, junior high and high school children. Older homeless children are much more difficult to identify, and therefore much harder to serve.

VIRGINIA

Contact:	James H. Stronge, Ph. D.
Phone:	(757) 221-4002
Fax:	(757) 221-2988
Total Grant FY96:	$331,441
Number of LEAs funded:	16
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,616
Total Grant FY96:	$331,441
Number of LEAs funded:	14
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,358
Estimated number of homeless children in Virginia:	**2986***

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- The number of divisions receiving grants was reduced from 16 in 1995-96 to 14 in 1996-97. And as a result of reduced funding, the project was able to fund only 14 out of 18 worthwhile and appropriate applications for funds.

- Services to homeless children were substantially reduced as a result of the budget cut. For example, the original grant proposal for Fairfax County requested $44,064 to provide a homeless liaison (15 hours/week), educational supplies, tutors for two shelters, and summer tuition for homeless students. Even with this large request, only two shelters would have received tutorial services.Given budgetary constraints, the state awarded Fairfax $20,000. This drastic cut mean that tutorial services were slashed by a factor of three (from $29,450 to $9,600). There will be no preschool teacher, one less assistant tutor, and far fewer nights of tutorial support during fewer weeks of the year. The liaison position was also cut by a third so that there will be no liaison during the summer months when the FY97-98 application for funds will be due and the requests for financial reimbursement will be made. In this case, the program has been gutted and the administration has been reduced to the point that the program may not survive.

- As yet, Virginia has not felt the repercussions of the new welfare act, but service providers are bracing for a substantial influx of families as the two year minimum is reached.

- A continuing challenge is in using shrinking dollars to increase public awareness of the educational needs of homeless children and youth, and to facilitate educational opportunities for them in the 120 Virginia school system without subgrants.

WASHINGTON STATE

Contact:	Melinda Dyer
Phone:	(360) 753-3302
Fax:	(360)664-3575
Total Grant FY95:	$413, 072
Number of LEAs funded:	10
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	1,762
Total Grant FY96:	$325, 572
Number of LEAs funded:	10
Number of children served 1996-97 school year:	1,762
Estimated number of homeless children in Washington:	16471*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- Working with the limited resources that resulted from the 1996 budget cut. The numerous services which were reduced include: staff (including elimination of a student coordinator position who identified high school students to serve as tutors and mentors), family support services, tutoring programs, enrichment programs and activities, and parent education workshops. The distribution of school supplies to homeless children and youth reduced in both quality and quantity. Summer programs were eliminated.

- At the district level, the biggest challenge remains transportation.

- At the state level, the biggest challenge has been the continued fight for financial support within the state's budget. Washington continually struggles for funding homeless children and youth educational programs and services.

- As a result of reductions in funding, Washington cannot fund additional school sites in the state.

WEST VIRGINIA

Contact:	Dr. Marsha Carey
Phone:	(304) 558-2546
Fax:	(304) 558-1613

Total Grant FY95:	$293,335
Number of LEAs funded:	25
Number of Children Served 1995-96:	930

Total Grant FY96:	$229,637
Number of LEAs funded:	23
Number of Children Served 1996-97:	890-910 (approximately)

Estimated Number of Homeless Children in West Virginia: 5,298*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- As a result of a 22% funding cut in FY96, two local homeless programs were eliminated. As a result, the amount of money received by each LEA was reduced from approximate allocations of $10,000 to $7,500. This loss of funds resulted in most schools and shelters reducing the amount of tutoring, counseling, and enrichment activities they offered to the children. Most sites reduced the number of days and hours for student services.

- Adjusting to increased demand. At the current funding level, the homeless education program is only able to provide direct services to approximately 17% of West Virginia's estimated 5,298 homeless children and youth. Although the state of West Virginia would like to expand the homeless education program to the many communities that have families who qualify for additional student services, it is unable to do so.

- Since services had to be reduced at each LEA site, West Virginia had to forgo plans to offer programs for preschool children.

WISCONSIN

Contact:	Barbara A. Bitters
Phone:	(608) 299-9609
Fax:	(608) 267-1052
Total Grant FY96:	$515,895
Number of LEAs funded:	9
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	2,097
Total Grant FY96:	$403,811
Number of LEAs funded:	9
Number of children served 1995-96 school year:	2,013

Estimated Number of Homeless Children in Wisconsin: 8245*

**1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program

Challenges

- As a result of FY96 budget cuts, each of the nine local educational agencies received a 20% cut in funding. There was also a reduction of staff, staff hours, and instructional hours and tutorial assistance. Transportation services for homeless children were reduced as well as parent and staff development and training. Summer programs were cut back or eliminated, and all pre-school programs were eliminated. Other reductions in service include the printing cost related to outreach and public information on the educational needs of homeless students, and reduction in emergency student supplies, materials, and resources.

- The number of homeless students is expected to rise in Wisconsin with the implementation of welfare reform policies in the fall of 1997. Shelter providers in the welfare transition program "Pay for Performance" reported large increases in numbers of homeless families seeking assistance.

STATE	Estimated Number of Homeless Children (1993*)	Number of Homeless Children Receiving Direct Services, 1996-97 School Year	% Homeless Children Receiving Direct Educational Services
ALASKA	2,000-2,500**	1,200	48 - 60%
ARIZONA	11,914	2,069	17%
CALIFORNIA	137,037	15,000	11%
COLORADO	4,356	1,900	44%
CONNECTICUT	5,090	980	19%
IDAHO	5,155	1,700	33%
ILLINOIS	33,000-45,000***	4,200	9 -13%
INDIANA	15,302	2,065	13%
IOWA	9,849****	2,835	29%
KANSAS	8,236	1,250	15%
KENTUCKY	5,662	2,860	49%
LOUISIANA	13,546	15,000	n/a
MAINE	8,337	200	2%
MARYLAND	10,994*****	3,949	36%
MASSACHU-SETTS	9,087	1,561	16%
MISSOURI	8,000******	6,500	81%
NEBRASKA	6,101	1,298	21%
NEW JERSEY	17,132	1,550	9%
NEW YORK	n/a	22,000	n/a
NEVADA	954	300	31%
NORTH CAROLINA	6,274	1,500	24%
OHIO	27,416	8,829	32%
OREGON	20,682*******	7,500	36%
PENNSYLVANIA	17,782	9,844 (est.)	55%
SOUTH CAROLINA	5,307	1,250	23%
SOUTH DAKOTA	1,455	406	28%
TENNESSEE	1372	5,900	430%*

TEXAS	123,738	15-16,000	12-13%
VIRGINIA	2,986	1,358	45%
WASHINGTON	16,471	1,762	11%
WEST VIRGINIA	5,298	890-910	17%
WISCONSIN	8,245	2,013	24%
TOTALS	**547,735**	**184,881**	**26% (average)**

* 1993 data from the 1995 U.S. Report to Congress on the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program.

** 1997 estimate from Alaska Department of Education.

*** 1996 data from the Illinois Coalition to End Homelessness

**** 1996 data from the Iowa Department of Education

***** 1996 data from the Maryland Department of Human Resources

****** 1996 data from the Missouri Department of Education

******* 1996/97 data from the Oregon Department of Education

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

ANALYSIS AND HIGHLIGHTS

An Evaluation of State and Local Efforts to Serve the Educational Needs of Homeless Children and Youth

Background

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Amendments Act of 1990 authorizes the U.S. Department of Education to review state plans submitted under the Act to "evaluate whether State laws, policies, and practices . . . adequately address the problems of homeless children and homeless youth relating to access to education and placement" and to gather information to "determine the extent to which State educational agencies are ensuring that each homeless child and homeless youth has access to a free appropriate public education."

Policy Studies Associates has conducted a study of the McKinney program for the Department. Findings are based on a survey of state coordinators in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and site visits to six state educational agencies and eight school districts, along with an analysis of state plans submitted to the Department.

Key Findings

State Legislative and Policy Responses to McKinney Act Requirements

- *Almost all states have revised their laws, regulations, and policies to improve access to education for homeless students.*

  They report a high level of success in identifying and eliminating barriers once posed by policies on residency and school records.

- *However, states and districts still struggle to provide access while meeting guardianship and immunization requirements (which raise sensitive health and safety issues).*

  To fight disease, most states (42) retain immunization requirements for all students. The extent to which these states are able to enroll homeless children and youth largely depends on the effectiveness of state and local methods for providing immunizations or obtaining these records for homeless students.

  To protect children's safety and welfare (and to avoid liability), schools require a legal guardian's permission for many enrollment and education decisions. Few states set aside these requirements entirely, instead making special allowances for homeless students.

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Barriers remain when children are not identified as homeless or when special allowances are not made at the district or school level.

- *States and districts have few resources to address transportation needs.*

  Site visit data suggest that homeless students are rarely placed in their school of origin, particularly when it would require transportation across district lines. The McKinney program does help transport shelter-based homeless students to *a* school; before McKinney, some homeless students had no access to any school transportation services.

McKinney Act Subgrants: Projects at the District Level

- *A large percentage of state grant funds are used for subgrants to districts.*

  States awarded an average of 71 percent of their McKinney Act grant funds for 1993-94 to local educational agencies (LEAs); subgrant funds went to 3 percent of LEAs nationwide, the majority (51 percent) to urban LEAs.

- *Subgrants support a variety of activities.*

  Subgrant activities included: before- and after-school education projects; awareness raising and sensitivity training; coordination among local service providers; transportation to school; parent involvement; identification and school placement of homeless children; and improving access of homeless children and youth to educational programs and services.

Additional Challenges

- *Homeless youth face extreme barriers to school access.*

  Efforts to curb crime or ensure school safety may impede enrollment for homeless teens—for example, curfew laws make them guilty of a crime just because they have no place to go. Schools in some states refuse to admit homeless teens due to liability concerns. Unlike younger children, teens may be placed statewide, with up to six or seven moves a year disrupting learning. In terms of McKinney-funded services, few of the LEAs in the site visit sample provided instructional services to older students.

- *Housing authorities are generally unaware of the importance of considering the educational needs of homeless students when making housing placements.*

- *Although access to school has improved significantly for homeless students under the McKinney Act, a large proportion have difficulty gaining access to specific educational services (e.g., gifted and talented programs, Head Start).*

  These difficulties remain despite state policies promoting such access. Some subgrantees try to ensure access to Chapter 1 (e.g., by tracking students' whereabouts), but few

reported monitoring the access to other services, such as special education, limited English proficiency programs, or Head Start.

- *Family mobility may be the greatest barrier to school success for homeless students.*

  States and districts are just beginning to explore ways to help homeless students continue making progress as they move from school to school.

Policy Implications

While this study was conducted prior to the enactment of the new legislation, many of the findings point to situations that policymakers still need to address.

Access

- *Homeless students in different districts within the same state often have uneven access to educational services. This situation can be addressed at the state, district, and school level.*

  State policies exempting homeless students from enrollment requirements do not eliminate barriers unless schools and districts are aware of and enforce these policies. State coordinators could help improve these situations by giving technical assistance and information on promising practices to all districts.

- *State policies favoring access for homeless students to federally-funded educational services are not sufficient in themselves to guarantee that access for eligible students.*

  Federal officials can provide guidance to state coordinators on ways to monitor and increase access. Also, federal program guidelines could give priority on waiting lists to homeless students.

- *Considering the unmet needs of homeless youth when targeting McKinney resources and developing programs for homeless students, along with better coordination among state and local agencies, may reduce some of the educational barriers homeless youth confront.*

- *Complying with the McKinney Act's school-of-origin provision may not be feasible for states and districts without additional transportation resources.*

  However, in many cases they have not exhausted all other avenues to find alternate solutions. For example, collaboration with shelter placement agencies may ensure that students are placed near their school of origin or near school bus routes or public transportation services.

Coordination With Other Agencies

- *Housing authorities must be made aware of the need to consider educational needs when making housing placement decisions, particularly for students with disabilities.*

If state and federal officials review the policies of other government agencies (e.g., housing, health and human services), they may identify additional impediments to school access for homeless children and youth.

School Success

- *Focusing more attention and resources on addressing the negative effect of family mobility on students' academic progress may improve homeless students' school success.*

Resources

- *State coordinators should more strongly consider the needs of districts that have not received McKinney subgrants when allocating time and resources.*

- *State coordinators could do more to build links among the countless public and private state and local groups and agencies that serve homeless children and youth.*

  Because McKinney funds are small relative to the size of the homeless student population, the funds might best serve to leverage the blending of resources and information among service providers to better address the educational needs of homeless children and youth. For example, officials should weigh the value of district liaisons, who coordinate among local providers serving homeless students, when planning McKinney-funded services. Supporting these liaisons may be the most efficient use of funds.

Additional copies are available from the Planning and Evaluation Service, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Ave., SW, Room 4162, Washington, DC 20202-8240 or (202) 401-0590.

REPORT TO CONGRESS

A Compilation and Analysis of Reports
Submitted by States in Accordance with
Section 722(d)(3) of the

EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAM

STEWART B. McKINNEY HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT
Title VII, Subtitle B

JULY 1995

This report is submitted in response to the requirement in Section 724(b)(5) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (Public Law 100-77, July 22, 1987, amended November 29, 1990).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

REPORT TO CONGRESS

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Education

PROGRAM: Education for Homeless Children and Youth

STATUTE: Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, Title VII-B (Public Law 100-77, July 22, 1987, amended November 29, 1990)

SUBJECT: A compilation of the reports submitted by States in accordance with Section 722(d)(3) of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Section 722(d)(3) of the Act, the Department instructed State educational agencies (SEAs) to submit by December 31, 1991, and every second year thereafter, reports concerning data collected on the number and location of homeless children and youth in their States.[1] This report summarizes data reported by States and other jurisdictions (hereafter referred to as States) for the period ending December 31, 1993.

State educational agencies in 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) received fiscal year (FY) 1993 funds under this program. All SEAs receiving program funds submitted reports to the Department except the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands, which receive funds through a consolidated funds system.

The 1991 report stated that due to problems with gathering data on homeless children and youth, data contained in the report should be viewed with caution. In spite of efforts by the Department and the States, the problems associated with duplication, extrapolation, and differing State definitions of homeless continue. We advise, therefore, that the data contained in this report be viewed cautiously as estimates rather than as precise numbers.[2]

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[1] Under Section 722(f)(4) of the amended McKinney Act, as reauthorized by the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-382), participating States are required to submit reports to the Department by October 1, 1997, and every third year thereafter.

[2] In reauthorizing the McKinney Act, Congress recognized the problems inherent with this data. Amendments to the Act eliminated the requirement that States report on numbers of homeless children and youth in their States and instead requires States to provide estimates of the numbers of homeless children and youth in their States. The revised Act focuses more on the difficulties homeless children and youth have enrolling in school and the special needs of such children and youth. See Sections 722(f)(1) and 722(f)(2) of the Act.

Department guidance regarding the data collection asked States to make adjustments, to the extent possible, for duplication. However, not all States were able to do this. In addition, some segments of the homeless population, such as those temporarily in doubled-up housing (i.e., children who live with relatives or friends to avoid homelessness), are extraordinarily difficult to identify. Not all States included this population in their counts.

SUMMARY OF DATA INCLUDED IN SEA REPORTS

This report compiles data submitted by States regarding the total numbers of homeless children and youth in each State by academic grade level, type of housing, and school attendance. This report also summarizes data from States on the special service needs of homeless children and youth and the reasons such children and youth do not attend school.

TABLE 1: Grade Levels of Homeless Children and Youth

Table 1 shows the grade levels of all reported homeless children and youth in each State. Excluding preschool children, States reported a total of 744,266[3] homeless school-age children and youth, of whom:

- 57 percent were elementary students;
- 22 percent were junior high school students;
- 19 percent were high school students; and
- 2 percent were of unspecified grade level.

Eighteen (18) States included optional counts of homeless preschool children. The number of preschool children totaled 86,534, 31 percent of the homeless children and youth, pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, in those States.

TABLE 2: School Attendance of Homeless Children and Youth

Table 2 shows that 23 percent of children and youth were not attending school during their homelessness. New York was not able to provide data on the attendance or non-attendance of its homeless children and youth. Some States gathered their data for Table 1 from different sources than their data for Table 2. This accounts for discrepancies between Tables 1 and 2.

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[3] This total, like all others in the report, was summed from the data submitted by the States. Since methodologies used by States differ, this figure is a broad estimate only.

Reasons Homeless Children and Youth Are Not Attending School

States provided a number of reasons why homeless children and youth did not attend school. The most frequently reported reasons in order of their frequency are:

- Lack of transportation to or from temporary residence;
- Shelter stays are too short to make enrollment worthwhile;
- Youth are discouraged by frequent school changes and by the condition of homelessness;
- Families lack motivation/keep children out of school;
- Lack of school records--academic, health, and immunization;
- Parents preoccupied with finding food, shelter, and employment;
- Lack of resources for supplies and clothing;
- Behavior problems or drug use by youth;
- Lack of health and mental health care/illness;
- State guardianship/residency requirements not uniformly interpreted by schools;
- Lack of information on school requirements/location; and
- Delays in transferring school and other records.

Special Needs of Homeless Children and Youth

States provided information on the special educational needs of homeless children and youth. The most frequently reported needs in order of their frequency are:

- Remediation/tutoring in basic skills;
- School materials and clothes for school;
- Support services such as counselors and social workers;

- After-school/extended day/summer programs to provide basic needs (food, shelter) and recreation;
- Adequate transportation;
- Educational assessment, screening, placement, and tracking;
- Educational program continuity and stability;
- Extensive long-term counseling to deal with problems associated with homelessness;
- Access to health care and nutritional services;
- Sensitivity and awareness training for school personnel/students; and
- Special education/expedited evaluation for special education services.

TABLE 3: Types of Housing of Homeless Children and Youth

Table 3 shows the housing arrangements of homeless children and youth in States. Connecticut, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and the BIA did not provide data on the housing of homeless children and youth. Several States provided only partial data (e.g., they did not count the number of children living in doubled-up housing). In addition, some States gathered their data for Table 1 from different sources than their data for Table 3. This accounts for discrepancies between Tables 1 and 3.

States that provided complete data reported that homeless children and youth resided in the following settings[4]:

- 22 percent in publicly funded homeless shelters;
- 21 percent in privately funded homeless shelters;
- 34 percent with family or friends for temporary periods of time; and
- 24 percent in other locations, including welfare hotels, runaway shelters, battered women shelters, campgrounds, parks, and abandoned buildings.

[4] Total percentage does not equal 100 percent because of rounding.

TABLE 1
GRADE LEVELS OF REPORTED HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

State	Pre-K	Elementary School	Junior High School	High School	Not Specified	Total (K-12)
Alabama		4672	3066	2597		10335
Alaska		299	293	1096		1688
Arizona		5663	2914	3337		11914
Arkansas		2973	1298	1136		5407
California		78310	27480	31247		137037
Colorado		2170	894	1292		4356
Connecticut		1989	807	2294		5090
Delaware		294	118	69		481
District of Columbia	529	334	133	64		531
Florida	3291	38799	8776	6870		54445[5]
Georgia		3335	4316	1831		9482
Hawaii		480	55	139		674
Idaho		1733	1383	2039		5155
Illinois		2682	1329	1246		5257
Indiana	9596	7788	3544	3970		15302
Iowa	1437	2202	2092	3219		7513
Kansas	193	3680	1387	2976		8043
Kentucky	203	3310	1240	1112		5662
Louisiana		8759	2300	2487		13546
Maine		1084	1417	5836		8337

[5] Florida's count is based on a representative sample of 34 school districts in the State. The number is high because of the effects of Hurricane Andrew. Dade County reported 15,000 children.

State	Pre-K	Elementary School	Junior High School	High School	Not Specified	Total (K-12)
Maryland	318	1344	435	286		2065
Massachusetts	3668	2192	1154	717	1356	5419
Michigan		92106	34889	12560		139555
Minnesota	8329	6339	3166	2968		12473
Mississippi		2249	724	580		3553
Missouri		317	224	149		690
Montana		604	428	996		2028
Nebraska		2809	995	1988	309	6101
Nevada		565	107	282		954
New Hampshire		46	31	148		225
New Jersey	11659	9451	3816	3865		17132
New Mexico		1102	608	1317		3027
New York		2575	626	389	2000[6]	5590
N. Carolina		3262	1569	1443		6274
N. Dakota		78	21	33		132
Ohio	7456	7021	2125	3645	7172	19963
Oklahoma		1235	461	562	216	2474
Oregon	7830	4581	2052	1224		7857
Pennsylvania	11184	9446	3776	3098	1462	17782
Puerto Rico		2970	986	499		4455
Rhode Island		646	289	151	205[7]	1291
South Carolina	1442	2918[8]	615[9]	332		3865

[6] New York State's report provided grade level data only for students in New York City. Homeless children and youth in the rest of the State are not broken down by grade level and appear in the "not specified" column, totaling 2,000.

[7] This figure represents the State's estimate of 205 runaways, based on monthly service totals received from Travelers Aid.

State	Pre-K	Elementary School	Junior High School	High School	Not Specified	Total (K-12)
South Dakota	1515	772	416	267		1455
Tennessee		795	327	250	56	1428
Texas		77195	31161	15382		123738
Utah	2492	3788	1496	2193		7477
Vermont	224	405	109	212		726
Virginia		1680	1337	1042		4059
Washington	15168	8715	3539	4217		16471
West Virginia		2422	1390	1486		5298
Wisconsin		4252	2025	1968		8245
Wyoming		550	679	245		1474
Bureau of Indian Affairs		479	177	79		735
Totals	**86,534**	**425,465**	**166,595**	**139,430**	**12,776**	**744,266**

[8] This figure includes 1,164 children in preschool through grade 6.

[9] This figure includes 91 children in grades 7-12.

TABLE 2
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH[10]

State	Attending	Not Attending	Total
Alabama	10,335	0	10,335
Alaska	1366	322	1688
Arizona	8332	3582	11914
Arkansas	5407	0	5407
California	120730	16308	137038
Colorado	3092	1264	4356
Connecticut	5090	0	5090
Delaware	481	0	481
District of Columbia	525	6	531
Florida	50,253	7483	57736
Georgia	9435	47	9482
Hawaii	674	0	674
Idaho	3375	1780	5155
Illinois	4468	789	5257
Indiana	14057	1245	15302
Iowa	7486	1464	8950
Kansas	2695	78	2773
Kentucky	5603	59	5662
Louisiana	13546	0	13546
Maine	3752	4585	8337
Maryland	1999	66	2065
Massachusetts	2085	54	2139[11]
Michigan	37,691	101,864	139555

[10] Some States gathered data on school attendance (Table 2) from different sources than their data on grade levels (Table 1) of homeless children and youth. These differences account for discrepancies between Tables 1 and 2.

[11] This figure does not include homeless children and youth in doubled-up living situations.

State	Attending	Not Attending	Total
Minnesota	9973	2500	12473
Mississippi	3325	228	3553
Missouri	596	94	690
Montana	1839	189	2028
Nebraska	5203	517	5720[12]
Nevada	942	12	954
New Hampshire	212	13	225
New Jersey	16234	898	17132
New Mexico	2837	190	3027
New York	n/a	n/a	n/a[13]
North Carolina	6274	0	6274
North Dakota	132	0	132
Ohio	19610	350	19960
Oklahoma	2434	288	2722
Oregon	6750	1107	7857
Pennsylvania	13522	2826	16348
Puerto Rico	4373	82	4455
Rhode Island	1073	13	1086
South Carolina	3811	54	3865
South Dakota	1120	335	1455
Tennessee	1372	56	1428

[12] This total does not include 68 homeless children and youth whose enrollment is unknown and 309 homeless children and youth whose age or grade is unknown.

[13] New York's status report included the following explanation: "The data for New York City were obtained from the New York City Board of Education and represent statistics from their Citywide Percentage of Attendance Report. The Board of Education collaborates with the New York City Human Resources Administration to identify and register all homeless children in New York City. Outside of New York City, the local departments of social services must file a "Designation of School District Attendance for a Homeless Child" form for any child placed in a school district outside the child's district of origin. As a result, the Department has data on the number of homeless children in this situation, but not of homeless children continuing to reside and attend school in the district of origin."

State	Attending	Not Attending	Total
Texas	113098	10640	123738
Utah	9969	0	9969
Vermont	675	51	726
Virginia	2955	1104	4059
Washington	10541	5930	16471
West Virginia	5197	101	5298
Wisconsin	7948	297	8245
Wyoming	1429	45	1474
Bureau of Indian Affairs	735	0	735
Totals	**566,565**	**168,916**	**738,797**

TABLE 3
TYPE OF HOUSING OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH[14]

State	Public Shelter	Private Shelter	Relatives or Friends	Other	Total
Alabama	3100	1034	6201	0	10335
Alaska	232	380	831	328	1771
Arizona	136	7324	0	4454	11914
Arkansas	135	1217	3839	216	5407
California	3907	19545	41060	72525[15]	137037
Colorado	72	2967	1317	0	4356
Connecticut	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Delaware	481	0	0	0	481
District of Columbia	14	511	6	0	531
Florida	31227[16]	0	20889	5620	57736
Georgia	0	9482	0	0	9482
Hawaii	480	55	139	0	674
Idaho	1733	1383	2039	0	5155
Illinois	41	2195	1919	1102	5257
Indiana	16931	6473	996	498	24898
Iowa	1486	0	4423	3041	8950
Kansas	1171	4557	5937	671	8236

[14] Some States gathered data on grade levels of homeless children and youth (Table 1) from different sources than data on housing of homeless children and youth (Table 3). For example, States surveyed schools to gather grade level data and social service agencies to gather data on housing. These differences account for the discrepancies between Tables 1 and 3.

[15] According to the SEA, 50,128 of these homeless children and youth now reside in permanent housing.

[16] This figure includes public and private shelters. The SEA did not provide a breakdown between public and private shelters. This figure also includes 8,000 homeless children and youth living in FEMA trailers in the South Dade County Hurricane Area.

State	Public Shelter	Private Shelter	Relatives or Friends	Other	Total
Kentucky	347[17]	0	4059	1156[18]	5662
Louisiana	0	13,546	0	0	13546
Maine	196	2081	500	5560	8337
Maryland	4471	0	81	14	4566
Massachusetts	3737	520	3525	1305	9087
Michigan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Minnesota	0	17942	1800	1060	20802
Mississippi	1964	20	1046	523	3553
Missouri	140	395	153	2	690
Montana	0	741	687	600	2028
Nebraska	0	2204	340	3557	6101
Nevada	0	34	211	709	954
New Hampshire	0	23	124	78	225
New Jersey	670	3896	5906	6660	17132
New Mexico	121	51	1971	240	2383
New York	20925	1380	n/a	471	22776
North Carolina	2070	816	2510	878	6274
North Dakota	20	0	103	9	132
Ohio	25926	967	465	58	27416
Oklahoma	222	115	2035	50	2434
Oregon	2479	1886	1728	1494	7857
Pennsylvania	n/a[19]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

[17] This figure includes homeless children and youth residing in privately operated shelters.

[18] This figure includes 347 children and youth living in inhabitable living conditions, 324 in temporary foster care, 243 in "HUD substandard housing," 116 in motels and hotels, 108 in spouse abuse/domestic violence shelters, and 18 in runaway shelters.

State	Public Shelter	Private Shelter	Relatives or Friends	Other	Total
Puerto Rico	297	868	2604	686	4455
Rhode Island	25	964	82	15	220[20]
South Carolina	978	2634	534	1161	5307
South Dakota	422	655	349	29	1455
Tennessee	875	144	267	86	1372
Texas	29	17842	78182	27685	123,738
Utah	3689	698	5283	299	9969
Vermont	n/a	341	252	133	726
Virginia	653	2,333	0	0	2986
Washington	5378	1344	5556	4193	16471
West Virginia	208	217	2011	2862	5298
Wisconsin	3380	1896	2638	331	8245
Wyoming	64	32	763	615	1474
Bureau of Indian Affairs	n/a	n/a	n/a	735[21]	735
Totals	**140,432**	**133,708**	**215,361**	**151,709**	**641,210**

[19] Pennsylvania's status report states: "Pennsylvania's shelter system is comprised of a wide range of private, non-profit agencies. Although the city of Philadelphia has a city-operated intake office - the Office of Services to Homeless and Adults (OSHA) - the city contracts with many providers who shelter individuals, families, and children."

[20] This figure includes an estimated 205 runaways.

[21] This figure specifies homeless children and youth located at BIA-funded facilities.

Homeless Families with Children

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Homelessness is a devastating experience for families. It disrupts virtually every aspect of family life, damaging the physical and emotional health of family members, interfering with children's education and development, and frequently resulting in the separation of family members. The dimensions, causes, and consequences of family homelessness are discussed below. An overview of policy issues and a list of resources for further study are also provided.

DIMENSIONS

The fastest growing segment of the homeless population is families with children. Families with children constitute approximately 40% of people who become homeless (Shinn and Weitzman, 1996). A survey of 29 U.S. cities found that in 1996, children accounted for 27% of the homeless population (Waxman and Hinderliter, 1996). These proportions are likely to be higher in rural areas; research indicates that families, single mothers, and children make up the largest group of people who are homeless in rural areas (Vissing, 1996).

Recent evidence confirms that homelessness among families is increasing. Requests for emergency shelter by families with children in 29 U.S. cities increased by an average of 7% between 1995-1996 (Waxman and Hinderliter, 1996). The same study found that 24% of requests for shelter by homeless families were denied in 1996 due to lack of resources. Moreover, every city surveyed expects an increase in the number of requests for emergency shelter by families with children in 1997.

CAUSES

Poverty and the lack of affordable housing are the principal causes of family homelessness. The number of poor people increased 41% between 1979 and 1990; families and children under 18 accounted for more than half of that increase (U.S. House of Representatives, 1992). Stagnating wages and changes in welfare programs (principally, restrictive eligibility requirements and erosion of benefits) account for increasing poverty among families. In 45 states and the District of Columbia, families would need to earn at least double the minimum wage in order to afford a two-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent. In all but two states, cash welfare benefits (AFDC) are inadequate to pay the Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom housing unit (National Low Income Housing Coalition, 1996).

The shrinking supply of affordable housing is another factor underlying the growth in family homelessness. The gap between the number of affordable housing units and the number of people needing them is currently the largest on record, estimated at 4.7 million units (Lazere, 1995). The affordable housing crisis has had a particularly severe impact on poor families with children. Families with children represent 43% of households with "worst case housing needs" -- those renters with incomes below 50% of the area median

income who are involuntarily displaced, pay more than half of their income for rent and utilities, or live in substandard housing (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1996). With less income available for food and other necessities, these families are only an accident, illness, or paycheck away from becoming homeless.

Domestic violence also contributes to homelessness among families. When a woman leaves an abusive relationship, she often has nowhere to go. This is particularly true of women with few resources. Lack of affordable housing and long waiting lists for assisted housing mean that many women are forced to choose between abuse and the streets. A 1990 Ford Foundation study found that 50% of homeless women and children were fleeing abuse (Zorza, 1991). More recent local estimates put the range of homeless women and children fleeing abuse at 25-35% (National Coalition for the Homeless, 1997).

CONSEQUENCES

Homelessness severely impacts the health and well-being of all family members. Compared with housed poor children, homeless children experience worse health; more developmental delays; more anxiety, depression and behavioral problems; and lower educational achievement (Shinn and Weitzman, 1996). In addition, homeless children face barriers to enrolling and attending school, including transportation problems, residency requirements, inability to obtain previous school records, and lack of clothing and school supplies. Parents also suffer the ill effects of homelessness and poverty. A recent study of homeless and low-income housed families found that both groups experienced higher rates of depressive disorders than the overall female population, and that one-third of homeless mothers (compared to one-fourth of poor housed mothers) had made at least one suicide attempt (Bassuk et al., 1996). In both groups, over one-third of the sample had a chronic health condition.

Homelessness frequently breaks up families. Families may be separated as a result of shelter policies which deny access to older boys or fathers. Separations may also be caused by placement of children into foster care when their parents become homeless. In addition, parents may leave their children with relatives and friends in order to save them from the ordeal of homelessness or to permit them to continue attending their regular school. The break-up of families is a well-documented phenomenon: in New York City, 60% of residents in shelters for single adults had children who were not with them; in Maryland, only 43% of parents living in shelters had children with them; and in Chicago, 54% of a combined street and shelter homeless sample were parents, but 91% did not have children with them (Shinn and Weitzman, 1996).

POLICY ISSUES

Policies to end homelessness must include jobs that pay livable wages. In order to work, families with children need access to quality child care that they can afford. But jobs and child care are not enough. Without affordable, decent housing, people cannot keep their jobs and they cannot remain healthy. Serious efforts to reform welfare would link cash benefits and job assistance to affordable housing. Preventing poverty and homelessness also requires access to affordable health care, so that illness and accidents no longer threaten to

throw individuals and families into the streets. Only concerted efforts to meet all of these needs will end the tragedy of homelessness for America's families and children.

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