

The McKinney-Vento Act is a federal law that protects the educational rights of homeless students. Under this law, your children are entitled to important rights and services. Knowing the protections your children are legally entitled to can help you advocate more effectively for them.

The McKinney-Vento Act defines "homeless children and youths" as any student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.



Your children have important educational rights. **To advocate for them you should:**

- **Know Your Children's Educational Rights**

- **Immediate Enrollment:** Your children are entitled to immediately enroll in school, even if you do not have ANY paperwork for them, including immunization forms, guardianship papers, birth certificates, and proof of address.
- **Choice of Schools:** Your children have the right to stay enrolled in the school they most recently attended, to re-enroll in the school where you were last permanently housed, and to enroll in the local area where your family is temporarily living.
- **Transportation:** Your children have the right to transportation to/from the school they last attended or were last permanently housed. They may also be entitled to receive transportation to/from the local school if other students in the area receive it.
- **Free Meals:** Your children are entitled to receive free meals at their school, without filling out any paperwork regarding your family's finances.

- **Ask the Right Questions**

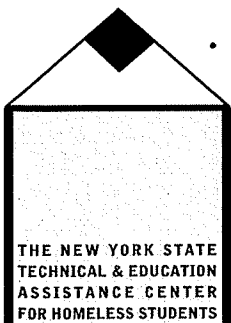
- Who is the local homeless education liaison? How can I contact her or him?
- What transportation is available for my child? Who can help me set it up?
- Who can help set up free meals for my child?
- What if my child needs special education services?
- How can my child participate in field trips/afterschool programs if I am unable to pay?

- **Keep Track of Important Documents**

- Although not necessary for your child's immediate enrollment in school, keeping track of important documents like immunization records, birth certificates and individualized education programs (IEPs) will be helpful.

- **Know Who Can Help**

- Every school district in New York has a homeless liaison who will help you make the best educational decisions for your children and access all of the above services. For contact information, please call NYS-TEACHS at 800-388-2014.
- NYS-TEACHS can help answer any questions you have regarding your children's educational rights. Please call us at 800-388-2014.



NYS-TEACHS

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Toll-Free Hotline: (800) 388-2014

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Visit our website: www.nysteachs.org