PARTNERSHIP FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES

WEBINAR SERIES

INTERSECTIONS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Every first Wednesday of the month in 2024

We have prepared a wide range of conversations with advocates and leaders in other sectors to talk about the impact that a lack of safe, affordable housing has on the work they do.

Join us to learn more about the intersectional nature of our work.

PARTNERSHIP FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES

CONNECTICUT AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONFERENCE

CAHC

NOVEMBER 17-18, 2025

OUR MISSION

The Partnership for Strong Communities promotes equitable change in Connecticut housing policy by **coordinating advocacy**, **advancing research**, and **uniting diverse partners**.

OUR VISION

Everyone in Connecticut has a safe, stable home, that is affordable to them, in an equitable community of their choice.

HERE FOR HOUSING

Our Priorities

Here for Housing AFFORDABILITY

Assist people in Connecticut to afford their homes while meeting their other basic needs.

Here for Housing CREATION

Invest in the creation and preservation of more affordable homes so more Connecticut residents have an affordable place to call home.

Here for Housing CHOICE

Ensure a variety of housing types in all communities, so Connecticut residents can choose where and how they live.

Here for Housing STABILITY

Support Connecticut residents to have quality, safe, stable places to call home.

Here For Housing

Here For Housing

Beyond the Classroom: The Impact of Housing Instability on the Educational Success of Teens and Young Adults of Color in CT

For young people, housing instability undermines physical health, mental well-being, and the ability to thrive. This report explores how housing instability affects teens and young adults of color in Connecticut, with a focus on school attendance, mental health, and overall outlook on the future.

Author: Kalimah Muhammad, Research Associate

INTERSECTIONAL WEBINAR SERIES:

East Hartford Adult & Continuing Education
Every Student, Every Day

Center for Children's Advocacy

SchoolHouse Connection

PARTNERSHIP FOR STRONG COMMUNITIES

THE INTERSECTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND EDUCATION

Fri, October 24th
1:00 - 2:00PM

via Zoom

Stacey Violante Cote,
Deputy Director,
Center for Children's Advocacy

Barbara Duffield,
Executive Director,
SchoolHouse Connection

Dr. Nasreen Al Omari,
Program Facilitator,
East Hartford Adult & Continuing Education

SchoolHouse Connection

The Intersection of : Affordable Housing and Education

Partnership for Strong Communities

October 24, 2025

SchoolHouse Connection

SchoolHouse Connection works to overcome homelessness, from prenatal to postsecondary, through strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with youth, families, schools, early childhood programs, institutions of higher education, and service providers.

Learn more:
schoolhouseconnection.org

Join our Newsletter:
bit.ly/4brxboR

Education and Housing are Both Necessary for Stability and Success

- Lack of safe, stable affordable housing negatively impacts educational outcomes.
  Consider:
  - Homeless students have higher rates of chronic absence and lower high graduation rates than low-income housed students (i.e. impact of homelessness over and above poverty).
- At the same time, a high-quality education is necessary to obtain and maintain stable housing.
  Consider:
  - Lack of a high school degree or GED is the single greatest risk factor for homelessness as a young adult.
  - Education protects against unemployment:
    - 6.2% for less than a high school degree
    - 4.2% for high school degree
    - 2.5% for bachelors degree

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Public Schools have a Unique Role in Addressing Housing Challenges

- Public schools exist in all communities (whereas shelter and housing options may not be in all communities).
- There is a federal right to a seat in the classroom for every child, regardless of housing status (McKinney-Vento Act).
- Educators have their eyes on children and youth day after day, in a way that no other system does.
- Schools may be more trusted systems for families than other systems.

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Making the Connection: Examples of School-Housing Partnerships

- Head Start on Housing! CT
- Hamilton County Public Schools (TN) - Housing Authority, City, and Homeless Coalition - Special Admissions Vouchers
- Impact Tulsa - Eviction Prevention
- Rochester, MN - Eviction Prevention
- Washington state: Homeless Student Stability Program

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Federal Policy Priorities: Funding and Firings

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What Does the Shutdown Mean for Federal Education Programs?

- Most K12 programs are “forward funded,” i.e. money for the current school year (2025-26) was already approved and disbursed.
- **This means that Education for Homeless Children and Youth, and most other federal education funding streams are not disrupted while the government is shut down.**

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Federal Funding

What Does the Shutdown Mean for Other Federal Programs?

Head Start:

- Six Head Start programs serving 6,525 children are already operating without federal funding, drawing on emergency local resources to stay open.
- As of November 1, another 134 programs across 41 states and Puerto Rico, serving 58,627 children, can no longer drawdown funds. 395 seats in Connecticut at risk.

Housing:

- HUD will cease reviewing and issuing new grant awards as well as pausing more technical assistance operations.
- Individuals receiving rental assistance should have access to funds, at least through November.
- The National Housing Law Project has a "Know Your Rights" resource for people living in HUD-supported housing during a shutdown.

Food:

- SNAP benefits are at risk now, depending on choices that the Trump Administration and individual states make.
- The Administration funded WIC from money collected from custom duties, but it runs out in November.

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FY26 Appropriations

Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program: Advocacy Win!

- Recall. The President's FY2026 budget proposal called for eliminating funding for the EHCY program via a block grant.
- SHC's goal: Focused advocacy on the House Committee because it would be more likely to adopt President's proposal, and if we could preserve EHCY there, it might protect in the future, too.
- Result: BOTH the House and the Senate rejected the block-grant proposal, maintained level funding for EHCY, and included language allowing funds to be spent for an additional year.
- This was not inevitable. The House bill eliminates over 20 education programs.
- Advocacy Matters: including over 26 visits with over 92 homeless liaisons and supporters.

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However: Mass Firing of U.S. Department of Education Staff

On October 10, the Trump Administration fired nearly 500 employees at ED in a “Reduction in Force” (RIF).

This includes:

- Everyone – except directors – in the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE).
  - McKinney-Vento EHCY, Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, Migrant Education, and more.
- Almost everyone in the Office of Special Education.
- Almost everyone in the Student Services in the Office of Postsecondary Education (TRIO, GEAR UP)

➔ Litigation to halt and reverse the firings is ongoing.
➔ There is bipartisan concern in Congress - it is unclear if or how this concern will translate into action.

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How do ED's requirements translate into support for students experiencing homelessness?

NEW RESOURCE:
What the U.S. Department of Education is Required to Do for Homeless Children and Youth – And Why It Matters

Authoritative answers from ED to questions from states	=	**support for students to enroll, attend, and succeed in school**
Clarifying uses of EHCY funds	=	**effective and appropriate services for students**
Data collection and reporting	=	**helps practitioners and policymakers assess trends in identification, chronic absence, academic achievement, and high school graduation**
Tribal and BIE responsibilities	=	**increased school access and stability for Native students experiencing homelessness**

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Federal early care and education protections and funding are still in place.

These guardrails for children and youth are only as good as the people willing to stand behind them, implement them, and ultimately fight for them.

Helpful Resources

Federal Protections

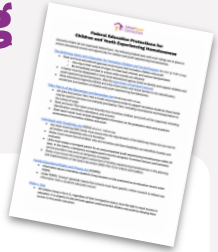
What it does:

Summarizes the core education protections for K12 students experiencing homelessness

Who it is for:

State and local educational agencies, community partners, advocates

Protecting EHCY



What it does:

Explains the EHCY program for policymakers across the political spectrum

Who it is for:

Legislators, legislative staff, local elected officials and policymakers

2025 EHCY Facts

What it does:

Provides the latest data on student homelessness, basic EHCY information. Downloadable/editable.

Who it is for:

Broader education as well as policymakers

LOCAL | STATE | NATIONAL DATA DASHBOARD

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POVERTY SOLUTIONS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Homelessness Data Profiles for Education and Advocacy

bit.ly/Data-Profiles

SCAN HERE

Let’s Connect!

Linkedin: SchoolHouse Connection

Instagram: @SchoolHouseConnection

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Facebook: SchoolHouse Connection

Bluesky & X: @SchoolHouseConn

SHC Community on Slack

✍️ **Sign up at bit.ly/SHC-slack**

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Sign up for our newsletter to receive:

- Important legislative updates
- Useful resources, including tips, tools, and guides
- Webinar announcements
- News related to education and homelessness

https://bit.ly/4brxboR

The Intersection of Affordable Housing & Education

Stacey Violante Cote
Deputy Director

OCTOBER 24, 2025

Center for Children's Advocacy

- **Center for Children's Advocacy is a nonprofit law firm, established in 1997, that provides legal representation and advocacy for Connecticut's most vulnerable children and youth.**

We work in child welfare, racial justice, educational inequities, immigration, youth homelessness, juvenile justice, access to medical and mental health care, and more.

We have offices in Hartford and Bridgeport and medical-legal partnerships in Hartford and New Haven.

Center for Children's Advocacy

Intersection of Housing & Education

- **Preventing** youth from becoming homeless

- **Advocating** for students' rights to be in school

- **Centering youth** with lived expertise of homelessness to find solutions

Intersection of Housing & Education

- **Preventing** youth from becoming homeless:
  - Ensuring vulnerable youth exiting state systems have access to safe/affordable housing.
  - Advocating for affordable housing for families.
  - Supporting minors experiencing homelessness.

Intersection of Housing & Education

- **Advocating** for students' rights to be in school
  - Understand the laws protecting students experiencing homelessness
  - Connect students to supports & resources
  - Mind the gaps

Education For Students Experiencing Homelessness

- **The McKinney Vento Act gives students experiencing homelessness, including minors, the legal right to make school choice decisions and to access resources in order to successfully continue, uninterrupted, in school.**

Students who lack fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence: This includes sharing housing due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (“doubled up”).

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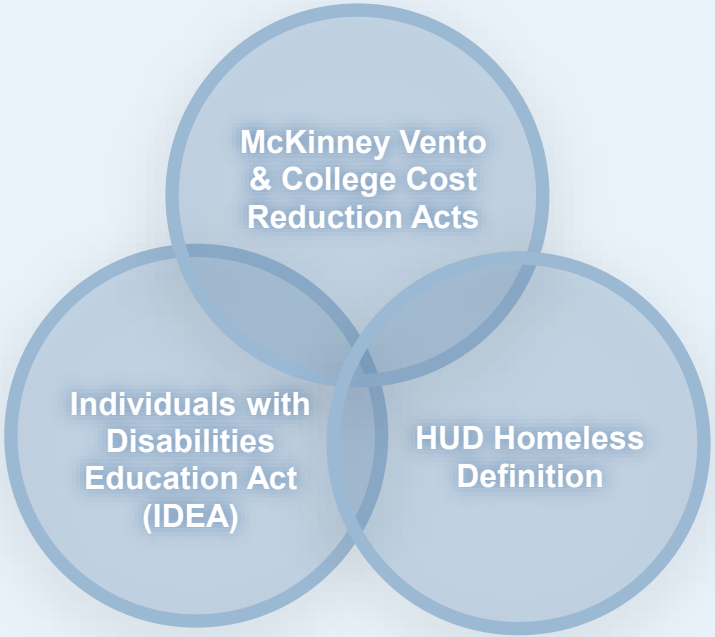
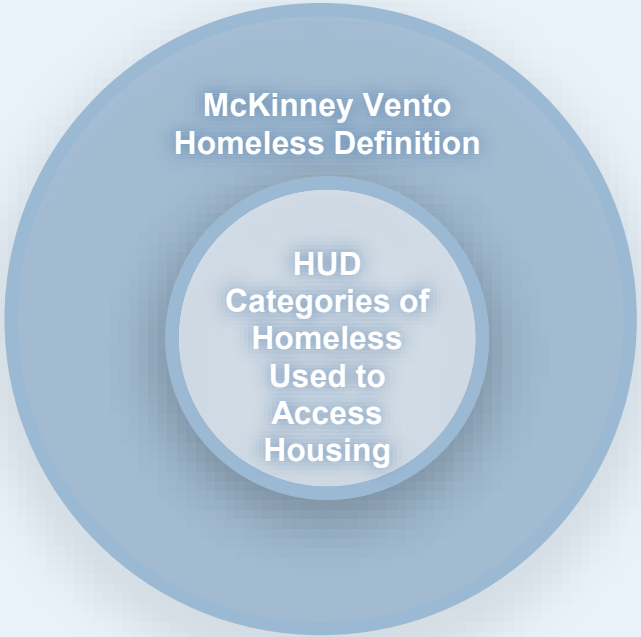
Education For Students Experiencing Homelessness

An unaccompanied youth is defined as "[A] homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian." 42 USC § 11434a(6). This can be for many reasons, including running away.

This includes those who are doubled up, couch surfing, living in motels, living in cars, parks, or abandoned buildings.

Federal Laws Protect Students Experiencing Homelessness





Education For Students Experiencing Homelessness

- The right to immediate enrollment in the student's school of choice.
- The right to be enrolled in your school of choice while any appeals are pending.
- The right to adequate and appropriate transportation.
- The right to have fees and fines waived, and the right to participate in extracurricular activities.
- The law also allows unaccompanied homeless youth to access their own education records. C.G.S. § 10-253(f).
- Contact the McKinney Vento Liaison in your district to help.

Intersection of Housing & Education

- **Centering youth** with lived expertise of homelessness to find solutions
  - Understand barriers
  - Research & implement solutions

Helpful Resources

SpeakUpTeens.org

ID and Birth Certificate

I am a minor. Can I get my birth certificate on my own?

If you were born in Connecticut and are on your own, you can get your birth certificate without a parent/guardian's signature. Go to the Vital Records Office in the town where you live now or the town where you were born.

You must go with the McKinney-Vento Liaison from school or with a staff person from a program that helps youth who are on their own. Go to speakupteens.org/shelters for a list of people who can help with this.

Where is Vital Records and what does it cost?

To find the Vital Records Office in your town, go to ct.gov/dph and type "Vital Records" in the search box.

Here is the cost to get your birth certificate:

- Vital Records Office in your town - $20
- Vital Records Office in the town your mother lived in when you were born - $20
- State Vital Records Office at 410 Capitol Ave, Hartford - $30

Do I need ID to get my birth certificate?

You and the person who goes to Vital Records with you both have to bring ID. It is best to bring a valid state ID but if you do not have one you can bring two other kinds of ID. To see the list of ID they accept, go to speakupteens.org and type "birth certificate" in the search box.

To get a state ID

You must go to DMV to get a state ID. You do not need parent/guardian consent. You must show proof that you live in Connecticut, but there are options if you are moving around. For information, go to ct.gov/dmv. Search "Non Driver ID."

DCF

Can DCF help me?

You can get help from DCF if you are under 18 years old and you were kicked out of your home or neglected or abused.

If you were in DCF care when you turned 18 and are under 21 now, you can go back to DCF. This is called "Re-Entry." Call the DCF Hotline at 1-800-842-2288 for help any time of the day or night.

What happens if I do not have legal status in the US?

DCF can still help you. They will not call immigration. Call us if you have questions about this.

Food, Cash, Medical

If you are on your own and trying to get help from the State, here are some things you should know:

Food

ID: You can use a license, a work or school ID, your medical card, voter registration card, pay stub, or birth certificate. If you don't have one of these, a shelter worker or your employer can prove your identity.

Address: You do not need a permanent a
and you don't have to prove your addre
You can apply on your own, even as
a minor. To find a place to get food,
go to foodshare.org and type
"mobile sites"in the search box.

Cash or Medical

Every program has different ru
but they cannot turn you awa
just because you are on you
own. Apply at DSS
(Department of Social
Services) or call them
to see if you can get help.

ct.gov/dss

Need Help?

If you are moving around a lot and don't have a permanent place to live, the law can help you.

Call us at 860-570-5327 or 203-335-0719.

Do you have questions about other teen legal rights?
Go to speakupteens.org and click on Rights & Resources.

Do you need more information about school and college?
Go to naehcy.org

This brochure is intended as reference only and should not be interpreted as legal advice. If you need specific information about the law, please call 860-570-5327 or 203-335-0719.

Center for Children's Advocacy

speakupteens.org
cca-ct.org

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I have
a place to sleep,
but I'm not sure
how long I can stay.

Moving Around

What happens with school?
Can I get my ID or birth certificate?

Helpful Resources

- **cca-ct.org & speakupteens.org**
- **CT State Dept of Education:**
  - CT McKinney-Vento Liaison: Louis.Tallarita@ct.gov
  - SDE Listing of School District McKinney-Vento Liaisons
- **National Center for Homeless Education**
- **SchoolHouse Connection**

Center for Children's Advocacy

Questions & Contact

Stacey Violante Cote
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Fighting for the legal rights of Connecticut's most vulnerable children