

HOMELESS INFORMATION

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 describes homeless individuals and provides protections for the educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness. District decisions regarding homeless children and youth are made in accordance with what is “the best decision” for the student.

The term “homeless children and youth” refers to individuals who lack fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence. It includes children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement; children and youths who have a primary night-time residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and migratory children who qualify as homeless because the children are living in circumstances as described above.

The identification of students who are homeless is done at the time of enrolment. Parents/Students who enroll in-person at the campus are required to complete a Student Residency Questionnaire form. This form is used by the homeless students' campus liaison to expedite the identification of homeless students and to provide services to students who qualify as homeless. Parents/Students who enroll on-line provide the same information to the campus liaison.

Changing schools greatly impedes students' academic and social growth. A “rule of thumb” is that it takes a child or youth four to six months to recover academically after changing schools. Highly mobile students have been found to have lower test scores and overall academic performance than peers who do not change schools. Therefore, the Pine Tree Independent School District endeavours to keep homeless children in the school they were attending at the time they first experienced homelessness or at the last school the student attended.

The federal government has allocated funding through Title I, Part A for school districts to provide services for homeless students. Under this funding, the Pine Tree Independent School District provides homeless students with free meals, school supplies, and transportation to and from school. These services are implemented at the campus the student attends.

Homeless students are generally eligible for health services that are provided through the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. Additional information can be obtained by dialing 2-1-1 or by using the toll-free number 1 (877) 541-7905 or at the Web site <http://chipmedicaid.org/>.

You can also call the Medicaid client hotline: 1-800-252-8263 or CHIP (low cost or free insurance for children) at 1-877-543-7669 or 1-800-647-6558.

The Buckner Mission Center (903) 757-9383 or (903) 234-1399 provides diapers, baby items, socks, shoes, underwear, blankets, sheets, pillows, and other items.

The Infoline of Gregg County is a valuable resource and offers various services for families. The line is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. This is a great resource for homeless families.

If you need to acquire a Texas birth certificate, then complete this form. (click on the link)

[Help with Birth Certificate English](#)

[Help with Birth Certificate Spanish](#)

The campus liaisons and the district liaison are listed below. Please feel free to contact them with any questions you might have in regard to student homeless identification, services, and other questions.

Gina Ozment – PT Primary – 903-295-5095

Karla Parmelee – PT Elementary – 903-295-5120

Tonya Shine – PT Intermediate – 903-295-5151

Sarah Barnett – PT Middle School – 903-295-5160

Valerie Ogle – PT Junior High – 903-295-5081

Bill Irvine – PT High School – 903-295-5031

Suzanne Shackelford, PTISD Liaison to Homeless Students - 903-295-5000.

Texas Homeless Education Office State Hotline - 1-800-446-3142.