

Recruiting and Meeting the Needs of Families Experiencing Homelessness

Carie Bires, Ounce of Prevention
Vicki Hodges, Illinois State Board of Education
Kim Nelson, Rockford School District
Teresa Fillers, Rockford School District

Preschool Expansion Grant Meeting
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Agenda for today...

- **Become familiar with issues related to homelessness among families, including:**
 - Prevalence and impact of homelessness among children
 - Barriers to enrollment/participation in early childhood programs
 - Enrollment data of homeless children in Illinois prek programs
 - The McKinney-Vento Act and educational rights of homeless children
 - **Learn strategies for identifying and enrolling homeless children**
 - **Discussion/Q&A**
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Who is homeless?

Children who **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**—

- ▶ Sharing the housing of other persons due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- ▶ Living in hotels, motels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations
- ▶ Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- ▶ Abandoned in hospitals
- ▶ Awaiting foster care placement (until 12/10/16)
- ▶ Primary nighttime residence is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- ▶ Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- ▶ Defined as “migratory children” who are living in the above circumstances
- ▶ Unaccompanied youth who are living in the above circumstances



“Fixed, Regular, and Adequate”

- **Fixed**

- ▶ Securely placed; not subject to change or fluctuation
 - ▶ A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change.

- **Regular**

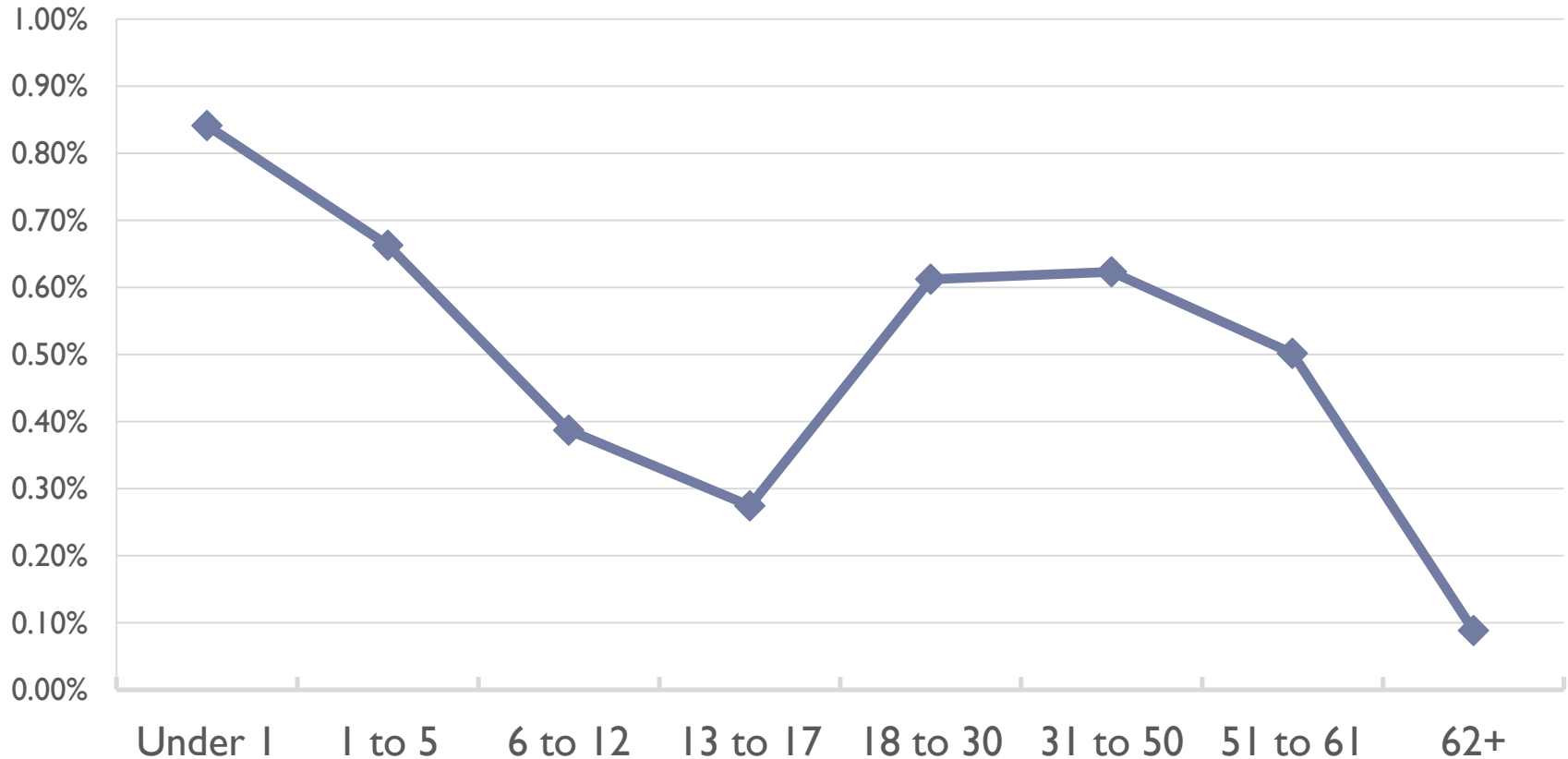
- ▶ Normal, standard
 - ▶ A regular residence is one which is used on a regular (i.e. nightly) basis.

- **Adequate**

- ▶ Sufficient for a specific requirement; lawfully and reasonably sufficient
 - ▶ An adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.



Annual Percentage Rates of Shelter Use By Age (National)



Source: 2012 AHAR (HUD, 2012) and Census Data

Slide courtesy of Beth Shinn, Professor and Chair, Department of Human and Organizational Development; Vanderbilt University

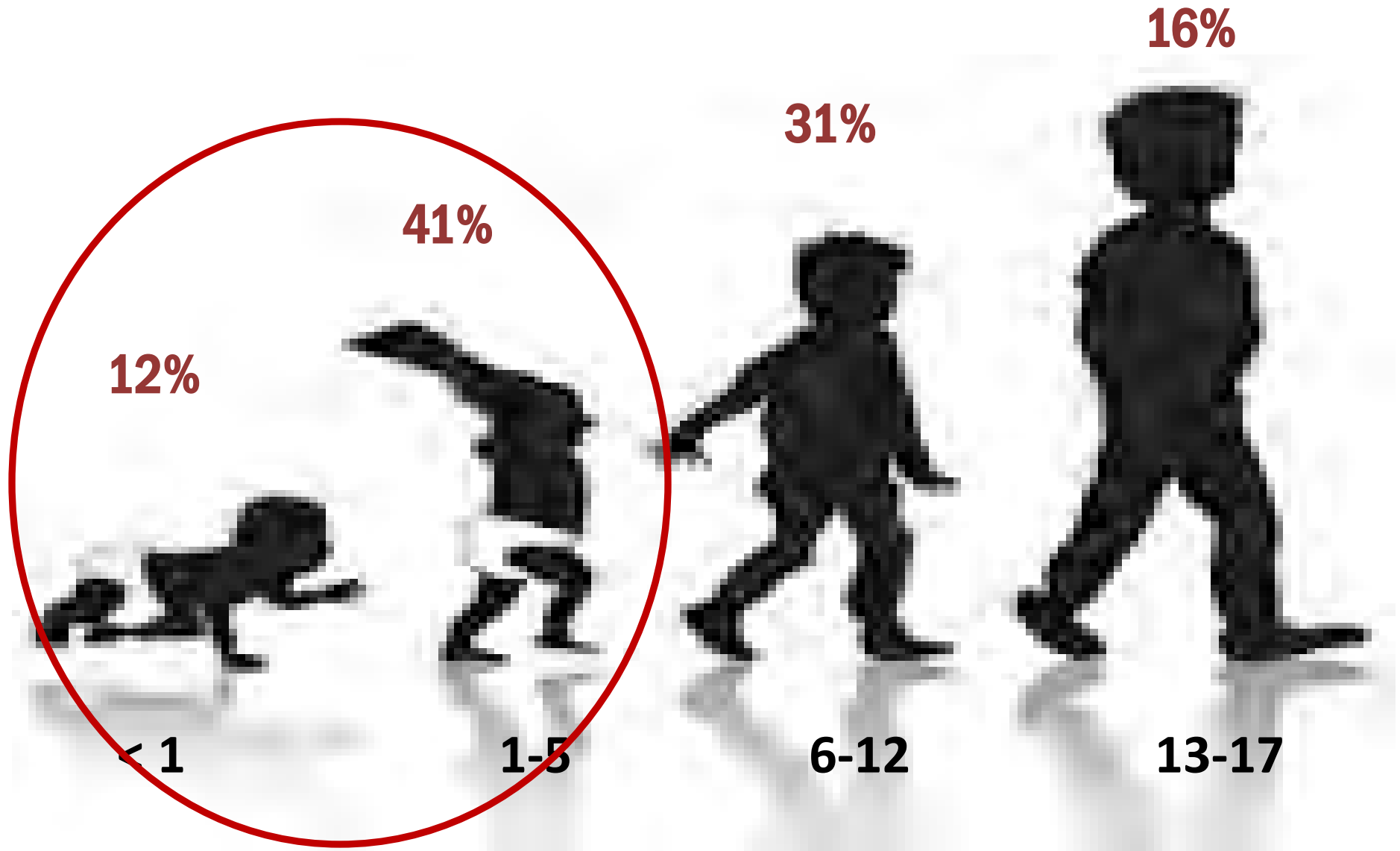


How many children experience homelessness?

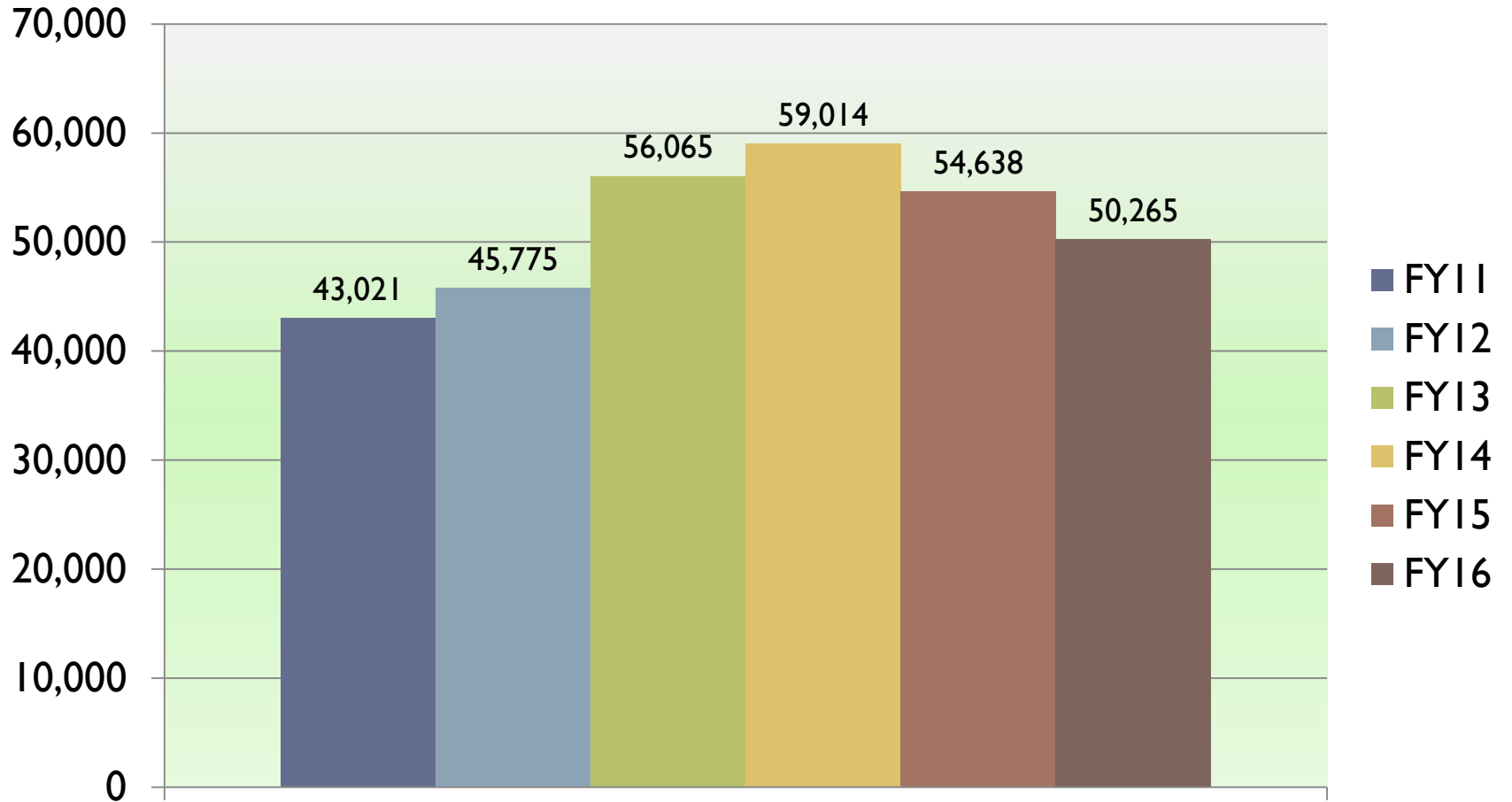
- Children are the fastest-growing segment of the homeless population
- 2.5 million children experience homelessness each year in the U.S.—that's one in 30 children
- Over 50% of children living in homeless shelters are under the age of 6
- NCFH estimates 98,212 homeless children in IL in 2012-2013



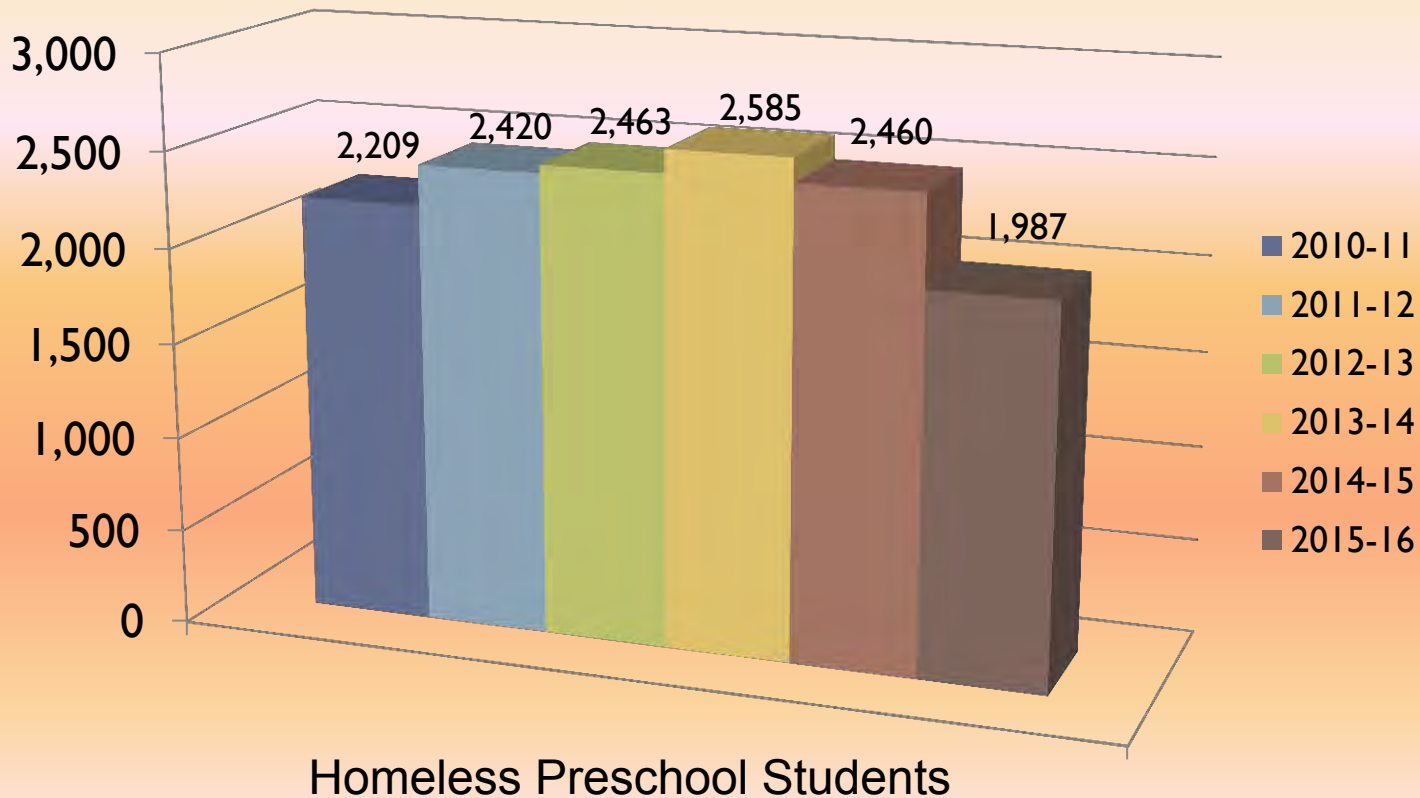
Ages of Children Experiencing Homelessness



PK-12 Homeless Counts (IL)



Homeless Preschool Students Served



Homeless preschool students reported in Student Information System (SIS)

AREA 2

Deb Foust
815/625-1495 Ext. 113

dfoust@roe47.org

ROE # 47
Lee/Ogle/Whiteside
1001 W 23rd St
Sterling, IL 61081

AREA 3

Eileen Worthington
309/837-4821

mworthin@roe26.net

ROE # 26
Fulton/Hancock/McDonough/Schuyler
130 S Lafayette St – Ste 200
Macomb, IL 61455

AREA 5

Ann Schwarm
618/283-9311

aschwarm@roe3.org

ROE # 3
Bond/Christian/Fayette/Effingham/Montgomery
1500 W Jefferson St
Vandalia, IL 62471

Homeless Information Hotline (800)-215-6379

ISBE Homeless Website –<http://www.isbe.net/homeless/default.htm>

Email: Homeless@isbe.net



AREA 1

Matt Hanafee
815/740-4322

mhanafee@willcountyillinois.com

ROE # 56
Will County
702 W. Maple St
New Lenox, IL 60451

AREA 7

Dave Schwab
773/553-5639

dlschwab@cps.edu

CPS Homeless Education
42 W. Madison
Chicago, IL 60602

AREA 4

Libby Wilken
815-694-0607

lwilken@i-kan.org

ROE # 32
Iroquois/Kankakee
189 E Court St, Suite 600
Kankakee, IL 60901

AREA 6

Johna Schullian
618/998-1283 Ext. 202

jschullian@roe21.org

ROE # 21
Franklin/Johnson/Massac/
Williamson
407 N Monroe, Suite 300
Marion, IL 62959

Impacts of homelessness on children

- Higher rates of acute and chronic illnesses, depression and anxiety
- Increased rate of developmental delays
- Increased rate of food insecurity/hunger
- Stressed attachments to caregivers
- Increased exposure to violence/trauma
- Homelessness in early childhood is associated with poor classroom engagement and poor social skills in early elementary school
- The achievement gaps between homeless and low-income elementary students tend to persist, and may even worsen, over time



Barriers and challenges

- Lack of awareness and understanding of homelessness
- Lack of program availability/capacity
 - Half day programs are not accessible
 - Programs not offered during off hours
- Lack of outreach to/identification of homeless families
 - Rigid program requirements and structures
 - Complicated program application/enrollment procedures
 - Lack of transportation
 - High mobility
- Families lack documentation required to apply/enroll (birth certificates, health records, etc.)
- Lack of meaningful data on homeless families



The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

- Originally passed in 1987
- Reauthorized in 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
- Works hand-in-hand with Title IA and other federal education programs
- ESSA: \$85 million authorized funding to SEAs
 - Largest percentage increase of all federal education programs.
 - SEAs award competitive subgrants to LEAs
- Establishes the definition of *homeless* used by schools
- Ensures that children and youth experiencing homelessness have immediate and equal access to public education, including preschool
- Provides for educational access, stability, and support to promote school success
- Needed to address the unique barriers faced by many homeless students



Educational right to...

- Attend school, no matter where they live or how long they have lived there
- Continue in the school they last attended before becoming homeless (school of origin) or the school they last attended
- Receive transportation to the school they last attended before their family became homeless or the school they last attended
- Attend school and participate in school programs with children who are not homeless
- Enroll in school without giving a permanent address
- Enroll in and attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records or any documents required for enrollment
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other children served in these programs
- Receive transportation to school and to school programs comparable to that provided to children who are not homeless



McKinney-Vento and preschool

- ▶ McKinney-Vento State Coordinators **must** coordinate with social service agencies, child development and preschool program personnel and other agencies to provide comprehensive services to preschoolers
- ▶ State McKinney-Vento plans **must** describe procedures that ensure that homeless children have access to public preschool programs administered by the SEA or LEAs
- ▶ School-based liaisons must identify homeless preschoolers and ensure access to Head Start, early intervention (IDEA Part C), and other preschool programs administered by the LEA
- ▶ Sub-grant funds can be used to provide early childhood programs that serve preschoolers experiencing homelessness
- ▶ Preschools are now included in the school of origin definition
- ▶ Comparable transportation



Identification strategies

- Avoid using the word "homeless" with school personnel, families, or youth
 - Provide awareness activities for school staff (registrars, secretaries, counselors, nurses, teachers, tutors, bus drivers, security officers, drop out prevention specialists, attendance officers, administrators, etc.)
 - <http://www.naehcy.org/educational-resources/videos>
 - http://center.serve.org/nche/web/online_tr.php
 - Post outreach materials and posters in all schools and where there is a frequent influx of low-income families and youth in high-risk situations, including motels, campgrounds, libraries, health center, youth services
 - <http://www.k12.wa.us/HomelessEd/Posters.aspx>
 - Coordinate with community service agencies, such as shelters, soup kitchens, law enforcement, legal aid, public assistance and housing agencies, mental health agencies and public health departments
 - Make special efforts to identify preschool children, including asking about siblings of school-aged children
 - Use enrollment and withdrawal forms to inquire about living situations.
 - www.utdanacenter.org/theo/downloads/factsheets/RPI4_SRQ.doc
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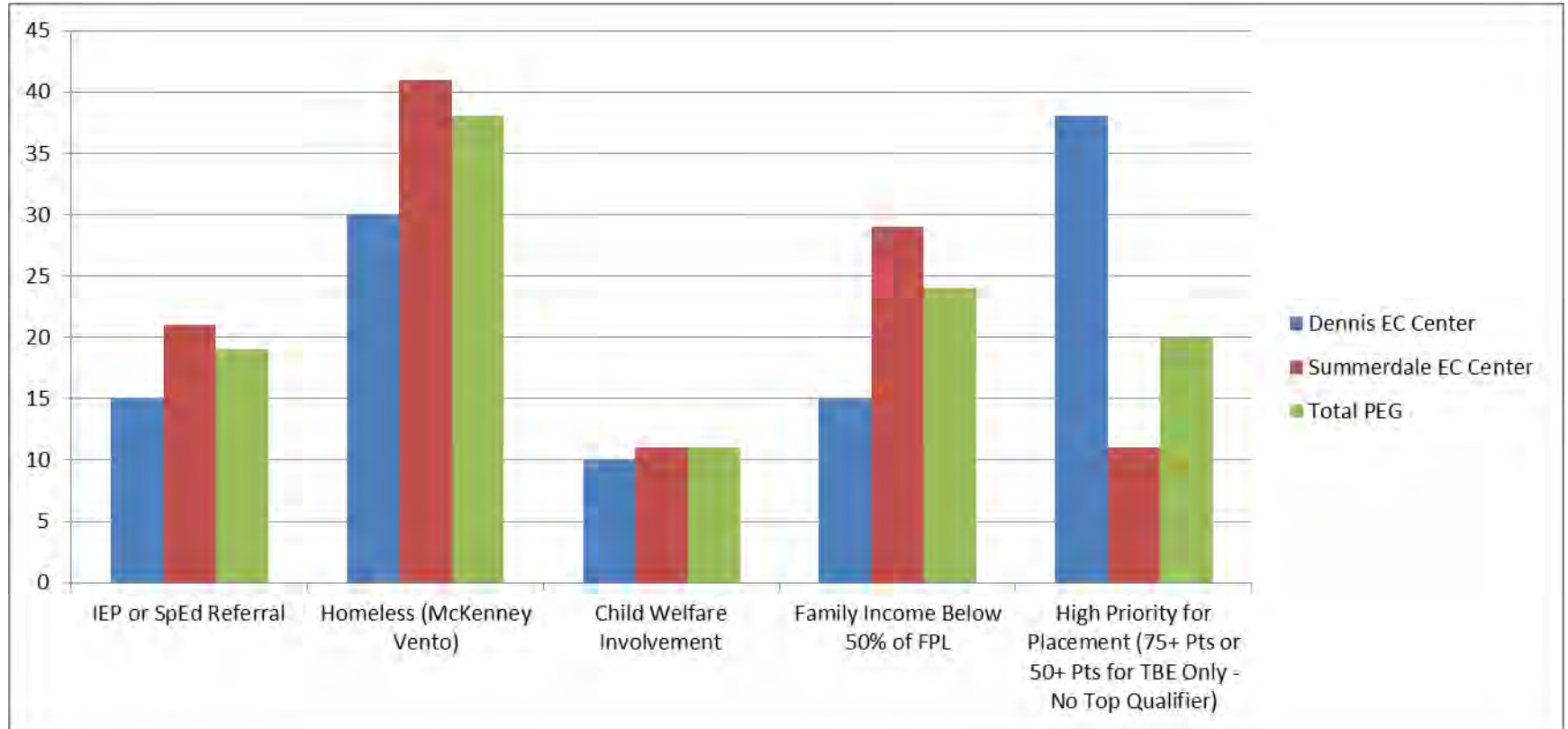


Preschool enrollment strategies

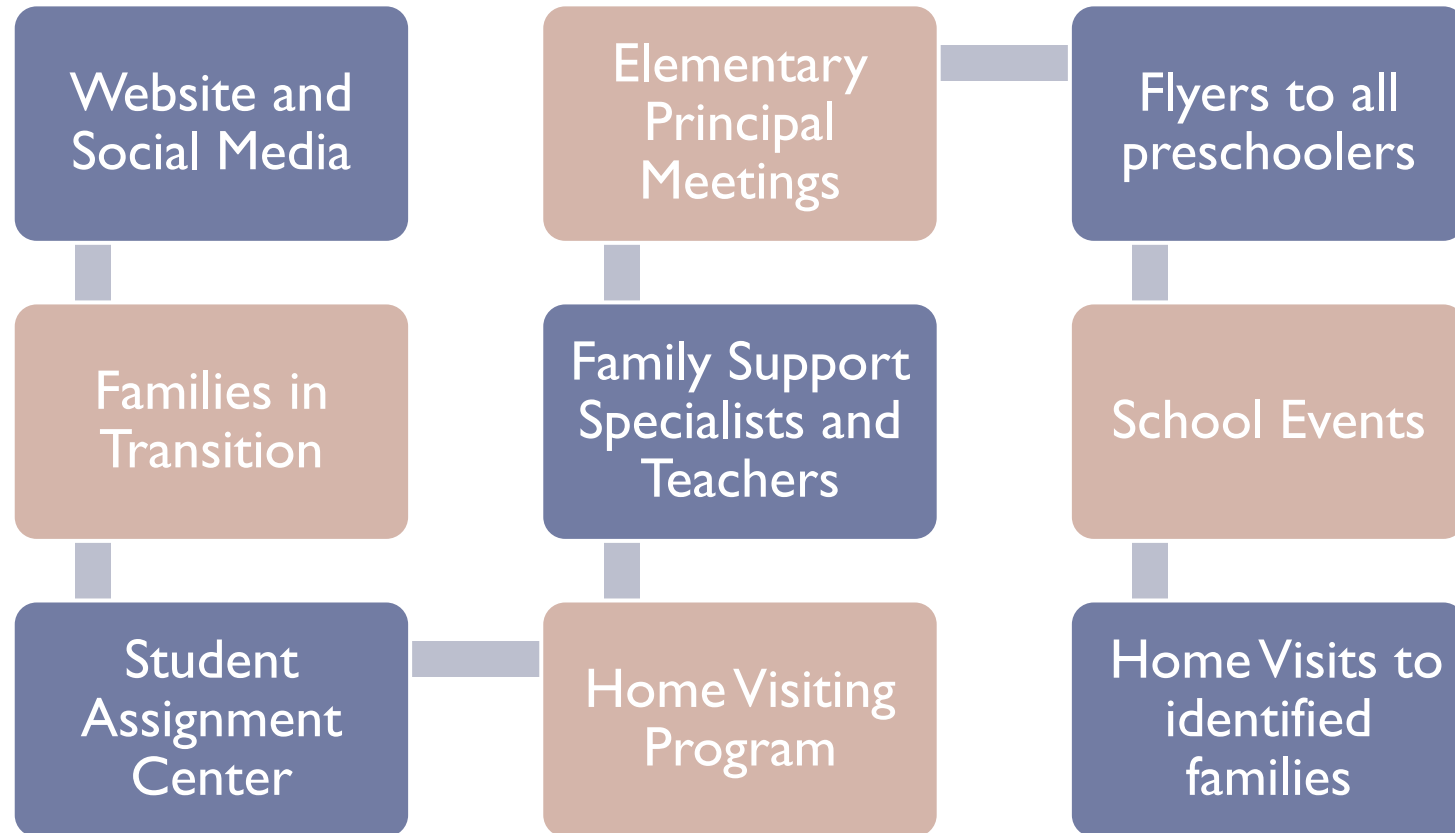
- Call the previous school/program for information about the family, including immunization and other records
 - Expedite records by working together: joint release forms
 - Ask parents about any special needs the child has
 - Ensure enrollment staff are aware of the law and procedures
 - Facilitate enrollment: include homelessness in needs assessments and priorities; put McKinney-Vento families at the top of waiting lists; provide enrollment forms on-site at shelters and motels
 - Develop joint/streamlined procedures and forms: joint intake forms; provide uninterrupted services as children move
 - Work with families and providers to meet school of origin and comparable transportation requirements appropriately for young children
 - Cross-train preschool, school, and service providers
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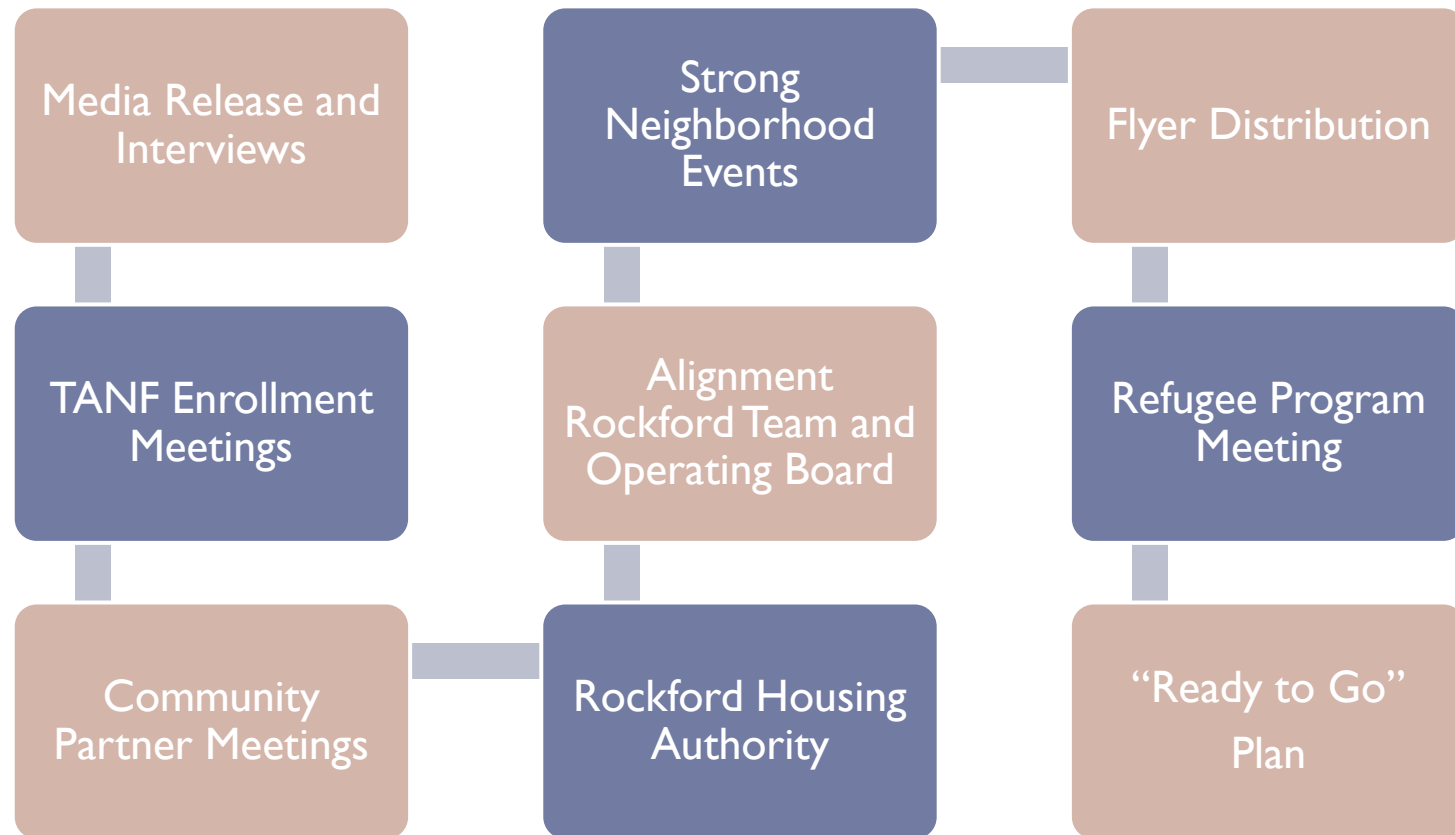
Rockford Enrollment by Priority



Internal Communication Plan



External Communication Plan



Resources

- National Center for Homeless Education
 - www.serve.org/nche
- NCHE's preschool page:
 - www.serve.org/nche/ibt/sc_preschool.php
- National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)
 - www.naehcy.org



Additional Resources

- **Most Frequently Asked Questions**

- http://www.naehcy.org/dl/naehcy_faq.pdf

- **Project HOPE's publications page:**

- <http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/infobrief.html>

- *Helping Young Children Grow & Learn: A Guide for Families & Shelter Providers*

- *Using the Best That We Know: Supporting Young Children Experiencing Homelessness*

- *Unlocking Potential! What Families and Shelters Need to Know About Homelessness and Special Education 2003*

- **History of McKinney-Vento**

- <http://web.archive.org/web/20071203073025/http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/McKinney.pdf>



Questions?

cbires@ounceofprevention.org
vhodges@isbe.net

Teresa.fillers@rps205.com
nelsonki@rps205.com