



HORIZONS FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN

*4th Young Children Without Homes National Conference
June 15th-16th 2009*

WORKSHOPS: Monday Morning, 10:15am – 12:15pm

Reaching the Youngest Homeless Children with the Parent-Child Home Program

Sara Benjamin, M.A., Teacher Liaison, Eastern Suffolk BOCES, Riverhead, NY

Most homeless families have little or no access to preschool education for their youngest children. Research shows that the early years are crucial for later school success. The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) is a research –proven home visiting model that has been successful in addressing this need. PCHP prepares young children for school success by increasing language and literacy skills and enhancing social-emotional development and strengthening the parent-child relationship. This session will offer practical guidance for replication of the program model as well as theoretic support for its success.

Planning and Implementing a Family Centered Wellness Program

Loretta Brady PhD, Clinical Psychologist and Assistant Professor, St Anselm College, **Catherine Kuhn PhD**, Director of Research and Training, **Becky Hadley MED**, Youth Coordinator, Families in Transition, Manchester, NH

This presentation will describe the planning and implementation of an innovative pilot program designed to address the needs of homeless families suffering from co-occurring trauma and addiction disorders. The presentation will focus on the importance of incorporating child and family wellness into head-of-household treatment plans.

Early Childhood Education and Learning through the Arts; a look into Children's Museum of Manhattan Shelter Program with Homes for the Homeless

Leslie Bushara BFA, Deputy Director of Education and Guest Services, The Children's Museum of Manhattan, **Kelli Peterman B.A.**, Development Associate, Homes for the Homeless, New York, NY

The *Shelter Program*, a partnership with the Children's Museum of Manhattan and Homes for the Homeless (HFH), is an intensive family-based learning program serving single mothers and their children living in the transitional Clinton Family Inn, located in New York City. This presentation will give service providers the tools they need to partner with local cultural institutions for unique programming opportunities.

Social Security Benefits for Homeless Children with Disabilities or Chronic Illness – Getting through the SSI Maze

Clare Deucher, Statewide HIV/Homeless Liaison, Disability Determination Services, **Gail Havelick**, Statewide Training and Policy Specialist, Department of Public Health, Boston, MA
Many children who are homeless are eligible for Social Security financial benefits and medical insurance. Presenters will offer clear and concise explanations of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability benefit program and how to effectively access benefits. This workshop will address the eligibility factors and medical documentation required for children, and important tips during the disability application process for children who are homeless.

Healthcare for Homeless Children 101: an Outline for the Non-Healthcare Provider

Robert Gamble FNP, MSN, Family Nurse Practitioner, **Mary Smith FNP, MSN**, Family Nurse Practitioner, Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program, Family Team, Boston, MA

Homeless children experience a range of health issues that are caused by or made more complicated by their experience of homelessness. This presentation will help service providers working with homeless children to understand some of the more common issues, and offer strategies for treating conditions and promoting healthy living.

Accessing Early Childhood Education: McKinney-Vento 101

Barbara Duffield, Policy Director, National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY), **Eric Tars**, Children and Youth Attorney, National Law Center of Homelessness and Poverty, Washington, D.C.

Homeless children, including pre-school children, have the right to a free, appropriate public education. This session will provide a basic overview of Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Selected parts of the Title I statute will also be discussed. Presenters will offer concrete strategies for advocacy and implementation.

The Elephant in the Living Room – Breaking the Intergenerational Cycle of Homelessness

Patricia Morgan, Executive Director, Partners for the Homeless, Memphis, TN

This presentation draws from recent research on the prenatal and/or on-going effects on infants and children of maternal substance abuse, domestic violence and other environmental toxins that so often lead to mental health issues for youth and predispose many of them to homelessness as adults.

The Impact of Trauma on Young Children

Sharon Adams M.A., Technical Assistance Specialist, Head Start Quality Initiative, UMASS Donahue Institute, New Haven, CT, **Jeanne Burkes B.Sc.**, Technical Assistance Specialist, Head Start Quality Initiative, UMASS Donahue Institute, Somerville, MA

This hands-on workshop will examine the effects of trauma on young children. Participants will learn to identify the signs of stress in children, strategies for working with children experiencing stress and ideas for supporting parents to support their children.

Children’s Voices: Stories behind “No Place at the Table”

Phyllis J. Agness, PhD, Professor, Indiana University-Purdue University, Fort Wayne, IN

This is an opportunity to hear the actual voices of homeless children, see their pictures, and learn their stories. The presentation will expand upon the stories in the book “No Place at the Table” and will allow caring professionals to develop appropriate methods of responding to the voices of the children they serve.

The Visible Child Initiative: Elevating the Needs of Infants and Toddlers in Supportive Housing

Sharon Henry-Blythe, Director of Children and Family Policy and Research, Family Supportive Housing Center, LLC, St. Paul, MN **Kim Skobba, PhD**, Non-Profit Research Consultant, Hudson, WI

The Minnesota Supportive Housing Provider Group identified the need to become more intentional about supporting families with infants and toddlers. This presentation describes a community driven research model that helped organizations learn from families and staff and guided them in designing services that support families with very young children who have experienced homelessness.

Horizons for Homeless Children Site Visit

Sarah Fujiwara, M.Ed, Chief Programs Officer, Horizons for Homeless Children, Roxbury, MA
Horizons for Homeless Children will host a site visit to one of our Community Children’s Centers and a Playspace to give participants an overview of each of these program models. Each site visit will last approximately 2 hours and will include a tour of infant, toddler and preschool classrooms in a CCC and a Playspace in a Boston area shelter. Transportation will be provided.

WORKSHOPS: Monday Afternoon, 2:45pm – 4:30pm

Empowering Homeless Latino Families

Carolina Gonzalez, LICSW, Family Therapist and Trainer, **Cristina Pachano, LMHC**, Family Therapist and Trainer, The Family Center, Somerville, MA

An experiential and dialogue based workshop that will inform participants regarding: the importance of family, compassion, and cultural influence. How to use Latin American/Latino values and cultural sensitivity to foster greater integration in U.S. culture? Help workers develop a greater awareness of the need for teaching/coaching Latino families around using resources and becoming proactive in addressing homelessness.

Creating Trauma-Informed Service Settings for Children Experiencing Homelessness

Kathleen Guarino, LMHC, Project Manager, **Katherine Volk, M.A.**, Director of Training, National Center on Family Homelessness, Newton, MA

What does it mean to create trauma-informed services and systems for children who are homeless? How can we take trauma-informed theory and turn it into concrete ways to improve our work? Workshop participants will learn how the National Center on Family Homelessness' *Trauma-Informed Organizational Self-Assessment* helps programs answer these questions.

Parenting in Transition – Strategies to Support Homeless Families with Young Children

Grace Harris, MFT, M.A., Marriage and Family Therapist, **Robin Bowen, M.A.**, California Parenting Institute, Santa Rosa, CA

Families experiencing homelessness face multiple challenges. This workshop will advocate for parent support services in homeless shelters and other transitional programs. Effective parenting strategies can develop greater confidence in parents and can reduce the incidence of anxiety and depression in young children.

Designing Parenting Programs for Homeless Families: What Works?

Mary C. Herrington, LCSW, Regional Coordinator, Richmond Regional Homeless Education Program, Richmond Public Schools, Richmond, VA

This workshop is designed to assist shelter directors, case managers, child advocates, mental health professionals, and school personnel to develop a psycho educational parenting group for homeless parents. Workshop participants will gain an understanding of the basic constructs of a psycho educational model of parenting and how to adapt this model to meet the needs in various shelter environments, i.e., domestic violence shelters, emergency shelters and transitional shelters. A parenting curriculum will be available to all workshop participants.

Promoting the Voice of Consumers

Jeffrey Naylor, Community Organizer for Housing First, Homes for Families, Inc., Boston, MA
Frequently, consumer opinions and recommendations are not usually sought during the creation and implementation of programs and policies that affect them. This training introduces basic concepts in engaging consumers in organizational decision-making, advocacy and public policy. Consumer involvement models will be discussed along with tips and strategies for working with consumers.

Caring for our Littlest Ones: Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs experiencing Homelessness

Patricia A. Popp, PhD, Virginia State Coordinator, Project HOPE-Virginia, Williamsburg, VA
Diana Bowman, Director, National Center on Homeless Education, Greensboro, NC

Families with young children are the fastest growing subgroup experiencing homelessness. While disabilities are significant, identifying and serving these children holds many challenges. This session will highlight how the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and

McKinney-Vento can work hand-in-hand by identifying legislative requirements and recent implementation and policy initiatives.

Medical Care in Shelters: Challenges Specific to the Children we serve

Dr. Elizabeth Vinton, MD, Dr. Deborah Blazey-Martin, MD, Women of Means Inc, Wellesley, MA

This workshop will review the impact of homelessness and shelter life on the health of young children and families, using cases from the presenters own clinical experience. The workshop will also give guidance for other professionals working with homeless children on when to call for help and how to prevent medical crises.

Domestic Violence and Homelessness – Its Impact on the Behavioral Health of Young Children and Families

Keiko Mizuguchi, M.A., LMHC, Linda Smith, M.A., ATR-BC, LMHC, Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program, Boston, MA

This presentation will focus on developing an understanding of the issues of domestic violence and resulting homelessness and its impact on young children and family systems. Behavioral health assessment, interventions and strategies for building health coping skills for children and families will be discussed. Case presentations will be shared to highlight specific interventions utilized (including family therapy, expressive therapy and play therapy) to help children and their families cope with trauma.

Self-Awareness and Self-Care: Preventing Burnout for the Caregiver working with Homeless Families

Ann Marie Teuber, M.A., LMFT, Director of the Parenting Journey Program, **Delores Reyes, B.S.**, Lead Parenting Journey Trainer, The Family Center, Somerville, MA

Attendees will understand and experience how important their own self-awareness, inner strength and self-care is to the overall health and effectiveness of their work life. Participants will learn to improve skills and practices that foster self-care in themselves and others—meditation, journal writing, physical stretching, rituals and more.

Looking at Curriculum through a Child’s Heart, Hands, and Head: Activities which Promote Development and Resilience in Young Homeless Children

Daryl-Ann Lewis, Director, **Kate List**, Preschool Teacher, **Meghan Wilson**, Preschool Teacher, Schoen Family Community Children’s Center, **Ida Yee Koo**, Infant/Toddler Teacher, Putnam Investments Community Children’s Center, **Cheryl Horney**, Infant/Toddler Teacher, Edgerley Family Community Children’s Center, Horizons for Homeless Children, Roxbury, MA

This hands-on workshop will provide an overview of the typical neurological process involved in sensory stimulation as well as the importance of sensory development for young homeless children especially. We will include tools, techniques and tips for incorporating sensory experiences in the classroom environment to help children strengthen relationships and create a sense of belonging. Participants will identify key elements for curriculum inclusion which are needed to stimulate homeless children’s healthy development in a safe and creative way.

How High Quality Early Childhood Education Anchors Support Services for Families Experiencing Homelessness

Dr. Jaime Temez, PhD, Cuidando Los Niños, Albuquerque, NM

For 20 years Cuidando Los Niños (CLN) has been providing high quality licensed child care, accredited preschool and support services for families experiencing homelessness. This workshop will focus on the systemic approach implemented by CLN utilizing the “Continuum of Well Being” which addresses the various causes of family homelessness and supports the entire family unit.

WORKSHOPS: Tuesday morning, 10:15am – 12:15am

Why does he do that? Helping Parents understand their Child's Behavior

Susan Minear, MD, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Boston Medical Center and Boston Healthcare for the Homeless, **Carmen Norona, MsED**, Boston Medical Center, Boston, MA
Many parents have concerns about their child's behavior. Concerns may create stress within family systems and even injure the parent-child relationship, especially within homeless families. This workshop will explore common concerns raised by parents of homeless children birth to five years and address ways to respond from a relational perspective.

HEAR US - Tools for Awareness Raising

Diane Nilan, President, HEAR US Inc., Naperville, IL
Using *My Own Four Walls*, the unique video glimpse of non-urban homelessness, participants will generate ideas and action plans to raise awareness and develop support for the reauthorization of McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act and/or other homelessness policy issues.

Schools on Wheels of Massachusetts Preschool and Family Read-Aloud Programs

Cheryl Opper, B.S., Founder and Executive Director, **Joanna Channell, B.A.**, Program Director, School on Wheels of MA, Brockton, MA
Learn about School on Wheels of Massachusetts' programs designed for young children and families experiencing homelessness including one-on-one tutoring, small group sessions, and a Family Read-Aloud Program for young children and families living in shelter. Participants will receive a program handbook and learn how to create programs to engage young children and parents.

Guiding Young Homeless Children's Development and Learning through Motor Skills

Sandra Putnam-Franklin B.S., M.Ed., Senior Early Childhood Specialist, Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts, Boston, MA
Physical development is critical to young children's development and learning. Building the large and small muscles has lifelong importance foundational to reading and writing as well as brain development, balance, and body control. Participants will receive information on the educational and developmental importance of gross and fine motor skills, and activities, materials, and equipment to build skills. The workshop will also address the unique challenges presented by homelessness, including lack of appropriate space and equipment. Participants will have the opportunity to actively explore low-cost activities and materials.

Findings from "America's Youngest Outcasts: State Report Card on Child Homelessness"

Christina Jordan, Senior Policy Manager, **Katherine Volk, M.A.**, Director of Training, National Center on Family Homelessness, Newton, MA
America's Youngest Outcasts: State Report on Child Homelessness offers a comprehensive snapshot of child homelessness in the US, describing extent, child well-being, structural risk factors, and policy and planning efforts in every state. Learn about the findings, discuss the implications, and hear about efforts to end child homelessness.

Aligning Housing and Early Education Policy to Help Young Homeless Children

Jeremy Rosen, J.D., Executive Director, National Policy and Advocacy Council on Homelessness, Washington, D.C., **Barbara Duffield**, Policy Director, National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, Washington, D.C., **Joe Willard, M.S.**, People's Emergency Center, Philadelphia, PA
Learn about successful national and regional advocacy efforts to impact federal policy for young children experiencing homelessness and their families. Brief presentations on housing /

homelessness policy – including the definition of homelessness, early education policy, and regional organizing will be followed by a group discussion of ways to engage with these important movements.

Medical-Legal Partnership: A Prescription for Homelessness Prevention

Tibrine da Fonseca, B.A., Housing Paralegal, Medical-Legal Partnership for Children, Boston Medical Center, *Dr. Kathleen Conroy, M.D.*, Fellow in Pediatrics, Boston Medical Center, Boston, MA

Why does homelessness matter to pediatricians? What can legal advocacy do to prevent homelessness? How can doctors and lawyers collaborate so families' can maximize access to the basic needs that promote housing stability? Answers to these questions will equip participants to leverage MLP principles and practices on behalf children confronting homelessness.

Working with Homeless Teen Parents

Nina Dickerman, M.S., Parent Educator, Families First Parenting Programs, Cambridge, MA
Being a parent is a difficult job for every adult, but teen parents face even greater challenges as they continue to grow up with their children. Participants in this workshop will learn the typical cognitive and social developmental trajectory for adolescents and then discuss how this process is made even more complicated when a teen becomes a parent. Participants will also learn strategies to overcome these challenges when working with teen parents and review relevant web and book resources to share with teen parents.

The Highland Scholar's Project: Improving Educational Outcomes through Housing Stability

Robyn Frost, Executive Director, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Lynn, MA, *Dr. Claire Crane*, Principal, Robert L. Ford School, 49 Hollingsworth St., Lynn, MA

This workshop will present an overview of the Highlands Scholar's Project, attaching subsidized housing and housing stability from to a child's education (from pre K to third grade). The goals of this project are to reduce student mobility and absenteeism, increase student educational achievement, enhance parent involvement in their children's education and assist parents to achieve economic self-sufficiency.

WORKSHOPS: Tuesday Afternoon, 2:15pm – 4:00pm

What About You? Tools to Promote Self-Care and Prevent Burnout

Katie Volk, M.A., Director of Training, *Kathleen Guarino, LMHC*, Project Manager/Trauma Specialist, National Center on Family Homelessness, Newton, MA

Working in the 'helping' professions often means that our work is emotionally intensive and resource-scarce. What is the impact of this on our day-to-day well-being? Learn how to build awareness, avoid pitfalls, find inspiration, and find time to foster healthy and sustainable work environments for you and your team.

REACHing Parents of Homeless Kids

Diane Nilan, President, HEAR US Inc., Naperville, IL

Children frequently become homeless when parents go to jail. Too often children are not considered homeless, and their education becomes unnecessarily disrupted because of homelessness. REACH, a new program of HEAR US, guides incarcerated parents (and those who work with them) to advocate for children's McKinney-Vento homeless education rights.

A Collaborative Strength-Based Approach to Working with Homeless Children and their families: The Community Children's Centers Model and Best Practices

Horizons for Homeless Children Staff

The directors and family advocates from Horizons for Homeless Children centers will share their experience in working with families to support the needs of young homeless children. Our panel

discussion will include; utilization of a strength-based approach to work with families, networking with shelters and other community resources, and the elements needed in providing quality child care and education that meets the special needs of the families without homes. Participants will be provided an opportunity to work in small groups to engage in more in-depth conversation with the facilitator's around one of the model's major components.

The Importance of Play in Family Shelters

Sarah Fujiwara M.Ed., Chief Programs Officer, Horizons for Homeless Children, Roxbury, MA
Minnie Walker, Bright Horizons Bright Spaces Project Manager, **Karin Weaver**, National Director of Bright Spaces, Bright Horizons Foundation for Children, Nashville, TN
HHC and Bright Horizons create playrooms in family shelters. These programs provide homeless children with the opportunities to learn and grow through play. The two models implemented by Horizons for Homeless Children and Bright Horizons Foundation for Children will be presented. Both models respond to the specific needs of children and families in the shelters. This workshop is geared to shelter providers, early childhood educators, administrators and all others who are interested in responding to the needs of homeless children.

Opening the Door to Early Education and Care for Homeless Children: A National Policy Model

Brad Kramer, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Horizons for Homeless Children, Roxbury, MA
Massachusetts policymakers will discuss a new policy under which homeless children living in shelter have immediate access to subsidized early education and care, a potential model for other states.

Connecting the Dots - Rationale behind the Current Policies, Funding Streams and State Mandates

Ann Reale, Former Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, Boston, MA

Do you ever wonder if all your hard work could make even more of a difference? Do you think connecting the dots across multiple programs and agencies would help? Learn more about sustainable, system-building solutions, drawing on real examples from the first years of the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

Use of Language and Health Literacy Strategies with Families Who are Homeless

Therese M. O'Neil-Pirozzi, ScD, CCC-SLP, SLP Graduate Program Director and Assistant Professor, Northeastern University, Boston, MA

Family homelessness is associated with reduced language literacy, health literacy, and health. This presentation will review preschool-aged children's risks for decreased language literacy and health and parents' risks for decreased language and health literacy and health. Language and health literacy strategies to facilitate child language literacy and health outcomes will be presented.

Rebuilding with Books

Angie Miles, M.Ed., Literacy Consultant, HAPPY Programs (Home Advantage with Parents as Partners for Youth), Ashland, VA

Family literacy is a simple, enjoyable way to help families reconnect with the world and to strengthen the love they have for each other. Affirming or beginning good habits with literacy during this challenging time in their lives pays dividends for years to come.

Where do we go from here?

Libby Hayes, Executive Director, Homes for Families, Boston, MA **Shirley Fan-Chan**, Chief of External Programs, **Andrea Urbano**, Director of Center Based Programs, Horizons for Homeless Children, Roxbury, MA

For many years, we have been sharing lessons from our work with homeless young children with other people and organizations across the country. However, we know that more work needs to

be done. What can we, who have been involved with work serving homeless families and their children, do to raise awareness and ultimately stop the national crisis of homeless young children?

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