Understanding Dropout Prevention

Strategies to support homeless children and youth

Meet the National Centers

- **National Center for Homeless Education**
  - http://nche.ed.gov
  - homeless@serve.org
  - 800-308-2145
- **National Dropout Prevention Center**
  - http://dropoutprevention.org/
  - (864) 656-2599

Meet Your Presenter

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About NCHE

- NCHE operates the U.S. Department of Education's technical assistance center for the federal Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program

  - Website: http://nche.ed.gov

  - Helpline: 800-308-2145 or homeless@serve.org

  - Products: http://nche.ed.gov/products.php

  - Webinars: http://nche.ed.gov/web/group.php

  - Listserv: http://nche.ed.gov/listserv.php

About NDPC

- The mission of the National Dropout Prevention Center is to increase graduation rates through research and evidence-based solutions.

  - Customized support services (DPI)

  - Conferences, Forums and Events

  - Webcasts

  - Research

  - Website

  - Strategic Partnerships

  - Member Services

  - Print (issue briefs, position papers, products for sale, newsletter)

    - http://dropoutprevention.org/

Outline

- Context Setting
  - Understanding Family and Youth Homelessness
- Definition of McKinney-Vento Homeless
- Dropout Prevention
  - 15 Effective Strategies
- Supports for Homeless Students

The Preventive Value Of Education

- Children in quality preschool programs are more likely to graduate from high school and own homes

- High school graduation is associated with an array of positive live outcomes (⇩ unemployment, ⇩ criminal justice involvement, ⇧ income, ⇧ health outcomes, ⇧ life span)

- 95%+ of the jobs created since the Great Recession have gone to workers with at least some post-secondary education

Economics Of High School Dropouts

- Earn less

- Pay less in taxes

- Rely more on public health

- More involved in criminal justice system

- More likely to use welfare services

- Have shorter life expectancy

The Preventive Value Of Education

Particular subpopulations are at higher risk for homelessness

346%
Youth with less than a high school diploma or GED had a 346% higher risk

162%
Youth reporting annual household income of less than $24,000 had a 162% higher risk

83%
Black or African American youth had an 83% higher risk

120%
LGBT youth had a 120% higher risk

33%
Hispanic, non-White youth had a 33% higher risk

200%
Unmarried parenting youth had a 200% higher risk

Findings from Voices of Youth Count, an initiative of Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago | voicesofyouthcount.org

Focus: Preventing Dropouts

Dropouts aren't qualified or eligible for 90% of all jobs.

The High Cost of Dropout – Medical

Cutting the number of high school dropouts in half nationally would save $7.3 billion in annual Medicaid spending — looking at overall spending and particularly spending on four key afflictions:

- Alcoholism
- Heart Disease
- Obesity
- Smoking

College graduates have better health, and lower medical costs, than high school graduates, while high school graduates have better health, and lower medical costs, than high school dropouts.

On average, a high school graduate lives six to nine years longer than a high school dropout.

Economics of High School Dropouts

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(Rotermund, *California Dropout Research Project*, Statistical Brief 5, September 2007)

Which Of These Students Will Dropout?

Has not passed math for 2 consecutive years

New to community. Family has moved three times this school year

Absent from school 22 days last school year

Averages 15 office referrals/year for disruptive behavior

Homelessness Creates Barriers

- Students experiencing homelessness may

  - Be unable to meet standard school enrollment requirements.

  - Move around and change schools a lot.

  - Be hungry, tired, and stressed.

  - Not have school supplies or a quiet place to study.

  - Not have access to reliable transportation

  - Not have a parent or guardian to help them (unaccompanied youth)

Homelessness Impacts Education

- Students experiencing homelessness are more likely to:
  - Be chronically absent from school
  - Get lower grades
  - Have special education needs
  - Score poorly on assessment tests
  - Drop out of school

Homelessness Impacts Education

- High mobility and its trickle-down effects
- Higher than average rates of:
  - Emotional, behavioral, and health problems
  - Developmental delays and school problems
  - Hunger and food insecurity
  - Witnessing violence
- Correlation between adverse childhood experiences and experiencing homelessness as an adult
- Difficulty in school

Educational Challenges

- Homeless students face unique educational challenges including:

  - Developmental issues, especially for younger children (toxic stress interfering with development, disproportionate rates of special education needs)

  - Financial issues (struggles to meet basic needs and purchase school supplies)

  - Logistical issues (often lack an appropriate study space and needed materials, high mobility, missing documentation)

Understanding Family Homelessness

- Common causes of family homelessness

  - Economic challenges (lack of affordable housing, poverty, unemployment/underemployment, single parenting/single income)

  - Health challenges (disabilities, mental health issues, substance abuse)

  - Domestic violence

Understanding Youth Homelessness

- Common causes of youth homelessness

  - Abuse or neglect

  - Acute conflict (pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, blended family issues, substance abuse)

  - Economic challenges (pressure for older children to be financially independent)

  - Shelter policies (lack of space for whole family, adolescent boys sent to adult shelters)

Understanding The Homeless Definition

- Shelters often are not an option
  - Not all communities have shelters
  - Shelter demand often exceeds supply (no space available)
  - Families and youth may avoid entering shelter due to concerns regarding safety and the shelter environment
  - Shelter policies (no adolescent boys, stay limits, curfews, etc.)
- Shared housing arrangements often are unsustainable or are offered by unscrupulous hosts

McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless

- Children or youth who **lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence**, including children and youth:
  - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
  - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
  - Living in emergency or transitional shelters, or are abandoned in hospitals

McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless

- Living in 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
- Migratory children living in the above circumstances

42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)

- The term *unaccompanied youth* includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian

42 U.S.C. § 11434a(6)

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

1. Student's living arrangement must meet the definition of homeless, **AND**
2. Student must be considered *unaccompanied*, defined as "not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian"

NCHE's *Unaccompanied Youth Eligibility Flowchart*

https://www.google.com/url?q=https://nche.ed.gov/downloads/toolkit2/app9a.doc&sa=U&ved=0ahUKEwjw4cbi78rWAhUSK1AKHYD7AKMQFggEMAA&client=internal-udscse&usg=AFQjCNHrBxZj2ijJImY57Ha_6xBjqUVDw

Wounded Students

Anger

Depression
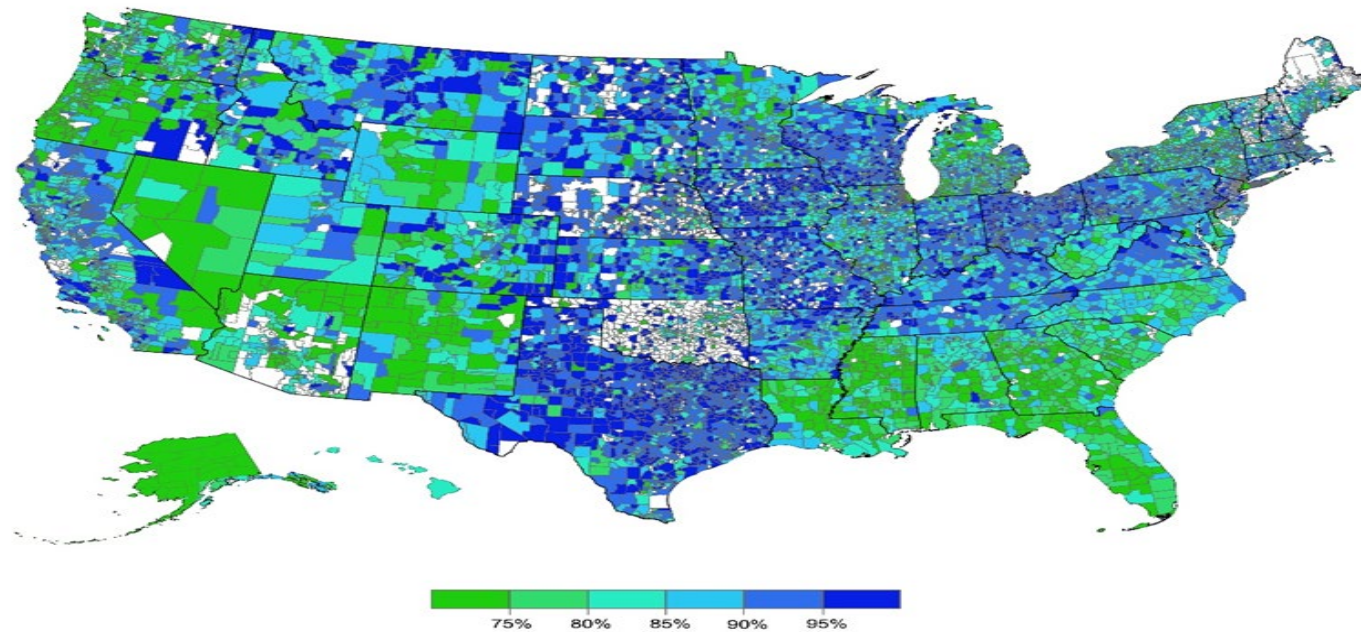
Fear

Anxiety

Isolated

Hopelessness

- Family Life/Parents
- Personal/Social Skills
- Emotional Problems
- Poor Reasoning Skills
- Lack of Support
- Negative Attitude about Self & Others
- Poor Self-Esteem
- Lack of Past Success In or Out of School

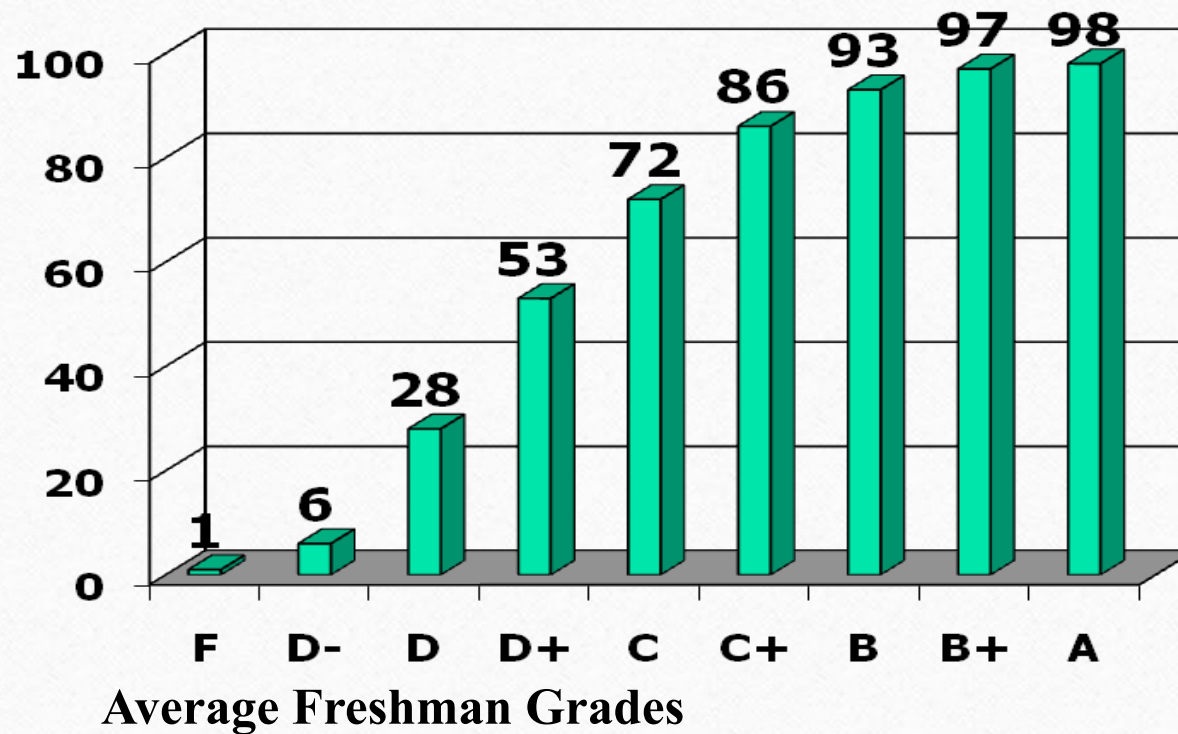# High School Graduation Rates – Nationwide

Understanding The Relationship Between Grades and Graduation

Average Freshman Grades

Grade Retention

Retention of one grade –
increases risk by 40%
Retention of two grades –
increases risk by 90%

Also note that a student suspended one time in the ninth grade is twice as likely to dropout.

(Roderick, M. PDK Research
Bulletin, No. 15, 1995)

The Dropout Pathway

Dropping out of school is the result of a long process of disengagement that may begin before a child enters school.

Push, Pull, and "Falling" Out Of School

- When adverse structures within the school environment lead to consequences, ultimately resulting in dropping out.

  - Discipline practices

  - Did not feel safe

  - Missed too much school

  - Poor grades

  - Failing

  - Could not keep up with the work

  - Did not get along with their teachers

Push, Pull, and "Falling" Out Of School

- When factors inside the student divert them from completing school.

  - May think getting a GED is easier

  - Got a job

  - Has a family to support

  - Pregnant

  - Could not go to work and school at the same time

- The student does not show significant academic progress in school and becomes apathetic. This is not necessarily an active decision but rather a side effect of insufficient persona and educational supports.

  - Did not like school

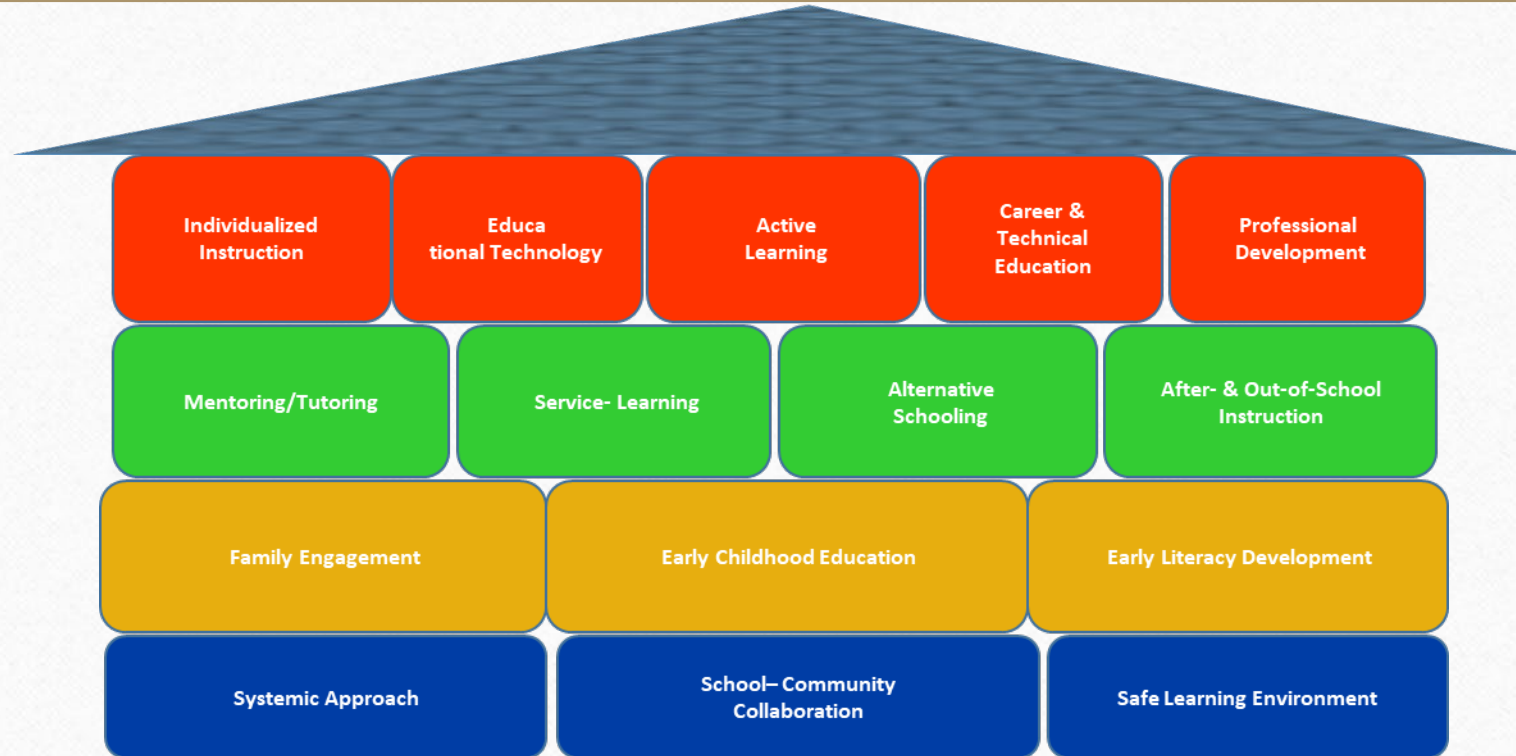 - Did not feel like they belonged at school

We Know That There Are 15 Effective Dropout Prevention Strategies

Family Engagement

Service Learning

Active Learning

School–Community Collaboration

Educational Technology

Individualized Instruction

Systemic Approach

Safe Learning Environment

Career & Technical Education

Early Childhood Education

Professional Development

Early Literacy Development

Alternative Schooling

Mentoring/ Tutoring

After- & Out-of-School Instruction

Early Literacy Development

Individualized Instruction

How Do We Select Strategies?

Strategies Must Be Strategically Selected and Applied

Organizing The 15 Effective Strategies

Basic Foundational Strategies

Systemic Approach

School– Community Collaboration

Safe Learning Environment

School Climate

- Accepting
- We want you!
- Views each child as valuable and honors potential – enough to speak their language
- Understanding -- EMPATHY
- Relational
- *"Sometimes you wanna go where everybody knows your name…"*

School Climate

- Hopeful

- Value opportunities/pathways to success for each individual

- Removal is NOT the goal

- Discipline is not terminal but restorative

  - Firm, clear -- always focus on future behavior and success

  - Not "Why?" but "What?"

Structures

- Personnel Resources
- Professional Development in various segments
- Relational Opportunities (avoid creation of "we-they")
- Managerial vs Instructional vs Developmental Imperatives

Structures

- Collaborative Structures
- Multiple Perspectives
- Utilize Community Resources
- Alternative Pathways
  - Alternative Programs
  - Academic/Therapeutic Support
  - Relational/Family Support
- Out of School Options

Organizing The 15 Effective Strategies

- **Early Interventions**

Family Engagement

Early Childhood Education

Early Literacy Development

Organizing The 15 Effective Strategies

Basic Core Strategies

| Mentoring/ Tutoring | Service-Learning | Alternative Schooling | After- & Out-of-School Instruction |

Credit Accrual And Recovery

- Homeless students face challenges in accruing credits
- Transient
- Varying factors across districts
  - Class offerings
  - Credit calculations
  - Graduation requirements
  - Seat time rules
- School policies can have a negative effect on students changing schools mid-year

Credit Accrual

- States and school districts must implement procedures to identify and remove barriers to McKinney-Vento students receiving appropriate **credit for full or partial coursework** satisfactorily completed at a prior school (42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(1)(F)(ii)

  EHCY Guidance, Question O-2

Organizing The 15 Effective Strategies

Managing and Improving Instruction

| Individualized Instruction | Educational Technology | Active Learning | Career & Technical Education | Professional Development |

How To Support Student Success

Keep students in SOO
Award partial credit
Suggest independent study, learning labs, online learning
Explore work-experience programs
Offer alternative education programs
After school classes

Opportunities to make up time and missed assignments
Saturday schools
Collaborate with community agencies to ensure basic needs are met
Create buy in
Portfolios
Address barriers – foundational pieces of dropout prevention

Q&A

Thank you!

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