



Policy#

Policy Name: Children Experiencing Homelessness

Elwyn SEEDS – Special Education for Early Developmental Success
 4040 Market Street
 Philadelphia, PA 19104

Subject: children experiencing homelessness

Effective Date: 9/1/18

Revision Date:

Prepared By: Director of Service Delivery

PURPOSE:

To ensure that children who experience any period of homelessness are able to access all aspects of preschool special education services including the evaluation process and the delivery of services required by the child's IEP

Children experiencing homelessness are defined as children:

1. Who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camp grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placements
2. Who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for ordinary use as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
3. Who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
4. Who are "migratory children" and qualify as homeless under federal law because the children are living in circumstances described above
5. Who are awaiting foster care placements in shelters, emergency foster care, transitional foster care or respite care

To provide guidance and requirements to all internal and external staff regarding Seeds expectations in ensuring access to preschool special education services for children experiencing homelessness

POLICY:

Elwyn Seeds has identified two professional staff who will serve in the role of liaison to children experiencing homelessness. Malene Green, (Malene_green@elwyn.org), will serve as the liaison and primary contact for any children experiencing homelessness who do not yet have an active IEP. Charlotte Principi, (charlotte_principi@elwyn.org), will serve as the liaison and primary contact for any children experiencing homelessness who have an active IEP. All Seeds internal and external contracted staff are expected to report any knowledge of a child experiencing homelessness to the appropriate Seeds Liaison. The Seeds Liaisons will work directly with the parents/guardians to ensure access to all appropriate activities necessary to determine eligibility for preschool special education services as well as the delivery of services outlined on the IEP during periods of homelessness as well as during the transition to temporary and permanent living situations. This coordination with families will include:

1. Acting as the primary contact for the parent/guardian and any other professionals who may also be assisting the family including DHS case managers, social workers, and shelter contacts during the time the child is experiencing homelessness
2. Communicating and coordinating with Seeds evaluation team members, Seeds service coordinators, and internal and external service providers to ensure coordination of evaluations and delivery of IEP services
3. Assisting the parent/guardian in obtaining any necessary health or immunization records, birth certificates, or any other documents required for enrollment in any community or special education programs
4. Maintain a tracking system of all children identified as experiencing homelessness to ensure that assigned service coordinators and service providers are aware of the child's status

To ensure continuity of service delivery, if an Elwyn service coordinator has already been assigned, he/she will remain the child's assigned service coordinator during any periods of homelessness or transition to temporary housing until the child is residing in a permanent living situation, regardless of the zip code location of the shelter or temporary housing. The service coordinator will also work closely with Charlotte Principi to ensure that the delivery of IEP services continues during this time. If a child is attending an early intervention center at the time he/she experiences a period of homelessness, the child should continue to attend that program, regardless of the location of the shelter or temporary housing. If the child is receiving transportation as a related service, the Elwyn Transportation Liaison should inform the District that the child is experiencing homelessness when submitting the transportation request. Every effort should also be made for the service providers to continue if services are being provided

in the community regardless of the location of the shelter or temporary housing location. Appropriate revisions to the location of service should be made to the IEP to allow the child to continue to receive special education services without interruption.

PROCEDURE:

1. The Liaisons will inform the appropriate internal and external staff that a child is experiencing homelessness within 48 hours of being informed and will share the individualized plan for each child accordingly.
2. The Liaisons will contact any shelter contacts, social workers, or DHS case managers associated with the child experiencing homelessness within 48 hours of being made aware of the child to introduce themselves as the Elwyn primary contact and to develop a plan to allow for access to services to continue during the period the child is experiencing homelessness.
3. The Liaisons will maintain a spreadsheet of all children who experience homelessness that includes appropriate contacts for the child/family including all shelter contacts, all social workers, and all DHS case managers associated with a particular child to allow for follow up. This spreadsheet should also include documentation of all temporary housing locations to ensure appropriate communication with the family, service providers and service coordinators during periods of homelessness.
4. Internal and external service providers and Seeds service coordinators will inform Charlotte Principi of all child absences for services during periods of homelessness within 24 hours of the child absence
5. Elwyn Transportation Coordinators will update transportation information to reflect the need for transportation to and from temporary housing locations and will inform the District the child is experiencing homelessness in the Notes section when submitting the request
6. Seeds service coordinators, internal, and external service providers will inform the appropriate Liaison that a child is experiencing homelessness, including any appropriate contact information, within 24 hours of being made aware so that the Liaisons can follow up with appropriate contacts
7. The Seeds evaluation team shall inform Malene Green of any no shows for evaluation appointments for children identified as experiencing homelessness within 24 hours of the date of the scheduled evaluation

Applicable Documents

Responsible Department Staff/Personnel: Service coordination, internal and external service providers

Approved By: Administration

Date Approved: 9/1/18