

10 Steps to Boosting Life Outcomes of Young Homeless Children



1. Designated Enrollment Specialists

States can use federal and/or state funds to pay the entities responsible for administering child care funding to have designated enrollment specialists who assist homeless providers and parents to enroll young children in high quality ECE programs

2. Optimize Head Start Presumptive Eligibility

States can ensure that agencies funded with federal IV-E funds (dependency funding) describe the process they are/will use to ensure that families, foster parents and kin caregivers taking care of children on the dependency caseload are aware that young children on the caseload are presumptively eligible for Head Start and encourage parents to choose Head Start programs for their young children.

3. Connect Child Welfare Resources to Boost ECE Engagement

Child Welfare Agencies can use IV-E prevention funds to designate resources to help homeless children get enrolled in high quality ECE Programs and Early Intervention Services.

4. Remove Enrollment Paperwork Barriers

States can adjust enrollment requirements so that homeless families who are likely to be missing income and related documents can self attest for missing documents.

5. Train Homeless Services Staff To Value ECE

States can use federal and or state funds to create and deliver specialized training for homeless services staff so that they understand the harmful connection between healthy early brain development and becoming homeless, and the potential that high quality ECE and effective parenting has in compensating for the harm to a child's development.

6. Create
Persuasive
Educational
Materials for
Homeless
Parents to
Choose High
Quality ECE

States can develop specialized resources that help homeless center staff help their parents understand early brain science and the benefits of high quality ECE for their child.

7. Improve Connections to Early Intervention Services

States can create systems and incentives that ensure that every homeless child under five is screened for any developmental delays. Such systems must be highly integrated with homeless service staff so the screening can occur and so that the results are communicated to parents and staff in an effective manner to promote utilization of post screening services when necessary. The costs of such screening are covered by federal Early Intervention Funds and operated via the states EPSDT systems.

8. Help
Families
Navigate
Accessing Early
Intervention
Services

States can fund Homeless Early Intervention Access Specialists who ensure that homeless families can get their children to needed developmental therapies or arrange for such therapies to be delivered in homeless service settings.

9. Get Evidence
Based Home
Visiting Services
to Every
Homeless
Family with
Young Children

States can use federal and state funds to increase the intensity of home visiting services made available to families in homeless systems.

10. Build the Will to Adopt These and Other Policies by Collecting and Releasing Data

States can issue annual reports that detail the share of children in high quality early learning programs, utilizing early intervention and receiving home visiting programs so that advocates have clear data to use to build support for policy solutions

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