



National Homeless Youth Awareness

Wake County Public School System
November 3, 2015

Homeless Children and Youth

- ∞ Each year, more than 1.6 million children are homeless at some point in their lives and that number is increasing (*The National Center on Family Homelessness*)
- ∞ North Carolina identifies 26,000-27,000 students annually (*NC Homeless Education Program*)
- ∞ In 2006, Congress approved legislation to designate November "National Homeless Youth Awareness Month" to educate the public about the many programs designed to assist youth who are living on the street or at risk of becoming homeless

The Law

- ☞ McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act originated in the 1980's
- ☞ Enacted due to the numerous barriers homeless children faced in obtaining a free, appropriate public education
- ☞ Recently reauthorized as the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act –Sec 725
- ☞ Federal Law 42 U.S.C. §11431-11435, NC 34 CFR 200.6 and Board Policy 6201.3

Funding

∞ Grant funded

- 3 year grant
- \$75,000 each year
- School supplies, Data Manager position

∞ Title 1 Set Aside Fund

- \$100,000
- Title 1 Summer School
- Afterschool Program Transportation
- Parent Involvement



Families like ours, it's not that we don't try. We penny-pinch like everybody else, we work hard, but sometimes things happen that, you know, we can't overcome ...



The Law

- ∞ Liaisons shall ensure that homeless children & youth
 - are identified
 - enroll in, have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in school
 - receive educational services for which such families, children and youth are eligible
 - parents/guardians/caregivers are informed of the educational opportunities available & their rights



Support

- ☞ District Liaison
- ☞ Student Information Data Manager
- ☞ School Liaisons
 - School Social Workers
 - SAP Counselors



People think that they don't see the homeless every day, but you do see them when they are ringing you up at a restaurant, store or sitting next to you in the office.

Eligibility

- ☞ Students who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence

- ☞ Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing
 - Living in hotels, motels due to loss of housing (ex. eviction)
 - Shelters or transitional housing programs
 - Living in cars, parks or similar setting



Eligibility

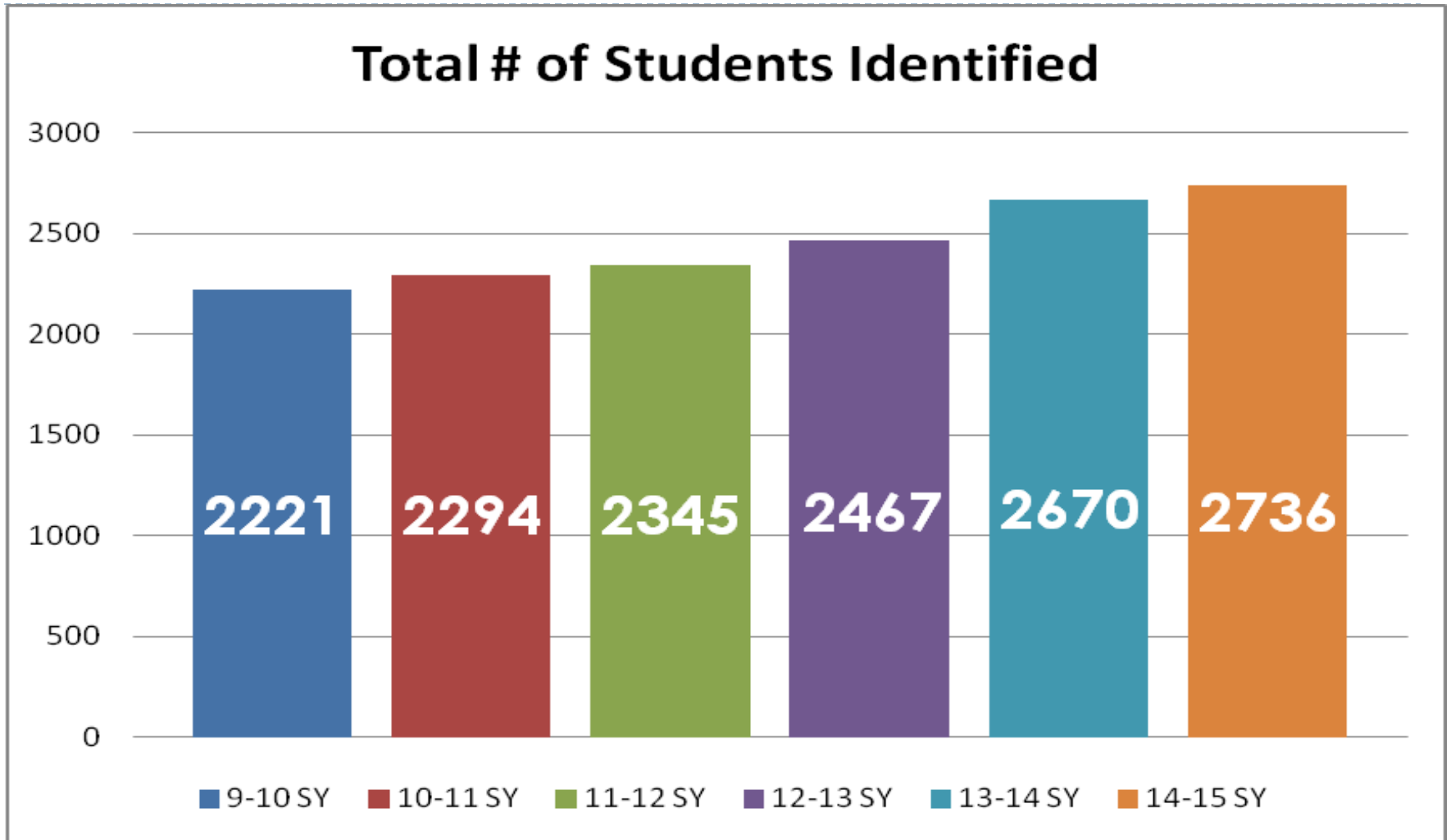
∞ Identification

- Posters displayed in schools (mandated)
- Questionnaire included in the enrollment packet
- Training of district staff
- School staff referrals
- Parent/Guardian/Caregiver referrals
- Disclosure upon investigating other issues (ex. non-attendance)



Schools have tremendous potential to stabilize the otherwise chaotic lives of many of these children.

WCPSS Data



WCPSS Data 2014-2015 SY

Grade	MV Students	Grade	MV Students
PreK	38	6	205
K	257	7	191
1	256	8	236
2	252	9	251
3	234	10	132
4	203	11	115
5	222	12	144

Student Profile

- 4x as sick as other children
- 2x the rate of hunger than other children
- 3x the rate of emotional & behavior problems
- 83% exposed at least 1 serious violent event
- 25% witnessed violence within their family
- 4x as likely to show delayed development
- 2x as likely to have learning disabilities



Kids who are homeless may act out and need a second chance, prompting administrators to rethink zero-tolerance policies.

"These are not bad kids. They are traumatized kids."

Student Profile

- Score lower on standardized tests
- 4-6 months to recover academically after changing schools
- Less likely to participate in extracurricular activities
- Likely to act out or get into trouble
- Diminished likelihood of graduation
- Frequent absences & tardies
- Lack of supplies, space in shelters
- Distractions





SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN TRANSITION

Supporting Students in Transition

∞ Schools provide:

- Academics
- First Aid at the nurse's office
- Social/emotional support by the school social worker/counselor
- College and career planning
- Breakfast and lunch
- Daytime shelter
- After school programming
- Referral to outside resources
- Showers and washing machines
- Opportunity for positive social interaction
- Lockers
- Library and internet connection

Supporting Students in Transition

- Free breakfast and lunch
- School choice: attendance area school or school of origin
- Transportation to and from school of origin (unfunded mandate)
- Immediate enrollment (includes actively participating in classes)
- Access to all academic opportunities as any other student (ex. Special Education Services)



“If a child leaves school two-three times a year, he or she can end up being a year behind.” Under McKinney-Vento, the school district should make every effort to keep the child in the same school.

Supporting Students in Transition

- Participating in WCPSS Title 1 Summer School even if attending a non-Title 1 school
- Access to YMCA summer programming
- Access to afterschool programs
- Note in the Pocket clothing referrals
- Parent workshops 4x per year in collaboration with CATCH (Community Action Targeting Children who are Homeless)



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COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Student Success

“...Through it all, school is probably the only thing that has kept me going. I know that every day that I walk in those doors, I can stop thinking about my problems for the next six hours and concentrate on what is most important to me. Without the support of my school system, I would not be as well off as I am today. School keeps me motivated to move on, and encourages me to find a better life for myself.”

~ Former Student in Transition

Counseling & Student Services

School Social Work

McKinney-Vento Program

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QUESTIONS?