



Tips for School Nurses Who Work With Students Who Are Homeless

You Can Support the Success of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness During the School Year

- Be familiar with common characteristics of children who are homeless so you can recognize them. Common signals are attendance at several schools, poor hygiene, transportation problems and poor health and nutrition.
- Verify immunization records and, if needed, refer the student to the local health department.
- Observe and alert the principal to any serious medical concern.
- Ask about eye glasses; the student may need them but not have a pair.
- Make sure the child enrolls in the free and reduced-price meal programs.
- Assist parents with completion of medical records.
- Remember that sending a sick child "home" may not be a safe or stable place for a child who is experiencing homelessness. Help families determine options for their children, if they get ill during the day.
- Contact the Title I Homeless Program so that additional services can be coordinated.
- Develop reliable, accessible resources for medical, dental and eye care.
- Sponsor a health night or set up a health display for conference night/day.
- Show that you care about the student!

Adapted from the Illinois, North Carolina, Texas and Virginia Departments of Education and the National Center for Homeless Education documents- 2007