

An Introduction to Homelessness in Early Childhood



Participant's Workbook
2021

Preface

Basic Knowledge Curriculum – Early Childhood

This curriculum has been designed to give child care and early learning professionals foundational knowledge to be successful when caring for children. The information presented in the curriculum is for all professionals working in family or center-based child care and early learning programs. This basic information about concepts and skills is ideal for an entry-level staff member, but may also be beneficial for more seasoned professionals as a “refresher course.” The entire Basic Knowledge Curriculum – Early Childhood curriculum is 36 clock hours and consists of 18 sessions trainings meeting *Core Competencies for Early Childhood and Youth Development Professionals (Kansas and Missouri)* (Levels 1 and 2) and Child Development Associate Credential content areas. Participants can complete these trainings in any order. All sessions are offered by Child Care Aware® of Missouri through a local child care resource and referral agency.

For additional information about this curriculum series contact:

Child Care Aware® of Missouri 1-800-200-9017

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Learning Objectives

At the end of the training, participants will be able to:

1. Define homelessness.
2. Name three causes of homelessness.
3. List three effects of homelessness on children.

*These objectives relate directly to the pre and post assessment.

The training will meet the requirements of the *Core Competencies for Early Childhood and Youth Development Professionals* (Kansas and Missouri) and the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) in the following content areas:

CDA	1. Maintaining a commitment to professionalism	
Core Competencies for Early Childhood and Youth Development Professionals (Kansas and Missouri)	IV. Families and Communities 3. Building Partnerships with Communities	
	Level 2:	a. Identifies the larger community context in which children, youth and families live.

Agenda

Homelessness 101: Defining Homelessness in Early Childhood

Welcome.....	10 minutes
Shared Agreements	
Review Objectives	
Defining Homelessness.....	40 minutes
Faces of Homelessness	
Causes of Homelessness	
McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act	
Break.....	10 minutes
<i>Show Me Child Care Resources</i>	
Understanding Homelessness.....	50 minutes
Looking at the Numbers	
ACEs	
Effects of Homelessness on Children	
<i>Wrap Up</i>	10 minutes
Action Steps	
Review Objectives	
Exit Assessment	
Session Satisfaction Surveys	
MOPD Systems Key Functions	
CDA Scholarship Project	
T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI Scholarship	
Online On Demand Training—MO Workshop Calendar	
<i>Show Me Child Care Resources</i>	

Action Items

Use this page to record things you plan to do, topics for further clarification and new ideas from this training.

I WANT TO REMEMBER...

ACTION STEPS:

- 1.

- 2.

The Faces of Homelessness?



What words or phrases do you think of when you see a homeless individual or family?

In 2019, how many Missourians do you think were homeless on a given night?

- A. 550
- B. 1,200
- C. 6,100
- D. 8,400

Equal to the entire student population of Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri being homeless for one night.

In 2019,

Missourians were homeless on a given night



Caring for the Health and Wellness of Children Experiencing Homelessness

Excerpted from [Providing Care for Children and Adolescents Facing Homelessness](#)

When working with families experiencing homelessness, it is important to remember that children's health and housing security are closely intertwined. Children experiencing homelessness are more likely to experience chronic diseases, behavioral health concerns, developmental delays, hunger, and malnutrition than those who have homes.¹



¹ Weinreb L, Goldberg R, Basak E, Perloff J. 1998. Determinants of health and service use patterns in homeless and low-income housed children. *Pediatrics* 102(3 Pt 1):554-62.

² [Hunger and Homelessness Survey: A Status Report on Hunger and Homelessness in America's Cities: A 39-City Survey / December 2016](#) The United States Conference of Mayors

³ 2015 data from U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Definition of Homelessness Based on McKinney-Vento

Homelessness refers to a state in which individuals lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children who are sharing housing of other persons owing to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds owing to lack of alternative adequate accommodations; living in emergency or transitional shelters or abandoned in hospitals, cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations). Homelessness may apply to migrant children under certain circumstances. This document provides information about determining eligibility of McKinney-Vento rights and services.

NOTE: this is a definition used by federal, state and local educational institutions (e.g., Head Start/Child Care, PART C and Part B).

For more information about McKinney-Vento as it relates to Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) or Head Start, visit [Supporting Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness](#).

Causes of Homelessness

Natural disasters (e.g., storms, hurricanes, mudslides, fires) have caused many families to experience homelessness. Domestic violence can also be a reason that families experience homelessness. According to the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, for women, [domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness](#). The top causes of homelessness among families are lack of affordable housing, unemployment, poverty, and low wages.²

Identifying and Assessing Need

1.2 million children under 6 years old in the United States experience homelessness every year.³ As an early care and education program provider, you may already be serving families with young children who are experiencing homelessness or who are at risk for homelessness. You play an important role in identifying, supporting, and connecting these families to resources that can help keep them healthy. There are many resources to help your program in this process.



Self-assessment tools such as this [one](#) developed by the Administration on Children and Families (ACF) can assist your program in identifying families who are at risk for homelessness, to help support them and connect them with the resources they may need.

Effects of Homelessness on Children's Health and Wellness

Children experiencing homelessness may be affected by a variety of health challenges because of difficulty accessing regular health care or not having a medical home, inadequate nutrition and access to food, education interruptions, trauma, and disruption in family dynamics. Children experiencing homelessness are sick at twice the rate of children who have homes. They also go hungry twice as often as children who have homes. Children experiencing homelessness have twice the rate of learning disabilities and three times the rate of emotional and behavioral problems of children who have homes.

Medical and Dental Homes

A medical home plays an important role in supporting children's mental wellness. Encourage families to share updates with a trusted provider in their medical home or help connect them to a medical home if they do not have one. A medical or dental home is not a building or a place. It is an approach to providing comprehensive and high-quality primary care that facilitates partnerships between patients, clinicians, medical or dental staff, and families. A medical or dental home extends beyond the four walls of a clinical practice. It includes specialty care, educational services, family support, and more. A key strategy to improving the health and wellness of families experiencing homelessness is to connect them to medical and dental homes. Early care and education programs can play an important role in connecting families experiencing homelessness to medical and dental homes that provide comprehensive and coordinated services that can help address their ongoing health concerns and special health care needs and provide stability and consistency in care that is often missing for these families.

Mental Health and Families Experiencing Homelessness

Recent studies on adverse childhood experiences have shown that multiple stressors that begin in childhood can have long-term adverse effects on a child's neurobiological make-up, cognitive ability, and mental health, as well as on their ability to manage stressors as an adult. Studies also show that these effects can lead to

chronic physical health problems. Adults experiencing homelessness have higher levels of stress and depression than those who have homes, which can make parenting young children difficult. Therefore, it is very important to address mental wellness and identify mental health resources and services for families experiencing homelessness. Your program may have access to mental health consultants who can help you develop strategies to support resilience in families experiencing homelessness. Visit this link for more information on [mental health consultants](#). To learn more about resilience in children and trauma informed care visit [Understanding Stress and Resilience in Young Children](#).

Oral Health and Homelessness

Children experiencing homelessness are less likely to visit a dentist than children from families with low incomes who have homes. Families experiencing homelessness may find it difficult to carry belongings, including a toothbrush and toothpaste. They may have limited access to facilities where they can brush their teeth. Most children experiencing homelessness are eligible for oral health services paid for by Medicaid. However, outreach efforts are not adequate to reach many of these families. The key to supporting the oral health of families experiencing homelessness is to assist them with accessing services to help maintain healthy habits like toothbrushing with fluoride toothpaste and drinking water. Your

program may also want to partner with local homeless shelters and health and wellness partners to provide services in-house to families. To learn more about how to support families who are homeless, visit [Oral Health Resources for Families](#).

When working with children who are homeless it is important to keep in mind the following:

Regulations/Funding

- Become familiar with regulations that provide flexibility or grace periods related to completing paperwork and meeting health requirement deadlines for families experiencing homelessness.

Social Services

- Identify and connect with social service programs that can assist with obtaining stable housing or safe temporary housing and emergency funds for rent, utilities, and support services.

Cultural Perspectives

- When working with families experiencing homelessness, use [strengths-based approaches](#) that include perspectives of different cultures.

Partnerships

- Connect with community health and wellness partners to maintain and promote healthy environments for children (e.g., park districts, museums, boy's and girl's clubs).

Physical Health

- Determine eligibility and help families enroll in [Medicaid](#) or other health insurance.
- Work with families to identify or maintain connections to medical and dental homes where they feel supported.
- Help families access high-quality mental health, oral health, and physical health services.
- Promote ongoing [well child care visits](#), including health and developmental screenings and preventive care with the same providers at medical and dental homes.
- Promote continuous, ongoing physical health and oral health visits for sick child care at a consistent location where medical and dental history is easy to access (medical or dental home).



Nutrition/Healthy Active Living

- Homeless shelters often provide foods that lack adequate nutrients for infants, toddlers, and preschool children and instead provide foods high in fat and low in fiber.
- [Connect with food and nutrition assistance programs](#) such as WIC to secure access to healthy foods for families experiencing homelessness.
- Work with families on simple strategies to keep children active (e.g., [5-2-1-0 Growing Healthy](#)).

Mental Health

- Support the social-emotional health of infants, toddlers, and preschool children by utilizing mental health consultants.
- Explore training opportunities on [trauma-informed](#) practices to support children and families experiencing homelessness.
- Connect with mental health centers or medical homes with behavioral health specialists to assess children's and families' mental health needs during transitions into homelessness.

Parent and Family Supports

- Work with parenting supports or home visiting programs to help identify strategies to create healthy activities for parents experiencing homelessness.
- Become familiar with resources available to help prevent families from experiencing homelessness.
- Work collaboratively with families experiencing homelessness to help them access resources.
- Become familiar with resources available to families with young children experiencing homelessness.
- Develop strong relationships with families experiencing homelessness to help build resilience and trust.



Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Resources:

Early Childhood and Family Homelessness Resource List
https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/occ/acf_homeless_resource_list.pdf

Early Childhood Homelessness in the United States: 50 State Profile — June 2017
https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ecd/epfp_50_state_profiles_6_15_17_508.pdf

Resources to meet the Child Care CCDF requirements

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ecd/interagency-projects/ece-services-for-homeless-children>

Additional Resources:

ACES/Trauma Building Resilience
<https://resiliencetrumpsaces.org/>

Find a Health Center
<https://www.findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov>

Health and Human Services Programs
<https://www.hhs.gov/programs/index.html>

Community Action Partnership
<https://www.communityactionpartnership.com/locations.html>

Health Care for Homeless Projects
<https://www.nhchc.org/resources/grantees/national-hch-grantee-directory/>

National Center for Homeless Education
<https://nche.ed.gov>

National Center on Health Care for Homeless
<https://www.nhchc.org/resources/>

National Association for the Education Care of Homeless Children and Youth
https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ecd/preschool_head_start_and_child_care_policies_for_children.pdf



NATIONAL CENTER ON

Early Childhood Health and Wellness

School readiness begins with health!

The Numbers and Causes



40% of Americans are one missed paycheck away from poverty

Prosperity Now, 2019

Causes of Homelessness

- Lack of affordable housing
- Low Wages
- Unemployment
- Poverty
- Natural Disasters
- Domestic Violence (#1 among women)
- Mental illness and substance abuse with lack of needed services



NOTES:



Did you know?

In 2012, **10.3 million renters** had **extremely low incomes (ELI)** as classified by HUD. There were **only 5.8 million rental units** available.

Only one in ten of those poor enough to qualify for low-income housing assistance receives it.
(National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, July 2015)

After paying rent and utilities, **75% of ELI households end up with less than half of their income left** to pay for necessities such as food, medicine, transportation or child care.



The **Extremely Low Incomes (ELI)** ranges from **\$16,850** for a **4 person family** in rural Missouri to **\$25,800** for a **4 person family** in Kansas City.

(US Department of HUD, July 2020)

May 22, 2011 Joplin



- Over 7,500 homes were damaged - 4,000 of those homes were completely destroyed.
- 9,200 people were left without a home.
- It took two years for everyone to be moved from FEMA temporary housing into longer term or permanent housing.

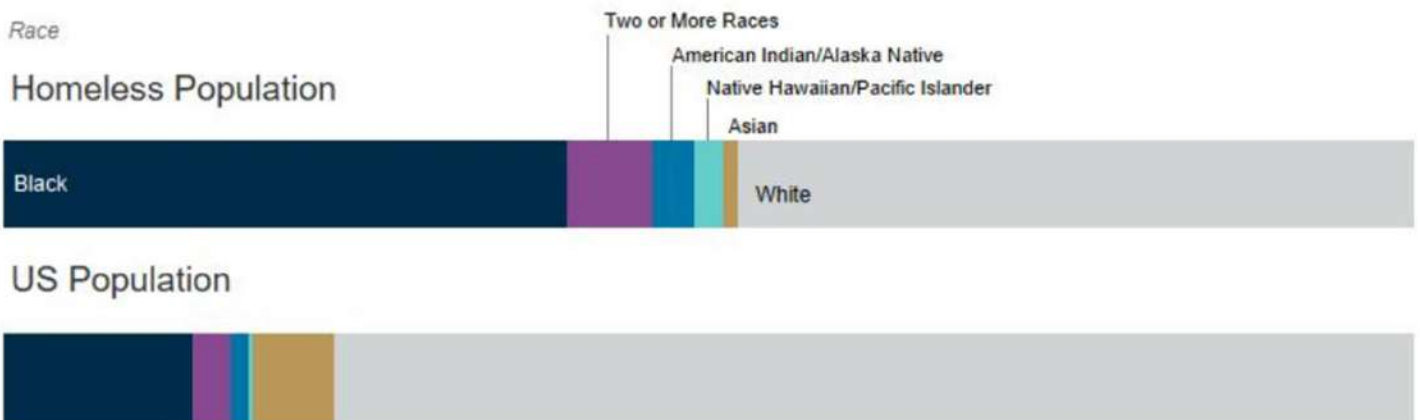
Poverty by Ethnicity



PovertyUSA, 2018

Most Minority Groups Make up a Larger Share of the Homeless Population than They Do of the General Population

Race and ethnicity of those experiencing homelessness compared with the general population



Homeless population data are for a given night in 2019.
Source: *Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, Part 1, 2020.*



NOTES:



Counting the Numbers

In the United States



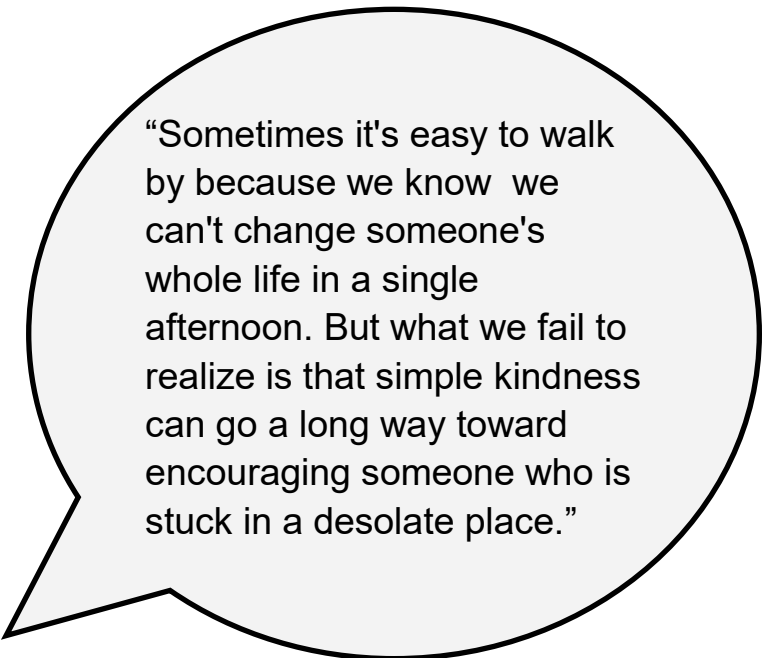
The **Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)** uses **point-in-time (PIT) estimates**, where employees and volunteers count both sheltered and unsheltered homeless people during the **last 10 days of January** annually.

It is very likely that the actual number of homeless individuals is much higher than the estimates as it is difficult to find and count all homeless individuals, families and children at any given time.

In 2017, approximately
184,000 people
were homeless on a
single night

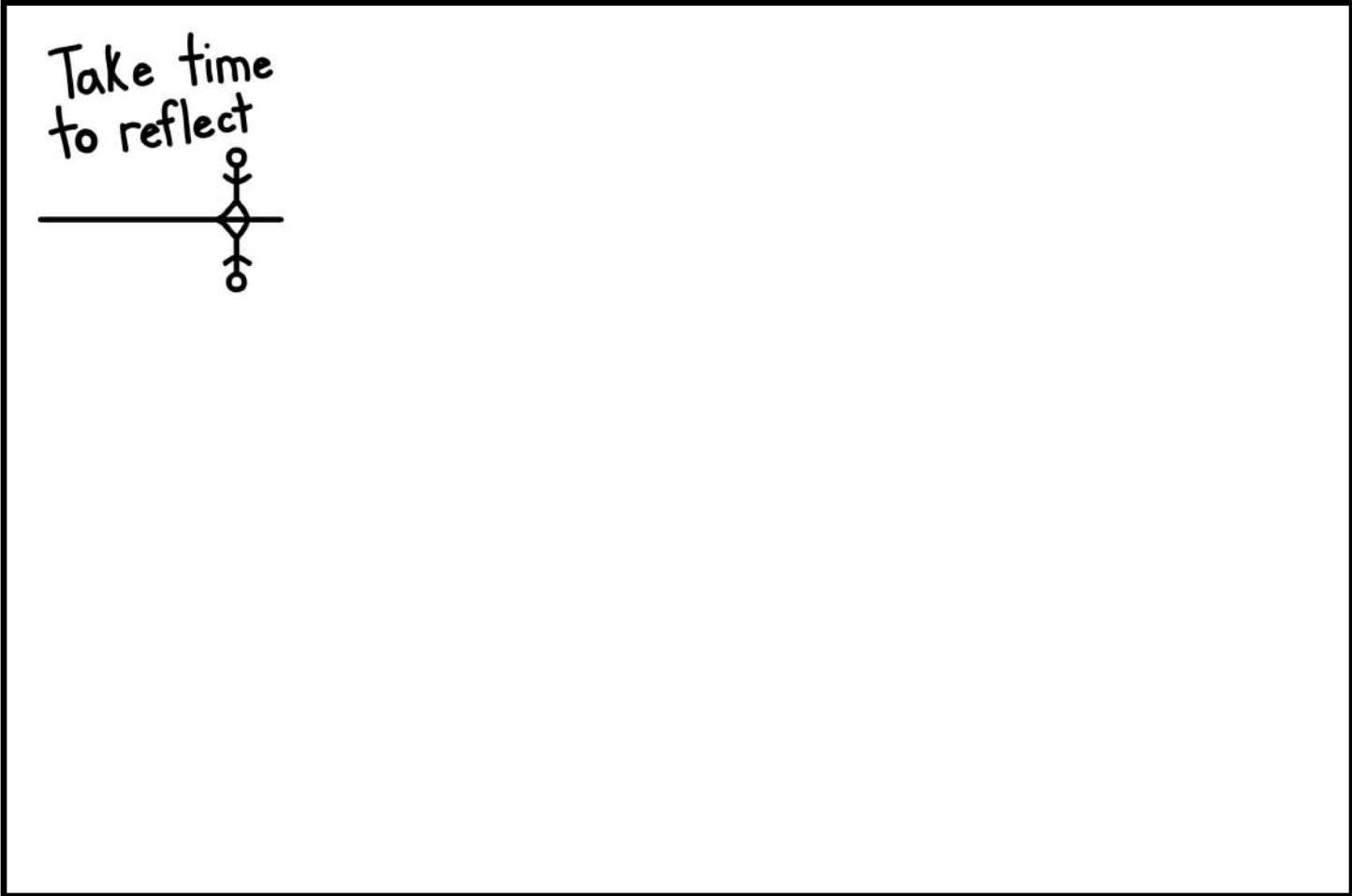
12% of these were
families with a parent
under the age of 25

About **half** of the children in
these families were younger
than 6 years old, including
11% who were infants
under the 1 year old



Mike Yankoski, Author

Under the Overpass: A Journey of Faith on the Streets of America



Effects of Homelessness on Children



Adverse **C**hildhood **E**xperiences are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood defined as birth to 17 years of age. These include:

- Being a victim of violence, abuse and neglect,
- Witnessing violence in the home and


Homelessness for children can increase the number of adverse childhood experiences they have creating lasting negative effects.

Negative early childhood experiences may lead to changes in the brain architecture that can have long-lasting developmental effects.

If the child's environment lacks:

- Safety
- Stability
- Opportunities for bonding

These can also be contributing factor to adverse childhood experiences.



The first 2,000 days of a child's life lays the foundation of their well-being for rest of their life.

Mental Literacy
Emotional
Development
Cognitive
Social Language
Physical
Dental

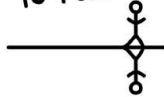
Homelessness experienced during the **first two years** is often associated with delays in social and emotional skill development, cognitive functioning and acquiring language and literacy skills.

Effects of Homelessness on Children



Video Reflections:

Take time
to reflect



NOTES:

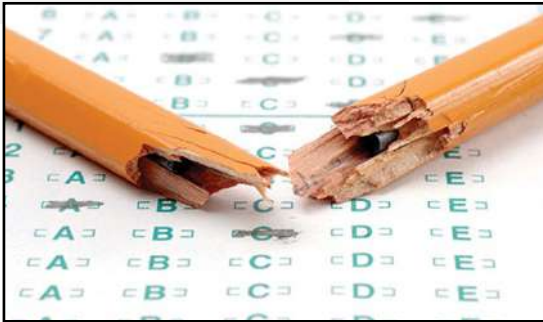


Effects of Homelessness on Children

Homeless families not in shelters are particularly at risk since they do not have access to support services

25% of very young homeless children showed poor social emotional development

Long Term Effects of Homelessness



Children who experience homelessness at an early age are more likely to:

- Score poorly on standardized assessments across an array of content areas including math, reading science and language in early elementary school.
- Be diagnosed with learning disabilities

NOTES:





Resources & Links



All things infants and toddlers!

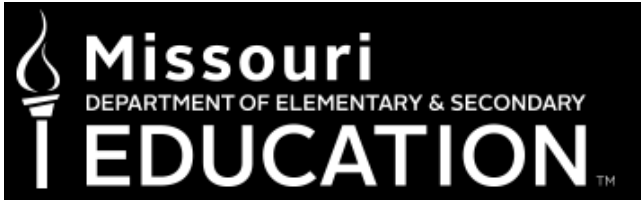
<https://www.zerotothree.org/>

- Resources for parents and educators
- Research on infant/toddler development
- Advocacy
- Policy making



<https://endhomelessness.org/>

- Data
- Policymaking
- Advocacy
- Training



McKinney-Vento State Coordinator

Cheryl Kosmatka

Homeless Education Program
Missouri Department of Elementary &
Secondary Education

cheryl.kosmatka@dese.mo.gov

(573) 751-6762

Local coordinators for school districts

<https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/qs-hmls-liaisons-19-20.pdf>



<https://www.211.org>



- Enter in zip code and find contact information for resources

<http://mofact.org/nokidhungry/>



- Direct services-connects children in need with programs that serves school breakfast, afterschool and summer meals
- Data



Resources & Links



<http://mofact.org/>

Connects Missouri families to community partnerships

Missouri Community Partnerships



Northeast Missouri Caring Communities

106 E. Jackson
Lancaster, MO 63548
660-457-3535



St. Joseph Youth Alliance

5223 Mitchell Avenue
St. Joseph, MO 64507
816-232-0050
<http://www.youth-alliance.org/>



Local Investment Commission (LINC)

3100 Broadway, Suite 1100
Kansas City, MO 64111-2513
816-889-5050

Pettis County Community Partnership

...working together we make life better



www.pettiscommunitypartnership.org

Pettis County Community Partnership

1400 S. Limit, Suite 29
Sedalia, MO 65301
660-827-0560



Randolph County Community Partnership

101 West Coates, 2nd Floor
Moberly, MO 65270
660-263-7173



Resources & Links



<http://mofact.org/>

Connects Missouri families to community partnerships

Missouri Community Partnerships



The Alliance of Southwest Missouri

1027 S. Main, Suite 7

Joplin, MO 64801

417-782-9899

<http://www.theallianceofswmo.org/>



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Community Partnership of the Ozarks

330 N. Jefferson Avenue

Springfield, MO 65806

417-888-2020

<http://www.cpozarks.org/>



The Community Partnership (Rolla)

1101 Hauck Drive

Rolla, MO 65401

573-368-2849



St. Francois County Community Partnership

1101 Weber Road, Suite 102

Farmington, MO 63640

<http://www.sfccp.org/>



Ripley County Community Partnership

209 W. Highway Street

Doniphan, MO 63935

573-996-7980



Butler County
**community
resource
council**

Butler County Community Resource Council

644 Charles Street

Poplar Bluff, MO 63901

573-776-7830

<http://www.thecrc.org/>

A Community Partnership of the Caring Communities Initiative



Resources & Links



<http://mofact.org/>

Connects Missouri families to community partnerships

Missouri Community Partnerships

Area Resources for Community and Human Services

539 N. Grand Blvd., 6th Floor

St. Louis, MO 63103

314-534-0022

<http://www.stlarchs.org/>



Families and Communities Together

4 Melgrove Lane

Hannibal, MO 63401

573-221-2285

<http://www.mcfact.org/>



Jefferson County Community Partnership

3875 Plass Road, Building A

Festus, MO 63028

636-465-0983X105

<http://www.jccp.org/>



Washington County C2000 Partnership

212 E. Jefferson Street

Potosi, MO 63664

<http://www.wcpartnership.com/>



Community Caring Council

937 Broadway Suite 306

Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

573-651-3747 X101

<http://www.communitycaringcouncil.org/>



Pemiscot County Initiative Network (PIN)

711 West Third Street

Caruthersville, MO 63830

573-333-5301 X231



Resources & Links



<http://mofact.org/>

Connects Missouri families to community partnerships

Missouri Community Partnerships

CARING COMMUNITIES

Mississippi County Interagency Council

603 Garfield

East Prairie, MO 63840

573-683-7551

<http://www.mccaring.org/>



Dunklin/Stoddard Caring Council

313 Kennett Street

Kennett, MO 63857

573-717-1158



New Madrid County Human Resources Council

420 Virginia Avenue

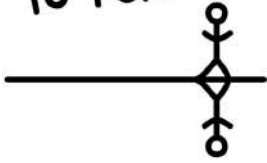
New Madrid, MO 63869

573-748-2778

NOTES/OTHER RESOURCES:



Take time
to reflect



“People think about homeless people being on the street,” she explains. “They don’t know that there are people living in shelters. It doesn’t mean you’re dirty, you’re dumb, or you’re a drug addict. Homelessness can mean that you were in the wrong place at a bad time, and now you’re trying to get back on your feet.”

Taliah Connor
Lived in homeless shelter
for four years as a child

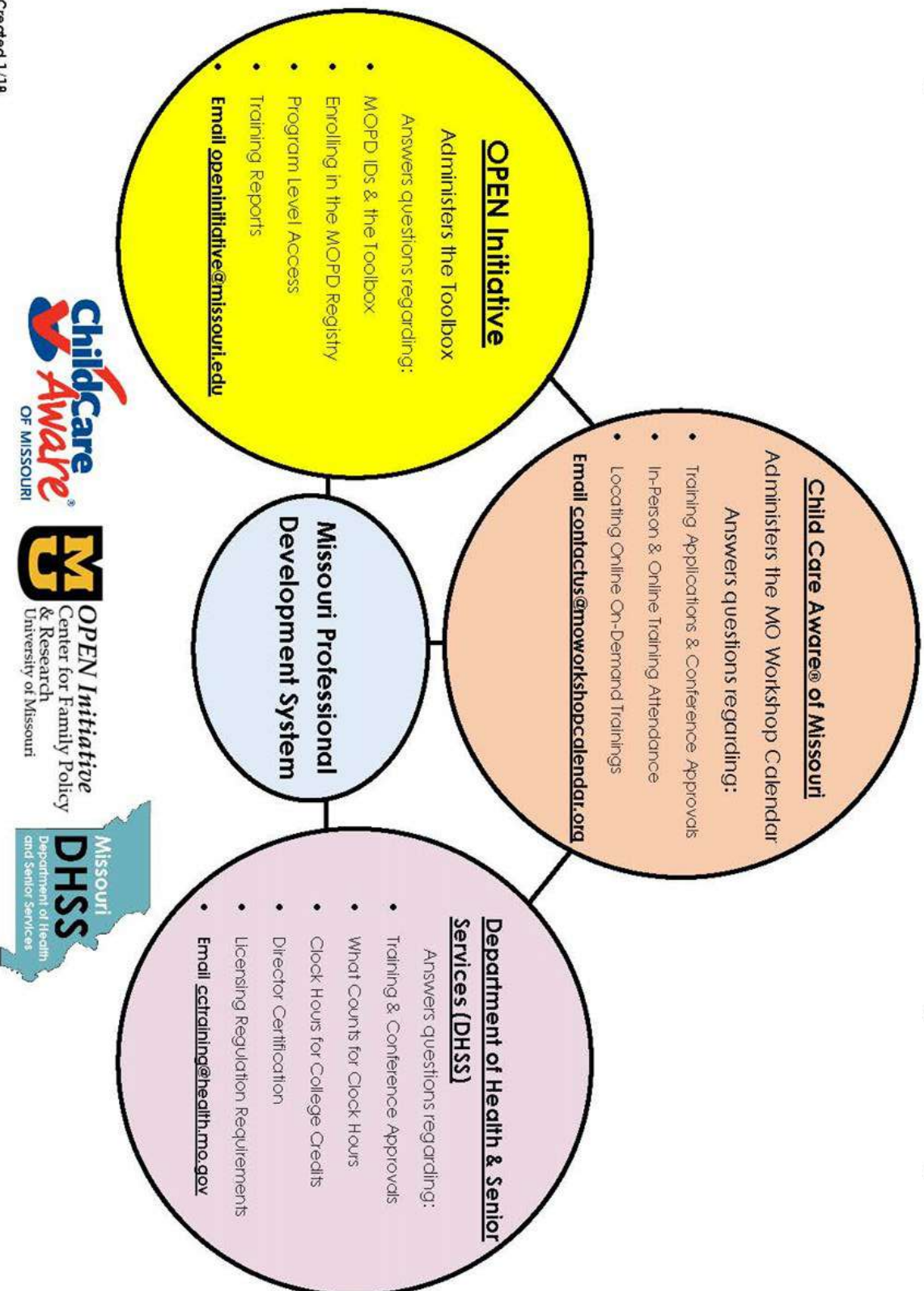
**Thoughts and
Reflections**

MORE OF TALIAH’S STORY:

https://www.odu.edu/news/2018/1/taliah_connor#.Xvz9pyhKhPY

Resources

Key Functions of the Missouri Professional Development System



Credited 1/18

Resources

T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI Scholarship

Want to continue your education?



- Support college credits towards early childhood AA/AAS or BA/BS
- Statewide scholarship available to directors, teachers and assistants in **licensed** child care programs
- Partnership between the scholarship recipient, sponsoring employer and T.E.A.C.H. MISSOURI with each paying a portion of tuition and books
- Applications accepted year round
- Visit our website www.teach-missouri.org to learn more and access an application



1-866-892-3228

mo.childcareaware.org

- Our referral service uses a database containing Missouri child care programs.
- Families are able to access the database and search for programs near them or contact a resource specialist to assist them in their search.
- All information in the database is self-reported by programs.
- We encourage families to ask questions about the child care programs in order to find a program that best suits the needs of their children.
- Update your Program Information Form (PIF) at least annually or when changes occur.



Questions?
 Child Care Aware® of Missouri
dori@mo.childcareaware.org
 or 314-535-1458 x611

[Engaging Families](#) |
 [In the Classroom](#) |
 [Saving Money](#) |
 [Successful Program Management](#)



HOME / [ENGAGING FAMILIES](#)

ENGAGING FAMILIES



Building Strong Relationships

Communication is a great start to establishing and maintaining a strong relationship between ECE providers and the families they serve.

The resources and tools in this section provide guidance and knowledge to educate staff and families about child development, general health concerns, nutrition and fitness, and much more.

In this Section

ADMIN TOOLS

Explore a multitude of tools, templates, guides, and other resources to support administrative operations including: creating a community bulletin board, cultural responsiveness, family handbooks, surveys, family/teacher conferences, IEP resources, transitions and much, much more.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

As a natural part of development, children experience typical milestones – such as mastery of age appropriate skills and abilities; and challenges – such as biting, nightmares, toilet training, or other developmental challenges. These resources from respected experts in the field are helpful for parents can be used as a discussion starter or to answer a question or concern.

EDUCATION

Apps and resources for families looking to integrate technology into their parenting support systems as well as helping their child develop a love for reading.

ENVIRONMENT

Caring for our environment and creating a healthy home starts with awareness geared to protecting our environment and its natural resources. Fact sheets, toolkits, and other resources will help families (and you!) create a healthier home environment and implement easy practices to save water.

GENERAL HEALTH

Child health is a number one focus for families and programs. Spread the word about how to reduce germs both in the classroom and at home with these resources on topics ranging from immunization and flu to measles and oral health to hand hygiene and more.

NUTRITION & FITNESS

Healthy bodies start with physical activity, limiting TV and screen time, and helping families with practical tip sheets on making nutritious food choices. These resources will provide eye-opening tools to help prevent obesity.



CDA SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT

GET YOUR CDA CREDENTIAL!

Get Paid \$380 | No Assessment Fee | Advance Your Career



Do you work in a licensed or license-exempt child care program?



Do you work in a child care program that accepts DSS subsidy?



Do you work a minimum of 20 hours per week?



Have you worked in the same child care program for at least 3 months?

If you answered **YES** to these questions, enroll in the CDA Scholarship Project at www.cdасcholarshipmo.org. Space is limited.

Don't delay...sign up **TODAY!**

Funded by the State of Missouri - Children's Division