

Does your family live in any of the following situations?

- shelter
- doubled-up with family members or other people due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- motel/hotel
- car, abandoned building, or park
- transitional housing

Your school-age children may qualify for certain rights and protections under the federal McKinney-Vento Act.

Funded by a grant from the Illinois State Board of Education and the Stewart B. McKinney Act for homeless youth and children.

RPS 205
Administration Building
Families in Transition
501 7th St.
Rockford, IL 61104

**Families in Transition (FIT)
Education Services**



Supporting the Education
of
Families in Transition

Who is FIT?

The FIT Department serves homeless children and youth. "Homeless children and youth" means:

- Individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence
- A family who stays at a shelter most nights or in a place not normally used for sleeping, like a car
- Children or teens who are staying with friends or relatives because they cannot pay for a place to live or whose parents or guardians will not permit them to live at home

How does homelessness affect students?

When children become homeless, the effects often show in their behavior at school. Parents trying to provide a safe place for their children to sleep at night are often too busy to help their child with the transition of going from one place to another. This may result in:

- Poor/short attention span
- Frustration
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Aggressive behavior
- Needs to claim something for themselves
- Difficulty with transition

Educational Rights of Homeless Children & Youth

Under the McKinney—Vento Act, children in homeless situations have the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where they live or how long they have lived there
- Attend their current school of origin (school last attended when child lost permanent housing) or attend the school nearest their shelter or temporary home
- Immediate enrollment to school. Even when medical records cannot be produced at time of enrollment
- Receive assistance with transportation if needed
- A priority to pre-school programs

Unaccompanied Youth

The number of unaccompanied youth in the Rockford area is rising. They are identified as students who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, though living with a caregiver, and are living in a situation that is not fixed, regular, and adequate. The homeless program can assist in federal financial aid for college or housing.

FIT Department Services

Through a grant from the Illinois State Board of Education, homeless children living within district boundaries can access education services through the FIT department. RPS 205 FIT advocates work closely with area emergency shelters, soup kitchens, pantries and other key agencies. Referral forms and information are available through FIT.

FIT Advocates help families with:

- ability to enroll in extra-curricular activities
- transportation
- free breakfast and lunch
- tutoring
- school supplies/uniforms
- accessing special education programs

For more information or assistance please contact the FIT Department at:

**RPS 205
Administration Building
501 7th St. 2nd floor
Rockford, IL 61104**

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