

III. MENTAL HEALTH AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS, INCLUDING DISASTER RECOVERY

A. STRATEGIES ARE IN PLACE TO ADDRESS THE SHORT- AND LONG-TERM MENTAL HEALTH AND CASE MANAGEMENT NEEDS OF STUDENTS AND FAMILIES.

“I don’t think any of us realized at the time the amount of counseling and support that would have been needed by these people.”

School District Administrator

School staff at all levels agree that meeting mental health care and case management needs of both students and families is a significant and ongoing challenge following a major disaster. It is very difficult for students to learn and progress academically if their mental health needs, and those of their families, are not adequately addressed.

“Whereas we were really concerned with academic type things, those children were more concerned with the emotional type issues. They were really not able to focus on academics. They were focusing more on life issues-- how are my family members doing that are back in that area, what happened to certain people. and my home, my dogs.”

School District Administrator

School districts should develop comprehensive plans to meet mental health needs in disasters, including needs assessment, supplemental funding and resources, and curriculum for students of different ages, needs, and cultural backgrounds. They should collaborate with community mental health providers and faith-based groups for assistance in meeting these needs. It is imperative to develop robust collaborative relationships and plans prior to disasters.

This section includes several tools and resources to assist school districts in meeting mental health needs in the following areas:

- 1. Assessing Needs**
- 2. Planning to meet mental health needs**
- 3. Potential supplemental funding for mental health needs**
- 4. Hands-on resources for mental health counselors to assist in their work with displaced children, youth, and families. Teachers, counselors, local liaisons, administrators, and all personnel working with displaced children may benefit from the resources.**

I. ASSESSING NEEDS

In order to offer appropriate mental health support, providers must assess the needs of students and families. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network has developed a two-page *Hurricane Assessment and Referral Tool for Children and Adolescents* to assist providers in determining a student's risk categories and mental health needs and to make appropriate mental health referrals. The tool can be adapted easily for use in a variety of disaster situations, including earthquakes, fires, and tornadoes, as well as in assessing the needs of children and youth who have experienced domestic violence, abuse, or other trauma. It is reprinted in Appendix 17 and available at http://www.nctsn.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/intervention_manuals/referraltool.pdf

2. PLANNING TO MEET MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

School districts need to plan to meet mental health needs, particularly in the wake of a disaster. The district may need additional staff, counselors trained to work with students of different cultures and language backgrounds, additional transportation services, counselors experienced in crisis response, and other resources that may not be readily available. Crisis plans should anticipate these needs and allow school districts to respond quickly and professionally. Strong collaborations with mental health providers in the community are an important part of disaster planning and response. These collaborations must be in place prior to a disaster; to find local providers, visit <http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/databases/>.

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network has developed a checklist for school personnel to evaluate and implement the mental health component of the school crisis and emergency plan. The checklist is reprinted in Appendix 18 and is available for download at:

http://www.nctsn.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/edu_materials/Challenger%20Newsletter%20Checklist-final-sw_rvsd.pdf

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Planning for the Psychological Aftermath Of School Tragedy. Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools (Appendix F). Arizona Department of Education.

Guide for planning to meet mental health needs after a disaster.

<http://www.ade.az.gov/schooleffectiveness/health/schoolsafety/safetyplans/planning.pdf>

Mental Health Crisis Response Plans for Schools. Pennsylvania Department of Education (2004). A checklist of recommendations for mental health crisis response planning.

http://www.pde.state.pa.us/svcs_students/cwp/view.asp?Q=89512

Fundamentals of Disaster Planning and Response, a Web-based, interactive video presentation from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, including modules on disaster mental health.

<http://www.shs.net/samhsadr/contents.htm>

About Planning and Action for the Mental Health Needs of Students and School Staff in the Aftermath of a Natural Disaster. Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA. A brief suggesting key issues to consider in planning for post-disaster mental health needs.

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/planningneeds.pdf>

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network has developed a sample letter to assist schools in developing partnerships with mental health providers. The letter is available at http://www.nctsn.org/nccts/nav.do?pid=ctr_aud_schl_3rs_readiness&Type=3rs&nAvPid=ctr_aud_schl_3rs_desc

See also Sections I.A and I.B of this toolbox for strategies and tools for creating collaborations with community organizations, including mental health providers.

3. POTENTIAL SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING RESOURCES

Existing financial resources may be insufficient to meet the increased demand following a major disaster. The following supplemental resources may be available to support school districts.

The Crisis Counseling Training and Assistance Program (CCP). CCP is a supplemental assistance program of FEMA, which funds mental health assistance and training activities in presidentially-declared disaster areas. Only a state or federally-recognized Indian tribe may apply for a crisis counseling grant.

Program overview: http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/EmergencyServices/ccp_pg01.asp

More information about the program:

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/EmergencyServices/progguide.asp>

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools offers Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Discretionary Grants for establishing or expanding school counseling programs in elementary or secondary schools. For more information: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/elseccounseling/index.html>

See also Section III.D for more resources and tools for funding.

4. HANDS-ON RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS

SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center (SAMHSA DTAC). DTAC is an interactive, on-call resource for mental health providers during the critical period when mobilization for response and recovery begins.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/dtac/default.asp>

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools (OSDFS) is organizing emergency teams of physicians and medical personnel to provide immediate mental health services to local communities. The OSDFS has established a toll-free hotline for people in crisis. By calling **1-800-273-TALK**, callers will be connected to trained professionals from a network of local counseling centers that are prepared to help those suffering from emotional trauma, such as anger, grief, hopelessness, shock, and sleeplessness, as a result of the disaster. The hotline is open 24 hours a day, every day.

The Three R's to Dealing with Trauma in Schools: Readiness, Response, and Recovery. Broadcast of the U.S. Department of Education Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, April 23, 2002. Viewable online at <http://www.walcoff.com/prevention/>

Helping Children Cope with Crisis: A workbook for African American families. Provides useful tips and activities for helping children cope with disasters.

http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/hccc/helping_children.htm

When the Hurricane Blew. A book written by Florida fourth-graders about their experiences with hurricanes. The book contains a story, tips for kids on preparing for and coping with a hurricane, and games. Available for purchase at <http://www.hurricanekid-network.org/peek.asp>

Resources from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):

The Role of Culture in Helping Children Recover from a Disaster.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/EmergencyServices/culture.asp>

Fundamentals of Disaster Planning and Response.

<http://www.shs.net/samhsadr/contents.htm>

When Talking Doesn't Help: Other Ways to Help Children Express Their Feelings Following a Disaster. <http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/EmergencyServices/otherways.asp>

Disaster Counseling.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/KEN-01-0096/default.asp>

Hurricane and Other Disaster Relief Information.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/katrina/>

Anniversary Reactions to a Traumatic Event: The Recovery Process Continues.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/NMH02-0140/default.asp>

Resources from the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA:

Crisis Assistance and Prevention: Reducing Barriers to Learning.

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/crisis_tt/crisisindex.htm

Psychological First Aid: Responding to a Student in Crisis.

http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/qf/crisis_qt/crisis_psych_first_aid.pdf

Schools Helping Students Deal with Loss.

[http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/loss\(hurricane\).pdf](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/loss(hurricane).pdf)

Trauma resources and links:

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/hurricane.htm>

Resources from the National Association of School Psychologists:

Crisis resources. <http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/crisismain.html>

Trauma resources and links. <http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/911memorial.html>

Culturally Competent Crisis Response: Information for School Psychologists and Crisis Teams. http://www.nasponline.org/culturalcompetence/cc_crisis.pdf

Natural Disasters. <http://www.nasponline.org/crisisresources/22-Lazarus.pdf>

Responding to Natural Disasters: Helping Children and Families. Information for School Crisis Teams. http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/naturaldisaster_teams_ho.pdf

Responding to Hurricane Katrina: Helping Children Cope.

http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/katrina_cope.pdf

Responding to Hurricane Katrina: Helping Students Relocate and Supporting Their Mental Health Needs. http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/Katrina_relocate.pdf

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Coping and Recovery After Katrina and Rita; Cultural Perspectives on Healing After a Disaster; and Hurricane Katrina Resource Guide. National Alliance on Mental Illness. Available by searching www.nami.org (requires free registration).

Emotional and Spiritual Care, An Introduction on Basic Concepts. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (2004). <http://www.nvoad.org/articles/ESCCchapterB.pdf>

Caring for Kids After Trauma and Death: A Guide for Parents and Professionals. Institute for Trauma and Stress at The NYU Child Study Center.

http://www.aboutourkids.org/aboutour/articles/crisis_guide02.pdf

Resources to Help Cope with Natural and Other Disasters. American Academy of Pediatrics. <http://www.aap.org/new/disasterresources.htm>

Resources from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, including a *Psychological First Aid Package* and extensive tip sheets and briefs in English and Spanish, for teachers, caregivers, relief workers, and mental health care providers.

http://www.ncsnet.org/nccts/nav.do?pid=typ_nd

Understanding the Impact of Katrina on Children and Adolescents. The ChildTrauma Academy. A brief outlining common effects of trauma on children and strategies to support children.

http://www.childtrauma.org/CTAMATERIALS/Educators_Handout_Katrina_05.pdf

Helping Children Cope: A Guide To Helping Children Cope with the Stress of the Oklahoma City Explosion. American Psychological Association. A brief to help parents recognize the warning signs of post-traumatic stress disorder and help their children cope with disasters. <http://www.apa.org/practice/kids.html>

Terrorist Attacks and Children. National Center for PTSD. A fact sheet describing common reactions and tips for helping children in various age groups from birth through age 18 cope with traumatic events.

http://www.ncptsd.org/facts/disasters/fs_children_disaster.html

Survivors of Natural Disasters and Mass Violence. National Center for PTSD. A fact sheet describing psychological problems related to natural disasters and strategies to address them. http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/facts/disasters/fs_survivors_disaster.html

Student Support Service Resources for School Districts Recovering from the 2005 Hurricanes. Office of Safe and Healthy Schools, Florida Department of Education and the Student Support Services Project, University of South Florida (2005). A list of and links to organizations that provide hands-on resources for mental health support.

<http://www.firn.edu/doe/hurricane/pdf/student-support-resources.pdf>

An assortment of articles related to crisis intervention, post traumatic stress, and critical incident stress management, from the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation. <http://www.icisf.org/articles/>

Long-Term Recovery Manual. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (2004). Appendix IV, "Casework Management in Long-Term Recovery" contains guidelines, detailed suggested approaches, tips, and sample forms for long-term case management for individuals. <http://www.nvoad.org/articles/LTRManualFinalApr232004a.pdf>

Resources for preschoolers:

Helping Children Rebound: Strategies for Preschool Teachers After the 2005 Hurricanes. Teaching Strategies (2005).

http://www.teachingstrategies.com/content/pageDocs/Katrina_1005_final_web.pdf

Helping Young Children After a Disaster. National Association for the Education of Young Children. <http://www.naeyc.org/families/disaster.asp>

Coping and Trauma Strategies. Zero to Three. A list of resources and links to help providers work with infants and toddlers who have experienced disasters and other

Self-Assessment III. A

III. Mental Health and Academic Success, Including Disaster Recovery

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district’s implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in meeting short and long-term mental health and case management needs.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

A. Strategies are in place to address the short- and long-term mental health and case management needs of students and families.

	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has a rigorous mental health crisis response plan in place.	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers have access to developmentally and culturally appropriate classroom activities to address the immediate concerns of a large number of homeless children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
School counselors have access to developmentally and culturally appropriate crisis counseling tools.	1	2	3	4	5
School district personnel and parents have access to immediate information on mental health needs and resources both within the school and the community.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has a system in place for utilizing additional professional resources for dealing with mental health issues – local, state, and national level resources.	1	2	3	4	5
Anniversaries of significant events are planned and celebrated in a positive way.	1	2	3	4	5
Students play a significant role in community service activities as part of the healing process.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district is able to access supplemental funding and resources for mental health support and case management following disasters.	1	2	3	4	5
Training in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), stress management, and reactions to trauma is part of the ongoing district training plan for all adults.	1	2	3	4	5
Schools are familiar with how to provide extended support services for families under stress.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

- 40-50 Points** This is a strength of the program.
- 30-39 Points** The program is moderately successful in this area.
- <30 Points** This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

B. STRATEGIES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE TO DEAL WITH STAFF FATIGUE.

“I think next time I’d take better care of myself, get more rest myself.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

All staff working with children, youth, and families experiencing homelessness are at risk of fatigue and burnout. This risk is particularly acute in disaster situations. The initial impacts of a disaster can be emotionally overwhelming; the ongoing stress of the long-term response can be emotionally exhausting. Local liaisons and other caregivers should make time and space to care for themselves and seek support from supervisors and peers in their school district, local liaisons in other school districts, their state coordinator, and friends and family. If necessary or helpful, they should make time and space to speak with a counselor. The school district should support these self-care efforts.

The following information from the National Association of School Psychologists will help school district support staff be aware of fatigue and mental health issues.

CARE FOR CAREGIVERS IN CRISIS RESPONSE

THE CHALLENGE OF CAREGIVING

It almost goes without saying that parents, teachers, and other caregivers play a critical role in helping children cope with crises. The natural instinct is to put one’s own needs aside and tend to children first. It is extremely important, however, for caregivers to monitor their own reactions and take care of their own needs. Failure to do so can result in burnout, which interferes with one’s ability to provide crisis intervention assistance. This can be true in the aftermath of immediate crisis like a natural disaster or terrorist attack as well as during extended periods of stress and anxiety like the war in Iraq. Following are some suggestions that help caregivers maintain their own well-being even as they support the needs of children in their care.

ROLE OF THE CAREGIVER

Traditional crisis caregivers include emergency response professionals, mental health providers, medical professionals, victim assistance counselors, and faith leaders. They are trained to handle exposure to images of destruction and loss and to assist victims response and intervention. Educators who lack the requisite skills need to be careful not to go beyond their training because they run the risk of making a very difficult situation worse.

THE POTENTIAL FOR BURNOUT

At the early stages of crisis response, caregivers may have abounding energy and motivation. Their cognitive functioning, training, and resilience make them important assets to the children under their care. However, as a crisis intervention continues, caregivers may find themselves experiencing physical or psychological “burnout.” Images of violence, despair and hardship and/or continuous concern over possible danger can contribute to feeling professionally isolated and depressed, particularly if caregivers do not have the opportunity to process their reactions. Successes may be ambiguous or few and far between, and, in some cases lack of sleep and limited opportunities for healthy nourishment breakdown the capacity to cope effectively. Caregivers can begin to feel more like a victim than a helper. Additionally, caregivers who have their own history of prior psychological trauma, mental illness (including substance abuse), or who lack social and family resources will be more vulnerable to burnout.

SIGNS OF THE BURNOUT

Burnout develops gradually, but its warning signs are recognizable beforehand. These include:

COGNITIVE

- An inability to stop thinking about the crisis, crisis victims, and/or the crisis intervention.
- Loss of objectivity.
- An inability to make decisions, and/or express oneself either verbally or in writing.
- Personal identification with crisis victims and their families.

PHYSICAL

- Overwhelming/chronic fatigue and/or sleep disturbances.
- Gastrointestinal problems, headaches, and other aches and pains.
- Eating problems including eating too much or loss of one’s appetite.

AFFECTIVE

- Suicidal thoughts and/or severe depression.
- Irritability leading to anger or rage.
- Intense cynicism and/or pessimism.
- Excessive worry about crisis victims and their families.
- Being upset or jealous when others are doing crisis interventions.
- A compulsion to be involved in every crisis intervention.
- Significant agitation and restlessness after conducting a crisis intervention.

BEHAVIORAL

- Alcohol and substance abuse.
- Withdrawal from contact with co-workers, friends, and/or family.
- Impulsive behaviors.
- Maintaining an unnecessary degree of contact/follow-up with crisis victims and their families.
- An inability to complete/return to normal job responsibilities.
- Attempts to work independently of the crisis intervention team.

PREVENTING BURNOUT

Whether it is in the aftermath of a serious crisis or during an extended period of high stress, unrelenting demand for support may result in burnout for even the most seasoned crisis caregivers, particularly if they themselves are feeling vulnerable due to the circumstances. The risk may be even higher for teachers and other caregivers who are not trained crisis responders. Consequently all caregivers need to consider the following personal and professional suggestions to prevent burnout:

- Know your limitations and with what you feel reasonably comfortable or uncomfortable handling.
- Recognize that your reactions are normal and occur frequently among many well-trained crisis professionals.
- To the extent possible, maintain normal daily routines (especially physical exercise activities, meal-time, and bed-time routines). Connect with trusted friends or family who can help take the edge off of the moment.
- Give yourself permission to do things that you find pleasurable (e.g., going shopping or out to dinner with friends).
- Avoid using alcohol and drugs to cope with the effects of being a caregiver during times of crisis.
- Ask for support from family and friends in terms of reducing pressures or demands during the crisis response.
- Be sure to maintain healthy eating habits and drink plenty of water.
- Take periodic rest breaks at least every couple of hours.
- As much as possible, try to get some restful sleep, preferably without the use of sleep aids or alcohol.
- Take time at the end of each day to process or debrief the events of the day with other caregivers or colleagues.
- Be kind and gentle on yourself and others, as you have all shared exposure to a life-changing event. Everyone needs time to process the impact of these events into their lives.¹

¹ *Note.* From “Helping children cope with crisis: Care for caregivers,” by National Association of School Psychologists, Copyright, 2003 by Author. Reprinted with permission. Retrieved August 15, 2006, from: <http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/CaregiverTips.pdf>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Understanding Caregiver Vulnerability. Long-Term Recovery Manual. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster: Long-Term Recovery Manual (2004). A one-page brief on burnout. (p.57).

<http://www.nvoad.org/articles/LTRManualFinalApr232004a.pdf>

Stress Prevention and Management Approaches for Rescue Workers in the Aftermath of Terrorist Acts. National Mental Health Information Center.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/EmergencyServices/stress.asp>

Tips for Managing and Preventing Stress: A Guide for Emergency and Disaster Response Workers. National Mental Health Information Center.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/KEN-01-0098/>

A Guide to Managing Stress in Crisis Response Professions. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. A pocket guide on stress management with strategies that can be incorporated into the daily routine of managers and workers.

<http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/SMA-4113/default.asp>

Fundamentals of Disaster Planning and Response. Web-based, interactive video presentation from SAMHSA, including a module on Managing Your Stress in Crisis Response Work.

<http://www.shs.net/samhsadr/contents.htm>

Self-Assessment III. B

III. Mental Health and Academic Success, Including Disaster Recovery

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district’s implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in addressing staff fatigue.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

- | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| No evidence | In existence
but not effective | Moderately
successful | Successful but
needs improvement | Strength of the
program |

B. Strategies, policies, and procedures are in place to deal with staff fatigue.

Multiple staff members are trained to address the needs of an increased number of children and youth.	1	2	3	4	5
Local liaison has the support of the highest level of leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
The human resources department has plans in place to deal with adults who have undergone significant periods of stress or traumatic events.	1	2	3	4	5
The district has a system in place for accommodating staff with mental health needs (e.g., modified work schedules, family medical leave policies, support groups, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
Local liaison, school counselors, and school administrators are aware of the symptoms of burnout and prepared to support colleagues suffering from burnout.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has a self-care system in place for the local liaison, school counselors, teachers, enrollment personnel, and others coming into continuous, direct contact with displaced children and families.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

- 23-30 Points** This is a strength of the program.
- 15-22 Points** The program is moderately successful in this area.
- <15 Points** This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

C. STRATEGIES ARE IN PLACE TO ADDRESS THE SHORT- AND LONG-TERM ACADEMIC NEEDS OF DISPLACED STUDENTS, INCLUDING GRADUATING SENIORS.

“We just finished our state testing. And there was just a report in the newspaper, that the percentage of [displaced] kids who passed our tests is very, very low. So we’re having summer school, and they can go to summer school and take the test again. But I think we may find, it’s a possibility, that many of our children might be retained.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

Students experiencing homelessness, including those displaced by disasters, often need academic support to help counteract the negative effects of mobility and trauma. Some of those needs can be addressed by tutoring programs and other supplemental services provided through McKinney-Vento programs. However, local liaisons should also make sure that homeless students are able to access the academic support services offered to other students in the district, including services through Title I, 21st Century Learning Centers, and other federal, state, and district programs.

When students are mobile between states, their academic needs may be even more urgent due to differing state curricula and standards. School districts should be prepared with flexible plans to address such mobility, academic challenges, and potential retentions.

This section contains tools and strategies to assist school districts in the following efforts:

- 1. Collaborating with Title I**
- 2. Ensuring that seniors can graduate**
- 3. Supporting highly mobile students**
- 4. Supporting young children**
- 5. Supporting students with special needs**

I. COLLABORATING WITH TITLE I

“We are using several different funding sources to provide extra tutors to come in during the day, in addition to after school tutoring services for students who are struggling. Those programs are open for any students, including displaced students. We use some Title I money, a Title VI grant, a Reading First grant, and a 21st Century Community Learning Center grant for the after-school component. We work really hard at making the funding work so we can provide the services the students need.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

Students experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible for Title I, Part A services, including services through the mandatory reservation of Title I funds for homeless students. Collaborations with this program are essential for supporting the academic success of children experiencing homelessness, including those displaced by disasters.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Title I and Homelessness. NCHE (2006). A brief identifying the key provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act dealing with serving homeless children and youth under Title I, Part A, and offering strategies for implementation.

<http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/titlei.pdf>

Collaboration Between Title I and Homeless Education Programs. NCHE. *Local Homeless Education Liaison Toolkit*, Chapter 5, (Table 7).

<http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/toolkit/chapters.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education. (July, 2004). Education for Homeless children and Youth Program Non-Regulatory Guidance. Section M. http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/guidance_jul2004.pdf

2. ENSURING THAT SENIORS CAN GRADUATE



Schools should make special efforts to ensure that high school seniors who are forced to move to another state due to a disaster or homelessness can graduate on schedule. For example, to ensure that seniors displaced by the hurricanes of 2005 could graduate, schools adopted procedures similar to the following:

- Counselors immediately placed seniors in the most appropriate classes, based on information provided by the student and parents.
- After receiving school records, counselors reviewed students' credits and academic standing.
- Counselors made extra efforts to ensure that seniors were placed in appropriate classes to allow them to earn the credits needed to graduate on time.
- Seniors who had missed school due to the evacuation were awarded partial credits and/or given the opportunity to make up work.
- States with large numbers of evacuees worked with states that received students to provide information about graduation criteria.
- Counselors determined if students met the graduation criteria in their home state and their new state.
- Students were given the choice to graduate from their home state or their new state, assuming they met graduation requirements.
- States with large numbers of evacuees, such as Louisiana and Mississippi, offered high school exit examinations in an online format. Receiving schools supervised students in taking these tests online.
- Students who wished to graduate from their new school were given the opportunity to earn any needed credits and take the high school exit exam.

“Some of the kids who are graduating are wearing a gown the color of their old school, because they requested that, and the schools are letting them do that.”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

3. SUPPORTING HIGHLY MOBILE STUDENTS

The following resources can help schools provide appropriate supplemental instruction for highly mobile students:



Reading on the Go! Volume 1: Students Who Are Highly Mobile and Reading Instruction. NCHE. (2002). A publication on what works in reading instruction for students who are highly mobile.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/reading_on_the_go.pdf

Reading on the Go! Volume 2: A Handbook of Resources. NCHE. (2006). A publication that provides strategies in reading instruction for students who are highly mobile, based on actual programs in practice.

<http://www.serve.org/nche/products.php>

Links to Literacy: A Handbook for Short-Term Literacy Intervention. AmeriCorps for Community Engagement and Education Project and the Texas Homeless Education office (2004). This training manual assists schools and shelters in providing literacy intervention through the use of trained tutors based on research-based strategies and methods.

<http://www.utdanacenter.org/theo/toolkits.html#linksliteracy>

Students on the Move: Reaching and Teaching Highly Mobile Children and Youth. NCHE. This handbook synthesizes research on the education of various subpopulations of students who tend to be highly mobile and explores common characteristics and significant differences. Subpopulations explored include migratory children and youth, children and youth experiencing homelessness, children of military families, and students experiencing mobility on a global scale.

http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/highly_mobile.pdf

4. SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN

The following resources can help schools provide appropriate supplemental instruction to young children:

Helping Young Children Grow & Learn: A Guide for Families & Shelter Providers. Project HOPE Virginia. A brief with strategies and ideas for supporting the development of young children experiencing homelessness.

<http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/ECSE-family.pdf>

Using the Best That We Know: Supporting Young Children Experiencing Homelessness. Project HOPE Virginia. A brief with strategies and ideas for supporting the development of young children experiencing homelessness.

<http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/ECSE-educ.pdf>

5. SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The following resources can help schools provide appropriate supplemental instruction to students with special needs:

Hurricane Katrina and Relocated Students With Special Needs: Recommendations for Receiving Schools. National Association of School Psychologists (2005). A comprehensive brief with practical strategies for providing services to students with special needs in the absence of an IEP.

http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/katrina_specneeds.html

New Schools for Students with Disabilities: Tips for Families Who Have Been Relocated. National Association of School Psychologists (2005). A comprehensive brief to assist parents in enrolling, advocating for, and supporting their children with special needs in a new school.

http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/katrina_relocate_families.pdf

The Council for Exceptional Children offers many publications, briefs, and strategies for supporting children with special needs. <http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Publications1>

Unlocking Potential! Project HOPE Virginia. Briefs with basic information on the rights of children with special needs experiencing homelessness and strategies to provide services. For families and service providers:

<http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/family-complete.pdf>

For special education personnel:

<http://www.wm.edu/hope/infobrief/personnel-complete.pdf>

Self-Assessment III. C

III. Mental Health and Academic Success, Including Disaster Recovery

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district’s implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in meeting short- and long-term academic needs.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

C. Strategies are in place to address the short and long-term academic needs of displaced students, including graduating seniors.

The school district Title I program sets aside the required reservation of Title I, Part A funds for homeless students and uses those funds in conjunction with the McKinney-Vento program to support the academic achievement of homeless students.	1	2	3	4	5
Displaced students are able to access regular academic support services and programs available in the district immediately.	1	2	3	4	5
Additional academic supports are available to help children and youth in homeless situations meet achievement standards.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has a flexible plan to address mobility, academic challenges, and potential retentions resulting from disasters.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a system in place for awarding academic credit for graduating seniors who do not have records.	1	2	3	4	5
There is a system in place to ensure that displaced seniors can graduate on time.	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers have access to instructional resources for highly mobile students.	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers have access to instructional resources for highly mobile students with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
Preschool teachers have access to instructional resources for highly mobile young children.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

- 35-45 Points** This is a strength of the program.
- 25-34 Points** The program is moderately successful in this area.
- <25 Points** This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

D. FUNDING: NEEDED SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL IN A VARIETY OF SETTINGS – USING A COMBINATION OF PUBLIC, PRIVATE, COMMUNITY, AND PERSONAL RESOURCES.



Providing appropriate services to children, youth, and families in homeless situations, including those displaced by disasters, requires funding. One important way to access services and funding is by building collaborative relationships. See Sections I.A and I.B for strategies for building and maintaining successful collaborations with service providers, businesses, community foundations, civic groups, and other community groups. A key collaborative partner in providing academic support and funding for other supplemental services is the Title I program, particularly Title I, Part A. See Section III.C.1 for resources related to collaborating with Title I.

Following major disasters, supplemental funding may be available from the federal government. It is important that McKinney-Vento programs and school districts maintain appropriate data to be able to claim this funding. See Section II.H for strategies and tips on data management.

The school district itself can also pursue additional resources from government and private sources. The following federal grants and resources may be available.

I. GRANTS AVAILABLE FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- *Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program*. The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools offers Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program grants for establishing or expanding school counseling programs in Elementary or Secondary schools. For more information: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/elseccounseling/index.html>
- *Project SERV (School Emergency Response to Violence)*. This program offers short-term and long-term assistance to local education agencies to recover from a violent or traumatic event in which the learning environment has been disrupted. Immediate services assistance covers up to 60 days from the date of the incident. Extended services assistance covers up to one year from the incident. <http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvppserv/index.html>
- *Emergency Response and Crisis Management Plans Discretionary Grants*. Emergency Response and Crisis Management grants provide funds to local educational agencies to improve and strengthen their emergency response and crisis management plans. <http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvpemergencyresponse/index.html>
- *Grants for the Integration of Schools and Mental Health Systems*. These grants provide funds to increase student access to high-quality mental health care by developing innovative approaches that link school systems with the local mental health system. <http://www.ed.gov/programs/mentalhealth/index.html>
- *Partnerships in Character Education Program*. This program provides federal financial assistance to assist eligible entities in designing and implementing character education programs that can be integrated into classroom instruction, to be consistent with state academic content standards, and to be carried out in conjunction with other educational reform efforts. <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/announcements/2006-1/022306g.pdf>
- *Mentoring Grants*. These grants promote mentoring programs for children with greatest need by assisting them in receiving support and guidance from a mentor and in pursuing academic improvement. <http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvpmentoring/index.html>
- *21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLCs)*. The focus of this program, re-authorized under Title IV, Part B, of the No Child Left Behind Act, is to provide expanded academic enrichment opportunities for children attending low performing schools. Tutorial services and academic enrichment activities are designed to help students meet local and state academic standards in subjects such as reading and math. In addition 21st CCLC programs provide youth development activities, drug

and violence prevention programs, technology education programs, art, music and recreation programs, counseling and character education to enhance the academic component of the program.

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>

- *Cultural Partnership for At-Risk Youth Program*. The program makes demonstration grants to eligible entities for the development of school-community partnership programs. These programs must be designed to improve the educational performance and future educational potential of at-risk children by providing comprehensive, coordinated educational and arts programs and services.

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/artscp/index.html>

- *Safe Schools/Healthy Students Discretionary Grants*. The Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative is a discretionary grant program supported by the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Justice. It provides students, schools, and communities with federal funding to implement an enhanced, coordinated, comprehensive plan of activities, programs, and services that focus on promoting healthy childhood development and preventing violence and substance abuse.

<http://www.ed.gov/programs/dvpsafeschools/index.html>

2. GRANTS FROM OTHER FEDERAL SOURCES

The Administration on Children & Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has an online database of all its grants.

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/index.html>

Grants.gov is a searchable, online index to all federal government grants.

<http://www.grants.gov/>

3. FUNDING AVAILABLE FROM COMMUNITY AND PRIVATE SOURCES

Every community includes private and community-based resources that can support the efforts of the school district and the McKinney-Vento program:

Large corporations with local offices

SMALL LOCAL BUSINESSES

Local family foundations

Community foundations

Individual donors

National foundations

CORPORATE GIVING PROGRAMS

Local government

CIVIC GROUPS

Women's clubs

Faith-based charities

Section II. J on donations includes many strategies and tools that can assist McKinney-Vento programs in cultivating local donors. The following resources may also be important funding sources.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

Community foundations are tax-exempt public charities serving thousands of people who share a common concern— improving the quality of life in their area. Individuals, families, businesses, and organizations create permanent charitable funds that help their region meet the challenges of changing times. The foundation invests and administers these funds. All community foundations are overseen by a volunteer board of leading citizens and are run by professionals with expertise in knowing their community's needs. Many McKinney-Vento programs have received funding from community foundations. To find local community foundations, visit <http://www.cof.org/Locator/>

OTHER NATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL FOUNDATIONS

There are hundreds of thousands of foundations in the United States and elsewhere that fund the types of services McKinney-Vento programs provide. These funders include family foundations, large private foundations, corporate foundations, corporate giving programs, and individual donors. Many programs supplement their public funds with such private grants.

Good Example: A McKinney-Vento program in Louisiana received \$90,000 from a foundation in the Czech Republic!

Researching grant opportunities can be time-consuming and daunting. To help McKinney-Vento programs with this task, the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) offers a free grant-announcement service to its members. Through a collaboration with GrantStation, NAEHCY members can opt to receive monthly e-mails announcing available grants. To join NAEHCY, visit <http://www.naehcy.org/membership.html>. To learn more about GrantStation, visit <http://www.grantstation.com/>

The Foundation Center is also an excellent source of funding information from a wide variety of corporate and private sources. Users of the Foundation Center's website can search the foundation database, ask questions of staff, participate in online tutorials on grant-writing and funding basics, and read weekly newsletters. The Center also offers a wide variety of workshops to help organizations research and secure private funding at its local offices in Atlanta, Cleveland, New York, San Francisco, and Washington D.C. and has established cooperative agreements with libraries across the country to offer Foundation Center publications and resources free of charge.

Basic registration for Foundation Center services is free and includes a weekly electronic "RFP Bulletin" that provides information on available grants. For more information on the Foundation Center, visit <http://www.foundationcenter.org/>

Self-Assessment III. D

III. Mental Health and Academic Success, Including Disaster Recovery

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district’s implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in obtaining and maximizing funding.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

D. Funding: Needed services are available and accessible to all in a variety of settings – using a combination of public, private, community, and personal resources.

	1	2	3	4	5
There is evidence of streamlining among agencies to promote cost-effectiveness; that is, there are opportunities to conduct referrals between community agencies that will not require additional funding; there are collaborative efforts among agencies to provide specialized services such as dental, medical, or mental health services; there are consolidated eligibility criteria set up between agencies to eliminate duplicate paperwork, wasted resources, and duplicate services.					
There is a consistent interaction among the education, health, and human services communities.					
Contacts with the business community are strong.					
The school district utilizes a variety of funding sources to provide services for homeless children and youth.					
Some funding sources provide flexibility in eligibility and spending guidelines so that funding can be directed flexibly to individual circumstances and provided at convenient times and places.					
Local liaison has access to some emergency funds to supplement student needs.					
There is a long-term plan in place to accommodate for extended times of need with an increased number of homeless children and youth.					
The district participates in all community-based groups and efforts to secure additional funds to meet the needs of homeless children and youth.					
TOTAL					

How did you score?

- 30-40 Points** This is a strength of the program.
- 20-29 Points** The program is moderately successful in this area.
- <20 Points** This area is weak. Needs program improvement.

E. STRATEGIES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE TO ADDRESS THE MULTIPLE ISSUES OF LONG-TERM RECOVERY, INCLUDING HOUSING NEEDS.



“What scares me the most is: where are these people going to go when their vouchers run out?”

Local Homeless Education Liaison

Long-term recovery from a disaster is an ongoing process that can take years. It requires input and effort from all sectors of the community and may include legislative and regulatory measures at the state and/or local level. Recovery issues include housing, long-term case management, physical and mental health care, employment, rebuilding, and planning for future disasters.

Many of these issues are beyond the immediate purview of the schools. Yet, they profoundly affect student academic achievement and emotional well-being. Many school districts have recognized this link and are involved in community responses to disasters and homelessness. Community collaborations, such as those described in Sections I.A and I.B are essential if schools are to help families access the variety of needed services. Disaster relief agencies and the local Continuum of Care are particularly important allies.

Good Example: Some local school boards have adopted resolutions recognizing the harmful effects of homelessness on education and supporting affordable housing. For an example of such a resolution from the Anchorage School Board, see http://www.asdk12.org/School_Board/archives/Arc2004-2005/Agendas/20041011/H01M057.pdf

This section provides information on general resources for families in homeless situations, including those displaced by disasters. It also offers information on Long-Term Recovery Committees.

I. GENERAL RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

“And some people don’t have that ability, they can’t get on the Internet and find out stuff, because they don’t know one end of a computer from the other. Some of them are not even capable of making telephone calls, and now that the FEMA office is closed here, there is no in-town ability to go and say, ‘what’s happening with my case?’”

Relief Agency Staff Member

Families experiencing homelessness are often in need of intensive case management. An important first step in case management is identifying and assessing the client’s strengths. These may include family, friends, employment, skills, talents, coping and emotional skills, parental competency, etc. Some homeless parents may struggle to see their own strengths. By beginning the process with this discussion, the client and case manager can take advantage of strengths in planning for the future.

The sample case management form in Appendix 19 may be useful in assessing strengths and needs and developing a case plan.

The following additional resources can help children, youth, and families find the resources they need for long-term recovery:

- Information about FEMA programs and what benefits survivors should receive from an independent, non-governmental source. <http://www.femaanswers.org>
- Information on a wide variety of public and private services for displaced children, youth, and families from the Child Welfare Information Gateway. http://childwelfare.gov/systemwide/service_array/mental/katrina_resource.cfm
- Information about how to obtain benefits and services from the Administration for Children and Families/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, including Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA)/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Head Start Services, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), displaced and foster children, refugee assistance program, and related State links. <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/katrina/index.htm>

- Child care information and resources on hurricane recovery, disaster relief, and emergency preparedness. <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/emergency/index.cfm>
- Housing Agency and School District Collaborations to Serve Homeless and Highly Mobile Students. Best Practices in Homeless Education Brief Series. NCHE (2006) http://www.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/housing_collab.pdf
- Online resources for helping those affected by the hurricanes of 2005. Includes: Emergency Guidelines for Helping Victims (including information on Social Security, Medicaid, SCHIP, Unemployment Insurance, Nutrition programs, and others); Giving & Getting Help; and Help with Healing. <http://www.connectforkids.org/node/3372?tn=hp/1b>

2. FORMING A LONG-TERM RECOVERY COMMITTEE

“What’s called EOC, the emergency operations center here in the city-- without a doubt we’ve built a closer relationship with them. I say closer because we’ve always had a good relationship with them, we’re asked to come to the meeting, so we have the opportunity to be a part and hear directly from the national officials. And also not only with them, with the local police department, fire department, Red Cross, and so I think we’ve built some very good working relationships.”

School District Administrator

To ensure that the school district is informed about and involved in long-term recovery, the local liaison must know what agencies are handling recovery efforts, how they can participate in the process, and how their students can access the services that exist. Most communities affected by disasters will establish a long-term recovery committee. These committees may be directed by FEMA, the Red Cross, the United Way, or other agencies. It is important that the school district, and preferably the local liaison, participate actively on the committee. See Section I.A for tips and strategies for getting a seat at the table. See Appendix 3 for a glossary of terms and acronyms commonly used in disaster planning, response, and recovery.

If the community has not established a long-term recovery committee, the school district can be a leader in forming such a group. There are resources below to assist communities in establishing committees. There are also general resources for families who have been impacted by disasters to help them find housing, employment, and other support, including a sample long-term case management form. Local and state governments and the other collaborative partners listed in the chart in Section I.A can also be important resources for families.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Organizing Protocols For Community Disaster Recovery Mechanisms. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster. Guidelines, specific field activities, and a recovery process organogram, with a particular focus on the interactions of faith-based community organizations and recovery committees. <http://www.nvoad.org/articles/recovery.php>

Long-Term Recovery Manual. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (2004). A manual containing sections on organizing long-term recovery, establishing and operating a long-term recovery group, volunteer management, emotional and spiritual care, case management, and the basics of recovery. Includes sample mission statements, a list of stakeholders, organizational structures, guidelines, and sample forms. <http://www.nvoad.org/articles/LTRManualFinalApr232004a.pdf>

Self-Assessment III. E

III. Mental Health and Academic Success, Including Disaster Recovery

The following, targeted self-assessment is designed to evaluate the school district’s implementation of the tools and strategies contained in this chapter. It includes several of the most important indicators of success in addressing the multiple issues of disaster recovery.

Individual(s) Conducting Assessment: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Date of Review: _____

Rank the following in order of their effectiveness within your McKinney-Vento Program:

1	2	3	4	5
No evidence	In existence but not effective	Moderately successful	Successful but needs improvement	Strength of the program

E. Strategies, policies and procedures are in place to address the multiple issues of long-term recovery, including housing needs.

There is a provision for opportunities to debrief and glean lessons learned. This can lead to a sense of regaining control.	1	2	3	4	5
Intensive case management services are available in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
Plans are in place for outreach staff (counselors and mental health workers) to work with individual students and/or adults struggling with recovery issues.	1	2	3	4	5
Local liaison and outreach staff are aware of community resources and able to refer families to appropriate services, including services available through federal and state government sources.	1	2	3	4	5
Every school has a list of community resources and contact information.	1	2	3	4	5
The district expresses a willingness to minimize requests for additional activities that may not be absolutely necessary during the recovery period.	1	2	3	4	5
A person(s) has been appointed to connect individuals with continued community resources and support ally and for as long as it takes. (This may be a period of 2-5 years.)	1	2	3	4	5
The school district uses existing materials that may assist with coping skills or is willing to institute a new curriculum across all grade levels.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district has a student and staff “wellness” campaign in place to promote positive behaviors.	1	2	3	4	5
Continuous training and awareness activities on the issues of homeless children and youth are a part of the ongoing district training plan for all adults, and training is tailored to meet the needs of specific audiences (bus drivers, data entry clerks, teachers, substitute teachers, non-instructional support staff, front office clerks, teachers, guidance, school administrators, district staff).	1	2	3	4	5

E. Strategies, policies and procedures are in place to address the multiple issues of long-term recovery, including housing needs.

If long-term support services are needed, the district has policies in place to make accommodations for space and additional staff, as needed.	1	2	3	4	5
Additional activities for homeless children and youth are planned during extended school times – after school, weekends, holidays, and summer.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district participates regularly in interagency councils/coalitions that provide a wide variety of services for children and their families, including housing.	1	2	3	4	5
The school district participates regularly in boards or with organizations related to family services and disaster relief (e.g., United Way, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, faith-based organizations, housing organizations, etc.).	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers play a significant role in the response and recovery process for children that are in homeless and highly transitional living conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
Parents have a significant role in the response and recovery process for children that are in homeless and highly transitional living conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
The community has a significant role in the response and recovery process for children that are in homeless and highly transitional living conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL					

How did you score?

- 70-85 Points** This is a strength of the program.
- 60-69 Points** The program is moderately successful in this area.
- <60 Points** This area is weak. Needs program improvement.