



Homeless Children Served by Part C Infant and Toddler Intervention

Fiscal Year 2016

Report

To the

Legislature

As required by

Minnesota Statutes,

section 125A.125

COMMISSIONER:

Brenda Cassellius, Ed. D.

**Report on Homeless Children Served by
Part C Infant and Toddler Intervention**

July 2016

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kara Tempel

Early Learning Services

651-582-8495

Kara.tempel@state.mn.us

Fiscal Year 2016

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Statutes

Section 125A.125

Cost of Report Preparation

The total cost for the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to prepare this report was approximately \$200.00. Most of these costs involved staff time in analyzing data from surveys and preparing the written report. Incidental costs include paper, copying and other office supplies.

Estimated costs are provided in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 2011, section 3.197, which requires that at the beginning of a report to the Legislature, the cost of preparing the report must be provided.

Minnesota Statutes, Section 125A.125, requires the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to annually report on the number of homeless children served by the Part C Infant and Toddler Intervention system (Part C). The current report covers the 2014-2015 school year. Data for this report were obtained from the Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS) data system.

Background Information

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requires state and local education agencies to build awareness of the needs of children and youth who are homeless. Public schools, including charter schools, must provide services that remove barriers to enrollment, attendance and educational success of these children.

According to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001 – Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act, the term “homeless children and youth” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes:

- i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- ii. children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings...
- iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- iv. migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Each state must adopt policies that ensure appropriate early intervention services are available to all infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families in the state, including those who are homeless. CFR 34 § 303.101(a)(1)(ii).

Similarly, each state is required to ensure that policies and practices have been adopted to ensure that traditionally underserved groups, including homeless families, are meaningfully involved in the planning and implementation of all of the Part C system. CFR 34 § 303.227 (a).

Each state must also have a comprehensive child find system that identifies, locates and evaluates all infants and toddlers with disabilities in the state, including infants and toddlers with disabilities who are homeless. CFR 34 § 303.302 (b)(1)(ii).

Homeless family shelters are considered a primary referral source in the Part C system. CFR 34 § 303.303(c)(10). When shelter staff suspects that a child has a developmental delay or disability, they are federally required to refer a child for early intervention services. CFR 34 § 303.303(a).

Analysis

As reported with MARSS, a total of 30 infants and toddlers with disabilities were homeless for the 2014-2015 school year. Twenty-eight of the children qualified for services under the developmental delay category; one qualified under speech/language impaired; and one under Autism Spectrum Disorder. Twenty-five children had English reported as their primary language, two were reported as Spanish, two were reported as speaking Igbo (Nigerian) and one was reported as Somali. Fourteen children were identified as white, 13 as black and three as Hispanic. Twenty-two children resided within the Twin Cities metropolitan area and eight in greater Minnesota. There was a 20 percent increase in the number of infants and toddlers with disabilities identified as homeless from the previous school year.

Figure 1. Number of Homeless children identified by school year

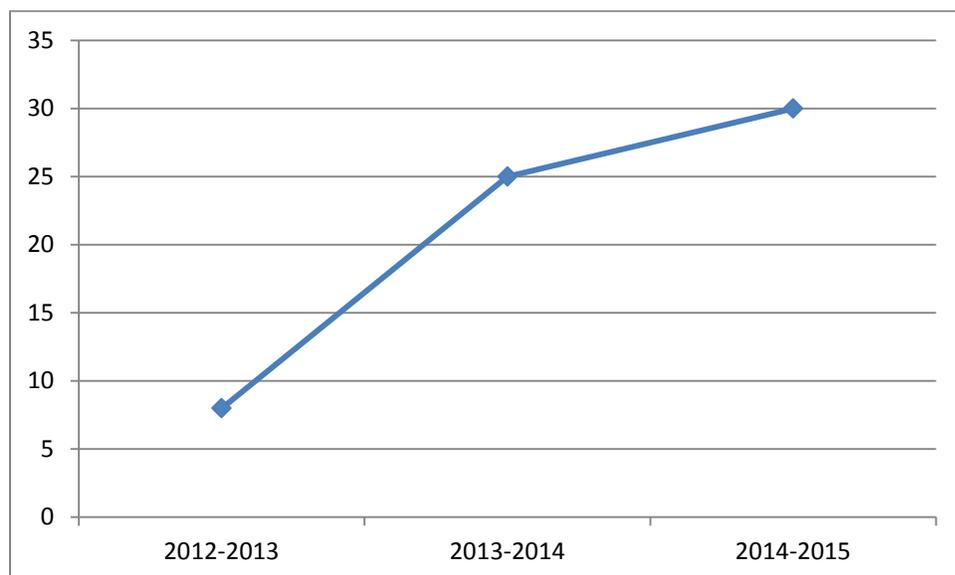


Figure 1, above, shows the increase in the number of homeless children with disabilities who have received Part C services, since MDE focused its child find, public awareness and outreach efforts on the homeless population.

Children under the age of 3 who are eligible for ECSE services typically receive their services within the home or child care environment or in other community locations where other infants and toddlers and their families frequent. Homeless families are also highly mobile. These factors likely contribute to the difficulty providing early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities who are also homeless.

Since the 2012-2013 school year, the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) team from MDE has emphasized with local school district leaders the importance of understanding the definition of homelessness and reporting children, especially infants and toddlers, as homeless. Therefore, it is highly likely that these efforts are contributing factors to the reported increase, though is also likely still an underrepresentation of the actual number of homeless infants and toddlers who received Part C services during that school year.

So, not only are infants and toddlers who are homeless likely under-identified through child find efforts (i.e., effective outreach is difficult), these children are also still likely to be under-reported

as homeless within the MARSS system and receive a relatively low number of early intervention service hours during the school year.

How MDE is Addressing this Issue

Efforts of the ECSE team to communicate the urgency of homelessness began in the summer of 2013 with the annual retreat of the Governor's Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). The focus of this retreat was underserved populations within the early intervention system. Roberto Reyes, MDE's Homeless and Neglected/Delinquent Programs state coordinator, presented the issue of and rules on serving homeless children, including infants and toddlers, within the education system. The presentation and discussion that followed revealed an obvious gap and lack of understanding among the various stakeholder groups represented by the ICC members related to homeless infants and toddlers and the relationship with the Part C system. As a result, a new member was appointed to the ICC, effective May 2014, to specifically represent homelessness issues within the early intervention system. This person's term expired in January 2016 and is being replaced by Roberto Reyes, consistent with Minnesota statute.

The homeless population is a federally mandated focus of the regional Interagency Early Intervention Committees (IEICs) through their child find, public awareness and outreach efforts. CFR 34 § 303.302 (b)(1)(ii). Minnesota Statutes, section 125A.30, requires that each IEIC includes a committee member to represent issues related to homelessness within the early intervention system.

Minnesota, through the Children's Cabinet and efforts of the Minnesota Departments of Health, Education and Human Services, is in the process of expanding our current Help Me Grow system to be consistent with the National Help Me Grow model out of Connecticut Children's Hospital. The expansion will lead to increased public awareness and outreach efforts, information and assistance to parents and professionals concerned about a child's development, and linkages to a wider range of existing community-based services. It is hoped that this will be beneficial to families experiencing homelessness and other risk factors as the efforts of the current Help Me Grow initiative only direct and connect eligible children to Part C infant and toddler intervention services or Preschool Special Education.

In the fall of 2015 through early 2016, the commissioner of education convened a working group to look at the education access and developmental needs of homeless children, ages 0-4. A careful and thoughtful review of the circumstances and barriers to homeless children's developmental, social/emotional, and academic needs would be beneficial to understanding how a state response could positively impact student outcomes.

The goals of the working group were to look at the following questions:

- Are we correctly identifying homeless children ages 0-4?
- What needs do homeless children, ages 0-4, have?
- What barriers or gaps in service exist that limit access for homeless children?
- What education-specific services do homeless children, ages 0-4, need?
- What educational services currently exist to fulfill those needs? What are the gaps?

- What resources are currently available that provide educational services to homeless children, ages 0-4?
- What resources are still needed to fill any identified gaps and where does that funding come from—the school district, city, county, state, or federal government?

The working group was asked to provide input and expertise on components of a report and provide recommendations that would meet the developmental needs of homeless children, ages 0-4, to ensure academic success.

Conclusion

Minnesota is aware of the issues related to identifying and serving infants and toddlers with disabilities who are homeless and is taking the necessary action to address the need within the system. Addressing the issues related to homelessness throughout all levels of the Part C service system, including in the broader community, we hope to see all infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families who are homeless identified for early intervention services in a timely manner and receiving the appropriate level and intensity of services to maximize their developmental outcomes.

Chris Steller

From: Parsons, Nicole (MDE) <nicole.parsons@state.mn.us>
Sent: Friday, July 6, 2018 8:30 AM
To: Chris Steller; Revisor of Statutes (revisor@revisor.mn.gov)
Subject: Homeless Children Served by Part C Infant and Toddler Intervention Reports - FY 2014 through FY 2018
Attachments: FY2018 Homeless Children Served by Part C.PDF; CORRECTED FY2017 Homeless Children Served by Part C.pdf; CORRECTED FY2016 Homeless Children Served by Part C.PDF; CORRECTED FY2015 Homeless Children Served by Part C.PDF; CORRECTED FY2014 Homeless Children Served by Part C.pdf
Follow Up Flag: DS reviewing
Flag Status: Flagged

Please find attached the FY 2018 Homeless Children Served by Part C Infant and Toddler Intervention Report.

We have found that the statistics were wrong in prior reports, so those have been corrected back to FY 2014, so they are also attached.

Thank you,

Nicole Parsons

Executive Assistant | Government Relations
651-582-8209 | nicole.parsons@state.mn.us

Minnesota Department of Education

1500 Highway 36 West, Roseville, MN 55113
education.mn.gov





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Analysis

As reported with MARSS, a total of 92 infants and toddlers with disabilities were homeless for the 2014-15 school year, which represents a decrease of approximately 16 percent. Eighty-five of the children qualified for services under the developmental delay category; two each qualified under Autism Spectrum Disorder, deaf-hard of hearing, and Speech/Language Impaired; and one qualified under Physically Impaired. Eighty-three children had English reported as their primary language, four were reported as speaking Spanish, two were reported as speaking Karen and one each was reported as speaking Hmong, Igbo (Nigerian) and unspecified. In regards to ethnicity, 39 children were identified as white; 30 as black; 13 as Hispanic; six as Asian or Pacific Islander; and four as American Indian. Sixty-five children resided within the seven-county metropolitan area and 27 in greater Minnesota.

Figure 1. Number of Homeless children identified by school year

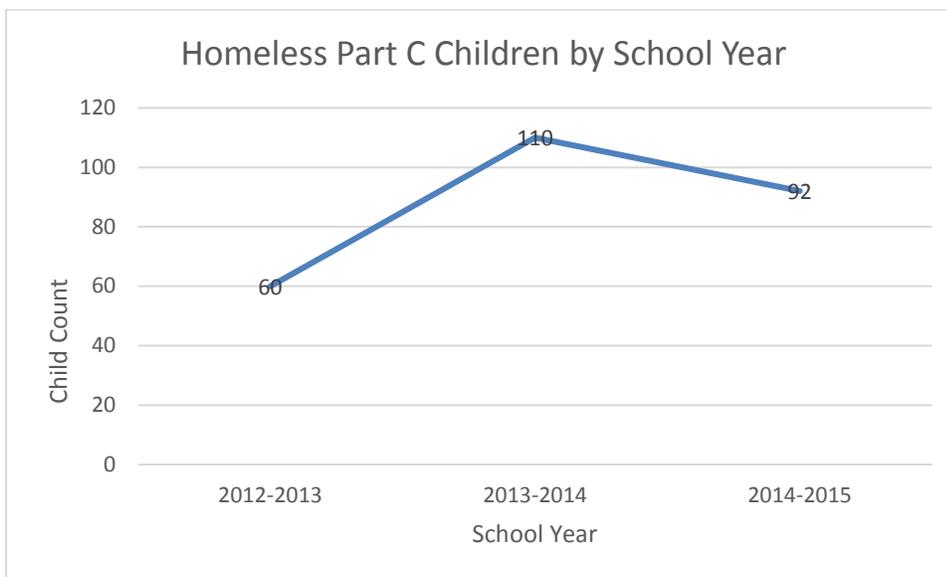


Figure 1, above, shows the trends in the number of homeless children with disabilities who have received Part C services, since MDE focused its child find, public awareness and outreach efforts on the homeless population.

Children under the age of 3 who are eligible for Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services typically receive their services within the home or child care environment or in other community locations where other infants and toddlers and their families frequent. Homeless families are also highly mobile. These factors likely contribute to the difficulty providing early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities who are also homeless.

Since the 2012-2013 school year, the ECSE team from MDE has emphasized with local school district leaders the importance of understanding the definition of homelessness and reporting children, especially infants and toddlers, as homeless. Therefore, it is highly likely that these efforts are contributing factors to the reported increase between the first two report years. It is not clear what may have led to a decrease in the number of children reported as homeless for the 2014-2015 school year. All data is likely still an underrepresentation of the actual number of homeless infants and toddlers who received Part C services during that school year.

So, not only are infants and toddlers who are homeless likely under-identified through child find efforts (i.e., effective outreach is difficult), these children are also still likely to be under-reported as homeless within the MARSS system and receive a relatively low number of early intervention service hours during the school year.

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