

For Secretaries and Enrolling Staff



ENROLLING HOMELESS CHILDREN

INFORMATION FOR SCHOOL SECRETARIES AND REGISTRARS

Signs that may indicate a family attempting to enroll is homeless:

- Parent exhibits anger or embarrassment when asked about current address
- Parent may hide lack of a permanent address with comments such as “it’s a new address, I can’t remember it, I will bring it tomorrow”
- Parent appears confused when asked what school child has last attended
- Parent has no medical or school records in hand
- Parent may create reasons for poor appearance and/or hygiene (“we have been unpacking, traveling, etc.”)

How you can help homeless children and their families in the enrollment process:

- If you think a family may be homeless, assure them that their child can enroll even if the family doesn’t have “a regular place to live” right now
- If possible, take the family to a private location in the building for enrollment
- Offer help in completing forms. Hesitation may indicate an inability to read.
- Enroll the child immediately (without medical records). Ask for the name and city of the last schools attended, call that school and ask to have the records sent
- Without the child’s academic records, proper placement may be difficult. Solicit the help of a teacher to assess the child’s academic status to avoid misplacement
- Give the child paper and pencils to take into the classroom; arrange for lunch
- *Be sensitive, patient, calm and reassuring. You can make a difference.*

Opening Doors – Statewide Access to Education for Homeless Children and Youth

Adult Learning Resource Center, 2626 S. Clearbrook Drive, Arlington Heights, IL 60005
ROE #26 – Hancock/McDonough, 130 S. Lafayette - Suite 200, Macomb, IL
<http://homelessed.net>

*Opening Doors is funded by the Illinois State Board of Education under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
The goal of this initiative is to disseminate information to Illinois schools and shelters as to the educational rights and needs of homeless children and youth.*