



HOW TO HELP HOMELESS CHILDREN IN SCHOOL

INFORMATION FOR SHELTER STAFF

ENROLLMENT PHASE

- Know the schools and district(s) in your area, every school district has a homeless education liaison. Get to know the liaisons in your area.*
- Keep a supply of registration and free school lunch forms from the schools on hand.*
- Make sure parents know that their children are eligible for fee waivers.
- When a family arrives at your shelter, help parents prepare for the enrollment process:
 - help with the decision as to which school to attend (in child's best interest)
 - explain what records will be needed
 - provide an *Opening Doors* Parent Pack folder if you have them available.*
- Complete the "School Enrollment Notice" with the parent, FAX it to the school, and call the school to confirm that this family will be enrolling.*
- Assist the parent in making an appointment to enroll their children.
- Tell the parent what to expect at the time of enrollment (who they will see, what the questions will be, etc.) Remind him/her of the right to immediate enrollment, and to inform the school of their child's special needs.

THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

- Assist the parent in preparing his/her child (grooming, clothing, breakfast, etc.).
- Provide the child with basic school supplies (can be obtained through local donations)
- Work with your local liaison to make sure transportation is covered.
- Parents and child(ren) will be nervous; reassure them.

CONTINUED SUPPORT AT THE SHELTER

- Provide a quiet space for reading and homework.
- Help parent and child find a secure place for books and supplies.
- Provide parent with a sturdy folder to keep important school documents (you may be able to obtain *Opening Doors* Parent Packs from your local liaison).*
- Take steps to assist parent/child establish a schedule for getting up, grooming, getting to the bus stop, etc.
- Encourage parent to call the school and teacher with questions.
- Help parents get to Parent-Teacher conferences.

*** Visit the *Opening Doors* website at: www.homelessed.net for more information and material.**

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

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