

SUPPORTING YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS: RIGHTS, RESOURCES, AND ADVOCACY

*Norma Mercado, McKinney-Vento Liaison, Bastrop ISD
Martin Martinez, Youth Justice Policy Advocate, Texas
Appleseed*

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AGENDA

- McKinney-Vento 101
- Opportunities for youth experiencing homelessness
- Tools for youth to become their own advocates

WHERE WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO RELAX?



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RAISE YOUR HAND IF...

- You have lived experience with homelessness
- You are a service provider or work directly with youth experiencing homelessness
- You work in law, policy, or advocacy that focuses on youth

RESOURCES

- Bastrop ISD Family Resource Center
- Bastrop County Cares: bastropcares.org
- Resource locator: findhelp.org
- Central Texas Food Bank: centraltexasfoodbank.org/food-assistance/get-food-now
- Hotline for teens: teenline.org
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act-<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/support-for-at-risk-schools-and-students/texas-education-for-homeless-children-and-youth-tehcy-program>
- Contact information:
 - Norma Mercado, MSW- BISD Family & Social Services Coordinator
 - Phone: 512-772-7133
 - Email: nmercado@bisdtx.org
 - Text: 512-395-5470



MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT 101

- Established in 1987 [BISD McKinney-Vento 101](#)
- Students who lack a **fix, regular** or **adequate** nighttime residency
- Living in shelters, cars, trailer parks, RV's, substandard living conditions, doubled-up with family/friends
- Right to: School of origin, transportation, enrollment barriers removed, school stability, and equal access
- Every school district has an appointed MV Liaison
- Awareness is key!



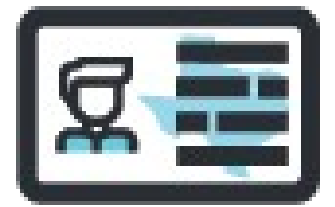
TEXAS APPLESEED

- Texas Appleseed is a public interest justice center that works to change unjust laws and policies that prevent Texans from realizing their full potential.
- We are a non-partisan, 501c3 non-profit
 - Texas Appleseed anchors a dynamic network of pro bono partners and collaborators to develop and advocate for innovative and practical solutions to complex issues.
- We work across all levels of government to advocate for all Texans!



FREE IDS AND DRIVER'S LICENSE!

- In 2019, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill 123 which gives young people experiencing homelessness a fee waiver for their driver's license, identification documents, and birth certificates.
 - Youth need to certify they are experiencing homelessness by completing a simple form.
 - The form can be signed by a McKinney-Vento liaison or a Director of a drop-in shelter, emergency shelter, or transitional living program.
 - This form can be found at the www.WeDoExist.org site.
- Additionally, the new law allows young people experiencing homelessness or who are in foster care to use a school or shelter as their address so they can receive these documents.



INFORMATIONAL FLYER ON IDS

- Informational fliers are available to help youth receive their identification documents:
 - Online PDF downloads are available at www.WeDoExist.org.
 - Texas Appleseed can mail out physical copies as well.

Are you couch surfing? Living in your car, doubled up with other people or in a shelter? Are you in foster care? Are you homeless?

Get your ID or Driver's License — It's free

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|--|---|--|
| Verify you're homeless or in foster care |  Fee Waiver | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talk with your caseworker, school homeless liaison, shelter staff, or transitional living program staff to help get your certification of homelessness or foster care status so you can qualify for the fee waiver |
| Gather documents |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Birth Certificate or other document to verify your US citizenship• Proof of your Social Security Number<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Such as Social Security card, paycheck stub, W-2 form, or letter from the Social Security office• Two Supporting Identity Documents<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This could include your Social Security card, immunization record, school report card, school ID, or Medicaid card |
| See TexasFosterYouth.org or WeDoExist.org for more information | | |
| Apply for ID |  ID Application | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• See dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense/ApplyforLicense.htm for more information• There is no cost for the application |
| Get your ID |  Your ID | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You will get a temporary paper copy of your ID or Driver's License and will get your card in the mail 2-3 weeks after you apply• Talk with someone, as you can use your school address or shelter address to receive your ID card |

Get Your Texas Birth Certificate for Free. Visit TexasFosterYouth.org or WeDoExist.org for Information!

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FREE DRIVER'S ED CLASSES!



- Youth experiencing homelessness and those who are or have aged out of foster care can qualify for the Youth Driver Education Funding (YDEF) Program!
- The YDEF Program was established during the 87th Texas Legislative Session under Senate Bill (SB) 2054 to reduce barriers for these young people to get their driver's licenses.
- Who is eligible for this program?
 - People under the age of 26 who:
 - were in or still is in foster care; OR
 - Is a homeless youth defined by 42 United States Code §11434a
- Youth will have to identify a driver education provider that meets the state's criteria
 - Is registered and licensed with the state and their cost does not exceed twice the average rate of other driver's ed programs within the city.
- Read the [Texas Workforce Commission's final rules](#) for the program on their website.

SCHOOL RIGHTS FOR YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR IN FOSTER CARE

- As of the 2019 Legislative Session, Texas Appleseed successfully advocated for two bills that provide protections for vulnerable youth in school.
- Schools cannot give out-of-school suspension for students experiencing homelessness!
- K-12 public schools are now required to consider a student's foster care or homelessness status in the case of disciplinary action.
- We are working with McKinney-Vento liaisons to help provide guidance on implementing both bills.



HOW CAN YOUTH GET INVOLVED?

- The next session starts soon and there are a lot of opportunities to become an advocate!
 - The regular session is from January 10, 2023, through May 29, 2023.
- Testifying during the Texas Legislative Session
 - There are opportunities to testify in both committee and floor hearings in both chambers of the Legislature.
- Contact your elected officials!
 - You can call your state legislators or drop by their office in person.



RESOURCES FOR ADVOCATES

- The following resources can be used as tools to help any youth or adult become an advocate during the Texas Legislative Session and beyond!
 - [Texas Homeless Youth Handbook](#)
 - [We Do Exist](#) website
 - [Young, Alone, and Homeless in the Lone Star State](#) report from Texas Appleseed and TNOYS
 - [Texas Legislature Glossary](#) from the Texas Legislative Council
 - Texas Appleseed's [Action page](#)



QUESTIONS?

Please feel free to reach out to:

- Norma Mercado, McKinney-Vento Liaison at Bastrop ISD
 - nmercado@bisdtx.org
- Martin Martinez, Youth Justice Policy Advocate at Texas Appleseed
 - mmartinez@texasappleseed.org



THANK YOU!