Research Summary

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students

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Table of Contents

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

2

Introduction

The National Center for Homeless Education provides an annual summary of research on an emerging topic related to educating homeless and highly mobile students. The 2012 research summary, regarding academic resilience in homeless students, prompted readers to ask for more effective strategies to assist students in the classroom. In response to these requests, peer-reviewed research conducted between 2002 and 2013 was examined, cross-referencing the topics of homeless and/or highly mobile student with teaching, learning, classroom, or school.

Numerous studies have examined the characteristics of effective teachers, and many address some aspect of effectiveness with at-risk students.[1] Others have focused more specifically on the teacher characteristics that are most valuable when working with at-risk and highly mobile youth,[2] but very few have honed in on successful teaching strategies exclusively for the subpopulation of at-risk students who are homeless or highly mobile (Popp, Grant, & Stronge, 2011; Shields & Warke, 2010). Most of that research involved case studies which may provide helpful strategies in some situations but are not necessarily generalizable to all HHM students (Miller & Schreiber, 2012). The purpose of this paper is to summarize the teaching and classroom strategies that can smooth transitions for homeless and highly mobile (HHM) students and enable them to achieve academic success.

In a recent literature review that examined, Miller (2011) found only six articles related to how teachers can best serve homeless students, five of which were written before the last reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Act in 2001. Since the extra student support required by the 2001 reauthorization changed the overall approach to homeless education so drastically, the literature review for this paper is limited to peer-reviewed articles based on research conducted since 2002. Despite the dearth of studies specifically addressing the needs of HHM students, there are some "basic, practical steps that…teachers can take to mitigate the effects that homelessness can have in the public school" (Hall, 2007, p. 11). Some of the more successful steps and strategies for teaching and interacting with HHM students and their parents are presented.

Background on Homeless and Highly Mobile Students

For many HHM students, changing schools is accompanied by a variety of negative emotional, social, physical, psychological, and academic effects (Gross & Capuzzi, 2004; Miller & Schreiber, 2012). The emotional challenges often include anxiety, low self-esteem, anger, embarrassment, and depression (Fantuzzo & Perlman, 2007; Helfrich & Beer, 2007).[3] Socially, these students tend to exhibit poor interaction with peers, inappropriate social interaction with adults, and self-isolating, or disruptive behavior (Anooshian, 2003; Kennedy, 2007). Physically, they are much more likely to experience hunger, stress, developmental delays, hyperactivity, and sleep difficulties. They are also more susceptible to domestic, physical, and sexual violence and experience a higher rate of

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[1] Landsman (2006) offers strategies for teaching economically struggling students, many of which could be useful for HHM students (p. 30).

[2] For more information on teaching at-risk and highly mobile students, see Popp, Grant, & Strong, 2011; and Grant, Popp, & Stronge, 2008.

[3] For interventions, visit http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/Search.aspx

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

3

health problems (Helfrich & Beer, 2007). Other commonly exhibited behaviors include difficulty concentrating, psychological and cognitive problems, and learning disabilities (Hall, 2007). All of these can lead to academic failure, school disengagement and, ultimately, dropping out (Rumberger, 2003; South, Haynie, & Bose, 2007). Worse yet, it is not just mobile students who are affected; the instability and chaos created by mobility can extend negative impacts across a classroom and even throughout an entire school (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004).

The McKinney-Vento Act requires that local educational agencies (LEAs) and homeless education liaisons in school districts provide or refer homeless students to certain services. Typically, classroom teachers work most closely with the homeless student population in schools, but, ironically, the only McKinney-Vento requirement addressing the actual classroom is that students must be enrolled in school, which includes participating fully in all school activities. Beyond that, it is usually up to teachers to figure out the best strategies for working with HHM students, even though teachers are not routinely informed about students' living situations.

Teacher Perceptions

Although there are some simple steps that teachers can take to provide continuity and stability in the lives of HHM students, teachers should first understand their responsibility to identify and readjust their own misperceptions about students and families experiencing housing instability (Poland, 2010; Powers-Costello & Swick, 2008). Even children living in extremely high-risk situations, such as those encountered by HHM students, have "identifiable strengths and developmental assets" (Miller & Schreiber, 2012, p. 162). Unfortunately, little effort has been put toward discovering the positive characteristics of these children and how to enhance and build on those to create beneficial outcomes (Israel & Jozefowicz-Simbeni, 2009).

When students are continually moving in and out of their classrooms, teachers have to make corresponding adjustments and spend excessive time reviewing material instead of providing the instruction originally planned. Therefore, they view high mobility as one of the primary obstacles both to student success and to their own effectiveness (Reynolds, Chen, & Herber, 2009). Some teachers perceive homeless children as more difficult, which then impacts how they interact with these students – and even whether they want to interact (Poland, 2010; Nabors, 2005). HHM students may already feel they do not belong, and treating them as outsiders only exacerbates the problem.

Teachers, especially those working with HHM students, can help each other develop more accurate perspectives that empower the teaching and learning process. Powers-Costello & Swick (2008) followed four teachers who kept a journal of their thoughts and met weekly for collaborative reflection. During the group meetings, they read from their journals and

> *There is no place for prejudgment in the classroom. If we look at a student whose head is on the desk each day or whose clothes are dirty and decide that that student is deficient in character, we will lose that student from the start.*
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> (Landsman, 2006, p. 30)

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

4

used critical questions that led to an open dialogue. Although the group did not specifically focus on HHM students, the same process could be used to transform teacher perspectives of these students. This could be accomplished simply by using this method and re-centering the discussion questions on how to rise above preconceived ideas in order to identify and build on the strengths HHM children. Through careful "kid watching" (Owoki & Goodman, 2002) it is possible to learn to recognize the skills and knowledge students possess and build upon them.

Kim (2013) argues that awareness information about homeless children and their families should be included in both teacher education programs and their ongoing professional development. Many students in teacher education programs have developed strong beliefs and values about teaching and learning, but they are typically assigned to teach students who have very different cultural and social class backgrounds from their own (Coffey, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2006). It is easy to stigmatize homelessness, viewing the living situation as a result of character flaws or unwise choices, but when pre-service teachers have multiple field experiences in underserved areas, such as urban school districts and community-based programs, it allows them to "disrupt their own biases" (Coffey, 2010, p. 336). In a study conducted at a homeless shelter learning center, pre-service teachers saw firsthand the complexity of children's lives, which prompted them to re-examine their deficit preconceptions (Kim, 2013).

Teachers who continually learn about students' lives and the barriers to their success are more likely to reframe their deficit viewpoints to asset-focused ones. This change of view is demonstrated by more positive responses to and stronger relationships with students, which results in increased opportunities to exert a more supportive and affirming influence on students and their families. Teachers at one school attributed the sparse parental attendance at school meetings to parental apathy. After learning that only about 10% of the parents had access to transportation, the teachers began scheduling parent visits at shelters and discovered that homeless parents very much wanted to be involved in their children's education, but they sometimes needed accommodations to do so (Landsman, 2006). When teachers become more informed about the effects of homelessness and high mobility, they adopt more accurate perceptions and take a step toward better understanding and supporting the needs of students and families.

Strategies to Help Teachers Realign Their Own Perceptions

◊ Examine personal beliefs about homelessness to become aware of biases and perceptions. To enhance understanding, take a course, volunteer at a homeless shelter or soup kitchen, or form a discussion group.

◊ Learn about the McKinney-Vento Act and its legal protections for homeless children and unaccompanied youth.

◊ Become familiar with available community resources specifically for children and families in order to advocate and network to help meet students' needs.

◊ Homelessness and high mobility can include peer problems, poor hygiene, frequent absences, inappropriate clothing, and incomplete homework. Learn to

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

5

recognize the warning signs.

◊ Avoid assuming that HHM children all share common behaviors and attitudes.

◊ Use staff work days to go into neighborhoods and homeless shelters to meet with parents.

Classroom Environment/Culture

Homeless and highly mobile students do not comprise a homogeneous group (Huntington, Buckner, & Bassuk, 2008). Aside from a few common "homeless accompaniments" (Miller & Schreiber, 2012, p. 148), such as higher rates of physical and mental health problems and higher mobility, there is no one set of attributes common to all, nor are there systematic methods to engage all of them. Much of the past research on HHM children and youth involved case studies, which provided some helpful strategies, but which also may be dependent on the particular situation related addressed in the study. Therefore, educators cannot assume that all strategies work in all situations; they must remember to factor in the impact of the overall setting.

All students need to feel a sense of belonging, and time at school may be the best part of the day for HHM students. School can be a place of refuge, providing a sense of stability they are unable to get anywhere else (Knowlton, 2006). Many mobile students lack structure and need to feel the security of an organized, predictable classroom and school schedule, so providing a well-established, daily routine gives a sense of stability and helps children feel that the classroom is a calm, peaceful place to learn (Knowlton, 2006; Monkman, MacGillivray, & Leyva, 2003). Plants, photographs of students, a class pet, and even home furniture can provide students with a comfortable sense of stability. Offering a small storage area in the classroom can be a welcome addition for those who have no other place to store their belongings.

Providing a consistent and caring environment is the basis for establishing quality relationships between teachers and students; just knowing that teachers care builds self-esteem and makes students more likely to regularly attend school and put more effort into their schoolwork (Aviles de Bradley, 2011; Knowlton, 2006). Teacher support and peer acceptance have a positive influence on attitudes toward school among children who experience more school mobility (Gruman, Harachi, Abbott, Catalano, & Fleming, 2008). As one teacher said, "It's all about relationships, developing personal relationships" (Isernhagen & Bulkin, 2011, p. 21). When students feel more comfortable in the environment, it becomes far easier for them to succeed academically.

It is not uncommon for HHM students to experience shame or embarrassment, feeling that others believe they are in their living situation because they did something wrong. Teachers who are sensitive to the feelings of HHM children can create a climate of acceptance and understanding by simply listening when the students want to disclose their feelings. When students are not comfortable voicing their concerns, they may be able to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences through writing. Keeping a journal can provide a means for working through difficult situations, such as being teased about poor hygiene or being asked for a home address or phone

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

6

number by a well-meaning peer. Students should have the right to decide whether or not they wish to share their journal. Teachers cannot know the circumstances of all students, and they may not know which ones are HHM, but they can create a culture where all students feel comfortable discussing their living situations without fear of embarrassment (Shields & Warke, 2010).

Teachers can help smooth the transition and adjustment of new HHM students by taking actions before, during, and after their arrival. In schools with high rates of mobility, Rumberger (2003) suggests that teachers' advance planning include developing: a) learning packets containing background information that students can use as a catch-up tool; b) assessments for subject matter, reading comprehension, and writing; c) a personal information assessment or journal assignment, which will both help the teacher get to know the student and provide a sample of writing skills; and d) a short list of class rules and procedures. As students arrive, the teacher can provide these items and then connect new students to others who enrolled late but are succeeding.

The adjustment problems that students face can last for an extended period of time, so teachers need to establish strategies that will continue to address the needs of new students long after their enrollment. A variety of strategies are offered below.

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Strategies to Help Teachers Improve the Classroom Environment/ Culture

◊   Examine the student's record for grades, attendance, and background information.

◊   Spend some individual time in the first couple of days to encourage students, ensure they are adjusting well, and that they understand your willingness to help.

◊   Offer tutoring or review time before or after school or at lunch.

◊   Watch for indications that the student is struggling to adjust academically, socially, or psychologically.

◊   Create referral procedures for new students who have difficulty adjusting.

◊   Form a "new student" group.

◊   Set up a mentoring or peer buddy program.

◊   Offer a welcome bag or backpack with school supplies and snacks.

◊   Keep snacks in the classroom for students who are so hungry they fall asleep.

◊   Respect students' right to privacy. Everyone does not need to know about their living arrangements.

◊   Ensure that students do not feel singled out because of their living circumstances.

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Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

7

Academics

Although teachers deal with many at-risk students, the homeless ones are usually characterized as the most prone to academic difficulties. This group is followed by housed students living in poverty (Bowman, Dukes, & Moore, 2012; Cutuli, et al., 2009). Some HHM students are resilient enough to successfully withstand school moves and still achieve educational success, but frequent school changes are increasingly detrimental (Jozefowicz-Simbeni & Israel, 2006; Moore, 2013). Therefore, it is helpful to assess incoming students in order to identify those who are highly mobile and target interventions for them.

School records can be used to identify risk factors, such as grade retention and excessive absenteeism, but teachers often have to place a new student at an appropriate level in the classroom quickly and without the help of school records, which may not be immediately available[4]. Utilizing informal assessments for incoming students to determine strengths, weaknesses, and skill levels can minimize the loss of instructional time. And with the high rate of transience and education gaps among HHM students, it is best for teachers not to wait until there is time to administer formal assessments before recording their own observations (Knowlton, 2006).

It is useful to have basic assessments that can be easily and readily administered both to learn about the knowledge, abilities, and needs of incoming students and to offset the potential negative effects of sudden departures. In some cases, teachers may even create their own analysis, which could involve having students do a short reading evaluation, or simply pointing at some concepts in a textbook and asking if they look familiar. Other ideas for assessments include asking students to talk about where they have been and what they remember learning in their former schools[5].

Homeless and highly mobile students benefit when teachers conduct ongoing, formative evaluations based on their own observations and continuous assessments (Popp, Grant, & Stronge, 2011). Studies found positive impacts on HHM student learning when teachers viewed students more holistically (incorporating affective and non-cognitive abilities) and used the data effectively to inform their instruction and planning (Demie, Lewis, & Taplin, 2005; Popp, et al., 2011). Research with HHM students shows that the strategies teachers use to serve this population improve their instruction with the general population as well (Isernhagen & Bulkin, 2011; Popp, et al., 2011).

School districts do not routinely measure the assets that promote academic resilience in disadvantaged students (Obradović, et al., 2009). Similarly, traditional achievement tests do not adequately assess a student's "soft skills" (Heckman & Kautz, 2012, p. 451) or non-cognitive abilities, such as motivation and social adaptability which promote the formation of cognitive skills (Cunha & Heckman, 2008; Jackson, 2012). Based solely on standardized test scores, there may be knowledge gaps with mobile students, but Noll & Watkins, 2003/2004 found their "interpretive skills are sometimes remarkable, revealing more insight than … expected" (p. 364), and they attributed these skills partly to the students' need to problem solve for survival. Recent research has increasingly

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[4] For assistance with appropriate placement, see NCHE's brief, Prompt and Proper Placement: Enrolling Students without Records, at http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/briefs/assessment.pdf

[5] Noll & Watkins (2003/2004) suggest questions specifically related to literacy.

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

8

associated such non-cognitive abilities with longer term outcomes like continued educational attainment and labor market success (Farrington, Roderick, Allensworth, Nagaoka, Keyes, Johnson, et al., 2012; Heckman & Kautz, 2012; Jackson, 2012). Although homeless students may lack certain school-based skills, they are likely to be adept at other, out-of-school skills. For example, Popp, Grant, and Strong (n.d.) report that "If you're homeless, you know more ways to use scissors than anyone ever thought of. They have a lot of knowledge" (p. 17).

When parents cannot read English or struggle emotionally, physically, or mentally, children often take the lead, figuring out how to complete forms and respond to questions in order to obtain services. Verbally and in writing, these students have had to learn how to explain, interpret, and synthesize. The family's survival often depends on the child's ability, not only to make sense of rules and regulations, but also to navigate the social services system. HHM students, just like all others, learn best when their background and strengths are recognized, valued, and used as building blocks. Recognizing the intangibles that students bring to the classroom helps teachers to embed teaching and learning within familiar social and cultural contexts.

Murphy & Tobin (2011) advise teachers to focus on advancing mobile students along with their peers while simultaneously addressing remedial needs. HHM students benefit when there are flexible ways to obtain academic credit. Partial credit programs and credit recovery programs seem to be especially helpful in allowing mobile students to fill gaps in their coursework, as they allow students to gain credit for all the work they have completed. Maintaining high academic expectations while also accounting for children's personal issues means that teachers have to be flexible and thoughtful in their decision making for this population (MacGillivray, Ardell, & Curwen, 2010).

Some teachers of HHM students recommend continuously monitoring student progress and searching for different ways to present concepts, such as using different words, different methods, and repetition (Isernhagen & Bulkin, 2011). Many teachers seek support from their peers, sharing what works and what does not work with mobile students. Co-teaching is another popular option. Teachers with high classroom turnover who do not adopt different techniques can spend so much time trying to help mobile students catch up that they no longer challenge their non-mobile students to the same extent (Isernhagen & Bulkin, 2011).

Assigning coursework that encourages creativity and critical thinking is a vital part of education; doing so without requiring a vast amount of parental assistance and financial expense is even more necessary with today's high unemployment, widespread poverty, and increasing homelessness (Shields & Warke, 2010). Hall (2007) suggests that teachers consider the impact of assignments on both advantaged and disadvantaged families and then offer alternatives, provide materials, and make workspace available to complete the assignments, without stigmatizing students. Policies that allow flexibility to complete assignments and projects at school are also helpful for ensuring academic success, as children in temporary living arrangements may have less time and space for homework (Murphy & Tobin, 2011). Parents in shelters or transitional living programs may have little free time due to mandatory meetings and classes, so it is important to equip parents to be more effective educational advocates (MacGillivray, et al., 2010). When asked what would best assist them to help their children with school work, the most common response from mothers was "better understanding of students' course topics" (Miller & Schreiber, 2012, p 169).

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

9

Strategies to Help Teachers Improve the Academic Performance of HHM Students

◊ Provide clear, achievable expectations. While it is important to consider their challenges and show compassion to HHM students, do not lower academic requirements for them.

◊ Offer tutoring. Thirty or forty minutes a few times a week can dramatically increase a homeless child's achievement level (Knowlton, 2006).

◊ Assemble a packet with information and expectations for each class.

◊ Be aware that each school move can delay academic progress and that many HHM students find it more difficult to engage and learn because of their prior negative school experiences, such as attending schools where transient students were not well supported.

◊ Be flexible with assignments. Some tasks, such as projects requiring materials that students cannot afford, might be difficult or impossible for mobile students to complete. Assignments to write about a summer vacation, conduct a backyard science project, construct a family tree, or bring in a baby picture can be impossible for a child who has moved frequently or suddenly. Instead, offer several alternatives from which all students can choose.

◊ Allow students to finish assignments independently, or give them the opportunity to complete tasks at their own pace.

◊ Create a portfolio to document the student's work, personal characteristics, and preferred learning style. If the student must transfer, the portfolio offers the next teacher a quick, easy way to pick up where the former teacher left off (Berliner, 2002).

◊ Rather than interpreting parental absences as a lack of commitment to their children's education, ask families what you can do to support an ongoing partnership. Phone conferences might be a good alternative. Initiating an interactive journal with the parent about what's happening at school and at home could help with teacher–parent dialogue.

◊ Offer after-hours (evening or Saturday) and off-site parent meetings.

◊ Talk with parents about class expectations and the challenges of changing schools mid-year.

Curriculum

The experiences of mobile children differ from those of their stably housed peers, and this influences the ways they understand and interpret information. They need a relevant curriculum

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

10

that recognizes their needs in the learning process, by offering a safe and respectful environment where they can explore and interpret difficult issues. Some teachers find ways to address those issues with slight alterations to the regular curriculum. For instance, the curriculum in one first-grade social studies class includes understanding one's home and place in the surrounding community. When the children were assigned to make a three-dimensional replica of their home environments, one student (whose family was living in a car) added wheels to his house. Instead of assuming that the child was confused about his house, the astute teacher recognized his ability to "merge his lived reality with the … reality … in school" (Noll & Watkins, 2003-2004, p. 365). Integrating art, music, movement, and other non-traditional activities offers a means for children who struggle academically to increase their learning and participate more fully in the classroom learning venue by including their own experiences. Additionally, including these opportunities creates avenues for children to reveal strengths that otherwise might go unnoticed and provides encouragement to reflect and imagine future possibilities (MacGillivray, Ardell, & Curwen, 2010; Noll & Watkins, 2003-2004).

Because of their chaotic living situations, HHM youth often feel they have less control over their lives than other youth. When students have input concerning their education, they are more engaged; the more they are given a voice, the more they can be engaged in demanding schoolwork. Landsman (2006) relates the following examples of this principle: One teacher allowed his AP English students to write assigned papers on their choice of topics as long as they connected their personal interests to themes from the literature they were studying. Students could also choose to fulfill course requirements by writing a play, researching music, or composing a short story. In another instance, an immigrant student was worried that her parents would be deported, so the teacher used those concerns as an incentive, challenging the student to undertake a project on immigration in order to better understand the issues. While it is important that teachers hold all students to the same instructional standards, they can do this in different ways through various assignments.

Strategies to Help Teachers Improve the Curriculum for HHM Students

◊   Allow a variety of method and topic options for student assignments.

◊   Broaden the diversity of families depicted in the books and materials in the classroom to include homeless, foster, and other mobile family and youth situations.

◊   Consider doing a unit on foster care during May (National Foster Care Month[6]) or on hunger and homelessness in November (National Homeless Youth Awareness month and National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week)[7].

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[6] The National Foster Care Month website is http://www.fostercaremonth.org/

[7] National Coalition for the Homeless and National Student Campaign Against Hunger & Homelessness co-sponsor an annual National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week. More information is at http://www.nationalhomeless.org/projects/awareness/index.html. The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse has information to increase the awareness of children and adults about hunger and homelessness at http://www.servicelearning.org/topic/area-service

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

11

Social

School moves have a harmful effect on social engagement while developing positive peer relationships, and socially detached students usually perform worse academically than those who are well connected (Fantuzzo, LeBoeuf, Chen, Rouse, & Culhane, 2012; Miller, 2011). High mobility and living in unstable environments creates unique affective needs in children and youth (Popp, et al., 2011). As newcomers, mobile adolescents are less likely to be selected for school activities or considered to be close friends by their classmates, thus it stands to reason that mobile students are more affected by social and behavioral problems (Gross & Capuzzi, 2004). Even more detrimentally, when mobile youth are integrated into peer groups, it is usually into those groups whose members are low-performing students who do not highly value educational success (South, et al., 2007).

On a positive note, peer acceptance can be a positive counter-influence to risk factors (Gruman, et al., 2008; Vance, 2002; Luthar, 2006; Masten, 2007). Therefore, successful transition strategies include connecting mobile students to the educational environment and to their successful peers. A peer buddy can help ease a youths' fears about encountering new school situations by making them feel more comfortable and incorporating them into school life. Buddies can show new students around unfamiliar territory and teach them the rules, routines and procedures of the classroom to help them fit in more successfully. Having a friend early on enables new students to participate in lunchroom conversations, playtime recreation, and other student-centered activities (Knowlton, 2006). Cultivating relationships in the classroom benefits both mobile and non-mobile students as they jointly enjoy a healthy and supportive classroom community.

In addition, other adults, such as foster grandparents or community helpers, may offer the stability and positive interaction necessary for building self-esteem (Knowlton, 2006). Homeless parents are often consumed with meeting the everyday needs of their family and have little time to spend nurturing their children, reading with them, or just initiating conversations, which are necessary for developing critical language skills. Connecting a student with an adult in the school or community can also provide encouragement and affirmation.

Strategies for Teachers to Increase Social Engagement

◊   Assign a peer mentor or buddy to facilitate an easier adjustment period for new students.

◊   Connect the student with an adult mentor from the school or community. Offer older youth the option of choosing the person.

Conclusion

School mobility not only creates havoc for individual students, it can adversely affect classrooms and entire schools. Research reveals that some activities can reduce the negative impact. For example, when teachers identify and adjust their personal misconceptions about students and families

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

12

experiencing housing instability, they create classroom environments that ensure success for HHM students. Teachers can identify and build on the positive characteristics of HHM students and counteract the harmful effects of high mobility by learning about students' lives and the barriers to their success. By gaining an accurate understanding of the issues, educators are better prepared to help students feel welcome and secure. The use of assessments upon enrollment of highly mobile students furthers student success by transitioning students quickly into the classroom and allowing teachers and other school staff to ensure students are connected with beneficial groups and programs. Providing a consistent, caring environment that includes quality relationships with and among students creates a healthier school environment.

While it has been shown that the stress of school mobility frequently leads to negative results inside and outside the classroom, the unique life experiences of HHM students often help them develop non-cognitive skills, which predict and produce "success in life" for students in general (Heckman & Kautz, 2012, p. 451). Unfortunately, non-cognitive skills are not adequately captured by traditional school testing, and to date, there is no impetus to identify and enhance these characteristics in HHM students.

To build on the immediate steps that educators can take to improve the academic outcomes of HHM students, further research is needed to spur the development of new procedures to identify and implement effective strategies. Specifically,

◊ researchers should include HHM students in future studies on both teacher effectiveness and the relationship between cognitive and non-cognitive issues;

◊ teacher education curricula should incorporate issues related to the education of HHM students; and

◊ teachers should participate in formal and informal professional development opportunities that address working with students and families who are highly mobile.

Further attention to the challenges facing HHM students is warranted as schools continue to develop learning models and examine the impact of relationships on learning. Due to the extreme nature of the challenges facing HHM students, focusing on meeting their educational needs is likely to impact all students in a school, regardless of their stability at school and home.

Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

13

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Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

14

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15

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16

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Teaching and Classroom Strategies for Homeless and Highly Mobile Students
National Center for Homeless Education | www.serve.org/nche

17

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About the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)

Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) serves as an information clearinghouse for people seeking to remove or overcome educational barriers and to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for children and youth experiencing homelessness. The Center also supports educators and service providers through producing training and awareness materials and providing training at regional and national conferences and events.

NCHE is part of the larger organization of
the SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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18