The McKinney-Vento Homeless

Assistance Act, Title X, Part C defines

homelessness as “individuals who lack a

fixed, regular and adequate nighttime

residence.”2

The definition includes children and

youth who are:

* Sharing the housing of other

persons due to loss of housing,

economic hardship, or a similar

reason (sometimes referred to as

doubled-up);

* Living in motels, hotels, trailer

parks, or camping grounds due to

lack of alternative

accommodations;

* Living in emergency or transitional

shelters;

* Abandoned in hospitals;
* Awaiting foster care placement;
* Using 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;

* Living in cars, parks, public spaces,

abandoned buildings, substandard

housing, bus or train stations, or

similar settings; and

Migratory children who qualify as

homeless because they are living

in circumstances described above.

The Government Accountability Office

(GAO) recently reported that the U.S.

Interagency Council on Homelessness

(Interagency Council) and federal

agencies have taken steps to develop a

common vocabulary for discussing

homelessness and related terms.

CHILD TRENDS

The National Center on Family Homelessness reports that more than 1.6 million children - or one in 45 children - were homeless annually in America between 2006 and 2010. It is estimated that 40 percent of homeless children, or roughly 640,000 over that timeframe, were under the age of six.

**Homeless Trends**

* According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the number of homeless families increased by 20 percent from 2007 to 2010.
* The typical homeless family is headed by a young, single woman in her 20s, with limited education (often less than a high school degree), with two children (one or both under the age of 6 years old).

**The Negative Effects of Homelessness on Child Development**

* Turbulence: Having two or more changes in residence, parent’s employment or schools in the previous twelve months.
* Children who are homeless may suffer from hunger, poor physical and emotional health, and missed educational opportunities.
* Homeless children are more likely than other children to have moderate to severe acute and chronic health problems, and less access to medical and dental care.
* Homeless children have three times the rate of emotional and behavioral problems, such as anxiety, depression, sleep problems, withdrawal and aggression.
* Children without stable homes are more than twice as likely as others to repeat a school grade, be expelled or suspended, or drop out of high school.
* Kindergarten and first-grade children (ages 5-7) living in homeless shelters had significantly poorer academic outcomes.
* Children presented higher rates of both internalizing behaviors (e.g., depression, anxiety) and externalizing behaviors (e.g., conduct disorder, hostility).

**Child Trends Volume 3, Issue 1-February 2012**

*Whether you're buying your first home or already own your home, homeownership education is for you.*

**Local Programs**

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St. Louis, MO 63108

Phone: 314.367-3440

***Neighborhood Housing Services of St. Louis, Inc.***

4156 Manchester

St. Louis, MO 63110

Phone: 314.533-0600 Ext. 104

***Justine Peterson Housing & Reinvestment Corporation***

1023 N. Grand

St. Louis, MO 63106

Phone: 314.533.2411

***Community Action Agency of St. Louis County***

2709 Woodson Road

Overland, MO 63114

Phone: 314.863.0015

***Beyond Housing***

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