**2011-2012 UPPER PENINSULA HOMELESS STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**FINAL REPORT**

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**Program Description**

The Upper Peninsula Homeless Student Assistance Program (UPHSAP) is a regional program serving seventy-three school districts and seven intermediate school districts (ISDs) and regional education agencies (RESAs) in the Upper Peninsula (U.P.). This consortia project seeks to improve the academic achievement of children and youth experiencing homelessness by coordinating accessibility to supports and services. The professional development and technical assistance provided facilitates the delivery of timely supports and services to help homeless children and youth (HCY) enroll, remain, and ultimately succeed in school.

The U.P. Homeless Student Assistance Program grant coordinator collaborated with the following team of professionals to address and meet the needs of homeless children and youth:

*73 Upper Peninsula School District Personnel (Homeless Liaisons, Administrators, etc.)*

*U.P. Shelter Care Providers*

*Region 1 Continuum of Care Team*

*Eight U.P. Regional Continuum of Care Teams*

*Voices for Youth Program Case Managers*

*Child and Family Services of the U.P. Case Managers*

*Seven U.P. Center for Education Development (UPCED) Facilitators*

**Collaboration**

During the 2011-2012 school year the U.P. Homeless Student Assistance Program engaged in a new partnership with Continuum of Care (CoC) partners and UPCED facilitators to further expand the support and services for students and youth experiencing homelessness. A visual representation of the U.P. Homeless Student Assistance Program collaboration is located at the end of this final report. UPCED facilitators from each ISD/RESA served as regional support for district homeless liaisons providing technical assistance on McKinney-Vento eligibility and services. Furthermore, eight Community McKinney-Vento partners were contracted through the CoC partners, Voices for Youth (VFY) and Child and Family Services (CFS), to work with district homeless liaisons, homeless families, unaccompanied youth and school personnel within each of the eight U.P. Continuum of Care regions. The Community M-V partners collaborated with district homeless liaisons to meet the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requirements and HEARTH Act assurances related to education.

During the 2011-2012 school year, Community M-V partners:

Collaborated with the Upper Peninsula Homeless Student Assistance Program and school district liaisons to assist in the identification of homeless families as well as informing these homeless families and youth of their eligibility for McKinney-Vento education services.

Considered the educational needs of children when placed families in emergency or transitional shelter and to the maximum extent practicable, placed families with children as close as possible to their school of origin so as not to disrupt the children’s education.

Established policies and practices that are consistent with the McKinney-Vento Act related to educational supports and services for children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Collaborated with U.P. Homeless Student Assistance Program representatives to ensure that children were enrolled in school and connected to the appropriate services within the community, including early childhood programs such as Head Start, Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and McKinney- Vento education services.

In addition, Community M-V partners:

Utilized *Release of Information* forms for use between schools and agencies.

Met individually with school liaisons at a minimum two times per year and logged meeting outcomes in quarterly reports. Met with newly designated liaisons as soon as possible to provide information about Community M.V. Partnership role.

Contacted district liaisons as soon as a homeless student was identified. Provided a copy of the education assessment form from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to district liaisons, district data managers, and grant coordinator.

Informed parents and unaccompanied youth of their rights to enroll in school, and provided parents with a brochure outlining their educational rights.

Linked parents and unaccompanied youth with district homeless liaison and appropriate services within the community.

Assisted homeless students in enrolling in school.

Provided awareness for school personnel about M-V in collaboration with district liaison.

Placed NCHE posters in schools and community (Posters for Youth and for Parents).

Attended regional CoC meetings.

Provided M-V information and materials at CoC Community CONNECT events and made it available to schools to distribute at Open Houses, Parent Teacher Conferences, etc.

Retrieved regional data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Systems Administrator and provided quarterly regional HMIS data reports, progress reports and activity logs to grant coordinator.

**Professional Development and Technical Assistance:**

The goal of the Upper Peninsula Homeless Student Assistance Program is to improve the educational outcomes for children and youth in homeless situations. During the 2011-2012 school year, supports and services were designed to ensure that all homeless children and youth enrolled, remained, and succeeded in school. Professional development and technical assistance was provided, addressing topics related to meeting the educational needs of homeless children and youth, including, but not limited to the following:

Understanding the McKinney Vento Legislation

Addressing liaison responsibilities under McKinney-Vento legislation

Identifying homeless children and unaccompanied youth

Assisting homeless children and youth enroll, attend, and succeed in school

Providing homeless families, children, and unaccompanied youth assistance in accessing timely & appropriate educational and community services

Strengthening established partnerships with community service providers

Working in collaboration with program partners to meet the needs of HCY

Making referrals to appropriate community agencies

Assessing and eliminating potential barriers that would prevent homeless children and youth from enrolling, remaining and succeeding in school

Utilizing NCHE webinars and materials, “Homelessness: What You Need to Know” DVD’s, Homeless Liaison Toolkit and other pertinent materials

Completing the MDE McKinney-Vento Self Assessment

Providing ongoing consultation to resolve ongoing challenges related to meeting the educational needs of homeless children and youth

**Supports and Services Provided**

Homeless children and youth in the U.P. received various supports and services aimed at helping students enroll, remain, and succeed in school. Services included, but were not limited to the following:

Tutoring

Counseling

Enrollment Assistance

Transportation

Expedited Evaluations

School supplies

Immunizations

Mentoring

Payment of Fees for School Activities

Emergency Food, Shelter, Clothing

Referrals for housing, medical, dental or other health and support services

**Data Collection**

As a result of the expanded collaboration with UPCED facilitators and Community M-V partners, the number of consortium members that identified, served, and reported homeless students in MSDS during the 2011-2012 school year increased. Fifty-one consortium members reported 745 homeless students in MSDS during the 2011-2012 school year, a 45 percent increase from the previous school year. In 2009-2010, twenty-three consortium members reported 182 homeless students in MSDS. During the 2010-2011 school year, thirty-six consortium members reported 412 homeless students in MSDS.