

# APPENDIX H

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Homeless Liaison Survey Description, Instrument &  
Summary of Results

## School Homeless Liaison Survey

**Goal:** To collect input on the role, workload, and services/support provided by homeless liaisons as well as their perceptions on the needs, gaps, and barriers for homeless youth to receive needed services/supports.

**Development:** This survey was developed with the input of TNOYS staff, Dr. Sarah Narendorf & team, University of Houston, Diane Santa Maria, University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Jeanne Stamp, Texas Homeless Education Office (THEO) as well as 9 homeless liaisons representing a range of schools and districts from across Texas. All reviewed topics and specific questions.

**Piloting:** Once the questions/survey was entered into Survey Monkey, it was piloted by those 9 homeless liaisons as well as TNOYS staff. Based on their feedback, question formats and wording were clarified to be more user friendly.

**Implementation:** An introductory email and the survey link were sent in a personal email from TNOYS Executive Director directly to the full list of Texas homeless liaisons (provided to TNOYS by THEO) on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and recipients were asked to complete the survey by August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016. This week was selected because school liaisons were required to attend professional development prior to students returning to school. As an incentive, instructions were include on how to enter a \$100 gift card raffle. In order to increase response rate, another email was sent to the full list of liaisons on September 12, 2016 and the survey was closed on September 26, 2016. The survey was also publicized during roundtables.

- Liaison distribution list: Approximately 1,254 people were on the initial list; There were a number of bounce backs – estimated to be 30% - where the contact had left the position for approximately 878 valid email addresses
- Final # of survey responses: 392
- Response rate = approximately 44.6%



# TEXAS NETWORK OF YOUTH SERVICES

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## Survey for Texas Homeless Liaisons on Youth Homelessness and Housing Instability

### I. Basics

***Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your input is critical as we at Texas Network of Youth Services (TNOYS) work with University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work, Texas Dept. of Housing and Community Affairs, and Texas Appleseed to better understand the needs of youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability. Please share your honest opinions in as much detail as possible. Your responses will be confidential; we will only share overall themes in aggregate form and won't attach your name or the name of your school or school district to any quotes used. Please contact [cgendron@tnoys.org](mailto:cgendron@tnoys.org) if you have any questions or concerns about the survey.***

***\*At the end of this survey, you'll have the chance to enter a raffle drawing for a \$100 Target gift card as a thank you for your time.***

1. How would you describe your county?

- Rural
- Suburban
- Small to Medium Urban Metro Area
- Large Metro Urban Metro Area

2. Are you the homeless liaison for (a/an) ...

- Single School
- Multiple Schools
- Entire District
- Other (please specify)

3. How many students are within your designated school(s) or district (i.e. for how many students are you the designated homeless liaison)? (please enter a whole number without commas)

4. How many homeless students did you personally work with last school year? (please enter a whole number without commas)



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**II. Your Job Duties**

Please describe your current position and job duties.

5. Your Current Job Title:

6. If you have multiple titles, please list up to three primary job titles:

1:

2:

3:

7. How many months have you worked in your current position?

8. What are the qualifications for your job (e.g. educational requirements, work experience, licensing/credentials)?

9. Please describe your overall job duties, including any homeless liaison duties:

10. Which job duty do you think your supervisor views as most important?

11. Which job duty do you view as most important?

12. What is your most time-consuming job duty?

13. In general, how many hours per week do you spend on your homeless liaison job duties?

14. In general, how many hours per week do you spend on duties unrelated to being a homeless liaison?

15. Do you feel you have sufficient time to carry out your homeless liaison duties?

Yes

s

No



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16. What is the average number of homeless students you personally may work with during a week?

17. How many hours, on average, do you estimate you spend working with an individual homeless student per week?

18. When working with homeless students and their parents, can you make enough time to ensure the legal requirements for helping the young person are met?

Yes

No



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Subtitle VII-B of the **McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act** ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. The act defines the requirements and responsibilities of local homeless education liaisons, listed in the rows below:

19. Which homeless liaison requirements are most challenging to meet (where "1" represents "not challenging at all" and "10" represents "most challenging")?

	1 - Not Challenging At All	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 - Most Challenging
Homeless children and youths are identified by school personnel and through coordination activities with other entities and agencies;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Homeless children and youths enroll in, and have full and equal opportunity to succeed in, schools of that local educational agency;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Homeless families and youths receive educational services for which they are eligible, including Head Start, Even Start, and preschool programs administered by the local educational agency, and referrals to healthcare, dental, mental health services;	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

1 - Not  
Challenging  
At All

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10 - Most  
Challenging

The parents or guardians of homeless children and youths are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children;

Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated where such children and youth receive services under this Act, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens;

Enrollment disputes are mediated in accordance with paragraph (3)(E); and

The parent or guardian of a homeless child or youth, and any unaccompanied youth, is fully informed of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin, and is assisted in accessing transportation to the school.

20. What stands in the way of meeting the most challenging requirements?



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21. Are you able to adjust your workload to accommodate the needs of homeless students when you need to?

Yes

No

22. If you checked "Yes", how do you get the support you need?

23. If you checked "No", how do you communicate with your supervisor?

24. How much support do you have or receive from your school/district?

0 - No Support

10 - Complete Support

25. Is there anything else you want to say about your time usage as a Homeless Liaison?



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### III. Homeless Student Services You Provide

26. Please choose the three highest needs of the homeless students you serve.

	1st	2nd	3rd
School Enrollment Assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
FAFSA Completion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SNAP Application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TANF Application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School Supplies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advocacy at School	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support Counseling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Free Lunch Program Enrollment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health Needs Assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental Health Needs Assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connection to Housing Supports	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supportive Services Outside School Setting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

27. Please indicate which services you typically provide yourself, and which services you typically refer to

others.

If you typically refer to others, please indicate to whom you make referrals in the box below each row.

I can provide this service.

I make referrals to someone else for this service.

School Enrollment Assistance

Referral(s) Made:

FAFSA Completion

Referral(s) Made:

SNAP Application

Referral(s) Made:

TANF Application

Referral(s) Made:

Transportation

Referral(s) Made:

School Supplies

Referral(s) Made:

Advocacy at School

Referral(s) Made:

Support Counseling

Referral(s) Made:

Free Lunch Program Enrollment

I can provide this service.

I make referrals to someone else for this service.

Health Needs  
Assessment

Referral(s) Made:

Mental Health Needs  
Assessment

Referral(s) Made:

Connection to Housing  
Supports

Referral(s) Made:

Supportive Services  
Outside School Setting

Referral(s) Made:

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#### **IV. Additional Resources Students Need or Request**

28. Please indicate whether the services below are available in your district:

	Available	Unavailable	Unknown
Identification Documents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal Assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Homeless Shelter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth Shelter/Housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transitional Living Program (TLP)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other Housing Programs (e.g. rapid rehousing)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emergency Food Assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Food Stamps	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Clinic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hygiene Supplies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Medical Services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dental Assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Resource Coordinating Group (CRCG)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Multi-Agency Referral System (MARS)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Services To At-Risk (STAR) program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other Available Services (please specify)



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### V. Your Relationship With Homeless Students

29. Do homeless students seek you out?

Yes

No

If you checked "Yes", how do they find and contact you?

30. If you checked "No", how do you find and contact them? (check all that apply)

All students are assessed each year

Students who present with risk factors are assessed

School personnel identify homeless students

Community agencies identify homeless students

Local homeless resources identify homeless students

Other (please specify)

31. Do you think there are problems identifying homeless students in your school/district?

Yes

No

If "Yes", please explain:



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32. Do you generally follow up with homeless students listed on the PEIMS throughout the school year?

Yes

No

33. If you checked "Yes", how often do you have contact?

34. If you checked "No", how do you find out what happens with them?



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35. Do you have contact with homeless students' parents/conservators?

Yes

No

36. If you checked "Yes", how often do you have contact?

37. If you checked "No", what is the main reason for no contact?



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**VI. Your Training and Support Resources Needed**

38. Have you received training specific to your homeless liaison duties?

Yes

No

If you checked "Yes", please describe this training (including title/provider/number of hours, if applicable):

39. Please indicate how well trained you are to do the following: (10 meaning "very well trained")

Provide homeless  
liaison services

Find services for  
homeless students

Advocate for the needs  
of homeless students

Build an alliance with  
homeless students

40. Please rate the support you receive related to your homeless liaison duties from the following individuals/groups ("10" meaning "very supported"):

	<input type="text"/>
Your school-based supervisor	<input type="text"/>
Teachers in your school	<input type="text"/>
School administration	<input type="text"/>
Colleagues in the community	<input type="text"/>
Organizations you refer to in the community	<input type="text"/>

41. List three resources and/or areas of training that would help you do your liaison job better:

42. List three specific areas where you think support needs to be increased:



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43. How do you assess the needs of your students?

44. When homeless students need shelter or housing, are you able to find and successfully access shelter or transitional living services for homeless youth that you refer? If not, why not?

45. What kinds of challenges do you have working with community services (e.g. long waiting lists, inability to work with homeless youth, lack of appropriate services, etc.)?



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46. When homeless students are living in informal settings (e.g. couch surfing), who are they typically staying with?

47. When homeless students are living in informal settings (e.g. couch surfing), are these arrangements long-term or are they typically temporary (i.e. less than two weeks)?

48. When homeless students are living in informal settings (e.g. couch surfing), do those arrangements typically "work out" or do they result in referrals to other services?



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49. What would help you better meet the healthcare needs of your homeless students?

50. What would help you better meet the mental health needs of your homeless students?

51. How do you track healthcare needs that you address (e.g. linkages, referrals, appointments kept)?

52. How do you assess the mental health needs of your students?

53. What do you do when mental health needs are identified?

54. How do you track mental health needs that you address (e.g. linkages, referrals, appointments kept)?



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55. What do homeless students need most that you are able to provide?

56. What do homeless students need most that you are unable to provide?

57. What, if any, transitional planning do you provide to homeless students when they prepare to leave your school?

58. What policies could be put in place to better help homeless students?

Homeless liaison survey respondent characteristics

- 392 in total
- About 63% identify their county as being rural, followed by 12.7% suburban and 13.5% small-medium metro, 10.2% large metro
- Majority (83.16%) serve as the liaison for the entire district, followed by single school (12.2%), multiple schools (2.6%) and other (1.5%)

Liaison Responsibilities by county type	Count	% by type of county
<b>Rural</b>	<b>248</b>	
Single School	18	7.26%
Multiple Schools	7	2.82%
Entire District	220	88.71%
Other	3	1.21%
<b>Suburban</b>	<b>50</b>	
Single school	3	6.00%
Multiple schools	1	2.00%
Entire District	44	88.00%
Other	2	4.00%
<b>Small/Medium Urban</b>	<b>53</b>	
Single school	14	26.42%
Multiple schools	2	3.77%
Entire District	35	66.04%
Other	1	1.89%
<b>Large Urban</b>	<b>40</b>	
Single school	13	32.50%
Multiple schools	0	0.00%
Entire District	27	67.50%
Other	0	0.00%

- For entire sample median school size is 700 students, with a median of 4 homeless students
  - o Rural schools: median school size 493, median homeless: 4
  - o Suburban schools: median school size 3566, median homeless students: 7
  - o Small to medium metros: median school size 790, median homeless students: 18
  - o Large metros: median school size: 1332, median homeless students: 1.5

- For entire sample, liaisons spent 2 hours per week on liaison duties, met with 1 homeless students for a median of one hour
- 67.8% felt they had enough time for their liaison duties
  - o Characteristics of those who did not have enough time:

Not enough time for liaison duties	Count	Percent
Total	97	
Median hours/week on homeless students	2	
Median homeless students/week	1	
County Type		
Rural	51	52.58%
Suburban	13	13.40%
Small/Medium Urban	18	18.56%
Large Urban	15	15.46%
Liaison responsibilities		
Single School	14	14.43%
Multiple Schools	4	4.12%
Entire District	78	80.41%

- o 88.3% felt they had enough time to meet legal requirements of interacting with homeless students/parents/guardian

Liaison issues and homeless student needs

- Respondents did not rank the issues mentioned as very difficult, scoring between a 2 and 4 out of 10 on the difficulty scale, identifying homeless youths was ranked as the most difficult, at 4

Issue	Median	Average Difficulty Level
Identifying homeless youths	4	4.03
Enrolling, opportunity to succeed	2	2.85
Receiving eligible services	3	3.51
Informing of available opportunities/ability to participate	3	3.58
Giving notice of rights where receive services	2	3.28
Enrollment disputes	2	3.11
Informing of available transport/assisting access to transport	3	3.57

- A majority (93.3%) indicated they could adjust their workload to meet the needs of homeless youths
- Most reported a high level of support from their school or school district (median score 9/10)

Miscellaneous	Percent or number
Percent able to adjust workload to meet homeless youth needs	93.31%
Median support from school / school district	9
Average support from school / school district	8.11

- Homeless students' top five needs are ranked below (1<sup>st</sup> = 3 points., 2<sup>nd</sup>=2 points, 3<sup>rd</sup>= 1 point):

Top five homeless student needs	Score
Supportive services outside school	213
Free lunch program	197
Connection to housing supports	186
School supplies	170
Transportation	148

All needs ranked

Needs of homeless students	Times ranked 1st	Times ranked 2nd	Times ranked 3rd	Total
Supportive services outside school	34	34	43	213
Free lunch program	52	15	11	197
Connection to housing supports	32	32	26	186
School supplies	28	33	20	170
Transportation	20	33	22	148
Support counseling	18	13	16	96
School enrollment assistance	18	13	14	94
Health needs assessment	9	18	23	86
Mental health needs assessment	7	18	19	76
FAFSA	8	13	15	65
Advocacy at School	6	4	13	39
SNAP application	3	3	0	15
TANF application	2	0	3	9

Services unavailable at school / school district

- Below are the services respondents indicated were available, unavailable or unknown at their school or district:
  - o Housing and shelter availability were the number one issues identified as unavailable, with respondents indicating that there were no Youth shelters (74%), Transitional Living Programs (72.9%), homeless shelters (70.8%), or other housing programs (65.1%) in their area. MARS (43.5%) and ID document services (43.5%) followed.
- The most common available services included hygiene supplies (82.4% available), Emergency Food Assistance (74.1%), Medical Services (59%), Food Stamps (58.9%), and Community Clinic services (55.9%).

Services Available	Unavail-able	Available	Unknown
Youth Shelter/Housing	74.1%	15.9%	9.6%
Transitional Living Program (TLP)	72.9%	12.3%	14.4%
Homeless Shelter	70.8%	21.7%	7.1%
Other Housing Programs (e.g. rapid rehousing)	65.1%	17.4%	17.0%
Multi-Agency Referral System (MARS)	43.5%	18.1%	38.0%
Identification Documents	43.5%	18.1%	38.0%
Dental Assistance	40.1%	42.6%	16.9%
Community Resource Coordinating Group (CRCG)	36.0%	32.6%	31.0%
Community Clinic	34.3%	55.9%	9.3%
Services To At-Risk (STAR) program	29.3%	40.2%	30.1%
Legal Assistance	29.3%	40.2%	30.1%
Food Stamps	29.2%	58.9%	11.4%
Medical Services	28.0%	59.0%	12.6%
Emergency Food Assistance	15.1%	74.1%	10.5%
Hygiene Supplies	9.6%	82.4%	7.5%

Locating and communicating with students

- Over a quarter of respondents (27.4%) believed there were problems with identifying homeless students in their school or district. About 45.12% of respondents indicated that homeless students sought them out.
- Over ¾ of respondents indicated they followed up on PEIMS throughout year (77.6%) and had contact with homeless students’ parents or conservators (75.1%).

Training and support

- Three-quarters of respondents indicated that they received training specific to being a homeless youth liaison (74.49%). Respondents indicated high levels of training adequacy, at a median of 7 or 8 on a scale of 10. The lowest score was on finding homeless student services.
- Respondents indicated a high level of support from peers, supervisors, teachers, the administration and community.

Training	Median score	Average score	Most frequent score (mode)
Level of training: Provide homeless liaison services	7	6.75	10
Level of training: find homeless student services	7	6.14	8
Level of training: advocate for needs of homeless	8	7.09	10
Level of training: building alliance with homeless	8	6.80	10
<b>Support level from...</b>			
Peers in school	8	7.18	10
School supervisor	9	7.75	10
Teachers in school	8	7.18	10
School administration	8	7.70	10
Colleagues in community	8	6.89	10
Organizations in community	8	7.10	10