



NATIONAL HOMELESS YOUTH AWARENESS MONTH

TOOLKIT FOR SCHOOL STAFF AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS





Information Sheet for LAUSD Support Staff and Community Partners

Statistics

Youth experiencing homelessness face many challenges in their education. According to the 2020 Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) Youth Count, there were 4,775 youth who were experiencing homelessness throughout Los Angeles County, a 19% increase from the year prior.³ Students facing housing insecurity are eight times more likely to be asked to repeat a grade.¹ In addition, families in transition move two to three times during a school year, which greatly affects a student's academic achievement.²

The Homeless Education Office has developed this toolkit to provide the history of National Homeless Youth Awareness Month, the goals of the Board resolution, and create an awareness of the challenges faced by students experiencing homelessness.

History

On July 11, 2007, the United States Congress established November as **National Homeless Youth Awareness Month**. Since then, the resolution has been adopted by many national organizations and school districts across the country. On October 18th, 2016, the Board of Education of the Los Angeles Unified School District, in collaboration with the Homeless Education Office, passed a Board resolution to recognize National Homeless Youth Awareness Month to support the unique needs of LAUSD students and promote social awareness. In November 2018, Board Members Gonez, Melvoin and Garcia, sponsored the resolution, Increasing ***Opportunities and Supports for Our Homeless Students and Families*** to further expand Board support for LAUSD initiatives addressing equity and access for LAUSD students and families experiencing homelessness.

Goals

The resolution was written to bring attention to the preponderance of homeless youth attending schools within the LAUSD. The goal of the National Homeless Youth Awareness Month is to encourage discussion pertaining to supportive strategies to end homelessness among students, parents, district employees, and community members. This toolkit contains ideas and activities that will help bring social awareness to the issue and engage stakeholders in ending youth homelessness.

1 The National Center on Family Homelessness. America's Youngest Outcasts 2010

2 Dr. Joy Rogers of the Loyola University Department of Education, Education Report of Rule 706 Expert Panel

3 2020 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count – LAHSA Briefing on Youth Homelessness Data Summary



National Homeless Youth Awareness Month Activities for the Month of November

School Staff

- **Collect Items for LAUSD Homeless Education Office (November 1st - November 12th)**
Organize a drive for school supplies, hygiene kits, or canned goods. Review the Homeless Education Office School Supply Drive Toolkit as a framework to collect either school supplies, hygiene items, or canned goods! (see attached)
- **Wear purple on Friday during the month of November (November 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th)**
Ask students and staff to support National Homeless Youth Awareness Month by wearing purple on Fridays in November. (see attached flyer and post around school campus)
- **Poster Contest (Make announcement November 1st)**
Send out notices to students via the applicable learning system (e.g., Schoology, Google Classroom, etc.) informing students there will be a poster contest the week of November 15th. Create different categories: Most Creative, Most Inspiring, and Social Impact. Display all entries virtually during lunch and have students cast their ballot for the winners. Make an announcement on November 19, 2021 congratulating the winner of the poster contest and display the poster on the school website during the last weeks of November (22nd – 30th).
- **Essay Contest (November 1st)**
During the week of November 1, 2021, send out a memo to classroom teachers informing them of the essay contest, deadline, and prizes, if any. Make sure to include an essay prompt for example: *What change would you make to homeless services in LA County if you were in Congress? Or What can you do in your community to address issues related to homelessness?* Remember to display posters/flyers virtually on your website or Schoology. Make an announcement on November 19, 2021 congratulating the winner of the essay contest.
- **Write letters in support of current or more services for Homeless Youth to city officials, school board, or congress (Week of November 8th)**
Invite students to join in a letter writing campaign during their advisory period or after school to write letters in support of more homeless services and/or initiatives.

Remember to get the approval of your school administrator and have fun!



Join us in our
fight to end youth
homelessness!

PURPLE FRIDAYS

Wear purple
on Fridays in
November!

Student Support Programs
Homeless Education Office
homelesseducation.lausd.net



National Homeless Youth Awareness Month Activities for the Month of November

Community Partners

- **Display the LAUSD National Homeless Youth Flyer (October 29th)**
Once you receive permission from your supervisor, print the LAUSD National Homeless Youth Poster found in this toolkit and display it around your office or on your agency website.
- **Collect items for LAUSD Homeless Education Office or other homeless service providers (November 1st-5th)**
Organize a drive for school supplies, hygiene kits, or canned goods. Review the Homeless Education Office School Supply Drive Toolkit as a framework to collect either school supplies, hygiene items, or canned goods! (see page 8 and 9)
- **Wear purple on Fridays during the month of November (November 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th)**
During a staff meeting, ask co-workers to wear purple on Mondays during the month of November. (see attached flyer and post around the office)
- **Organize a group of co-workers to Sponsor-a-Family through the LAUSD Homeless Education Office (go to www.homelesseducation.lausd.net for details; deadline to sign up is 12/3/21)**
Get a team together and visit the Homeless Education Office website for more information to review the Sponsor-a-Family guidelines.
- **Recognize employee with the most donations (November 17th)**
Send a certificate to the employee who was able to gather the most donations for the LAUSD Homeless Education Office campaign drive.



NATIONAL HOMELESS YOUTH AWARENESS MONTH 2021 - TOOLKIT

Recommended Videos

- 60 Minutes-Hard Times Generation Part 1
Not far from Disney World in Florida there is a very different world of budget motels filled with homeless families -- people for whom lost jobs and foreclosures have put their families at risk. It's estimated that the poverty rate for kids in this country will soon hit 25 percent, and this will impact their education, their home-lives, and their future. Scott Pelley talks with some of these children and their parents.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dK_RnxYdrqU
- 60 Minutes-Hard Times Generation Part 2
Scott Pelley brings "60 Minutes" cameras back to central Florida to document another form of family homelessness: kids and their parents forced to live in cars. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2hzRPLVSm4>
- SHC's Director of Program Advancement and Legal Affairs, Patricia Julianelle, has created a series of videos that can be used to make your training sessions more dynamic. The videos build awareness of homelessness while providing basic information about the law, and schools' and communities' obligations to children and youth in homeless situations. This information is presented in a series of short films told from the perspective of real educators in schools and will support you and your districts as you deal with the daily challenges of helping our most vulnerable students. <https://vimeo.com/pjulianelle>
- Jamal Speaks recently took to the football field for his first game in two seasons. He had been ineligible to play because he didn't have a permanent address. Now his future is looking bright. CBS News senior national correspondent Jim Axelrod has his story. <https://www.cbsnews.com/video/homeless-high-school-football-player-earns-college-scholarship>
- Homeless to Harvard: The Liz Murray Story
At 15, Liz Murray finds herself living on the streets after her mentally ill, drug-addicted parents falter in their attempts to keep their family together. Instead of crumbling, the troubled teen clings to hope and determination, and works her way up out of homelessness— all the way to Harvard University.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGe3u5rLGQc>
- Pursuit of Happiness (movie, 2006)
The movie is based on Chris Gardner's nearly one-year struggle with homelessness. A series of circumstances left Gardner jobless and homeless at age 30, living in a bathroom at a San Francisco train station with his son. Despite the negative situation, Gardner continued to fight toward his goal of becoming a broker, and would eventually become a self-made millionaire.



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- **The Soloist (movie, 2009)**
Los Angeles Times columnist, Steve Lopez, discovers Nathaniel Ayers, a mentally ill, homeless street musician who possesses extraordinary talent. Inspired by his story, Lopez writes an acclaimed series of articles about Ayers and attempts to do more to help both him and others in similar homeless situations. Lopez's good intentions run headlong in the hard realities of the strength of Nathaniel's personal demons and the larger social injustices facing the homeless. They must find a way to conquer their deepest anxieties and frustrations to support Nathaniel's transition out of homelessness.
- **The Blind Side (movie, 2009)**
The movie is based on the Tuohy family who takes in a homeless teenage African- American, Michael "Big Mike" Oher. Michael has no idea who his father is and his mother is a drug addict. Michael has had little formal education and few skills to help him learn. When he expresses an interest in football, she goes all out to help him, including giving the coach a few ideas on how best to use Michael's skills. They provide him with a loving home, and hire a tutor to help him improve his grades which allows him to qualify for an NCAA Division I athletic scholarship. Michael Oher was the first-round pick of the Baltimore Ravens in the 2009 NFL draft.
- **All Together Now (2020)**
An optimistic, talented teen clings to a huge secret: she is homeless and living on a bus. When tragedy strikes, can she learn to accept a helping hand? This is a movie about some of the realities of difficult home life situations and difficulties of being an unaccompanied homeless student.

Organizations

- The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) is a national membership association dedicated to educational excellence for children and youth experiencing homelessness. Through state and federal policy and technical assistance to members, students, and the public, NAEHCY works to change systems so all children and youth can learn, succeed academically, and achieve their dreams. <http://www.naehcy.org/>
- SchoolHouse Connection is a national organization promoting success for children and youth experiencing homelessness, from birth through higher education. The organization engages in strategic advocacy and provide technical assistance in partnership with early care and education professionals (including school district homeless liaisons and state homeless education coordinators), young people, service providers, advocates, and local communities. <https://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/>
 - ***Contribution of recommended videos and organizations provided by J. Kottke, LA County Office of Education, October 2021.***



[Links to Additional Tools and Materials](#)

National Homeless Youth Awareness Month Resolutions

[National Homelessness Youth Awareness – Congress Resolution](#)

[LAUSD Board of Education– Resolution](#)

LAUSD, Homeless Education Office

[The Homeless Education Office](#)

[Homeless Education Office- Instagram](#)

[Homeless Education Office- Twitter](#)

Latest Homeless Data for LA County

[2021 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count Overall Results for LA County](#)

[2020 Homeless Count By Service Planning Area](#)

Activities

[NAEH Fact Sheet and Activities for K-2 Grade Students](#)

[NAEH Fact Sheet and Activities for 3-5 Grade Students](#)

[NAEH Fact Sheet and Activities for Middle School Students](#)

[NAEH Fact Sheet and Activities for High School Students](#)

Follow this link to access a “Reading Rainbow” video on discussing the many challenges homeless students face: [PBS SoCal Insider LAUSD Homeless Education](#)

Useful Links

[LGBTQ Information](#)

[National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth](#)

[Hollywood Homeless Youth Partnership](#)

[Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority](#)



NATIONAL HOMELESS YOUTH AWARENESS MONTH 2021 - TOOLKIT

NOVEMBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
24	25	26	27	28 Announce NHYAM Host a supply drive to collect school supplies, hygiene items or canned goods	29 Download NHYAM toolkit from HEO website Display LAUSD National Homeless Youth Awareness Month Poster	30
31	1 Begin supply drive Announce Homeless facts and poster/essay contest	2 Advertise poster/essay contest	3 Organize a group of co-workers to sponsor a family, visit HEO website	4	5 Designated day to wear purple	6
7	8 Invite students to engage in writing letters to local, county and state officials	9	10 VETERAN'S DAY NO SCHOOL	11	12 End supply drive Write letters to City, School Board or Congress Members	13
14	15 Begin collecting posters Arrange delivery of school supplies, hygiene items, or canned goods	16	17 Recognize employee with the most donations	18	19 Announce Poster/Essay Contest Winners Designated day to wear purple	20
21	22 No class in session Display student posters on website thru 11/30	23 No class in session	24 No class in session	25 No class in session Thanksgiving	26 No class in session Designated day to wear purple.	27
28	29	30				



LAUSD HOMELESS EDUCATION OFFICE

School Supply Drive Toolkit

There are thousands of homeless students identified in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Their parents struggle to meet their basic needs like food and shelter. The added financial burden of purchasing back to school supplies is extremely difficult for these families.

Without access to school supplies, students begin the year at a disadvantage. New supplies can boost a child's self-esteem and help a student feel motivated and ready to learn.

Students can become homeless at any time during the school year, so school supply drives can be held throughout the year. Our students can always benefit from your support!

Here's How to Get Started!

Select Dates

Select a week or even a month for people to donate school supplies. Decide if you will be hosting your own collection or working with other groups/businesses.

Get Help

Enlist a group of colleagues/friends to help plan and organize the drive. Maximize your volunteers' skills and interests and put them to work! Volunteers can assist with publicizing the event, utilizing social media, creating flyers, and/or obtaining and distributing large containers/boxes to serve as donation receptacles.

Get the Word Out

Customize our sample flyer with your collection date and drop-off location information. Post the flyer around your office; share it at meetings, with outside groups, through office-wide emails and on social media platforms.

Choose Collection Boxes

Select collection receptacles with clear labels and strategically place them in convenient and targeted locations to make it easy for people to donate.

Contact our Program

Call our LAUSD Homeless Education Office to schedule a pick-up or delivery date once your supply drive is complete. The number to contact the HEO is (213) 202-7581.



Ideas to Increase Participation

Have fun with the collection boxes! Hold a competition for the most creative box decoration. Below are some examples of previous collection boxes:



- Set a goal for your office/group to work towards.
- Track your progress by using a “thermometer” display or a moving bus. Consider encouraging friendly competition between different groups.
- Give a “Bus Pass.” The pass can be any special opportunity, such as the chance to win a gift card, have a free lunch, or enjoy a “casual day” or “jeans day”.
- Publicize the school supply drive’s progress through a newsletter, email, or social media.
- Share photos of the collection boxes or volunteers participating in the collection.
- Host a virtual fundraiser or raffle to earn money to purchase school supplies and publicize the drive.
- Recognize volunteers verbally, or through personalized notes or photos.
- Make this an annual event!

For additional information, please contact our office: LAUSD HOMELESS EDUCATION OFFICE
121 N. Beaudry Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 202-7581



NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL HOMELESS YOUTH AWARENESS MONTH!



On July 11th, 2007 the United States Congress established November as National Homeless Youth Awareness Month. Since then, the resolution has been adopted by many national organizations, cities, states and localities across the country including many in California.

On October 18th, 2016, the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education in collaboration with the Homeless Education Program passed their own resolution, which coincides with National Awareness Month events.

The resolution was written to highlight the issue of homeless youth within LAUSD. Last year, LAUSD had approximately 15,138 students identified as homeless. Our goal is to encourage discussion among students, parents, district employees and community members.

**For more information please contact:
LAUSD Homeless Education Office
121 N. Beaudry Ave.
Los Angeles, CA. 90012
213-202-7581
<http://homelesseducation.lausd.net>**



You can ENROLL in school!

Even if you have:

- Uncertain housing
- A temporary address
- No permanent physical address

You are guaranteed enrollment in school by the federal McKinney-Vento Act and California state law if you live:

- In a house or apartment with more than one family due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- With friends or family because you are a runaway or an unaccompanied youth
- In substandard housing (without electricity, water, or heat)
- In a shelter (family, domestic violence, or youth shelter or transitional living program)
- In a motel, hotel, or weekly rate housing
- In an abandoned building, in a car, at a campground, or on the streets

You can enroll in school immediately even without the documents normally required for enrollment, such as:

- Proof of residency
- Immunization records or other required health records
- School records
- Legal guardianship papers

Your child may:

- Participate fully in all school activities and programs for which he/she is eligible.
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin if you request it.
- Continue to attend the school in which he/she was last enrolled even if you have moved away from that school's attendance area.
- Qualify automatically for school nutrition programs.

Your responsibilities are to:

- Make sure your child gets to school on time and ready to learn.
- Stay informed of school rules, regulations, and activities.
- Contact the homeless liaison for assistance in removing barriers to your child's education.
- Attend parent/teacher conferences, Back-to-School Nights, and other school-related activities.

For questions about enrolling in school or for assistance with school enrollment, contact:

- Your local school district homeless liaison:

Angela Chandler
LAUSD Homeless Liaison
Email: angela.chandler@lausd.net
Phone: (213) 202-7581

- Your county homeless liaison:

Jennifer Kottke
LACOE Homeless Liaison
Email: kottke_jennifer@lacoed.edu
Phone: (562) 922-6614

- Your homeless state coordinator:

Leanne Wheeler
State Coordinator
California Department of Education
1430 N Street, Suite 6408
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 1-866-856-8214