Supporting Children Experiencing Homelessness in Rural America
Today’s Panelists

- **Derrick Lambert** – Senior Manager, “No Kid Hungry” campaign by Share Our Strength

- **Christina Dukes** – Federal Liaison, National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE)

- **Michelle Patton Swisher** – McKinney-Vento Liaison, Spotsylvania County Schools in Virginia

- **Lisa Dolan** – Lead School Social Worker, Spotsylvania County Schools in Virginia
Student Homelessness in Rural America

- School district level data from U.S. Department of Education
- Homelessness seen as an urban issue, leaving little research and resources to homeless students in rural areas
Between SY 2013–14 and SY 2016–17, there was an 11% increase in rural student homelessness, compared with a 3% increase nationwide.

162,000 homeless students in rural parts of the country (12% of all homeless students)
Rural Homeless Less Likely to Sleep in Shelter
SY 2016–17

- **Rural Homeless Students**
  - 83% Doubled Up
  - 8% Sheltered
  - 5% Unsheltered
  - 4% Hotels/Motels

- **Non-Rural Homeless Students**
  - 75% Doubled Up
  - 15% Sheltered
  - 6% Unsheltered
  - 4% Hotels/Motels
Change in Where Rural Homeless Students Stay
SY 2013–14 to SY 2016–17

- 47% increase in children staying in hotels/motels
- Increase in almost all primary nighttime residences indicative of high demand
Rural Areas Are Underfunded and Underserved

- Only 42% of rural homeless students attend school in a McKinney-Vento funded district, compared with 67% of non-rural students.

- Additional challenges:
  - Lack of primary healthcare and mental healthcare
  - Limited internet access
  - Transportation

Disproportionate allocation of funds

- 42% Coverage in Rural Area
- 67% Coverage in Non-rural Areas

For every 100 non-rural homeless students covered, only 63 rural homeless students are covered.
# Youth at Higher Risk of Homelessness

## Particular subpopulations are at higher risk for homelessness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>346%</td>
<td>Youth with less than a high school diploma or GED had a 346% higher risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>162%</td>
<td>Youth reporting annual household income of less than $24,000 had a 162% higher risk</td>
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<tr>
<td>83%</td>
<td>Black or African American youth had an 83% higher risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120%</td>
<td>LGBT youth had a 120% higher risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>Hispanic, non-White youth had a 33% higher risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200%</td>
<td>Unmarried parenting youth had a 200% higher risk</td>
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</tbody>
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“The More You Learn, the More You Earn”

Figure 1. We need systemic solutions that address education and homelessness together

1. Supporting young people’s housing stability makes it easier for them to stay in school and focus on their educational success.

2. Helping young people with educational opportunities increases long-term income and safety nets needed to exit homelessness for good.

3. Identifying and addressing common underlying risk factors can help prevent both homelessness and school dropout.

Mental Health Difficulties  Structural Racism  Childhood Trauma  Poverty  Family Conflict  Social Isolation
## Urban Vs. Rural Prevalence

Rates of youth experiencing homelessness were similar in rural and nonrural areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth 13-17</th>
<th>Young Adults 18-25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household prevalence in urban counties</td>
<td>Population prevalence in urban counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household prevalence in rural counties</td>
<td>Population prevalence in rural counties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nighttime Residence: Urban vs. Rural

Where youth experiencing homelessness stayed on the night of the youth count.

- Youth in large counties:
  - Staying with others: 20%
  - Unsheltered: 40%
- Youth in small counties:
  - Staying with others: 22%
  - Unsheltered: 28%
  - Sheltered: 50%
  - Staying with others: 23%

THANK YOU!

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