

OUR MISSION

-to increase the number of accurately identified homeless students in Nassau County schools, enroll them in the FIT program, and alleviate barriers to education by working with parents, teachers, and community partners to help ensure access to school and community services which may increase their overall success.

Any student living in the following circumstances due to loss of housing qualifies as "homeless" as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act:

*in a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground,
*on the street, in an abandoned building, trailer, or other inadequate accommodations,
*doubled up with friends or relatives,

Also eligible are students who are living in substandard housing— a home that is not safe, warm/cool and dry or is otherwise not adequate for the residents. (These conditions do not constitute abuse on and are not reported to agencies on their own.)

"One of my McKinney-vento students packs the contents of his desk and takes it home every day— just in case he doesn't get to come back."

Contact Information

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FIT/Homeless
Program of
Nassau County
Schools



The Starfish Story
Original Story by: Loren Easley

One day a man was walking along the beach, when he noticed a boy hurriedly picking up and gently throwing things into the ocean.

Approaching the boy, he asked, "Young man, what are you doing?"

The boy replied, "Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die."

The man laughed to himself and said, "Don't you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can't make any difference!"

After listening politely, the boy bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the surf. Then, smiling at the man, he said,

"I made a difference to that one."



NASSAU COUNTY'S
HOMELESS KIDS
HOMELESS, BUT NOT HOPELESS



More than 1.3 million children in the U.S. are homeless.

This figure includes more than 91,000 students in Florida.

In NASSAU COUNTY there are over

550 children who are without a home of their own.

EDUCATIONAL BARRIERS

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS-

Proper documentation is required for school enrollment (proof of residency, school and health records, birth certificates, etc.) It is often difficult for these families to provide this information. FIT program donations are used to help families acquire these needed documents, thus keeping students in school.

HIGH MOBILITY-

These students are constantly on the move, resulting in a lack of school stability and educational continuity. FIT program funds are used to help students remain in their School of Origin, thus providing school stability even in the absence of home stability.

LACK OF SUPPLIES, CLOTHING, ETC.-

Community donations are used to provide school supplies and free clothes from our Clothes Closet.

POOR HEALTH, FATIGUE, HUNGER-

These factors contribute to failure in the classroom. We aim to provide immediate free breakfast and lunch. Referrals are given to dental & other community resources.

PREJUDICE & MISUNDERSTANDING-

The Homeless Liaison works to educate school employees and the community about issues regarding homeless students in an effort to identify and enroll qualified students. Such education also contributes to the understanding needed to ensure the absence of bullying or other mistreatment.

PARENTS ARE IN 'SURVIVAL MODE'-

Academic help is often neglected because caregivers are trying to "make ends meet."

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

- More than 75% of homeless children read below grade level.
- 36% of homeless children repeat a grade. That's twice the rate of non-homeless children.
- Students who frequently switch schools score lower on standardized tests; one study said 20 points lower.
- Students suffer psychologically, socially, and academically.
- It takes children an average of 4-6 months to recover academically after changing schools.
- Students who changed high schools (even once) were less than half as likely to graduate than stable students.
- Mobile students are less likely to participate in extracurricular activities and more likely to act out and get into trouble.

*The Nassau County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability or marital status in its educational programs, services or activities, or in its admission, hiring, or employment practices.

HELPING OUR HOMELESS KIDS

DONATIONS ACCEPTED:

- New and used student books
- New hygiene items
- New underwear & socks
- New & used clothing
- New school supplies
- New Christmas gifts
- Tote Bags

MONETARY DONATIONS ARE USED FOR:

- Items Listed Above
- Field Trip Fees
- Head Lice Kits
- Senior Expenses
- School & Sports Physicals
- Transportation/Gas
- College Tours & College Application Fees
- Other Miscellaneous, Case-Specific Needs

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR:

- Clothes Closet
- Tutoring

*Donation receipts are available upon request.
Checks should be made payable to Nassau County School Board.*

*"Everybody can be great...
because anybody can serve."*

-Martin Luther King, Jr.