

## **How Do I Adjust and Modify Homework and Special Projects for Homeless Students?**

Supporting homeless students in their education may require some adjustments and/or modifications for homework assignments and special projects. Depending on where a student is living, it may be difficult to impossible to complete work outside of school. Here are some strategies that educators can use to support student learning.

### **Flexible Assignment Submission**

Allow flexibility in how assignments are submitted. Recognize the transient nature of homeless students' living situations. Remember that homeless students may not have a consistent place to work. Allow for flexible assignment submission methods, such as email or online platforms, to accommodate changes in their environment.

### **Provide Access to Resources**

Ensure that homeless students have access to necessary resources. This might involve providing school supplies, access to a computer or the internet, and information about local resources like libraries or community centers. Assess the resources available to homeless students and ensure they have access to essential supplies.

### **Extended Deadlines**

Offer extended deadlines for assignments to accommodate any disruptions in the students' schedule or living situation as needed. Recognize that stability may be a challenge for homeless students, and providing additional time can reduce stress. This flexibility can alleviate stress and ensure that students have sufficient time to complete tasks amidst potential disruptions.

### **Break Down Assignments**

Break down larger assignments into smaller, more manageable tasks. This approach can help alleviate feelings of being overwhelmed and make it easier for students to focus on one component at a time. Homeless students may experience increased stress, and simplifying tasks can make the workload more manageable.

### **Alternative Assignment Formats**

Allow for alternative assignment formats, such as verbal presentations, visual projects, or hands-on activities providing a range of options to showcase understanding. This provides flexibility for students who may not have a stable place to complete traditional written assignments. Recognize that traditional written assignments may pose challenges for homeless students.

### **Homeless Liaison Support**

Collaborate with the school's homeless liaison to identify specific challenges the student may be facing. This collaboration can inform tailored modifications that address the unique circumstances of each student.

### **Utilize School Resources**

Leverage available school resources, such as before or after-school programs, tutoring, or counseling services, to provide additional support for homeless students, thereby creating a network of assistance.

### **Consider Living Situations**

Be mindful of the student's living situation when assigning projects. If possible, choose projects that can be completed without access to a stable home environment. Acknowledge the potential lack of a designated study space, electricity, or internet service.

### **Provide Basic Necessities**

Collaborate with the school or Homeless Liaison to ensure homeless students have access to necessities like food, clothing, school supplies, internet service, and hygiene items, which can alleviate stress and contribute to a more stable learning environment. Addressing these fundamental needs contributes to students' self-confidence and well-being.

### **Offer Emotional Support**

Recognize the emotional toll that homelessness can take on students. Create and foster a supportive classroom environment and be open to discussions about their experiences if they are comfortable sharing.

### **Connect with Local Resources**

Utilize connections with local organizations or charities that specialize and provide support for homeless individuals. This can include information about shelters, food assistance programs, and other services. This collaboration can provide valuable information toward the students' wrap-around support.

### **Maintain Confidentiality**

Respect the privacy of homeless students and maintain confidentiality. Avoid singling them out in the classroom, and work discreetly to provide necessary accommodations, creating a safe and inclusive learning environment.

By incorporating these detailed strategies, educators can play a crucial role in mitigating the challenges faced by homeless students and fostering a more supportive and inclusive educational experience. Remember, the key is to be flexible, empathetic, and proactive in addressing the unique challenges faced by homeless students. Collaborating with school staff, social services, and community organizations can help create a more supportive learning environment.

