

The School District of DeSoto County
McKinney-Vento Program Staff

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Parents Tab > Homeless Services link

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Resource and Referral Guide

The School District of DeSoto County McKinney-Vento Program



HOPE thru EDUCATION and PARTNERSHIPS

Our goal is to provide
HOPE
for the future to ensure each student has the opportunity for quality
EDUCATION
and to strengthen family and student stability through
PARTNERSHIPS
within the school and community

Dear Parent, Guardian or Youth,

This resource book is being given to you based on information that you have provided. The School District of Desoto County McKinney-Vento Program (MVP) Resource and Referral Guide provides information about our program and the legal rights that you may exercise under the McKinney-Vento Act, should you or your child qualify. The booklet also provides valuable community resource information that can assist you with specific needs.

Please do not hesitate to call our office if you have any questions or are in need of assistance.

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National Agencies and Contacts

National Association for the Education of Young Children- answers questions concerning the education of children ages 0-8 years. 800-424-2460

Social Security Administration- Hotline assists individuals applying for benefits. 800-772-1213 or 800-325-0778 TDD

National Alliance to End Homelessness- information on homelessness. 202-393-0287

National Coalition for the Homeless- 202-737-6444

National Runaway Switchboard- 800-621-4000

National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty- legal information. 202-638-2535

Child Help USA- counselors available to talk with pre-teens about their problems with child abuse, runaway teens and high risk behavior. Contact: 800-422-4453

First Step Mothers and Infants Program- Over 18 years, pregnant, alcohol/drug residential treatment while pregnant and postpartum, up to 1 year. Contact: 800-266-6866

Resource information provided by the United Way Health and Human Services Resource Guide. Services and contact information may be subject to change with notification. We attempt to keep this guide up to date.

If you discover a discrepancy, please notify the MVP staff.

Thank you

Social Services:

- ◆ **Access Florida-** sites to visit for help in applying for benefits
Food Stamps, TANF, Medicaid
- ◆ **Department of Children and Families (DCF)-**
805 N. Mills Ave. Arcadia, FL 866-762-2237
- ◆ **Arcadia Goodwill Good Neighbor Center-** 1701 E. Oak St
Arcadia, FL. 863-491-1445
- ◆ **Arcadia Housing Authority-** 7 Booker T. Washington Road
Arcadia, FL. 863-494-4343
- ◆ **Community Care Family Healthcare Center-** 1110 Gibson
Arcadia, FL. 863-494-6222
- ◆ **Senior Friendship Center-** 23 N. Polk Ave, Arcadia, FL
863-494-5965
- ◆ **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation-** 1733 E Oak St.
Arcadia, FL. 863-993-4655
- ◆ **Goodwill-** Thrift store, job skills, online education,
1701 E Oak St, Arcadia FL. goodwillindustries.org
- ◆ **Catholic Charities-** Emergency food, clothing, financial,
immigration assistance, after school enrichment program
1210 E. Oak St. Arcadia, FL. 863-494-1068
- ◆ **DeSoto Cares-** Local homeless services organization.
159 S. Orange Ave. Arcadia FL. 863-491-9933
- ◆ **Healthy Families Florida-** Program for expectant parents
and parents of newborns. 10 S. DeSoto Ave, Suite E.
Arcadia, FL. 863-491-9832
- ◆ **Arcadia Police Department-** 863-993-4660
- ◆ **DeSoto County Sheriff's Department-** 863-993-4700

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, children are considered homeless if a student is:

- ◆ Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- ◆ Living in a motel or hotel due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- ◆ Staying in a shelter; emergency or transitional
- ◆ Living in substandard housing; without electricity, running water, health code violations, lack of cooking capabilities, etc.
- ◆ Sleeping in a car, campground, park or public space

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, children in homeless situations have the right to:

- ◆ Go to school, no matter where the student is currently living
- ◆ Be immediately enrolled in school if student lacks proof of residency or other documents
- ◆ Continue enrollment in the student's school that he/she attended before becoming homeless, or the school for which the student is currently zoned
- ◆ Attend classes while the new school secures previous school records
- ◆ In case of an enrollment dispute, continue to attend classes while dispute is being heard and resolved
- ◆ Request assistance with transportation to school of origin
- ◆ Participate in school programs with students who are not homeless
- ◆ Receive free lunch

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, homeless unaccompanied youth are students who:

- ◆ Are in homeless situations and who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, including youth who have run away from home, been thrown out of their homes and/or been abandoned by parents or guardians.
- ◆ Have the same rights as other students experiencing homelessness including: remaining in their school of origin, transportation to and from the school of origin, immediate enrollment in a new school serving the area in which they are currently living even if they don't have typically required documents (e.g. proof of guardianship) and equal access to programs and services such as gifted and talented education, special education, and English Language Learner Services.

How will the MVP staff help my child?

- ◆ Ensure your child is enrolled immediately, whether you have the required documentation and records; assist you in obtaining the records.
- ◆ Assist with transportation arrangements to school of origin or your choice; assist the timely resolution if a dispute occurs.
- ◆ Refer you to other school and community resources that may help during your time of housing transition.
- ◆ Connect your child with assistance available through the McKinney-Vento Program (such as clothing, food, school supplies etc.)
- ◆ Provide information pertaining to McKinney-Vento Rights.
- ◆ Coordinate academic resources in the district to support your child's academic success.

Should I keep my child in their school of origin or should I move them to the local school? Consider the following:

- ◆ How old is your child?
- ◆ How much time would your child spend commuting to and from their school of origin?
- ◆ How long do you expect to be in this living arrangement? Do you expect to stay in this area?
- ◆ How attached is your child to their school? Would changing schools be upsetting to your child?
- ◆ Are there safety issues to consider?

What if the school and I disagree on where my child should go to school?

The school district will notify you in writing if it thinks your child should go to a different school than the one you want, along with instructions on how to appeal their decision. Your child can still enroll in, attend, and participate fully in the school you think best for him/her while the disagreement is being settled. The dispute policy and procedure is also on our website.

Resource and Referral Guide

- ◆ Dial 211- www.uw211manasota.net for Health and Human Services Guide

Housing:

- ◆ Arcadia Housing Authority- housing assistance
7 Booker T. Washington Rd. Arcadia, FL. 863-494-4343
- ◆ Habitat for Humanity- 10 S. DeSoto Ave. Suite 200-B Arcadia, FL. 863- 494-4118
- ◆ Casa San Juan Bosco Homes- affordable housing for DeSoto County farm workers
2358 SE Arnold Andrews Ave. Arcadia, FL. 863-884-2136
- * *There are currently no emergency housing shelters in Arcadia*

Medical Care:

- ◆ DeSoto County Health Department- 519 Hickory St. Arcadia FL. 863-491-1918
- ◆ DeSoto County Dental Clinic- 34 S. Baldwin Ave. Arcadia, FL. 863-491-6150

Local Food Bank and Pantries:

- ◆ All Faiths Food Bank- For Arcadia distribution sites 941-379-6333
- ◆ Arcadia Center for the Needy- 163 S. Orange Ave. Arcadia, FL. 863- 558-9450
- ◆ Catholic Charities- Emergency food Pantry- 1210 E. Oak St. Arcadia, FL. 863-494-1068
- ◆ St. Edmund the Martyr Episcopal Church- 327 W. Hickory St. Arcadia, FL .
863-494-0485
- ◆ School Pantry: DeSoto County Middle School has a pantry that is stocked by All Faith's Food Bank weekly for families of students. Food backpacks are sent home on Fridays with elementary children. Please contact your child's school or MVP staff for further assistance.