



RECOGNIZING HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

Depression/Anxiety

- Poor/short attention span
- Aggressive behavior
- Withdrawn
- Unwilling to socialize at recess
- Anxiety late in the day
- Lying about where parents are or where they are living
- Protective of parents/covers for parents
- Poor self-esteem
- Developmental delays
- Fear of abandonment

Disturbed Relationships

- Need to claim something for self
- Does not know rules of games
- Difficulty making transitions
- Difficulty trusting people
- Old beyond their years
- School phobia (want to be with parent)
- Need for immediate gratification
- Unwillingness to risk forming relations with classmates and teachers
- Clinging behavior

Poor Health/Nutrition

- Skin rash
- Respiratory problems
- Increased vulnerability to colds and flu
- Unattended dental needs
- Unattended medical needs
- May lack immunization records

Opening Doors – Statewide Access to Education for Homeless Children and Youth

Adult Learning Resource Center, 2626 S. Clearbrook Drive, Arlington Heights, IL 60005
ROE #26 – Hancock/McDonough, 130 S. Lafayette - Suite 200, Macomb, IL

<http://homelessed.net>

Opening Doors is funded by the Illinois State Board of Education under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
The goal of this initiative is to disseminate information to Illinois schools and shelters as to the educational rights and needs of homeless children and youth.

Hunger

- Hordes food at snack time

Poor Hygiene (lack of shower facilities/washers etc.)

- Wears same clothes for several days
- Inconsistent grooming – well groomed one day, poorly groomed the next day

Transportation/Attendance Problems

- Numerous absences
- Does not participate in after-school activities
- Does not participate in field trips
- Does not attend school on days when students bring special treats
- Parents do not attend parent-teacher conference, open houses, etc.
- Parents unreachable

Lack of Continuity in Education

- Gaps in skill development
- Mistaken diagnosis of abilities
- Difficulty adjusting to new school
- Many different schools in a short time span
- Does not have personal records needed to enroll
- Poor organizational skills
- Poor ability to conceptualize

Lack of Privacy/Personal Space after School

- Fatigue
- Incomplete, missing homework (no place to do homework or keep supplies)
- Unable to complete special projects (no access to supplies)
- Loss of books and other supplies on a regular basis
- Refusing invitation from classmates
- Concern for safety of belongings
- Lack of basic school supplies
- Inability to pay fees

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