



Better TOGETHER

September, 2023

Sharing information and resources for supporting Wisconsin's youngest students experiencing homelessness

What's in this issue?

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Upcoming Dates and Resources



New Resources from SchoolHouse Connection for Early Childhood

People are most likely to experience homelessness in their early years of life, and children under the age of six are historically under-identified when experiencing homelessness. As the school year begins, SchoolHouse Connection has released new resources to aid homeless liaisons and other early care and education professionals in identifying and supporting children experiencing homelessness.

[Back to School Awareness and Training Resources](#)

[Referring Young Children to Early Childhood Development Programs: Checklist for Homeless Liaisons](#)




Wisconsin Early Childhood
Collaborating Partners





Wisconsin Receives Federal Approval to Implement Housing Benefits



The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) received approval from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide housing support for low-income Wisconsin families in need. Those who are eligible include families with children 18 and younger and individuals who are pregnant who have low income (below 200% of the [federal poverty level](#)) and do not have housing. Wisconsin is the first state to implement this type of housing benefit through a Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Health Services Initiative (HSI). The HSI option allows states to use a portion of CHIP funding to implement initiatives that improve the health of vulnerable children.

"We are very excited to be able to provide housing support to Wisconsin families in need," said DHS Secretary-Designee Karen Timberlake. "Research shows that stable housing is a crucial factor in health, and that health in childhood sets the foundation for positive life-long outcomes. Connecting families with supportive housing services not only helps them right now, but is a proactive measure that can build a better future for Wisconsin children." Those eligible will be able to access the following supportive housing services:

- Housing consultations that will prepare families by developing a housing support plan
- Transition supports that help families prepare for and make the move to new housing
- Relocation supports that provide financial support to help families move from temporary living spaces to their own housing
- Sustaining supports that assist families with keeping their housing, after they move

DHS will select homeless assistance providers to deliver the supportive housing services to eligible families. This includes one provider each in Dane, Milwaukee, and Racine counties, and five providers to serve the remainder of the state. Homeless assistance providers can apply through a request for applications that will be available on the DHS [housing support services webpage](#) in November.

To learn more about housing supports, visit the [DHS website](#).

The language in the above article is from a DHS press release, and is used with the permission of DHS.





Wisconsin Shares makes *More* possible

**Get help paying
for child care.**

Coming Soon: Changes to Wisconsin Shares Policies

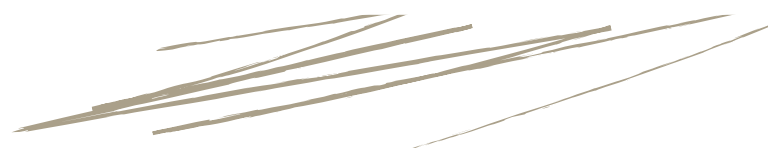
Wisconsin Shares provides important financial support to families. Why? Because child care is an essential part of helping working families thrive. Parents and caregivers rely on safe, affordable child care so they can work, take classes, or take advantage of other opportunities to strengthen their families. Most importantly, children get a better start when they're in quality care. Young children depend on child care to help them develop the social-emotional skills needed to prepare them for the future.

Beginning October 1, 2023, WI Shares Subsidy will change from hourly amounts to full or part-time childcare amounts. In addition, limited registration fees may be paid through WI Shares to providers for parents with authorizations.

Childcare subsidies are an important support for families experiencing homelessness and/or living in poverty. Display posters in common areas and refer parents and guardians to WI Shares to help support eligible families.

Learn more about the Wisconsin Shares changes [here](#).

Access Wisconsin Shares posters and other shareable media kits [here](#).





Wisconsin Homelessness Awareness - Community Outreach Toolkit

Homelessness awareness month is November. The Wisconsin Homelessness Awareness group created a Homelessness Awareness-Community Outreach Tool, so communities across Wisconsin can form partnerships and create plans to bring awareness to homelessness. This tool can be used to help shape the outreach efforts and events in communities across Wisconsin. Though the tool has a focus on homelessness awareness month, resources and information inside the tool can also assist with planning year-round school district events and community engagement and outreach efforts.

To obtain a copy of the Toolkit, please fill out the [Google Form](#), and Wisconsin Homelessness Awareness will email you an electronic copy.

More information about Wisconsin Homelessness Awareness can be found on their [Facebook/Meta page](#).





2nd Annual

WI Homelessness Awareness Kickoff

November 1, 2023

12 PM CT

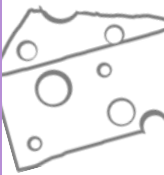
Wisconsin State Capitol Rotunda

- **Guest speakers, including state lawmakers and those with lived experience.**
- **Tree of Data representing the different ways in which homelessness is experienced in our state.**

Raise awareness in your own community with our
Community Outreach Toolkit

Follow us on Facebook:

facebook.com/WisconsinHomelessnessAwareness





Connect and Learn with DPI's Education for Homeless Children and Youth



Wisconsin Virtual EHCY Conference

For the second year, DPI is hosting a FREE virtual conference for homeless liaisons on November 2 and 3, 2023. It is open to all staff, including support staff, administration, and staff directly supporting students experiencing homelessness. The conference will provide in-depth professional development from DPI and national partners, and networking opportunities.

Details and registration can be found on the [conference website](#).


Lunch Time Live

The DPI EHCY Team will be continuing the Lunch Time Live chat series during this school year. These are times to connect with liaisons and others across the state to share best practices in supporting children and youth experiencing homelessness. Generally, these will happen monthly throughout the year.

Dates and connection details for Lunch Time Lives can be found on the [2023-24 DPI EHCY Virtual Offerings Calendar](#).



Family Resource Center System Navigators



DPI has used American Rescue Plan-Homeless Children and Youth funds to contract with Family Resource Centers across the state to hire resource navigators to work with students & families experiencing homelessness. These systems navigators can help connect families and students to needed supports throughout their communities.

Here is the list of Family Resource Centers (FRCs) that have contracted resource navigators across the state: Children's Hospital West, Children's Hospital North, Family Childcare Resources Northeast Wisconsin, Focus on Community, Lakeland, Bayview Community Center MCCY, Northwest Family Connections, and Western Dairyland.

[Open this link for a list of school districts that are served under these FRCs.](#)



Upcoming Dates and Events

- [SchoolHouse Connection](#) offers live webinars on several topics related to supporting children and families experiencing homelessness throughout the year. Join their mailing list to receive emails with upcoming webinar and training opportunities.
- November 11-14: National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) Conference. Find more information at <https://naehcy.org/2022-naehcy-conference/>.
- The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) hosts regular webinars on educating children experiencing homelessness. Webinar details and registration can be found [here](#).
- The Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care (WIBSCOC) shares information about local homelessness coalition meetings and other housing coalition events on their website calendar. Find out more by visiting their website <https://www.wiboscoc.org/>.
- CESA 5 is hosting a Supporting Homeless Children and Youth full day workshop November 14, 2023 from 9:00am - 2:00pm. Details and registration can be found [here](#).

*The mission of the Wisconsin Early
Childhood Collaborating Partners: All
children will be healthy, nurtured, safe
and successful.*