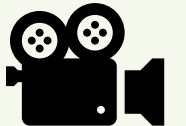




“We Don’t Have Any Homeless Students in Our Town”

Dispelling misconceptions related to identification and the need to develop partnerships to serve students in all areas of the state.



Meet Your Presenter



Suzanne M. Peck

- Program Specialist
- speck@serve.org

National Center for Homeless Education

Operates U.S. Department of Education's homeless education technical assistance & information center. NCHE has:

- Comprehensive website: <http://nche.ed.gov>
- Toll-free helpline: Call 800-308-2145 or e-mail homeless@serve.org
- Products & Listserv: <https://nche.ed.gov/resources/>
- Social Media
 - Twitter: [@NCHEducation](https://twitter.com/NCHEducation)

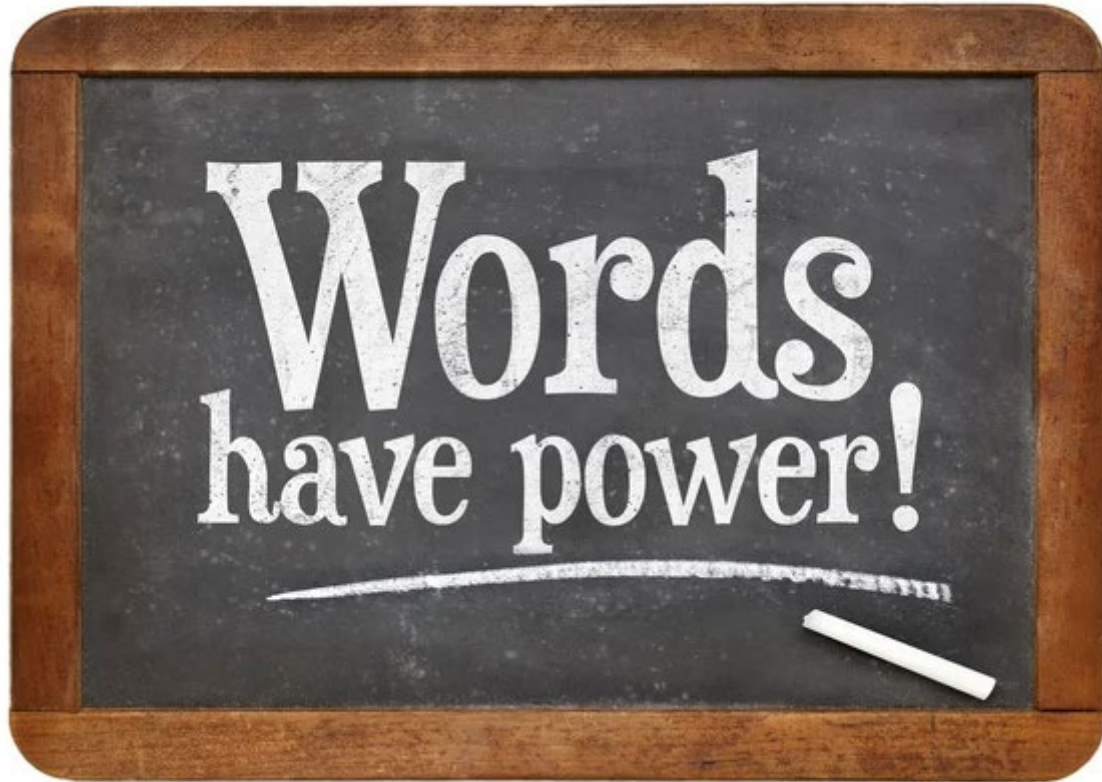


Learning Targets



- Understand there is hidden homelessness within their communities.
- Review data related to rural homelessness & McKinney-Vento definition.
- Examine current practices and apply new strategies to identify students.
- Increase support provided to students experiencing homelessness through better internal communication and partnerships with community-based organizations.

Student First Language



- Students experiencing homelessness
- Families in transition
- McKinney-Vento students

Myths of Homelessness

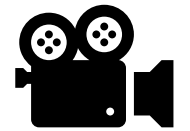


1. Most are mentally ill.
2. The majority abuse drugs and alcohol.
3. They're dangerous and violent.
4. They're criminals.
5. "Bad choices" led to their homelessness.
6. They prefer the freedom of life on the street.
7. They spend all their money on drugs and alcohol.
8. They just need to get a job.
9. The homeless are not part of "our community."
10. They live in unsanitary conditions because they don't care.

Nowhere to Go: Family Homelessness in America

HEAR US

Giving Voice and Visibility to
Homeless Children and Youth



www.hearus.us



Put Yourself in Their Shoes!

Imagine yourself as a young person experiencing homelessness –

- What do you miss most?
- What are you afraid of?
- What does “going” to school mean to you?



Please Remember!

Being homeless doesn't make someone a bad parent/young person.

Many amazing, supportive, loving families are going through difficult circumstances.

All families, regardless of their current situation in life, should be treated with dignity and respect.

How vulnerable are you to becoming homeless?



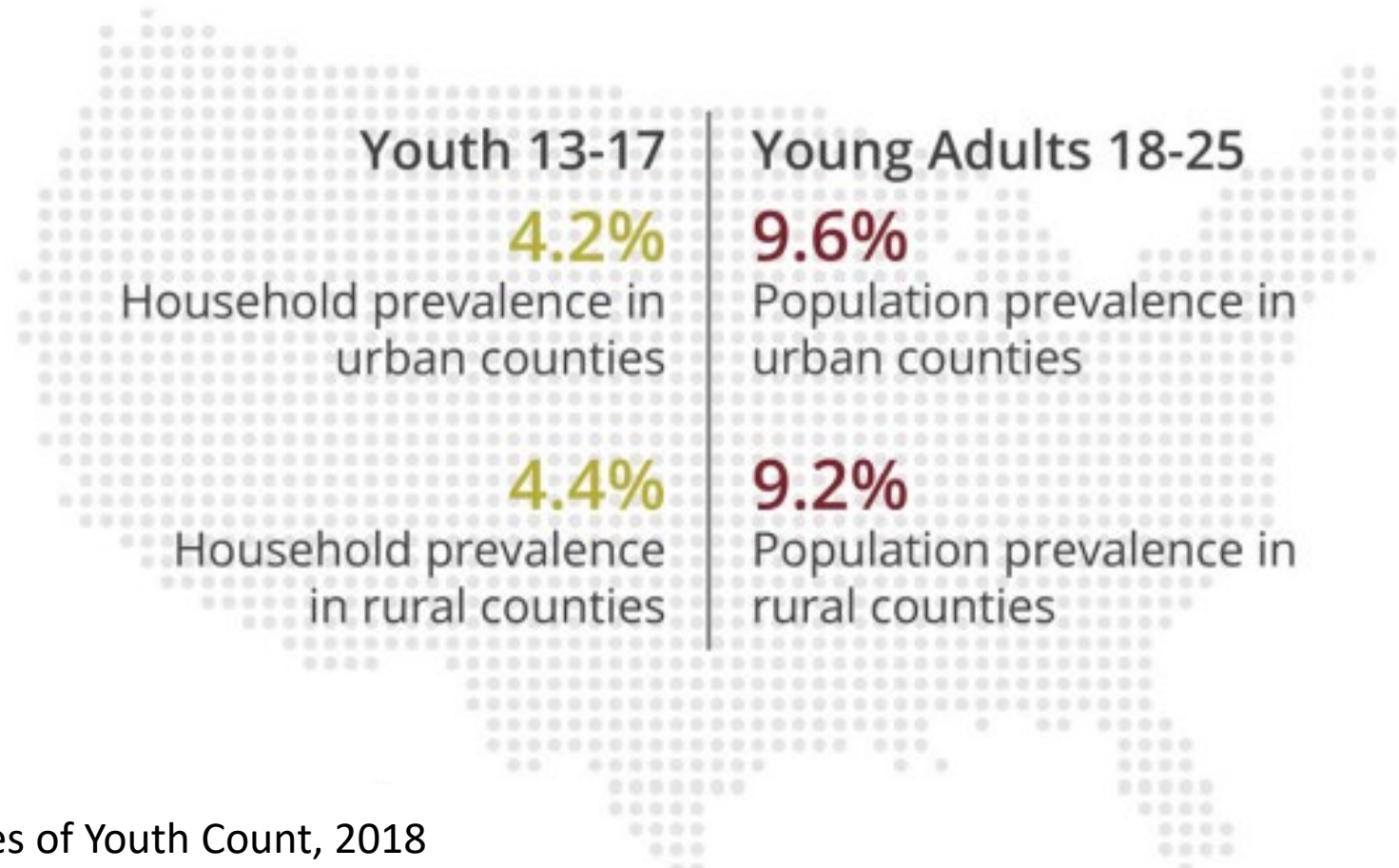


Rural Homelessness



Rural Vs. Urban Homelessness

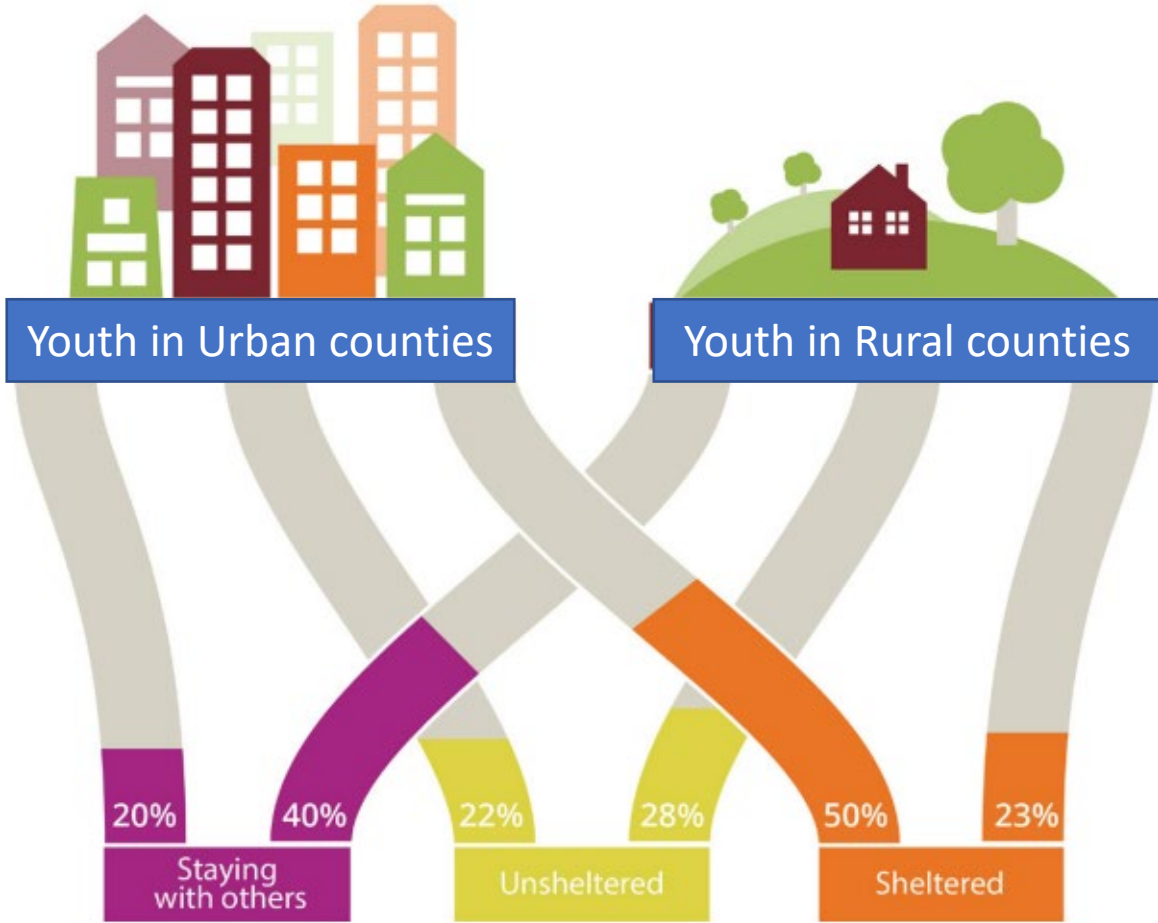
Rates of youth experiencing homelessness were similar in rural and nonrural areas.



Source: Voices of Youth Count, 2018



Misconceptions of “Doubled-Up”



Source: Missed Opportunities - Youth Homelessness in Rural America



Additional Barriers of Rural Homelessness

- Lack of resources and infrastructure
- Limited public transportation
- Limited job opportunities
- Lack of affordable housing options

Enrolled Homeless Students: School Year 2021-22

Student Group	United States	Tennessee
Homeless Children & Youth (HCY)	2.4% = 1,205,259	1.8% = 17,512
Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY)	9.2% = 110,664	8.1% = 1,414

Source: U.S. Department of Education's *EDFacts* Initiative

HCY in the Surrounding States: SY 2021-22

Tennessee: 1.8%
Kentucky: 3.2%
Virginia: 1.3%
North Carolina: 1.9%
Georgia: 2.0%
Alabama: 1.2%
Mississippi: 1.3%
Arkansas: 2.8%
Missouri: 3.7%



Rural HCY Trends

Homeless Student Population, School Year 2020-21

TENNESSEE
Percentage of Students Who Are Homeless

HCY Pct: LEAs
0% 5%

HCY Pct:
Charters & Other Schools
0% 5%

HCY Pct: LEAs
0% 21%

In SY2023-24, **60 out of 146 LEAs (41%)** were eligible for Rural Education Access Program (REAP) programs

- Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA)
- Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS)

53 of these LEAs reported identifying HCY= **3,392**



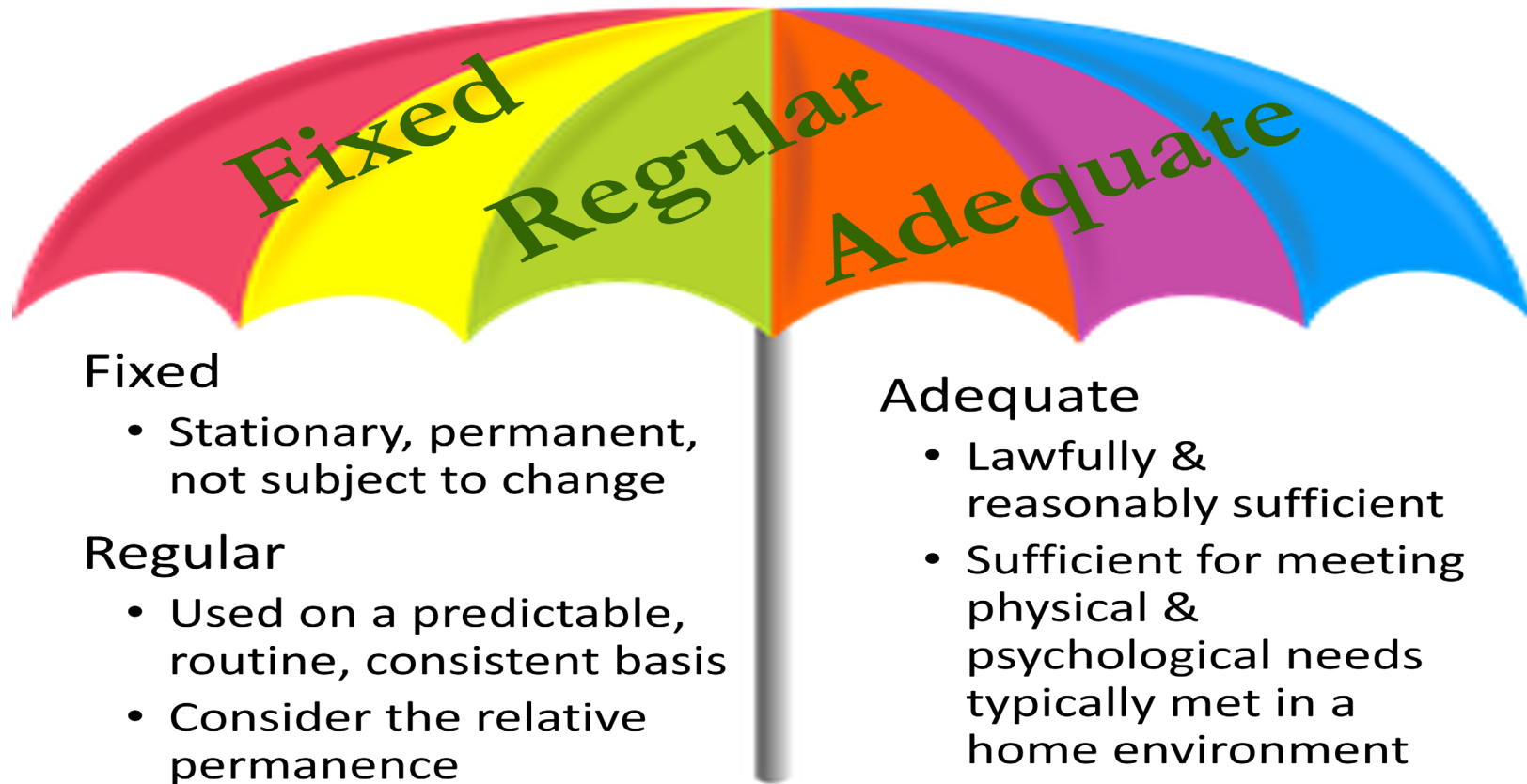


McKinney-Vento Definition & Goals of EHCY



McKinney-Vento Definition

Children or youth who lack a **fixed, regular, and adequate** nighttime residence.



42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)

Examples of Living Situations

The definition continues with examples of circumstances considered to be homeless:

- Sharing the housing of other persons *due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason*
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds *due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations*

42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)



Examples of Living Situations – Cont.

- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Abandoned in hospitals
- Living in a public or private space not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, *substandard housing*, bus or train stations, or similar settings



42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)

Examples of Living Situations – Cont.

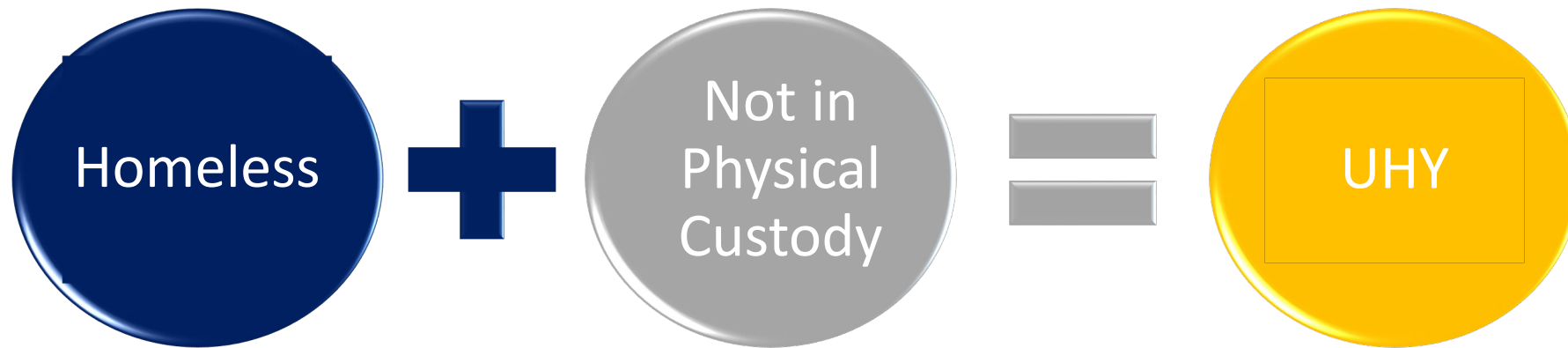
- Children of migratory agricultural workers (including migratory dairy workers or fishers) – *living in qualifying circumstances*
- Unaccompanied youth - *living in qualifying circumstances*



42 U.S.C. § 11434a(2)

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY) Definition

1. Student's living arrangement must **meet the definition of homeless**, **AND**
2. Student must be considered ***unaccompanied***, defined as "not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian"



Unstable Housing Impacts Education

High mobility and its trickle-down effects

- Higher than average rates of:
 - Emotional, behavioral, and health problems;
 - Developmental delays and school problems;
 - Hunger and food insecurity; and
 - Witnessing violence.
- Correlation between adverse childhood experiences and experiencing homelessness as an adult
- Higher chance of dropping out of school



Goals/Results of EHCY Program

School Stability & Removing Barriers for Full Participation

- Attendance
- School of Origin
- Academic success
- Graduation
- Postsecondary participation and completion



HOPE for a better future!



Identification Strategies: Throw the Net Wide



Housing Survey

General Strategies

- Enrollment for new students
- Registration of returning students
- Reverification of previous MV students

Targeted Strategies

- Online vs Paper form
- Mid-year “Updating” records
- Insert with report card

Awareness Efforts

General Strategies

- Posters
- School events
- Social Media
- Newsletter
 - MV highlights
 - Ways schools can help

Targeted Strategies

- Back to School Events
 - School Supply giveaways
 - Kindergarten registration
- Personal connection
- Parent advocates/advisory team
- Mid-year “Updating” records

Training Opportunities

General Strategies

- Staff training
 - Online vs. In-person
 - Staff referral process
 - District resources
- Specific training
 - Administrators
 - Registrars
 - Child Nutrition
 - Transportation
 - Paraprofessionals

Targeted Strategies

- “Family Engagement” classes
 - Cooking with basics
 - Parenting classes
 - Financial Literacy
- Share the needs of the school and how groups can help
 - Community-based Organizations
 - Faith-based Groups

Signs of Homelessness



- Changing schools frequently
- Gaps in skill development or credit accrual
- Transportation and attendance problems
- Poor hygiene, health, or nutrition
- Social and behavioral concerns
- Consistent lack of preparation for school, such as not completing assignments and not having school supplies
- Lack of participation in after-school programs
- Reactions/statements by parent/guardian or child

Building Awareness & Providing Services in a Culturally Sensitive Manner



- Provide training to increase cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills
- Avoid making assumptions
- Learn about other cultures
- Build trust and rapport
- Overcome language barriers/provide interpreter services
- Educate parents and partner with them
- Practice active listening
- Use a strength-based approach when working with families



Meeting Needs & Removing Barriers



Collaboration = No Wrong Door!

Whenever a family or young person presents with an identified need at a service agency or school system, they will be supported to find the help they need and not be turned away.



What Is Already Happening In Schools?



- **Current Academic/Behavioral Support**
 - RTI teams
 - “CARE” teams
- **Current Programming**
 - 21st Century After-School Programs
 - Title I-A
 - English Learner
 - Migrant
 - Title IV-A
 - Pre-K programs
 - CTE
 - GEAR UP or other college/career prep programs
- **Cross-training with other programs**
- **Braiding Funds**

Collective Impact!

A network of community members, organizations, and institutions who advance equity by learning together, aligning, and integrating their actions to achieve population and systems-level change.

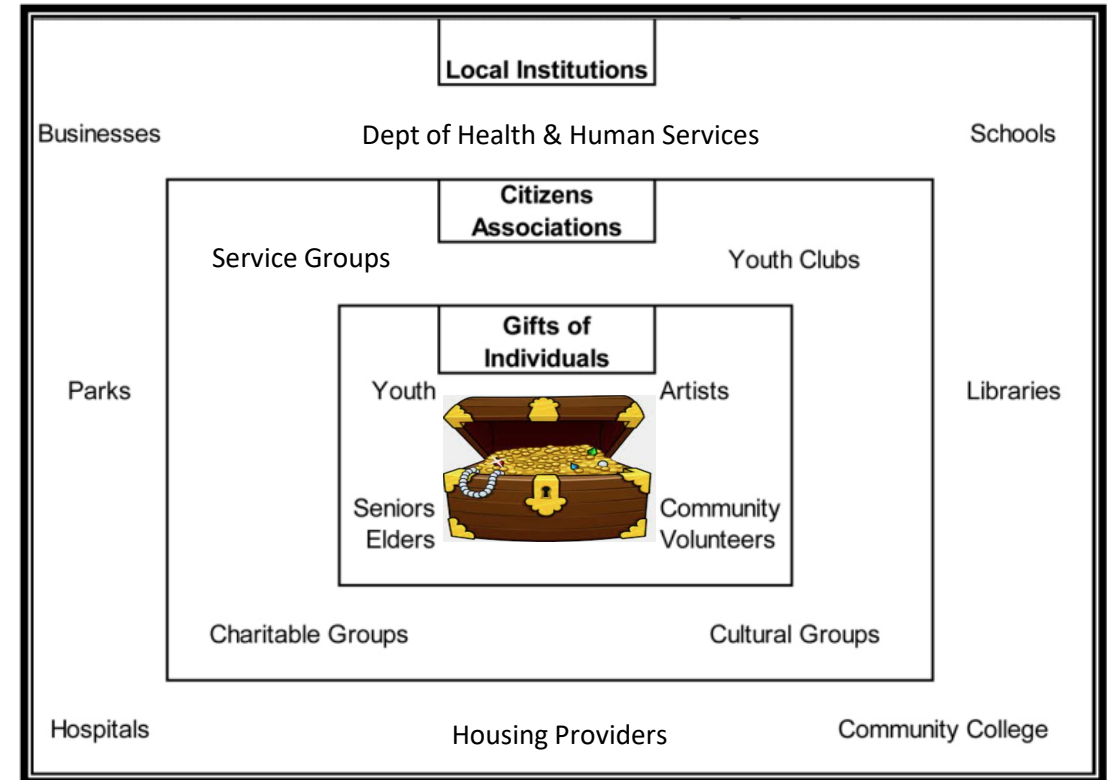
- Common Agenda/Goal
- Shared Measurement
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Continuous Communication
- Systemic Approach

Asset Mapping: Finding Your Local Treasure Chest!

Asset-Based: Uncovers talents/skills found in the community right now

Internally Focused: Relies on the community's assets, not on those found outside of it

Relationship Driven: Seeks to build linkages among local people, institutions, and organizations



Activity: Treasure Hunt



Once community strengths and resources are inventoried and depicted on a map, you can more easily think about how to build on these assets to address student needs and improve support.



Community
Resource
Mapping
Template



Food Resources
Health Resources
Community Resources
Housing Resources
Youth Resources
Emergency Resources

[Findhelp.org](https://findhelp.org)

[Findhelp.org/find-social-services/Tennessee](https://findhelp.org/find-social-services/Tennessee)

<https://tn211.myresourcedirectory.com//>



NCHE Resources

- *Identifying Children and Youth in Homeless Situations*
<https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/identification.pdf>
- *Partnering with School Social Workers to Expand Local Homeless Liaisons Capacity to Provide Wraparound Services under ARP-HCY*
<https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/SSW.pdf>
- *Rural Homelessness Resource Page*
<https://nche.ed.gov/rural-homelessness/>

Questions?

Ticket out the Door Activity



3, 2, 1 Activity

- 3 things that you learned/remembered
- 2 strategies you will use to identify students
- 1 partner whom you will reach out to



<https://padlet.com/speck38/tn-strategies-for-identification-ticket-out-the-door-6234bzivqb9hy9ck>