

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN TRANSITION

Homelessness exists in our community. A combination of high housing costs and poverty causes families to lose their housing. Many young people leave their home due to abuse, neglect, and family conflict. Children and youth who have lost their housing live in a variety of places, including motels, shelters, shared residences, transitional housing programs, cars, campgrounds, and other situations. Lack of permanent housing can lead to potentially serious physical, emotional, and mental consequences. The Sevier County School System will ensure that all children and youth receive a free appropriate public education and are given meaningful opportunities to succeed in our schools. The system will also follow the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act.

It is the policy of our system to view children as individuals. Therefore, this policy will not refer to children as homeless; instead, the term "children and youth in transition" will be used. Under federal law, children and youth in transition must have access to appropriate public education, including pre-school, and be given a full opportunity to meet state and local academic achievement standards. They must be included in state and district assessments and accountability systems. Our schools will ensure that children and youth in transition are free from discrimination, segregation, and harassment.

Information regarding this policy will be distributed to all students upon enrollment and posted in every school as well as other places where children, youth, and families in transition receive services, including family and youth shelters, soup kitchens, motels, campgrounds, drop-in centers, welfare departments, health departments, and other social service agencies.

Each year, schools that have been particularly creative in implementing this policy will be publicly recognized for the benefits they provide their students.