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UNDERSTANDING THE FORMAL IDENTIFICATION OF HOUSELESSNESS AS A CULMINATION OF STRESSORS

BRIEF 2: STUDENTS NAVIGATING HOUSING INSTABILITY SERIES

Educational outcomes for students navigating housing instability (SNHI) are persistently lower than for other students, as outlined in SNHI Research Brief 1. Housing instability can present many challenges to academic success, including challenges with transportation to school; lack of access to learning resources and the internet; lack of access to a quiet and private place to study; stress, trauma, and vulnerability related to unstable housing; and loss of personal property. However, given that houselessness and housing instability are rarely isolated events in a student's life, we seek to understand how much of those impacts can be attributed to houselessness and housing instability itself, and how much can be attributed to broader stressors in a student's life, which both impact the student's academic performance and eventually result in a formal identification of navigating housing instability.
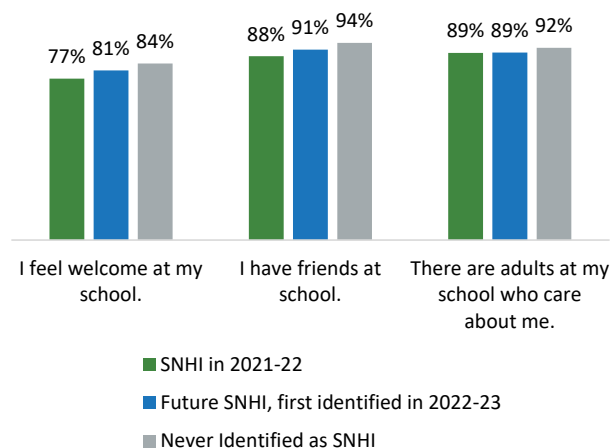
By leveraging longitudinal data sets collected by ODE, we can examine results for students who would eventually be formally identified for houseless (McKinney-Vento) services, but had not yet been identified in a selected historical data year. We examine whether outcomes and sense of belonging[1] for this group already reflected the impact of the economic and domestic stressors that lead to their later identification for McKinney-Vento services.

Key Takeaways

- Houselessness and housing instability should be considered a culmination of a series of domestic and economic stressors over the course of multiple years, rather than an isolated calamity, for many students.

- Multi-year economic and domestic stressors may be tracked well before the formal identification of housing instability, in assessment, attendance, and on-track data.

- While re-housing students and families is important and necessary, it is likely not sufficient to address the full scope of these stressors. Additional interventions will be needed in most cases.

Figure 1: Students Experiencing Economic and Domestic Stressors Report Lower Sense of Belonging on Some Items

2021-22 % AGREEING/STRONGLY AGREEING WITH SELECTED SENSE OF BELONGING ITEMS, BY MCKINNEY-VENTO IDENTIFICATION

	I feel welcome at my school.	I have friends at school.	There are adults at my school who care about me.
SNHI in 2021-22	77%	88%	89%
Future SNHI, first identified in 2022-23	81%	91%	89%
Never Identified as SNHI	84%	94%	92%

■ SNHI in 2021-22
■ Future SNHI, first identified in 2022-23
■ Never Identified as SNHI

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1   Data from the 2021-22 administration of the SEED Survey to Oregon public school students. Given the small sample size, results should be interpreted with caution. Over 13,000 students who had not previously been reported as houseless took the survey in this year; 120 of these students were identified as houseless for the first time in the following school year.

Authors: Jennifer Bevers, Tom George, Isabella Jacoby, Office of Education Innovation and Improvement

Background

The federal McKinney-Vento Act establishes the definition of Students Navigating Housing Instability (SNHI), and requires school districts to designate a local liaison, who is responsible for identifying SNHI within their district. Once SNHI are formally identified, they receive access to additional supports intended to promote consistent enrollment and attendance, and address the additional academic needs of SNHI.

However, significant research indicates a variety of stressors often predicate houselessness and housing instability, including but not limited to economic stressors. Precarious economic situations, including high rates of poverty, lack of affordable housing, unemployment or underemployment, and unaffordable health care, combined with insufficient or inaccessible aid, can create a sense of vulnerability in a family. These situations often drive frequent moves in search of more affordable housing or, if evicted, may eventually lead to doubling up (i.e., shared living) or other formally-defined types of housing instability.[2] In addition, a single economic event, such as unaffordable treatment for an injury, the loss of a car, or loss of day care access can result in a vulnerable family becoming houseless.[3] In 2022, 13% of American households reported that they would not be able to cover an unexpected $400 expense at all; 46% did not have enough savings to cover three months of expenses in case of job loss; and 28% went without some form of medical care because they could not afford it.[4] This vulnerability and instability has the potential to impact a student's ability to be successful and engaged in school, particularly when students may have competing priorities, such as the care of younger siblings or parents, or employment, which are necessary for their family's survival, or when they are going without needed medical care. Poverty also impacts students materially, limiting their access to tutoring and other supports, school supplies, internet access, or safe and quiet places to study.

Research also supports the prevalence of trauma, traumatic stress, and mental and behavioral health challenges among houseless parents. One study found that, while houselessness exacerbates these conditions, mental health challenges commonly preceded houselessness: particularly mood disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, and schizophrenia.[5] Students whose parents or caregivers experience these illnesses may find it more difficult to succeed in school and may find the experience disruptive or stressful.[6] Research is mixed on the direct impact of parental mental health on a child's educational attainment – one study found that having a parent with schizophrenia was associated with significantly lower grades and educational attainment,[7] and another linked parental mental illness to lower school readiness among young children,[8] but most studies found variable effects depending on which parent was diagnosed and the specific diagnosis.[9]

2   Giano, Z, Williams, A., Hankey, C., Merrill, R., Lisnic, R., & Herring, A. (2020). Forty Years of Research on Predictors of Homelessness. *Community Mental Health Journal,* v. 56, pp. 692–709. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-019-00530-5

3   Bassuk, Ellen L., Carmela J. DeCandia, Corey Anne Beach, and Fred Berman. "America's youngest outcasts: A report card on child homelessness." (2014). https://apo.org.au/node/52181

4   US Federal Reserve, Report on the Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households in 2022. 63% of those surveyed would be able to cover a $400 expense in cash or equivalent, and another 24% would borrow or sell something to cover it.

5   Pinillo, Mercedes. "Precursors and outcomes: A look at mental health in relation to homelessness." *Modern Psychological Studies* 26, no. 1 (2021): 2.

6   Meadus, Robert John, and B. Johnson. "The experience of being an adolescent child of a parent who has a mood disorder." Journal of psychiatric and mental health nursing 7, no. 5 (2000): 383-390.

7   Ranning, Anne, Thomas Laursen, Esben Agerbo, Anne Thorup, Carsten Hjorthøj, Jens Richardt Møllegaard Jepsen, and Merete Nordentoft. "School performance from primary education in the adolescent offspring of parents with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder–a national, register-based study." *Psychological medicine* 48, no. 12 (2018): 1993-2000.

8   Bell, M. F., D.M. Bayliss, R. Glauert, A. Harrison, and J.L. Ohan. "Children of Parents Who Have Been Hospitalised with Psychiatric Disorders Are at Risk of Poor School Readiness." *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences* 28, no. 5 (2019): 508-20.

9   Ayano, Getinet, Ashleigh Lin, Berihun Assefa Dachew, Robert Tait, Kim Betts, and Rosa Alati. "The impact of parental mental health problems on the educational outcomes of their offspring: Findings from the Raine Study." *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* 56, no. 5 (2022): 510-524.

Domestic violence in the home[10] is another form of stress and trauma for all who live in the home, whether directly targeted by the violence or not. While domestic violence can impact individuals of any gender, it disproportionately impacts women. As many as half of all women navigating housing instability cited domestic violence as the primary cause of their houselessness, and 45% reported remaining in violent relationships due to lack of alternative housing,[11] suggesting that formal designation of houselessness may in some cases reflect years of preceding family violence. A recent report by the Oregon Secretary of State found that lack of affordable housing was strongly related to domestic violence, with 1/3 of survivors returning to violent relationships when they can't find housing, and unstable housing increasing the risk of domestic violence by 400%.[12] The report also noted that financial aid to support domestic violence survivors in leaving relationships has not kept up with increased housing costs, and is now largely insufficient to cover deposits or rent. Literature has extensively documented negative impacts of exposure to family violence on students' academic achievement, including standardized assessment results and Grade Point Average (GPA).[13,14]

Children have also been found to have a history of direct or collateral stress, maltreatment, and trauma prior to becoming houseless. For example, a substantial body of literature indicates that children who live with chronic domestic violence between their parents or caregivers are at heightened risk of significant mental and behavioral health problems that resemble Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Common symptomatology includes anxiety, depression, sleeping and eating difficulties, difficulty concentrating, impulsive or reckless behavior, and decreased academic achievement.[15,16,17] Further, a growing body of retrospective studies suggests a considerable number

of children who eventually experience houselessness were abused, neglected, or otherwise maltreated prior to their first houseless episode, the negative effects of which are well documented.[18] These experiences of maltreatment have been shown to have both immediate (e.g., injury) and long-term impacts on mental, behavioral, physical, and cognitive growth.

Although housing instability is often discussed or addressed in ways which suggest an isolated, discrete, or temporary negative experience, the literature indicates this is rarely the case. Increasingly, housing instability is being viewed as "chains of risk" in which one exposure to stress is likely to lead to another, in a snowball effect. This model suggests housing instability is produced when a cascade of negative events accumulates into a whole that's bigger than the sum of its parts[19] - referred to throughout this brief as "cumulative effects."

This analysis aims to test the cumulative effects model of housing instability by examining children's educational achievements leading up to and after experiencing their first formal identification as houseless. Consistent with the cumulative effects model, we will demonstrate that economic and/or domestic stressors both precede and follow the formal identification of houselessness. As such, we expect early stressors of young students to be evident in lower achievement scores on English Language Arts and Math assessments, as well as in lower attendance and a lower likelihood of being on-track academically in ninth grade. In addition, we expect a decline in performance as the cumulative effects of economic and domestic stressors accrue, with houselessness serving as a reinforcing step in the process, but not as a substantial inflection point relative to the students' existing trajectories. While some of these stressors may be out of the control of educators, we conclude this brief with recommendations and best practices for educators looking to better support students navigating housing instability.

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10   Including intimate partner violence between parents and their partners, but also other types of domestic violence, including violence between parents and children, or between other occupants of the student's home. Children are impacted both by violence directly perpetrated against them, and by violence they witness, are aware of, or are exposed to.

11   Bassuk et al.

12   Oregon Secretary of State. Advisory Report: Breaking the Cycle: A Comprehensive Statewide Strategy would Benefit Domestic Violence Victims, Survivors, and Advocates. https://sos.oregon.gov/audits/Pages/audit-2023-31-domestic-violence.aspx

13   Supol, M., Satyen, L., Ghayour-Minaie, M., & Toumbourou, J. W. (2021). Effects of Family Violence Exposure on Adolescent Academic Achievement: A Systematic Review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 22(5), 1042–1056. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838019899486

14   Kiesela, L., Piescherb, K., & Edleson, J. (2016). The Relationship Between Child Maltreatment, Intimate Partner Violence Exposure, and Academic Performance. *Journal of Public Child Welfare,* DOI: 10.1080/15548732.2016.1209150.

15   Campbell, J., & Lewandowski, A. (1997). Mental and physical health effects of intimate partner violence on women and children. *Anger, Aggression, and Violence*, v. 20 (2). The Psychiatric Clinics of North America.

16   Wolfe, D., Crooks, C., Lee, V., McIntyre-Smith, & Jaffe, P. (2003). The effects of children's exposure to domestic violence: A meta-analysis and critique. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, v. 6,* 171-187. DOI: 10.1023/A:1024910416164.,

17   Smiley, A., Moussa, W., Ndamobissi, R., & Menkiti, A. (2021). The negative impact of violence on children's education and well-being: Evidence from Northern Nigeria. *International Journal of Educational Development*, v. 81, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102327.

18   Coates, J., & McKenzie-Mohr, S. (2010). Out of the frying pan, into the fire: Trauma in the lives of homeless youth prior to and during homelessness. *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare,* v. 37 (4), article 5. DOI: https://doi.org/10.15453/0191-5096.3561. Available at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol37/iss4/5.

19   Ben-Shlomo, Y., & Kuh, D. (2002). A life course approach to chronic disease epidemiology: conceptual models, empirical challenges and interdisciplinary perspectives. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, v. 31 (2). https://doi.org/10.1093/ije/31.2.285

About the Sample

We identified a cohort of students with consistent grade level enrollment across multiple years, starting as 3rd graders in 2014-15, and continuing through their 7th grade year in 2018-19.[20] Students with inconsistent enrollment,[21] or who skipped or repeated grades, were excluded in order to identify a comparable group of students across years. Students who had previously been formally identified as houseless (between 2012-13 and 2015-16), or who were first formally identified as houseless after 2016-17 were also excluded from our analysis.[22]
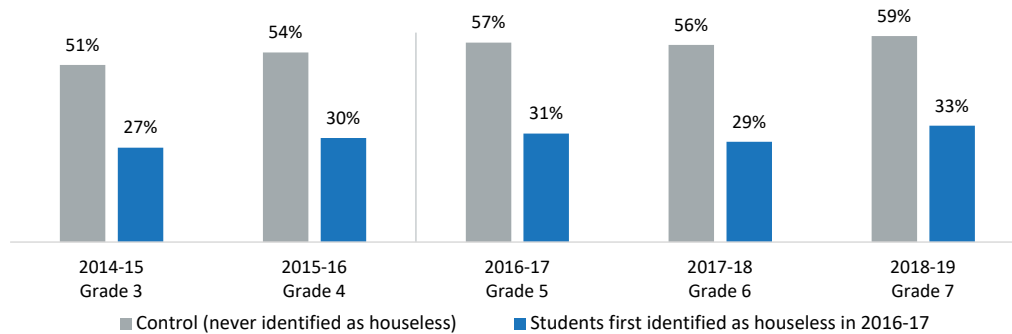
This resulted in a cohort divided into two groups: a control group (students who were not formally identified as houseless or navigating housing instability at any point between 2012-13 and 2018-19) consisting of 31,836 students, and our main group of interest, consisting of 297 students first formally identified as houseless in 2016-17. This group will be referred to throughout the brief as Students Experiencing Economic and Domestic Stressors.
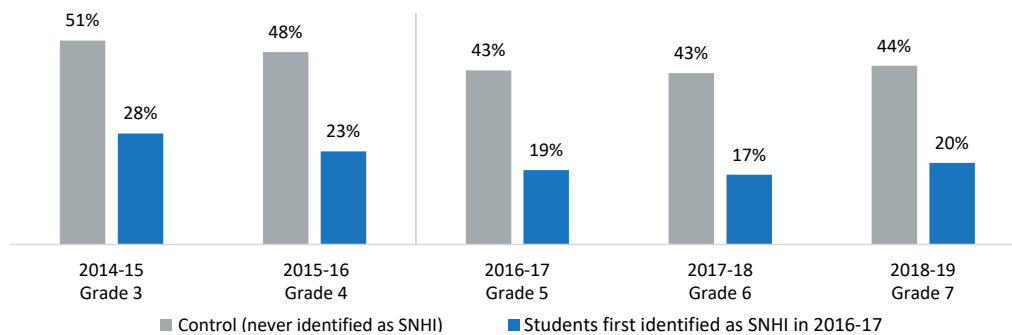
Results: Statewide Assessment[23]

Students experiencing economic and domestic stressors (who would later be identified as eligible for McKinney-Vento supports) were significantly less likely to score proficient on Oregon's statewide assessment in either English Language Arts (ELA) or Mathematics, compared to students who were not identified as eligible for these supports. The gap in 2014-15, two years prior to formal identification, is approximately 23% in both ELA and math and widens in following years until 2017-18, then declines slightly in 2018-19. Formal identification of houselessness does not seem to inflect the existing trend substantially.

Figure 2: Proficiency on Statewide Assessments is Consistently Lower for Students Experiencing Economic and Domestic Stressors, Even Prior to Formal Identification of Houselessness/Housing Instability

PROFICIENCY RATES ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT BY MCKINNEY-VENTO IDENTIFICATION

	2014-15 Grade 3	2015-16 Grade 4	2016-17 Grade 5	2017-18 Grade 6	2018-19 Grade 7
Control (never identified as houseless)	51%	54%	57%	56%	59%
Students first identified as houseless in 2016-17	27%	30%	31%	29%	33%

PROFICIENCY RATES ON MATHEMATICS STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT BY MCKINNEY-VENTO IDENTIFICATION

	2014-15 Grade 3	2015-16 Grade 4	2016-17 Grade 5	2017-18 Grade 6	2018-19 Grade 7
Control (never identified as SNHI)	51%	48%	43%	43%	44%
Students first identified as SNHI in 2016-17	28%	23%	19%	17%	20%

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20   These grades were selected to align with the availability of Oregon Statewide Assessment System (OSAS) data, which is administered to students in grades 3-8 and 11 (in Math and English Language Arts). Oregon began using its current statewide assessment system in 2014-15; results from assessments administered in earlier years are not comparable. Data from 2019-20 is not presented due to interruptions to the assessment system in that year as a result of the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

21   Consistent enrollment was defined as being enrolled on the first school day in May (spring membership) and having been enrolled in their May 1 district for at least half of the school year ("full academic year").
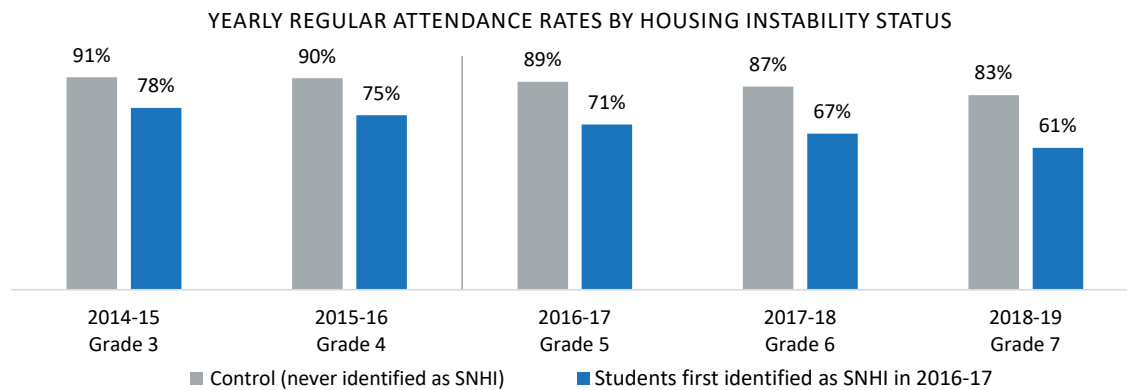
22   A total of 2,620 students with consistent grade level enrollment were excluded due to first being identified as houseless in years other than the year of interest.

23   A secondary analysis was conducted to evaluate whether identification differences within this group in subsequent years (i.e. students who were identified as houseless for multiple years vs. those identified for only one year) were relevant, but due to small sample sizes and negligible differences between these groups' rates, those analyses are not included here.

Results: Regular Attendance

Students experiencing economic and domestic stressors had consistently lower rates of regular attendance[24] than their peers with comparable enrollment and grade level patterns. Gaps between the two groups started at 13 percentage points in 2014-15, two years before the formal identification would first occur, and widened by 2-3 percentage points in each subsequent year. As with assessment results, we did not see more widening in 2016-17, the year of first identification, than we did in other years, which supports the hypothesis that McKinney-Vento identification marks formal recognition of domestic and economic stressors that have reached the point of federally-defined housing instability, rather than marking a tipping point in a student's life. Formal McKinney-Vento identification comes with additional rights and resources intended to offset the disruption of housing instability, so one possible interpretation of these data is that these resources do offset the disruption that led to a formal designation of McKinney-Vento eligibility, but were not sufficient to offset the impacts of all the other domestic and economic stressors that had been present in a student's life prior to formal identification.

Figure 3: Regular Attendance is Consistently Lower for Students Experiencing Economic and Domestic Stressors, Even Prior to Formal Identification of Houselessness/Housing Instability

YEARLY REGULAR ATTENDANCE RATES BY HOUSING INSTABILITY STATUS

	2014-15 Grade 3	2015-16 Grade 4	2016-17 Grade 5	2017-18 Grade 6	2018-19 Grade 7
Control (never identified as SNHI)	91%	90%	89%	87%	83%
Students first identified as SNHI in 2016-17	78%	75%	71%	67%	61%

We also examined differences within the cohort of students who were first formally identified as SNHI in 2016-17, based on whether those students were also identified in 2017-18 and/or 2018-19. No meaningful differences were seen in attendance rates in this analysis, further reinforcing the understanding of McKinney-Vento identification as just one formal marker of stressors that continue to impact students even when they may not meet the formal McKinney-Vento definition of houselessness or housing instability.

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24   Defined as attending more than 90% of the days for which they were enrolled, among students with at least 75 total days of enrollment within the district they attended on the first school day in May.

Results: Ninth Grade On-Track

Due to the different nature of this measure, we looked at a slightly different sample group for this portion of the analysis. Similar to the main analysis, students were included if they had consistent enrollment between 2014-15 and 2018-19. For this measure, we looked at students who first entered high school in 2016-17, and compared on-track rates in that year between students who were never houseless (the control group; 30,325 students), students who were first formally identified as houseless between 2014-15 and 2016-17 (students currently or previously navigating housing instability; 1,087 students), and students who were first formally identified as houseless in 2017-18 or 2018-19, and were not identified as houseless in 2014-15 through 2016-17 (future navigating housing instability: 577 students).

Figure 4: Ninth Grade On-Track Rates are Similar Between Students Experiencing Economic and Domestic Stressors, Regardless of Formal Houslessness Identification

2016-17 NINTH GRADE ON-TRACK RATES,
BY 2016-17 MCKINNEY-VENTO STATUS
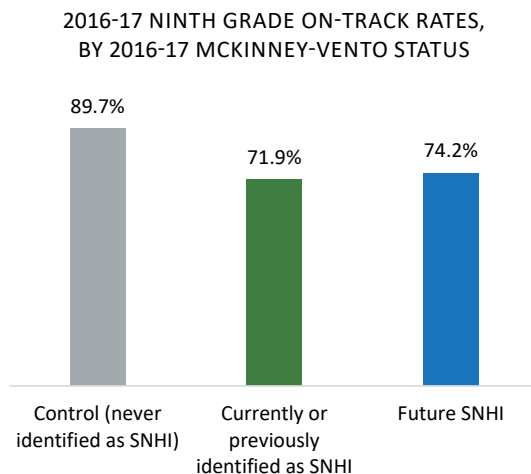
Although it would be a year or two before they are formally identified as houseless, the chart above shows that students who will be formally identified in the future are already much less likely to be on-track to graduate, with rates much closer to their peers navigating housing instability than to the control group. Again, this provides evidence that domestic and economic stressors strongly and negatively impact students before they compound enough for formal houseless identification to occur.

Discussion

Results from this study are consistent with a cumulative effects model of houselessness and housing instability, in which economic and domestic stressors accrue up to the point of a houseless experience, impacting a student's educational performance and opportunities all the while. As hypothesized, we found that prior to their first formal identification of housing instability, young students were already displaying signs of needing additional support through lower scores on statewide ELA and math assessments, lower attendance, and a decreased likelihood of being academically on track in ninth grade. Further, some evidence indicates that the gap between those who experienced housing instability and those that did not was widening both before and after the formal SNHI identification. However, there was no evidence of an additional drop in educational achievement coinciding with formal identification of houselessness. These findings may suggest that the economic and domestic stressors themselves are a greater contributor to the gap in student achievement than the specific experience of becoming houseless. Additionally, not seeing any impact from the implementation of McKinney-Vento supports on regular attendance, on-track, or proficiency rates after students are formally identified could indicate these supports are not functioning as intended, not utilized to their full potential, or are affecting indicators not reviewed in this analysis.

Limitations

Certain limitations have been identified in this analysis. First, it is likely that at least some students who are eligible for McKinney-Vento supports are not being identified in a timely manner by their school or district. While each school district is required by federal law to have a designated Homeless Support Liaison to determine who qualifies for supports and to aid families in accessing those supports, identifying all students who are eligible can be challenging. A recent analysis by InvestigateWest and the Center for Public Integrity, based on poverty estimates within each district, found that a significant fraction of Oregon districts may be under-identifying students,[25] mirroring nationwide trends.[26] In InvestigateWest's analysis, students and families reported barriers to identification and receiving supports, including distrust of education staff and lack of knowledge about McKinney-Vento rights as some of the reasons for not disclosing their housing status. Considering that students who are not formally identified as houseless

25   Tornay, Kaylee (2022). "Homeless students can get assistance from their schools, but unless they're identified, they get none." *InvestigateWest.* https://www.invw.org/2022/12/01/dozens-of-oregon-school-districts-likely-undercounting-homeless-students/

26   DiPierro, Amy and Corey Mitchell (2022). "Hidden toll: Thousands of schools fail to count homeless students." *The Center for Public Integrity.* https://publicintegrity.org/education/unhoused-and-undercounted/schools-fail-to-count-homeless-students/

may not receive transportation, nutrition, and other support for which they are eligible, these students may be experiencing even more disparate outcomes than the sample population studied. Additionally, some portion of the students who we categorized as "future navigating housing instability" may actually have been eligible and just not formally identified. We believe that this is likely a minority of the total population, however, and that in general McKinney-Vento identification does coincide with McKinney-Vento eligibility.

Additionally, demographic differences exist between the sample population of students navigating housing instability and the overall population of students navigating housing instability. Relative to students navigating housing instability as a whole, our sample (which was limited to students with five consistent years of enrollment) underrepresented American Indian/Alaska Native students and white students, and overrepresented Hispanic/Latino/a/x students. Students being served through an Individual Education Plan (IEP) are also overrepresented in the sample population. Nearly one in four students in the sample population had an active IEP at the time they were identified as houseless, while one in five students in the overall population of students experiencing houselessness had an active IEP. It is hypothesized this is not due to more students in the population of interest being eligible for an IEP, but rather that the consistent enrollment required to be included in the sample contributed to consistent supports; students with higher mobility are disproportionately likely to lose access to disability support plans, as seen in other research.

Demographic Group	Students in Sample (first formally identified SNHI in 2016-17)[27]	Other SNHI in 2016-17	Control (Never identified as SNHI)
American Indian	0.73%	2.25%	1.21%
Asian	1.09%	1.32%	4.17%
Black/African American	3.28%	5.68%	1.72%
Hispanic/Latino/a/x	38.69%	28.46%	23.98%
Multiple Races	6.57%	6.92%	5.93%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1.82%	1.70%	0.64%
White	47.81%	53.67%	62.34%
Students with Disabilities (IEP)	24.09%	18.76%	15.05%
Students Navigating Poverty	>95.00%	93.97%	55.84%

This hypothesis is supported by the higher percentage of students experiencing mobility[28] in the overall population of SNHI. 35% of all SNHI were reported as mobile in 2016-17 while only 16% of the sample population of SNHI were reported as mobile in the same year. Changing schools often includes a disruption or interruption in enrollment and accessing academic or other supports, exacerbating the negative outcomes already associated with navigating housing instability. While limiting the sample to students with consistent enrollment was necessary to avoid introducing attrition bias into our results, the exclusion of highly mobile students, who are often more vulnerable and less well-supported, means that our results may underestimate the true size of the outcome gap for students experiencing economic and domestic stressors.

Implications for Schools, Districts, and Communities

While housing these students and their families is undeniably important, it will not be sufficient without addressing the underlying stressors that precipitate the housing instability, which are impacting student achievement years before their formal identification as houseless. These results are consistent with a recent randomized trial, which found that a rapid rehousing program did not significantly improve educational outcomes for students navigating housing instability, relative to the usual care provided (emergency shelter space, with more limited access to rehousing resources).[29]

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27   Both the sample and the control group are also limited to students with five years of consistent enrollment and grade level advancement, as ODE data does not include outcomes or attendance rates for students served outside of our K-12 public education system.

28   Defined as attending more than one school in a single school year, first enrolling in a school after the first school day in October, exiting school prior to the first school day in May and not re-enrolling elsewhere, or having a gap of 10 or more days in school enrollment during a single school year.

29   Cutuli, J. J., and Janette E. Herbers. "Housing interventions and the chronic and acute risks of family homelessness: Experimental evidence for education." *Child Development* 90, no. 5 (2019): 1664-1683.

Previous research has found that houselessness, and housing instability generally, negatively impacts a student's sense of safety and control, as well as their sense of their parent's ability to protect them – emotional and cognitive impacts that may be long-lasting and require supports to help children regain their emotional equilibrium.[30]

In a recent study by the University of California, San Francisco, Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative surveyed over 3,000 individuals about the time period directly prior to becoming houseless to assess what the precipitating factors were and how they could have been prevented. While this study was focused on those over 18 and residing in California, several common factors emerged: economic stress and domestic unrest were primary reasons for first becoming houseless. Only 36% of those interviewed sought homelessness prevention services and most believed a small rental subsidy or one-time cash infusion would have prevented their houselessness. While these challenges cannot all be addressed by a school or district, being aware of student and family situations such as a job loss or health crisis and connecting with supports available through the school, district, community, or government organizations may prevent escalation into houselessness. When district housing questionnaires look for stressors beyond the formal McKinney-Vento definition, they may be better able to connect students with school and community resources to support them and potentially prevent houselessness.

The National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) recommends several practices to more fully identify and support SNHI. First, it is important to remember that while liaisons are responsible for much of the implementation of McKinney-Vento supports, the law itself states students are to be identified by "school personnel through outreach and coordination activities with other entities and agencies." Schools and districts should build capacity and empower staff in understanding the McKinney-Vento identification process, how they can best support the process, and the importance of ensuring the confidentiality of sensitive information.

This capacity can further be supported by incorporating identification strategies into existing school or district practices. Including a housing questionnaire in enrollment packets for all students may minimize the stigma of passing them out only to certain students. Broadening the questionnaires to look at a range of economic and domestic stressors and housing instability, rather than limiting them to McKinney-Vento eligibility, may enable districts to intervene before students are formally identified as houseless – in those preceding years where the impacts of stressors are already apparent in educational outcomes. Building relationships within the community, such as with staff at shelters, youth organizations, or community centers, can help spread awareness of the benefits of McKinney-Vento supports. These staff may suggest to families or students that they connect with the Homeless Support liaison at their school or district or recommend to school or district staff that they reach out to families and students. Having community connections such as these can help strengthen the support for those in need.

It is vital to keep in mind houselessness does not occur in isolation; rather it is a result of layered events which have the potential to have far-reaching negative impacts on students' lives. It may be possible to disrupt the chain of events prior to houselessness which could result in a return to a more stable environment. Students who are aging out of the foster care system may apply prior to their foster benefits ending. More support for transitioning foster care youth is available through the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS). Support for increased access to stable housing is available through Oregon Housing and Community Services. Resources to support those experiencing/escaping domestic violence are available through Oregon's Judicial Branch, the Oregon Department of Justice, and DHS, including grants available to fund housing for those at risk. Additional recommendations can be found in the Secretary of State's Advisory Report on Domestic Violence. Additionally, for those who need it, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers an SSI/SSDI (Supplemental Security Income/Social Security Disability Insurance) Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) program which increases access to Social Security benefits to those who are experiencing or at risk of becoming houseless and have a mental illness, medical impairment, or substance use disorder.

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30   Schmitz, Cathryne L., Janet D. Wagner, and Edna M. Menke. "Homelessness as one component of housing instability and its impact on the development of children in poverty." *Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless* 4, no. 4 (1995): 301-317.

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