



Sustainability for McKinney-Vento Programs: A look at programming, funding and advocacy

March 20, 2026



Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Why & How did this all start?
3. Program Evolution
4. Data
5. Student Story
6. Sustainability
7. Funding
8. Policy



Meet the Panel

Margaret Olmos

Director of the Unified Education team at the National Center for Youth Law

Kayla Schivo

Senior Program Manager at the National Center for Youth Law

Erica Parker

Housing Specialist at the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District



Changing to Meet the Needs

- In the 2017-2018 school year MPUSD had identified **8.6%** of its student population as McKinney-Vento
- That left **1 staff member to serve all 840 students** and their families in the district
- MPUSD spans across **3 cities**
- NCYL's Compassionate Education Systems Model launched in the 2018-2019 school year
 - Student and **relationship** centered support
 - **Individualized** education planning
 - **Goal oriented** career & post secondary planning



Learning from Both Successes and Failures

- **Year 1 Launch:**
 - 2 FTE NCYL liaisons to serve all 4 high schools
 - 1 FTE MPUSD district wide liaison
- **Year 2:**
 - COVID hit March 2020
- **Year 3:**
 - Fully remote learning
- **Year 4:**
 - Came back from remote learning
 - 1 FTE MPUSD liaison to serve the middle schools
 - 1 FTE NCYL program manager
 - Resource centers on each campus
 - Responsive services added
 - Motel 6 partnership
 - Awarded CDE HIP grant
- **Year 5:**
 - 1 FTE MPUSD liaison to serve the elementary schools
 - 1 FTE MPUSD data support
 - Launched a Youth Advisory Board
 - Launched BESTS toolkit
 - Launched Families For Housing
- **Year 6:**
 - Launched safe parking program
 - Senator Laird came to MPUSD for a site visit
- **Year 7:**
 - Launched Broadway Apartment
 - CES program wrap-up
- **Sustainability:**
 - 1 FTE MPUSD Housing Specialist
 - Continued partnership with NCYL

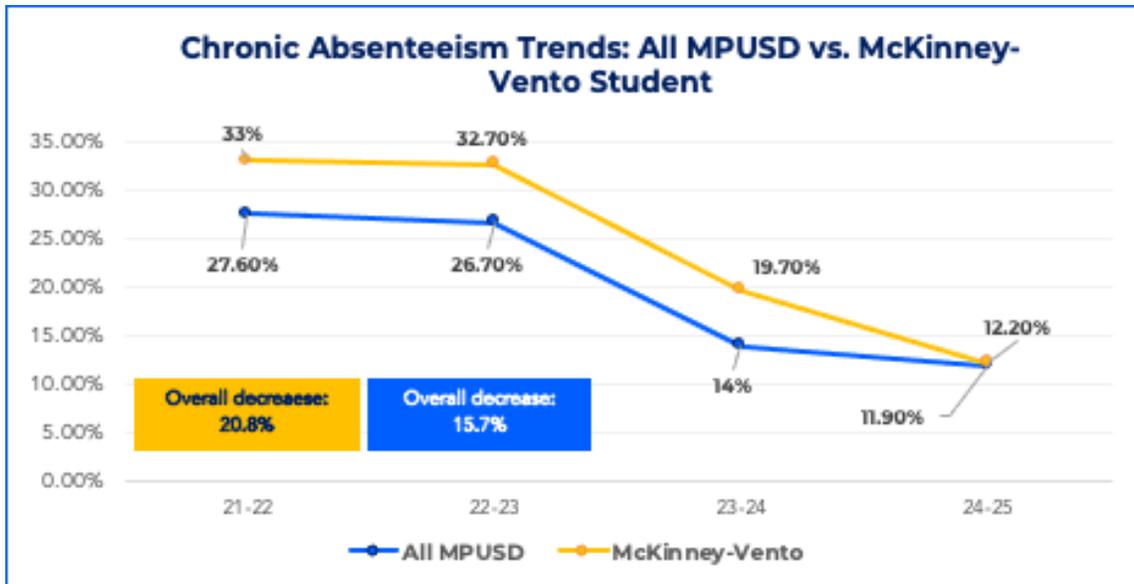


District leadership and commitment	MPUSD invited partnership, invested in implementation, and used the demonstration to build lasting infrastructure. NCYL matched that commitment with a proven model, coaching, and accountability through data.
Co-located, relationship-based support	NCYL Education Liaisons met students where they were (on campus) and treated stability, belonging, and dignity as essential conditions for learning.
Data plus continuous improvement	EdTeamConnect and shared metrics helped NCYL and MPUSD identify barriers early, adapt interventions, and communicate results to decision makers and partners.
Whole-family, cross-system coordination	NCYL paired school supports with housing pathways, health and nutrition access, and coordinated adult champions around each young person.
Tiered systems design	BESTS aligned McKinney-Vento services with MTSS logic so supports scaled across campuses and did not depend on a single person.
Youth voice and belonging	The Youth Advisory Board and strengths-based practice ensured young people were respected as partners in shaping what works.

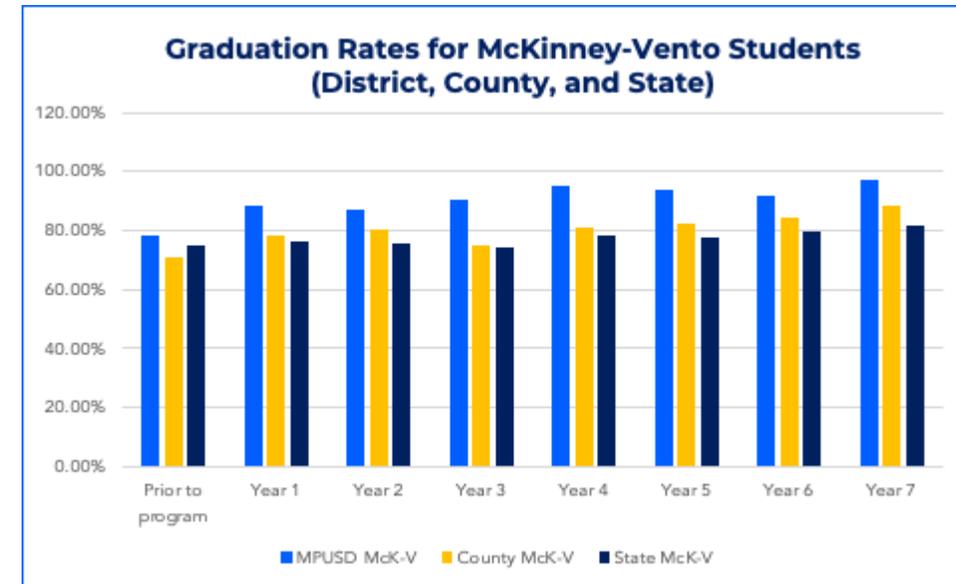
MPUSD Outcomes

When transportation barriers, basic needs, and school connection are addressed systematically, students show up, stay enrolled, and build momentum toward graduation.

Chronic Absenteeism



Graduation



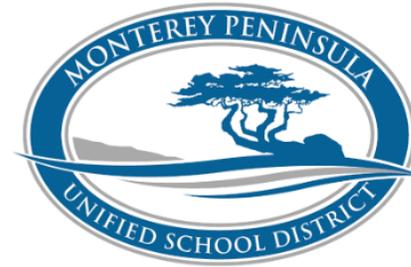
Data tells a story, but so do the students we serve...

- Avery was served
 - 9th
 - 10th
 - 11th
 - 12th
 - *Never transferring schools*
- Moved **6 times** before being permanently housed
 - Hotels
 - RV
 - Shared housing
- Resources received
 - Bus passes
 - Clothing
 - Food
 - Gift cards
 - Holiday donations
 - Motel 6 stay
 - Broadway Unit stay
 - Families for Housing funds
 - Advocacy

Despite endless barriers, Avery worked hard. He was able to be qualified for reduced credits under AB 2251 and **GRADUATED!**

Importance of Partnerships

NCYL and MPUSD **invested in the people who make implementation real:** teachers, counselors, liaisons, administrators, and community organizations. From July 2022 through May 2025, the CES team delivered 47 trainings to strengthen identification, improve referral pathways, and **build shared ownership for supporting students experiencing homelessness.**



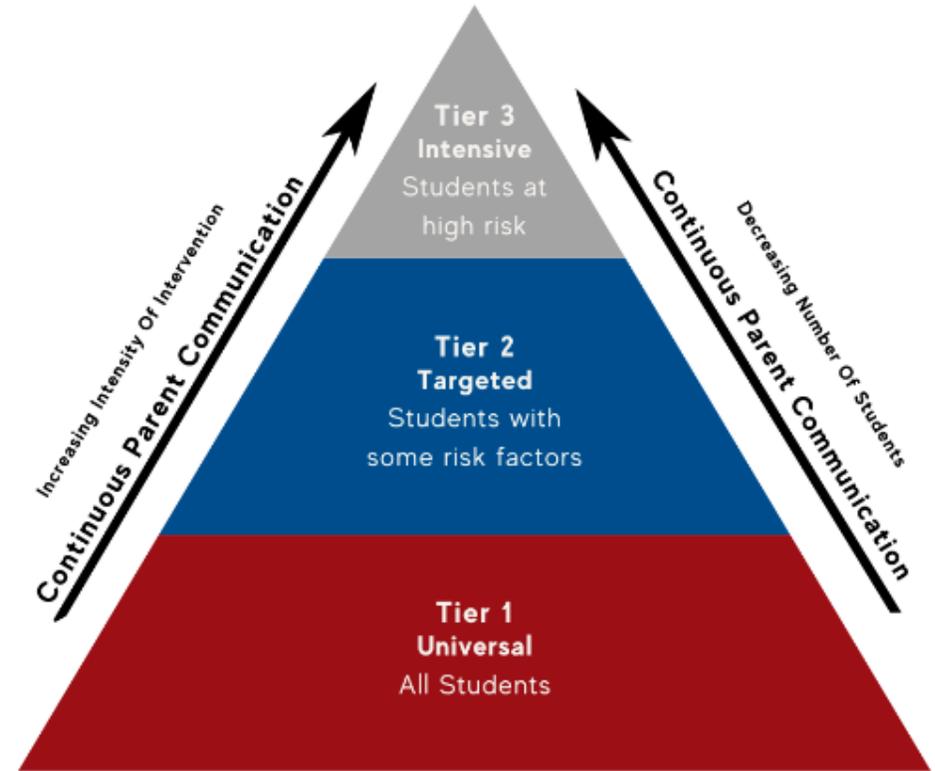
MONTEREY COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
**HOMELESS
CHILDREN
& YOUTH**
SERVICES
PROGRAM

THE COALITION
OF HOMELESS SERVICES PROVIDERS



BESTS Toolkit

- Building Equitable Supports through a Tiered System (BESTS)
- Framework that other COEs & LEAs can use to build out or strengthen their existing McKinney-Vento programs



Tier 1: All Students

Universal supports are provided to ALL McKinney-Vento students.

- Identification
- FAFSA/grant applications
- Resource centers
- Free/reduced priced lunch
- Know your rights information

Think about indirect things that can better ALL McKinney-Vento students overall experience

- Staff training
- Data

Tier 2: Some High Risk Factors

Responsive supports are short-term and considered “light touch” meaning liaisons are not providing in-depth individual or family services.

- Short-term support
- Case Example: student/ family are not interested in long-term support but needs a referral to a community based organization
- Resource Example: qualifying for AB 1806 or providing a bus pass

Tier 3: Highest Needs

Intensive supports serve the highest needs students based on the needs metrics. These services look different for each youth and family and center around both academic needs AND basic needs.

- Long-Term Support
- Parental Involvement
- Individualized Supports
- Creating and working towards goals
- Meeting at least 2x's per month

Sustainability

- 1 FTE Housing Specialist
 - Aims to support families in finding & securing permanent housing
 - Funded through public dollars
- Continued partnership with NCYL
 - Technical assistance for McKinney-Vento team (policy, data & implementation)

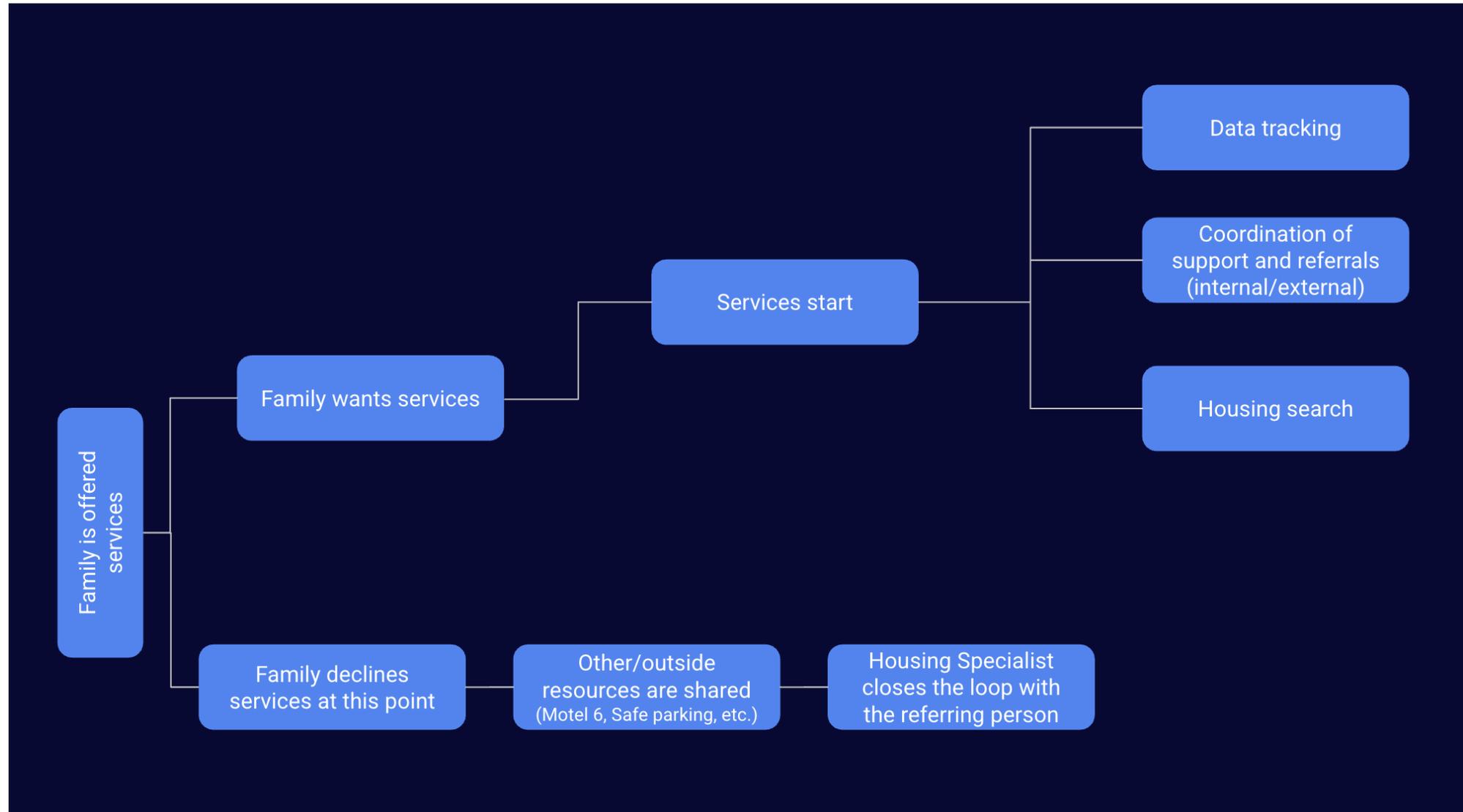
MPUSD remains committed to the work.

Despite changes in funding and support from the current administration, MPUSD continues to push forward, pilot new programs and serve their most vulnerable students.

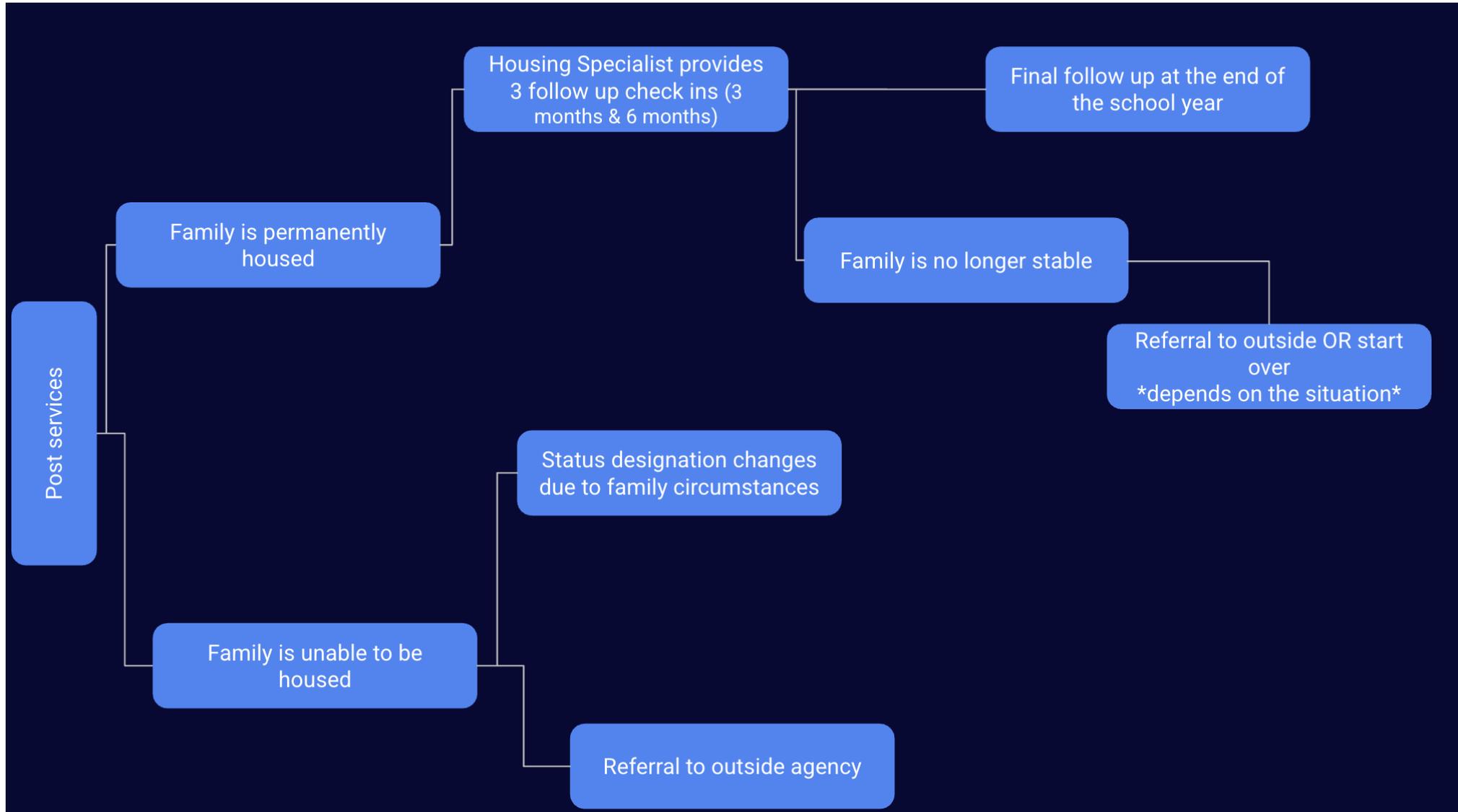
Housing Navigation Model



Housing Navigation Model pt. 2



Housing Navigation Model pt. 3



Status Definitions

Status	Definition
Safe	Full-time work (two incomes) or housing voucher, good credit, no prior evictions
Stable	Full-time work or Housing Voucher & one of the following: low credit or eviction history
Vulnerable	Low income (unable to pay most bills), large family but okay credit and no eviction history Note: What is their rental budget? How many people are in the household?
Crisis	Undocumented, no income, no credit, eviction history
At-risk	Going to be evicted due to not being able to afford rent

- Housing Specialist will use information collected during the intake to identify which status each individual family falls under
- Services that can be provided vary based on the status of the family
- Information collected is NOT part of the education record of the student
- Data tracking
- Relationship building with landlords/property management companies

Funding

- Education of Homeless Children Youth (EHCY) Grant
 - MV School Social Work Salary/Benefits
 - Resource Center Supplies
 - Gift Cards
 - Transportation
- Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)
 - Staff Salaries/Benefits
 - Transportation
 - Family Resource Center Supplies
- Donors
 - Motel 6 Emergency Stays
 - Rental Assistance
 - Short-Term Housing

Having the unwavering support of the school board, Superintendent, staff, and the community has been integral to the success of the program and this next phase of sustainability.

Policy

- California's receives just \$14 million annually to serve the 286,853 K-12 students experienced homelessness during the 2023-24 school year. The state has no dedicated funding for this student group and only 73 of California's 937 school districts receive grants
- Two leading risk factors for chronic adult homelessness include the lack of a high school diploma and experiencing homelessness as a child.

Proposal:

NCYL is advocating for a McKinney Vento statewide match

Call to Action:

Reach out to Paige Clark to sign our budget letter!

pclark@youthlaw.org

Opportunities & Challenges

- *Opportunity:* Students experiencing homelessness are included in California's funding formula but there is no funding attached
 - *Challenge:* A report found that only 7% of school districts even mentioned students experiencing homelessness and less than 1% of funding went towards them
- *Opportunity:* ARP-HCY funding improved outcomes - increased identification by 25% (95 in CA) and decreased chronic absenteeism, and increased high school graduation rates for grantees during the same period.
 - *Challenge:* Uncertainty in both the state and federal budget

Questions?

To support our ongoing advocacy for K-12 students experiencing homelessness, the National Center for Youth Law is seeking to understand trends in homeless liaison participation in school and districtwide initiatives. We hope to learn where there is integration across programs and what, if any, barriers exist. Please feel free to complete the survey anonymously if you do not wish to include your name. Thank you in advance!

