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## The Rights of Homeless School-Aged Youth

Prepared by  
Legal Services  
of Greater Miami Inc.  
3000 Biscayne Boulevard  
Suite 500  
(305) 576-0080  
[www.lsgmi.org](http://www.lsgmi.org)

## If you live in any of the following situations:

- ✓ In a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground,
- ✓ On the street,
- ✓ In foster care,
- ✓ In an abandoned building, trailer, or other inadequate accommodations, or
- ✓ "Doubled up" with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing.

## You have certain rights to help your children in school.

Your children have the right to:

- ✓ Continue in the school they attended before you became homeless or the school they last attended, if that is your choice and it is feasible.
- ✓ Receive free transportation to the school they attended before you became homeless or the school they last attended, if you request it.
- ✓ Enroll in school without giving a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay the enrollment.
- ✓ Enroll or attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of immunization records and any other documents necessary for enrollment.



## Enrollment & Transportation

If you are having problems enrolling your children in school or would like to arrange for transportation to the school your children were attending before you became homeless, contact the Miami-Dade County Public Schools liaison for homeless education:

Laura Pena  
Project Manager  
Project Upstart  
(305) 995-7318  
lpena@sbab.dade.k12.fl.us

## Things to Remember



- ✓ Students at shelters typically stay there for 60-90 days.
- ✓ Switching schools can set back your child's education. Students who switch schools score lower on standardized tests and fall 4-6 months behind each time they change schools.
- ✓ It is the parent's choice whether the child remains in the school they attended before becoming homeless.
- ✓ It is the School Board's responsibility to provide free transportation to the original school.
- ✓ If the School Board refuses to provide transportation, it must give you a written explanation as to why it is not possible to keep your child in the previous school.

## When you move, you should do the following:

- ✓ Contact the school district's liaison for Homeless Education for help enrolling in a new school or arranging to continue in your child's old school.
- ✓ Contact your child's school or teacher and provide any information you think will assist them to help your child adjust to the changes.

## Complaints

If the School Board refuses to assist you or determines that it is not practical to transport your child to the school he or she was attending before you became homeless, the liaison for Homeless Education must give you a written explanation for this decision.

If you disagree with the School Board's decision, contact Legal Services of Greater Miami.



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