

NATIONAL
HEALTH CARE
for the
HOMELESS
COUNCIL

ADAPTING YOUR PRACTICE

Anticipatory Guidance for
Infants and Toddlers
Experiencing Homelessness

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May 7, 2015

AGENDA

- Introduction
- Challenges & effects of homelessness
- Key recommendations
- Examples
- Discussion

HCH CLINICIANS' NETWORK

- Brings together clinicians of all disciplines serving people experiencing homelessness
- Identifies priorities in homeless health care field and develops resources to address
- Provides publications, training, peer support
- **Free to join: nhchc.org**



2014-15 Clinicians' Network Steering Committee

ADAPTED ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE

- Advisory Committee launched by Clinicians' Network Steering Committee
 - Representatives from various disciplines (medicine, nursing, social work) and locations
- Reviewed American Academy of Pediatrics' *Bright Futures* anticipatory guidance and recommended adaptations for condition of homelessness
 - 2015 publication: infants and toddlers
 - 2016 publication: school age and adolescents

ADAPTED ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE



- Part of *Adapting Your Practice* series of recommendations for homeless patients
 - <https://www.nhchc.org/resources/clinical/adapted-clinical-guidelines/>
- Full recommendations to be published June 2015 at nhchc.org

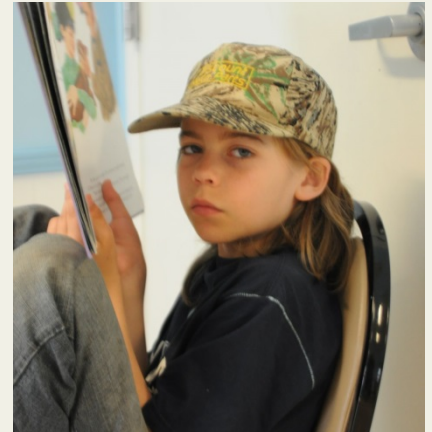
PREVALENCE OF CHILD HOMELESSNESS

- 2.5 million (1 in every 30) homeless children in America
 - Historic high
 - 8% increase nationally from 2012 to 2013



CAUSES OF CHILD HOMELESSNESS

- Poverty rate
- Lack of affordable housing
- Continuing impact of economic recession
- Racial disparities
- Challenges of single parenting
- Traumatic experiences



EXPERIENCES OF HOMELESS CHILDREN

Video: <http://archive.cincinnati.com/interactive/article/20131020/CINCI/131018028/What-s-like-live-mommy-s-depression>

A family who has experienced homelessness deals with the effects of maternal depression, including developmental delays and emotional and behavioral problems

EXPERIENCES OF HOMELESS CHILDREN

- Become sick four times more often than housed children
- Three times more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems
- Four times more likely to show delayed development
- 83% exposed to at least one serious violent event by age twelve

CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

Young children may exhibit:

- Increased fear and anxiety
- Difficulty leaving caregivers
- Regression to an earlier developmental stage
- Sleep and eating disturbances

ADAPTED ANTICIPATORY GUIDANCE GOALS

- Family oriented
- Trauma informed
- Provide parenting support
- Connect with resources



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS: NEWBORN

- Share local resources for obtaining necessities

→ Housing

→ Newborn clothing and essentials

→ Parent hotline



- Emphasize bonding with baby, holding closely, and speaking gently
- Discuss crying and ways of coping

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS: INFANT

- Discuss finding safe physical spaces for the child to explore
 - Place to sit up, crawl, cruise, walk
- Encourage talking to the child
- Discuss safe sleeping arrangements
- Emphasize safety as child gains mobility

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS: TODDLER

- Encourage five minutes of play with child each day
 - Teaching simple songs
 - Getting on the child's level
 - Conversing frequently; teaching words
- Emphasize finding caregivers you trust
- Discuss ways of providing consistency and comfort to the child



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS: PRESCHOOLER

- Emphasize importance of stability
- Encourage literacy and numeracy skills
 - Play with letters, words, and numbers with child
 - Expose child to books and age-appropriate toys
- Discuss options for physical activity
- Discuss exposure to second-hand smoke, if applicable

SMALL GROUP EXERCISE

- Form groups of 3-4 people
- Choose a scenario where a child's living situation presents challenges for her safe, healthy growth and development
- Brainstorm suggestions for addressing these challenges

DISCUSSION

- What other situations or concerns do you address in visits with clients experiencing homelessness?
- What other tools would be useful for providers who work with families experiencing homelessness?

OTHER RESOURCES

Visit nhchc.org/resources/clinical/tools-and-support/children-youth/ for

- Child Exposure to Trauma: Comparing Effectiveness of Interventions Addressing Maltreatment
- Designing Developmentally-Based Services for Young Homeless Families
- Pathways to Prevention: A Comprehensive Guide for Supporting Infant & Toddler Mental Health
- Operation CHOICES: Nutrition and Fitness Programming to Combat Obesity and Food Insecurity for Families in Shelters

JOIN OUR COMMITTEE

To join the Advisory Committee developing adapted anticipatory guidance for **school age children and adolescents** experiencing homelessness, email Lily Catalano,
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Committee will convene July 2015

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