

PCOP



YOUTH HOMELESSNESS
DEMONSTRATION
PROJECT

HI-SET

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Parent Community Outreach Program

Good News!!!

Our Outreach and Advocacy efforts have made a difference!!!!!!

Over the past (3) years we’ve attempted to advocate for the students and families who did not meet a certain criterion to attend the Blackfeet Boarding Dormitory. By way of collaborating and meeting with the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council, 2 important resolutions have been passed:

- 2021- A Committee to Address Youth Homeless Needs on the Blackfeet Reservation was established
- 2023- A declaration of a “State of Emergency” on Youth Homelessness within the exterior boundaries of the Blackfeet Reservation.

Since the BTBC has passed the most recent resolution, I have been contacted by Heather Denny, Education Program Specialist with the U.S. Department of Education with opportunity to receive further support from her partners and federal agencies. Please see attached email.

HI-SET/ Adult Basic Education/Kinship~

Hi-SET

Currently, we have not had any interests in the Hi-Set Tutor Position being advertised. We are still offering tutoring with limited hours (Monday & Wednesday’s from 8am-12pm). We will adjust our availability to meet the needs of those clients who have different schedules, as time allows. Because we do not have a Hi-Set Tutor, we are referring new interests to the BCC program or and to the Blackfeet Man Power Program. We will need to delay our Hi-Set recruiting until we are able to hire a tutor. Our priorities have changed to meeting the needs of the students in our district or who are able to enroll at BPS. We will re-visit the dropped lists from the last few years

at a later time and attempt to recruit them for the Hi-Set Program (with the permission from the BHS/WBHA Principals).

Grandparents Raising Grandkids/Kinship (a program within āisspōōmmoōtsiiyō•p) Kinship Program & Aging Mastery Program-

We've identified some subtle changes to our GRG/Kinship families but, we still have over 217 (so far) GRG/Kinship who are interested in receiving support or who are already receiving support through our McKinney Vento Program. Families are eligible for MV support by meeting one of the following criteria:

- In a homeless shelter
- In a hotel or motel
- In a campground, RV, or building that is not a home
- Doubled up with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing

Many of our GRG/Kinship families also meet the criteria for both.

An example: Family of 12 includes, Great-Grandma, 7 great-grandchildren, 3 grandchildren, and 1 adult son, who are living in a 3-bedroom home where there are more than 2 individuals sharing a bedroom and the home has 2 broken windows. Grandma doesn't receive any financial assistance because she is \$2.80 over the financial limits and has stage 4 cancer. She does not want to have the kiddos go to Boarding School during the week because she doesn't want to split them up. Three of the great-grandchildren have disabilities accompanied with behavior issues and are struggling in school. Great-Grandma nor her son have actual custody of 3 of the children. They were placed in the care of Great Grandma five years ago and her placement paperwork is beyond the "end date", which was supposed to only be valid for 6 weeks. She does not have a current case manager at CPS/Family Services and has never been contacted by anyone regarding the welfare of any of the children.

The only request Great-Grandma stated for us when we reached out to offer support was, "All we need is a fine-tooth comb that comes in those head-lice kits." "I've got 2 little girls who were sent home from school because they had head-lice but, I think they are really fleas from their puppies."

This is just one example of the multi-generational families that we serve.

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McKinney Vento Data update 2023-2024: 198

We identified #224 students experiencing homelessness for the academic year 2022-2023.

McKinney Vento (MV)

Ashlynn is currently making bi-weekly rounds in each building to check and connect with our MV students who were on our list from last year as well as the newly identified students from this SY. She is collaborating with other support staff to identify easier forms of communication and ways staff can refer students. She has met with the Districts Attendance Committee and has provided reminders of what our program can offer families to help eliminate some of the barriers that we are facing.

We are experiencing a delay in receiving the information for those who self-identified on the online registration as experiencing homelessness. We are continuing to reach out to families via, phone and/or home visits while providing support to those who are requesting specific supports.

Ashlynn was not able to attend the OPI high-tiered COP Fall conference. Now that we have a budget to support Professional Development opportunities, we will be aligning more opportunities for her as well as the rest of our staff. However, she's been directly connected to other McKinney Vento Liaisons throughout the state and with Serena Wright who is the State Coordinator for OPI.

We recently submitted the McKinney Vento Continuation Grant which is now a competitive grant.

Foster Care:

This SY, we've identified over 28 students who are currently transitioning through or who have been a part of the Foster Care System. Many of who are not receiving support through the state foster care system. The types of supports that are usually requested are all related to financial support.

A Resource for children in foster care or transitioning out of foster care:

Kairos Youth Services

(406)727-0076

Montana Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Region 2

- Dan McFadyean, Rural and Tribal Coordinator

We have also received information directly from School House Connection stating, since students are a ward of the state/tribe, they're not eligible for services through the McKinney Vento program. We have created a separate budget for the Foster Care students especially since they aren't receiving any financial or basic need related services through Family Services. This is one of the major barriers our Foster Care Families face in regards to receiving support through the Tribal Foster Care Program.

Teen Parents:

Currently, we've identified 9 Pregnant/Parenting Teen Parents and are continuing to meet with the Blackfeet Man Power Teen Parent Coalition as well as receive/request referrals from I.H.S.

We also have the baby pantry stocked with diapers, wipes, clothing, shoes, wraps, and hygiene items. We also have a crib, high-chair, seating supports, and a walker.

We are currently in need of a stroller. Soon, we'll be collaborating with the Clear Choice Clinic to offer parenting classes to all of our teen parents as well as some of the families we serve in other areas.

We will also be offering moccasin making classes.

School-based Clothing Closets

Our clothing closets are always a "work-in-progress". We are currently not accepting donations other than the following sizes:

Youth: 6T, 7T, 8,9,10/12, 12/14, and 14/16

Shoe sizes: 12,1,2,3,4, and 5

If donating underwear or socks, they need to be in packaging (new).

We're attempting to keep our clothing closets de-cluttered as it makes it difficult for students to choose items in their appropriate size.

We've located a possible space at BES to store the clothing and hygiene items, for the time being and are just awaiting approval.

BPS YHDP

Currently, 18 enrolled UHY.

23 UHY have been identified this 23/24 SY. Three of those students have declined support.

One of our YHDP students will be attended the Scholars of Hope, Fall College Prep Retreat in Bozeman, MT. She was able to tour the MSU College Campus, visit with other Native American Students who are currently in college at MSU and those who are Alumni. She also received a free laptop and was able to use it to start her Financial Aid, Scholarship Letters, and personal letter.

This trip was offered and paid for by Hopa Mountain. Bonnie Sachatello-Sawyer is the Executive Director of Hopa Mountain and a huge supporter of our students and families of our community. Hopa Mountain has provided our district with amazing books, clothing, winter gear, and opportunities for our students to reach higher peaks and we are forever grateful for Bonnie and her amazing team.

Through our efforts to connect students to these opportunities, we've identified shared goals in that we hope to raise students' understanding of college/trade school options, increase their knowledge of admissions process, connect with other students, mentors, and resources. Most importantly, immerse students into college life to remove self-doubt, intimidation, and increase their excitement.

Also, we're focusing on making smoother transitions to higher educations. Through early exposure to the many options students have, their better able to make informed decisions for their future.

We will be expecting Jeri Lawrence soon. She will be out YHDP Youth Case Manager! Yayyy!

October Outreach Events:

- **Fill the Bus Event:** We received over 36 boxes of new and gently used winter clothing items. People liked having access to the bus on main street because they were able to by-pass the traffic on the one-way in front. We were also able to put out adult clothing we had and a lot of people were grateful for that.
- **Cat/Griz Food Drive:** We placed boxes in each building and the winner of the food drive was Browning Elementary with 85 items. Overall, we received 205 items and the Griz fans donated the most.
- **Our Cat/Griz Gift Basket Fundraiser** will continue until Nov. 17th, 2023
- **Hopa Mountain Donations:**





UPCOMING Outreach Events for November:

- Cat/Griz Gift Basket Raffle
- Secret Santa: If you'd like to adopt a student(s) please send me and email and we will give you details!
Email: irenea@bps.k12.mt.us
- Winter Gear Give-Away (Date TBA)
- Partner with the BTBC to recognize and issue an official resolution designating November as Runaway & Homeless Youth Prevention Month on the Blackfeet Nation. Our letter is attached but hasn't been approved to share with the BTBC, yet.

Current Positions available within the Parent Community Outreach Program:

- Hi-Set Tutor