

# MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS AND HOMELESSNESS

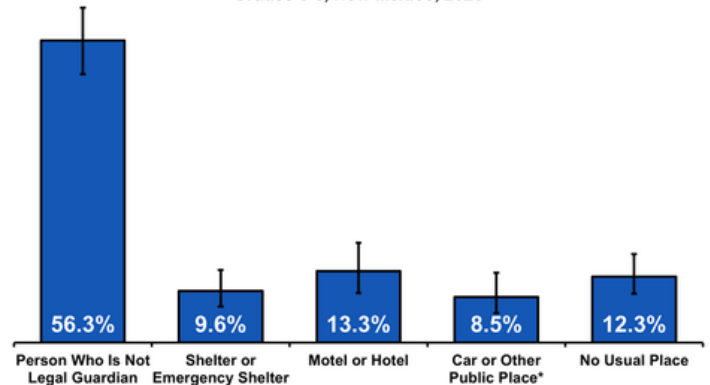
## IN NEW MEXICO

Homeless children and youths are students who **lack a secure, stable, and safe place to sleep at night.\***

### In 2023, Among New Mexico Middle School Students:

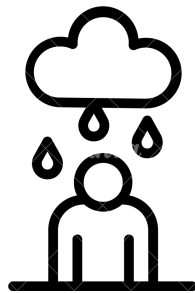
- **1 in 27** experienced homelessness
- It is estimated that between **2,300 and 3,000** experienced homelessness
- **Over 50%** of students experiencing homelessness slept in the home of a friend, family member, or other person who was not their legal guardian or parent\*

Where Middle School Students Experiencing Homelessness Sleep  
Grades 6-8, New Mexico, 2023



### Depression

- 42% of students experiencing homelessness had symptoms of depression



### Suicide

- Students experiencing homelessness were:
- 49% **more likely** to have considered suicide than students in stable housing
- 71% **more likely** to have made a plan to attempt suicide
- **Twice as likely** to have attempted suicide

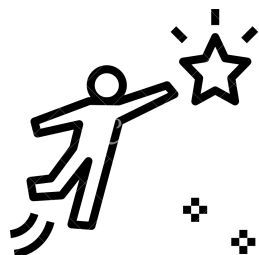
### Resiliency

Unhoused students who **feel good about who they are as a person**, are:

- 76% **less likely** to have considered suicide
- 70% **less likely** to have made a plan to attempt suicide
- 73% **less likely** to have attempted suicide

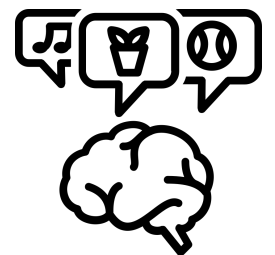
Unhoused students who **have a sense of direction and purpose in life** are:

- 55% **less likely** to have had symptoms of depression



Unhoused students who are **interested and engaged in daily activities** are:

- 47% **less likely** to have had symptoms of depression



Unhoused students who are **hopeful and optimistic about their future** are:

- 58% **less likely** to have had symptoms of depression
- 63% **less likely** to have considered suicide
- 63% **less likely** to have made a plan to attempt suicide



### Footnotes:

- The definition of homelessness is based on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. For more information on this definition please go to this website: <https://nche.ed.gov/mckinney-vento-definition/>
- Other public places examples include parks, campgrounds, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations,
- Data obtained from the 2023 New Mexico Youth Risk Resiliency Survey. To learn more about this survey, visit: <https://youthrisk.org/>
- Question: During the past 30 days, where did you usually sleep? Response: In the home of a friend, family member, or other person because I had to leave my home or my parent or guardian cannot afford housing

## **CALL TO ACTION:**

### **Students Experiencing Homelessness and Their Families**



- **Reach out to the Homeless Education Liaison** in your school district or state charter school for assistance
- Homeless Liaisons can help provide:
  - Referrals to health care and related resources (e.g. mental health, dental care, housing services)
  - Information on educational opportunities for both parents or guardians and their children
  - Transportation services to school
  - Assistance with school enrollment
- For additional information and resources on food, housing, transportation, and education, please go to the New Mexico Public Education Department website
- The New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness collaborates with over 80 agencies and partner providers and can also help provide housing support, referrals, and contact information

### **Schools**

- **Support for more advocates in each school district**, such as Homeless Liaisons, to help identify and provide resources sooner to middle school students and their families struggling with homelessness
- **Help students access programs**, such as Career Technical Education (CTE), to provide them with:
  - Career exploration and the opportunity to discover their interests/passions
  - Real-world and technical skills that can help them succeed in high school and higher education

### **Government**

- **Homelessness is a public health issue** that not only affects adults, but youth, as well. Inadequate housing can have detrimental effects on a student's ability to succeed and their resilience.
- **Continue to provide funding and awareness to programs**, such as the McKinney-Vento Assistance Act, so that schools can provide resources to families and students experiencing homelessness

### **Resources**

- Find more information about supporting students experiencing homelessness through the New Mexico Public Education Department website
- For general homeless assistance questions, please go to the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness website
- For more information about mental health in New Mexico, please go to the Mental Health Program through the Department of Health
- **Call, text, or chat 988** a 24/7 free, confidential lifeline for emotional, mental, or alcohol and drug use support

#### **Footnotes:**

1. If you would like more information on mental health statistics, please contact Dylan Pell, Mental Health Epidemiologist (dylan.pell@doh.nm.gov).
2. This document was created in collaboration with University of New Mexico (UNM) and New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH). This effort was supported in part by the R6 PHTC funds from the US HRSA. This fact sheet was created by intern, Lucy. For more information on the Internship Program through NMDOH, please contact Rosanna at NMDOH.internships@doh.nm.gov.

