Identifying Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

Definition of Homelessness
According to Title X, Part C, Section 725 of the No Child Left Behind Act, homelessness is defined as follows:

The term homeless children and youths' —
(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and
(B) includes —
(i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
(ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));
(iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
(iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Sources of Information on the Incidence of Homelessness

1. Project HOPE-VA can provide data regarding the estimated number of children and youth identified in 1999-2000.
2. Every school division has identified a local homeless education liaison whose responsibilities include identification of children and youth experiencing homelessness. Liaisons should be aware of students experiencing homelessness who have requested support. All liaisons are identified on the Project HOPE-VA website: www.wm.edu/hope
3. Homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters, and transitional housing programs in your area should be able to provide data about the number of children they have served who were school age. The Virginia Housing Development Authority has a searchable database of homeless shelters and other service providers under “Virginia Housing Directory” at www.vhda.com.
4. If your locality has developed a Continuum of Care (CoC) for HUD funding, this group can provide information regarding the incidence of homelessness in your community. A listing of existing local CoC with contact information can be found at www.viach.state.va.us/vc.html.