

## Film Discussion Guide

### “Eligibility for McKinney-Vento School Benefits”

<https://youtu.be/u2jUCXwRNFc>

*A short 3-min educational film*

**Visit [Youth-Help.org](https://youth-help.org) to view the films on the rights of youth living in unstable housing situations in CT**

1. This film begins with Jasmine in class. While other students are focused on their class work, Jasmine can't focus on school because she's thinking about her living situation. Did this scene surprise you? Why/why not? What do you think is the importance of this scene?
2. When Jasmine is thinking about where she can sleep that night, she tells the viewer that she's stayed several nights at a friend's house. How common do you think it is for a youth to stay at a friend's house if they are not able to stay at home with their parents/guardians? Who else do you think youth might turn to for help or a place to stay? Would they turn to an adult at school or in the community? Why/why not?
3. Jasmine is afraid to tell her teacher about her housing situation. In the film, she tells us, “But if I'm living in another town, then they might make me change schools and I don't want that. I want to stay here.” Do you feel that this is one of the fears that students might have? Why/why not? What other fears do you think youth might have that could prevent them from telling others and getting help?
4. How many students (or staff/colleagues) at your school do you think know that youth have the right to:
  - Stay at their school even if they are living temporarily outside of the school district?
  - Go to a new school and have the right to start immediately even if they don't have ID or records or a parent's consent?
  - Receive additional services and resources if they are eligible under the McKinney-Vento Act (e.g., transportation, free lunch, and so on)?
5. Do you think if more youth knew about these rights and resources that they would be more likely to ask for help? Why/why not?
6. The McKinney-Vento laws states that any youth living in an unstable situation qualifies for benefits. How would you know who is eligible for the benefits? If you didn't know who qualified, who would you ask?
7. The film shows various places that Jasmine has stayed (at a friend's house, with family, shelter, motel, outside, at a bus station). How did these scenes at the end of the film convey the idea that there are many forms of unstable housing situations? How does that compare with common perceptions of youth homelessness?
8. What kinds of things do you think schools could do to promote awareness of youth rights?
9. What messages are important in this film? Why?

## Film Discussion Guide

### “The Right to Choose Your School Under McKinney-Vento Law”

<http://youtu.be/w9eV-IRHizY>

*A short 2-min educational film*

1. This film begins with John arriving late for school. What do you think is the importance of this opening scene? Do you think that teens in a situation like John’s may find it difficult at times to get to school on time or to come regularly? Why/why not? Is there anything else about the opening scene that stood out to you?
2. In the film, numerous people in John’s life are aware of him missing school and being late to school (for example, John’s drama teacher, the school secretary, John’s friend). What could these characters in the film have done differently in their interactions with John? Which school staff are in the best position to see that there might be an issue and to reach out to John to let him know about his rights and available resources? What about friends/peers?
3. John tells his friend that he’s been kicked out of his house and he’s staying with his cousin in another town. How does this scenario compare with common perceptions of youth homelessness and housing instability? Would you have thought that he is eligible for benefits under the McKinney-Vento Law?
4. John doesn’t want his friend to tell the principal about his situation because he is afraid that the principal won’t let him stay at his school if she finds out he is living in another town. Do you feel that this is one of the fears that students might have? Why/why not? What other fears do you think youth might have that could prevent them from telling others and getting help?
5. How many students (or staff/colleagues) at your school do you think know that youth have the right to:
  - Stay at their school even if they are living temporarily outside of the school district?
  - Go to a new school and have the right to start immediately even if they don’t have ID or records or a parent’s consent?
  - Receive transportation to and from school?
6. Do you think if more youth knew about these rights and resources that they would be more likely to ask for help? Why/why not?
7. What kinds of things do you think schools could do to promote awareness of youth rights?
8. What messages are important in this film? Why?

## Film Discussion Guide

### “The Right to Enroll Immediately Under McKinney-Vento Law”

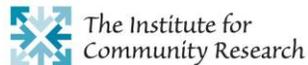
<https://youtu.be/zPsQA0mg6MM>

*A short 3-min educational film*

1. Early in the film, Isabelle is seen walking up to a new school alone to enroll but then she hesitates and walks away. What do you think is the importance of this scene? What are some of the reasons why Isabelle might not go to school while she is in an unstable housing situation?
2. Isabelle is staying at her cousin’s place in a new school district. How does this scenario compare with common perceptions of youth homelessness and housing instability? Would you have thought that she is eligible for benefits under the McKinney-Vento Law?
3. In the film, Isabelle and her cousin go to the main office at the school to ask about enrolling at that school. What do you think about the secretary’s response? What might have happened if the principal hadn’t overheard the conversation and told Isabelle that she could enroll immediately in school? How common do you think this scenario is?
4. Had you ever heard of a McKinney-Vento liaison before this video? Would you feel comfortable reaching out to him/her? Why/why not? What could schools do to promote awareness and trust for youth to reach out to the liaison?
5. How many students (or staff/colleagues) at your school do you think know that youth have the right to start school immediately even if they don’t have ID or records or a parent’s consent?
6. What kinds of things do you think schools could do to promote awareness of youth rights?
7. What messages are important in this film? Why?

Note to educators: Visit Youth-Help.org if they would like to download a higher resolution version of the films to show on a computer in their class.

This project was done in partnership with the following organizations:



Center for **Children's** Advocacy