TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 15-05
	DATE January 6, 2006

TO: ALL STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
ALL STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
ALL ONE-STOP CENTER SYSTEM LEADS

FROM: EMILY STOVER DeROCCO
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Providing Employment and Training Services to Homeless and Runaway Youth

1. **Purpose.** To provide information and resources to states and local areas to encourage the outreach and recruitment of homeless and runaway youth, including youth displaced by recent hurricanes, into employment and training programs funded under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth program.

2. **References.** Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 3-04: *The Employment and Training Administration's (ETA's) New Strategic Vision for the Delivery of Youth Services under the Workforce Investment Act* (WIA) of 1998.
http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL3-04.pdf

   The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2002.
http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/rulesandregs/laws/index.cfm

3. **Background.** The Employment and Training Administration's (ETA's) *New Strategic Vision for the Delivery of Youth Services* under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 focuses on serving those populations of youth who are most in need of employment and training programs, including displaced, homeless, and runaway youth. Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a) generally describes homeless children and youth as individuals who lack a "fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." This includes: 1) youth who are sharing the housing of persons (doubled-up); 2) youth living in motels, camp grounds, cars, emergency or transitional shelters; 3) abandoned youth or youth awaiting foster care placement. Migratory youth are defined as homeless because they are living in circumstances that meet these definitions. Youth involved in the foster care or juvenile justice system may lack the skills necessary to live independently, placing them at heightened risk of becoming homeless as they transition to the workforce. The impact of recent hurricanes has created a new population of displaced and homeless families and youth in the United States.

Storm victims, including those youth whose lives have been disrupted by the hurricanes and who fit the definition of "homeless" under the McKinney-Vento Act, qualify for services under WIA. As these displaced families and young adults work to rebuild their lives, storm assistance efforts may require them to change residence as they obtain better arrangements. Receiving employment assistance, job training and supportive services in their new communities can be instrumental in ensuring their future success. Through the support offered under WIA-funded programs, youth can develop the skills and competencies necessary to initiate and maintain self-sufficiency and decrease their personal risk of homeless.

4. **Strategies for Serving Homeless and Runaway Youth.** The U.S. Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Education, and the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention formed a strategic federal partnership to better serve the nation's neediest youth. Under the federal partnership's "Shared Vision for Youth," the focus on serving the neediest youth, including homeless and runaway youth, encourages services and investments to assist them in a successful transition to adulthood.

   Workforce programs face unique challenges in delivering the necessary educational, occupational, and other skills training and services that will prepare homeless and runaway youth for existing and future job opportunities. To meet these challenges, WIA programs are encouraged to consider:

   - Collaborating with community-based and faith-based agencies and organizations serving runaway and homeless youth. This offers an opportunity for youth providers and workforce areas to share and enhance resources. The Family and Youth Service Bureau (FYSB), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides funding nationally to community-based organizations and agencies to deliver services to homeless and runaway youth through: (a) *Street Outreach Programs* (street-based education, survival aid, access to emergency shelter); (b) The *Basic Center Program* (immediate needs such as shelter, food, clothing, counseling, and referrals for health care); and (c) The *Transitional Living Program* (assists older youth, including pregnant and parenting youth, in developing skills and resources to promote their independence). Youth can be placed in the *Transitional Living Program* for up to eighteen months and may be offered a variety of services that complement the program elements offered under WIA-funded youth programs; thus, dual enrollment can substantially increase resources.

   - Developing relationships with organizations and reentry programs serving young people exiting the juvenile justice system. This helps ensure a smooth

transition into the workforce for youth through the provision of work readiness and/or occupational training. *Project RIO-Y* (Reintegration of Offenders - Youth) in Texas exemplifies a program that helps young offenders transition from youth correctional facilities and prepare them for employment or additional education and training. www.tyc.state.tx.us/programs/workforce/

- Collaborating with organizations specifically serving the needs of families and youth displaced by the recent hurricanes to ensure the delivery of quality, comprehensive services. Local homeless shelters, food banks, and housing and redevelopment offices, as well as the vast array of community and faith-based organizations, such as the American Red Cross or United Way are reaching out to young adults.

- Obtaining the necessary training and awareness about legal issues pertaining to homeless and runaway youth, as well as seeking out and becoming knowledgeable about available community resources and how best to serve the individual needs of homeless and runaway youth. Work with local law enforcement and social service providers to grasp the extent of the problem, determine how the laws work, and how best to provide services to these youth. The National Alliance to End Homelessness is one nonprofit organization that offers numerous training tools and a variety of resources to assist communities in combating the issues surrounding homelessness. http://www.naeh.org/

- Collaborating with the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program liaison through their local educational agency (LEA). The Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program (title VII of the McKinney-Vento Act), under the administration of the U.S. Department of Education, protects the educational rights of students experiencing homelessness. Grant funding offers legal protection and assistance in order that youth in homeless situations can enroll in, attend, and succeed in school. The liaison's responsibility is to help youth who are on their own and need an education. The National Center for Homeless Education offers a state list of general resources and includes contact information for the State Coordinator for Homeless Education. http://www.serve.org/nche/

5. **Models of Collaboration.** The following programs are examples of how WIA youth programs can collaborate with community organizations and leverage resources to assist homeless and runaway youth.

   - California's Larkin Street Youth Services' *HIRE UP* Program provides employment and educational resources designed to meet the specific needs of homeless and runaway youth. The Education and Employment Center, located

in San Francisco, offers six separate, but integrated components designed to meet immediate needs while utilizing strategies where youth have opportunities to obtain industry specific skills training and opportunities for career advancement. *HIRE UP*'s collaborative partners bring together funding under WIA and the Chaffee Foster Care Independence Act. http://www.larkinstreetyouth.org/

- The *Working Zone* works with other WIA service providers to help homeless youth ages 15-21 address barriers to housing and employment. Offered through the YWCA, the program provides job and life skills training and paid internships at several training sites throughout Seattle, WA. www.ywcaworks.org

- *Outside In*, Portland, Oregon, is an employment resource center providing homeless youth the opportunities to increase work readiness, obtain and retain employment, and build a positive work history. An education component helps youth obtain a GED and enter college or continue their occupational training. One innovative component is the "Virginia Woof Dog Daycare Center," an intensive job training program staffed by homeless youth that provides a bridge for youth between street life and employment. www.outsidein.org

6. **Additional Resources**. Family and Youth Services Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Bureau is dedicated to supporting young people, particularly runaway and homeless youth. Funding is awarded that enables communities to offer services to young people and their families and to test new approaches to helping youth. In addition, the Bureau has created a network of support that includes a national hotline and referral system for runaway and homeless youth; offers conferences, training, and on-site consultations; documents effective practices, and distributes information. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/

   The Interagency Council on Homelessness is comprised of twenty federal agencies seeking to develop and recommend strategies to combat homelessness by providing states with recommendations and highlighting innovative approaches. http://www.ich.gov/

   FirstStep is an interactive tool developed for case managers and outreach workers to help their clients who are homeless access federal benefit programs. Designed by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Housing and Urban Development, FirstStep is a result of a partnership between several federal agencies and offers advice, timesaving tips, tools and resources for professionals who work with people who are homeless. http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicaid/homeless/firststep/index.html

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth is a national grassroots membership association that connects educators, parents, advocates, and service providers to ensure school enrollment and attendance for youth whose lives have been disrupted by the lack of safe and adequate housing. http://www.naehcy.org/index.html

7. Actions Required. States are requested to share this Training and Employment Notice with local areas.

8. **Inquiries.** Questions should be directed to the appropriate regional office.