

# Keeping Track of Important Information

Children and families who experience homelessness have rights to schooling and benefits from public assistance programs. Facing homelessness can be a stressful experience. Having appropriate documentation can help you access services and benefits. Here are some ways you can stay organized during this stressful time:

## Reach Out to Your School District for Help

Children experiencing homelessness can enroll in school without documentation. Your school district's homeless liaison is available to help you enroll your children in school and access public benefits. They will also help you locate the records that are needed.



## Gather Important Documents

Keep important documents in an envelope, folder, or zip-top bag. These include birth, death, marriage and divorce certificates; medical records, including immunization records; and education records. Families experiencing homelessness can often obtain these documents without a fee at government offices. If you have a cell phone, take photos for a backup copy.

## Choose a Key Contact Person

Talk to a friend, family member, or other support person you trust about your housing situation. Make sure this person always knows how to contact you. Ask them to hold a second copy of the important documents in a safe location.

For more information, visit <https://illinoisearlylearning.org/toolkits/experiencing-homelessness/>

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this tip sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois State Board of Education.



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