Early Education Programs for Children Living in Temporary Housing

Children who go to early childhood programs are better prepared for kindergarten and beyond. Pre-K teaches children skills they will need later for reading and math and helps them learn how to get along better with others. Early childhood programs give children a safe and stable space to learn and grow, which in turn gives parents more time to focus on their own work, education, or housing search. Most of the programs are free!

Head Start

These are **free**, year-round, full-day (8 hours) programs in community-based organizations for children who are 3-5 years old (until kindergarten). All children living in temporary housing are eligible.

How to Find a Head Start Program:

- To find a program, use the Head Start Locator at: http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices
- Call 311

EarlyLearn

These are year-round, full-day (up to 10 hours) programs serving children 6-weeks to 5-years old (until kindergarten). EarlyLearn programs are free for most children in temporary housing, though some may have to pay a small fee.

How to Find an EarlyLearn Program:

- Search for "EarlyLearn NYC" on www.nyc.gov
- Call: (212) 835-7610 or 311
- Text: EARLYLEARN to 877-877
- Visit a local HRA Job Center and ask to be placed in an EarlyLearn NYC program

Pre-K for All

These are **free**, full-day (6 hours, 20 minutes) programs overseen by the NYC Department of Education. Programs are in public schools (including charter schools), Pre-K Centers, and NYC Early Education Centers (NYCEECs). All children living in New York City who were born in 2012 are eligible for Pre-K for All for the 2016-2017 school year.

How to Find/Apply to a Pre-K for All Program:

- To find a Pre-K program, families can use the online Pre-K Finder (https://maps.nyc.gov/upk)
- Families can apply online (nyc.gov/prek) or over the phone (718-935-2067)
- Families can apply in person at a Family Welcome Center

The person in my shelter who can help me find an Early Childhood program for my child is:
Name: Phone: Email:

Transportation

All parents of children living in temporary housing can get MetroCards to bring their children to and from their Pre-K for All program. MetroCards are available from the Department of Education Students in Temporary Housing (STH) Family Assistant working at the shelter or from the STH Content Expert. For more information on who your STH Context Experts are, visit http://tinyurl.com/STHContact.

Immediate Enrollment

The *McKinney-Vento Act* provides that students in temporary housing **are not required** to produce address documentation (including a letter from the shelter), proof of date of birth, and immunization records in order to be registered. Programs should provisionally register the child and then contact the Students in Temporary Housing content expert for their district for assistance.

Special Education Services

Preschool students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that recommend Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) and/or Related Services are eligible to receive these services at any Head Start, EarlyLearn, or Pre-K for All program. Preschool students with an IEP recommendation for a Special Class or a Special Class in an Integrated Setting should work with their CPSE to find an appropriate placement in a preschool special education program.

Children Who Speak Languages Other than English

If a child speaks a language other than English, families may be interested in pre-K programs that have extra services. Some DOE public schools have Dual Language (DL) Pre-K for All programs where children

split their time between learning in English and in another language. Some New York City Early Education Centers (NYCEECs) have Enhanced Language Supports (ELS) such as books in the languages children speak and staff who speak those languages. You can find lists of DL and ELS Pre-K for All programs by using the Pre-K Finder (https://maps.nyc.gov/upk/). Families can check with EarlyLearn and Head Start programs to ask about the language supports available.