

When talking with families experiencing housing transitions:

Try to reflect back to them their current living situation.

If they say they are “currently living with family” you might want to say something like the following:

- “Oh, okay, so you are living with your sister/parents/uncle. We are connected to some local programs that might be able to assist you during this time while you are sharing housing with your relatives. Is it okay if I help you connect with Sue Smith?”

Someone living in a shelter. . .

- “I understand that you are currently staying at (insert shelter name here). I would like to connect you with local school personnel that may be able to assist you, is that okay?”

Someone camping out at the state forest...

- The weather is getting cooler. Would you like me to connect you with local folks who can help you find other options, while you continue to work on more permanent housing?

Someone living in their car. . . .

- “So, you slept in your car last night? I bet that is difficult. I know that you want to keep your child/ren and yourself safe. Would it be okay if we talk to some folks that can help you locate a more secure location for tonight and help you toward a longer term solution?” [You need to be ready to offer some resource information and help them make the call—MV Grant Coordinators will have this info]

General language:

- . . . so you are experiencing a housing transition. . .
- . . . so you are sharing housing with family/friends. . .
- . . . We want you to know that your child may not have to change his/her preschool program due to your current housing transition/stay at shelter. . . We want you to be safe and there are programs that can help transport your child back to the program where he/she started the school year.

Convey empathy, rather than judgement, when you talk with these parents:

- . . . That must be difficult for your family. . .
- . . . I understand that many families are having hard times right now. . .
- . . . Would it be okay if we talk to some folks that can help you locate a more secure location for tonight and help you toward a longer term solution?

Remember to ask about older school-aged siblings:

- . . . Did you know that public schools have a special staff person to support school-aged children living in your situation?
- . . . Do you have school-aged children, too? Public schools can help them stay on track with their education while you are in this housing transition...