

DO YOU KNOW?



School-age children living in any of the following situations are protected under the McKinney-Vento Act:

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- Living in motels or hotels
- Living in shelters
- Awaiting foster care placement
- Living in a public or private place not designed for sleeping
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations

Being protected under McKinney-Vento gives children important rights, such as:

- continued enrollment in their same school even if they are temporarily living outside of the school district or attendance zone
- free transportation to their school
- immediate enrollment in the local school where they are temporarily living if they decide to transfer
- access to free school meals
- access to educational support services (tutoring, counseling, school supplies, etc.)
- other services available through the NYC Department of Education's Students in Temporary Housing Program

ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN OF NEW YORK, INC.

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For more information, please contact the New York State Technical and Education Assistance Center for Homeless Students (NYS-TEACHS) toll-free at 800-388-2014, or visit www.nysteachs.org.

The NYC DOE is implementing NYS's **NEW INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) FORMS.**

For more information, go to: www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/formsnotices/IEP/memo-Jan10.htm.

The form is changing, but students' rights remain the same.

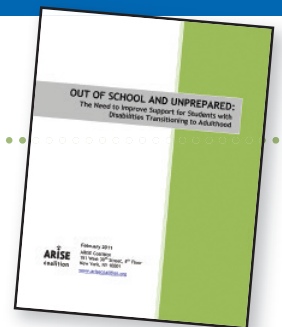
The Advocate

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CHECK IT OUT

New report from the Arise Coalition

OUT OF SCHOOL AND UNPREPARED: *The Need to Improve Support for Students with Disabilities Transitioning to Adulthood*



With the release of this policy paper, the ARISE Coalition kicked off its new "Next Step" campaign which aims to improve transition planning for students with disabilities in New York City (NYC). The group is calling on NYC and New York State to follow the law with respect to transition planning and to give post-secondary transition for students with special education needs the same high priority they are beginning to give college and career readiness for other students. Visit www.arisecoalition.org/publications.php (Reports and Fact Sheets) to download the full report.

See our new **"Fact Sheet on The Legal Requirements for School Co-Location in New York City,"** available at www.advocatesforchildren.org/guides.php.

A co-location occurs when two or more schools share a single building. AFC prepared this worksheet on the legal requirements for school co-locations to answer the questions posed by schools and communities throughout New York City.

Visit www.advocatesforchildren.org/EI%20Guide%201.2011.pdf to see Advocates for Children's new Guide to Early Intervention.

To learn more about how AFC **helps thousands of families** each year, or to make a tax-deductible donation, please visit our website www.advocatesforchildren.org.



ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN OF NEW YORK



The Advocate

HELPING CHILDREN SUCCEED IN SCHOOL

SPRING 2011

WWW.ADVOCATESFORCHILDREN.ORG



MISSION STATEMENT

Advocates for Children promotes access to the best education New York can provide for all students, especially students of color and students from low-income backgrounds.

We use uniquely integrated strategies to advance systemic reform, empower families and communities, and advocate for the educational rights of individual students.



KHIRY SMITH

Success Story

Khiry Smith is this year's recipient of Advocates for Children's "Education Champion Award."

Khiry, a student with Duchenne muscular dystrophy, is a bright, 21-year-old young man who has a history of needs that the NYC Department of Education (DOE) repeatedly failed to address, resulting in his being out of school without an appropriate placement for 4 years. Though facing physical limitations, Khiry is a capable and motivated student, eager to learn and working hard to earn his high school diploma.

AFC took Khiry's case and succeeded in enrolling him in an appropriate school program at an alternative high school. AFC staff then requested an impartial hearing, through which Khiry obtained assistive technology and compensatory education services that will enable him to attend school beyond the age of 21 so he can graduate with a diploma.

At this time, Khiry has passed all his courses and many of his Regents exams, and he is currently taking college preparation courses. He wants to become a sportscaster. We congratulate him for all his hard work and perseverance and wish him all the best!

AFC PARTNERS TO INCREASE SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH INTERRUPTED FORMAL EDUCATION

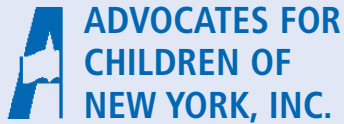
On April 14, 2011, AFC partnered with the New York City Department of Education's Office of English Language Learners and Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project to host the second of a three-part series of events designed to address the needs of Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE). The event, a forum featuring practitioners in the field, explored ways to better support SIFE in developing their native language skills while responding to their social-emotional needs. The series resulted from AFC's May 2010 report, "Students with Interrupted Formal Education: A Challenge for the New York City Public Schools," <http://advocatesforchildren.org/SIFE%20Paper%20final.pdf>, which called for improved systems of identifying SIFE, instructing them, assessing their performance, and helping them graduate.

By definition, SIFE come from a home where a language other than English is spoken. While the majority of SIFE, 64%, are Spanish speakers (mostly from the Dominican Republic), nearly 40% are speakers of other languages. They come from countries such as Yemen, Haiti, China, Mexico and the Ivory Coast. Despite linguistic differences, all SIFE enter the United States after the second grade and, for a variety of reasons, have had at least two years less schooling than their peers or function at least two years below their expected

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(for Advice & Referral):
866-427-6033
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COURT SETTLEMENT PROTECTS RIGHT TO EDUCATION FOR COURT-INVOLVED YOUTH

In 2004, AFC and the Legal Aid Society of New York filed a lawsuit on behalf of students who have been involved with the juvenile or adult court systems and who were denied education upon return to the New York City schools. On April 28, 2011, the court approved a settlement between the plaintiffs and the Department of Education ("DOE"). Among other requirements, the settlement:

- Requires the DOE to register students returning from court-ordered settings within five days of seeking enrollment from the DOE;
- Requires the DOE to register students returning from Passages Academy (the DOE school for youth in juvenile detention) within two days of discharge from Passages Academy;
- Establishes procedures to ensure that the DOE requests records for students who are returning from court-ordered settings to the NYC schools and arranges for any special education planning that may be needed;
- Requires the DOE to make training available to its staff regarding working with this student population; and
- Requires the DOE to ensure that students at Passages Academy receive necessary special education evaluations and services.

In addition, students who were not enrolled in a school within 5 days of returning from a court-ordered setting between December 14, 2001 and April 29, 2011 and who filed for relief by May 31, 2011 can receive free educational services including: re-enrollment in a DOE school, counseling sessions that may result in tutoring, the opportunity to earn extra credits, help with basic reading or math, public adult educational opportunities, or vocational options and services. For more information about the settlement and how to participate in the relief, please go to our website at: <http://advocatesforchildren.org/jg.php>.

AFC PARTNERS TO INCREASE SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH INTERRUPTED FORMAL EDUCATION

continued

grade level in reading and mathematics. In addition to the typical struggles of adjusting to a new social, cultural and academic environment that most newcomers face, SIFE may be pre-literate in their first language, older than their peers, and more likely to drop out of school.

Strong partnerships between schools and community-based organizations, such as the one that Sauti Yetu Center for African Women has forged with Bronx International High School, emerged as a promising model for the DOE to pursue as the advocacy community continues to demand more effective programs and policies that will support the 15,529 SIFE in New York City public schools.

For more information on this topic, contact: ECP@advocatesforchildren.org.

Connect with AFC on facebook and twitter!

Stay up-to-date on our latest work and learn more about educational issues affecting New York's most vulnerable students.



www.facebook.com/advocatesforchildren



<http://twitter.com/afcnewyork>

PARENTS SPEAK OUT

In April, the ARISE Coalition, coordinated by Advocates for Children, co-sponsored a series of speak outs for parents and caregivers in each NYC borough. Co-sponsors included Bronx Independent Living Services in the Bronx, Advocates for Children and Parents for Inclusive Education in Queens, Sinergia in Manhattan, Parent to Parent NY in Staten Island, and the Brooklyn Center for the Independence of the Disabled and United We Stand in Brooklyn.

The groups heard compelling stories on a variety of subjects. The themes of bullying, low expectations, inappropriate placements, and struggles for necessary services came up again and again. The events were extremely emotional at times.

Elected officials and top DOE personnel were also on hand to hear the parents speak.

Maggie Moroff, Coordinator of the Coalition, says, "ARISE plans to use what was heard at the speak outs to fine tune our advocacy strategies and make certain that we remain true to the things that parents and students experience in the schools, and the issues they care most about."

For more information about the ARISE Coalition, go to www.arisecoalition.org, or contact Maggie Moroff at mmoroff@advocatesforchildren.org.

40TH ANNIVERSARY BENEFIT

MAY 10, 2011 · RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART

Celebrating 40 Years of Transforming the Lives of New York City's Students



Presenters
Nicole Miller and Darryl Strawberry,
Honorees
Khiry Smith and Dana Buchman,
and AFC Executive Director **Kim Sweet.**

Bill Jesinkey, an AFC founder and former Board member, with his wife Dorothy Jesinkey, who also spent many years working for and supporting AFC in its earliest days.



Thank you to everyone who supported AFC's 40th Anniversary Benefit. It was a tremendous success. You can still donate by visiting www.advocatesforchildren.org

ADVOCATES FIGHT REDUCTION IN CHILD CARE

In February, Mayor Bloomberg announced a plan to cut subsidized child care for 17,000 children from low-income working families in New York City. The city's subsidized child care programs are often the only opportunity that low-income children have to participate in an early childhood education program before entering school. Research shows that graduates of high-quality early learning programs are less likely to be retained a grade in school, require special education classes, and drop out of high school.

Advocates for Children joined with organizations across the city to form the Emergency Coalition to Save Child Care, and we are proud to serve on the coalition's steering committee. Through rallies, press events, petition drives, sign-on letters, and meetings with elected officials, the coalition brought together parents and com-

munity leaders to highlight the importance of child care programs for school readiness and school success.

We were pleased that, in May, Mayor Bloomberg announced that he would partially restore child care funding. However, his budget still contains significant cuts. Under the Mayor's revised budget, at least 7,000 fewer children would have access to early childhood education programs in the coming year and hundreds of early childhood classrooms would close by September. Advocates for Children will continue to urge Mayor Bloomberg and the City Council to fully protect child care in the final budget to help ensure that low-income children enter school prepared to succeed. To learn more about the Emergency Coalition to Save Child Care, please visit <http://savechildcare.com>.

AFC Junior Board Hosts Panel on Charter Schools

On Tuesday, February 15th, the Junior Board of Advocates for Children hosted a panel focused on charter schools in New York City. The panel, entitled "Beyond Test Scores: Holding Charter Schools Accountable to Students, Parents, and the Community," took place at the New York University School of Law.

AFC's Executive Director, Kim Sweet, served as moderator for a distinguished panel of experts, including: Dr. Susan Miller Barker, Interim Executive Director of the SUNY Charter Schools Institute; Recy Dunn, Executive Director of the NYC Department of Education's Office of Charter Schools; Eve Colavito, Principal of Harlem DREAM School; and Mona Davids, President of the New York Charter Parents' Association. Panelists offered a diverse range of perspectives on issues like school discipline, services for students with disabilities and English Language Learners, and parent involvement.