

**Learning Centers** are educational spaces within shelters and transitional residences that are equipped with computers, libraries, kid-friendly furniture, and a wide array of educational materials. Learning Centers provide a quiet, structured, and visually appealing location where students can complete homework assignments, study, read books, access educational software, and more. Learning Centers also serve as sites for HCEF-funded and other afterschool and summer programs. Since 1999, HCEF has created 12 Learning Centers in homeless agencies throughout Allegheny County, as well as five Resource Rooms in agencies without sufficient space for a Learning Center.



**Afterschool & Summer Programs** empower students to realize their full potential as learners and citizens through daily on-site programming led by highly qualified teachers and volunteers who work with students on homework, literacy, and creative projects. Students learn critical skills for school success, including study habits and setting personal goals for learning and behavior. Programming is provided on-site for residents of partnering housing facilities. In 2016, over 175 students participated in the afterschool and summer camp programs at 5 agencies.



## How You Can Help

### **VOLUNTEER**

as an afterschool mentor or help out with HCEF's special events

### **EDUCATE**

your community about children experiencing homelessness

### **ORGANIZE**

a small fundraiser at your business, school, or club

### **DONATE**

by mailing a check or visiting [homelessfund.org/donate](http://homelessfund.org/donate)



## **HOMELESS CHILDREN'S EDUCATION FUND**

creating hope through learning  
[www.homelessfund.org](http://www.homelessfund.org)



## **HOMELESS CHILDREN'S EDUCATION FUND**

## Menu of Educational Opportunities



## Our Mission

To advance the education of children and youth experiencing homelessness, guiding them to be productive, empowered citizens.

As a national model for addressing the educational needs of unstably-housed children and youth, HCEF leads a collaborative effort among regional partners by providing educational programs and services in Allegheny County and advocating for policy and system improvement.

**Enrichment Programs** engage children and families in a variety of hands-on learning activities that foster their creativity and critical thinking skills. Through partnerships with Pittsburgh's leading cultural, artistic, and educational organizations, HCEF is able to meet the need for quality out-of-school time learning opportunities for children served by homeless housing agencies in Allegheny County. Classes are led by highly-skilled educators and artists from contracted partners, including The Andy Warhol Museum, Lab Ratz Science Club, Saturday Light Brigade Radio, Art Expression, and many others. Over 600 children participated in the enrichment program in 2016.



## Professional Development Opportunities for Homeless Providers

are offered throughout the year to partnering homeless providers on topics of interest to caregivers and child advocates, at no cost to participants. Child-centered trainings expose housing provider staff to research, skills, and best practices they can use when caring for children at their agencies. Approximately 50 staff members representing more than 20 organizations participate in professional development each year.

## HCEF's Annual Backpack Distribution

provides over 2,000 backpacks filled with school supplies to children at local homeless agencies and community organizations. Every August, HCEF delivers these backpacks via school bus. Each backpack arrives filled with supplies, ensuring children are fully equipped for their first day of school.



## Hope Through Learning Awards

are available to young people who have persevered against homelessness and are applying to post-secondary education programs. Awardees can use their funds for tuition or other school-related expenses such as books, computers, transportation, or housing. In the first year of the program (2014), HCEF awarded two \$2,500 scholarships to young college-bound students. In 2016, HCEF awarded five \$2,500 and fostered ongoing supportive relationships with past award recipients.

**Mini-Grants & Field Trips** provide homeless housing providers with funds that may be spent on educational programs, projects, materials, and community excursions. These opportunities enable children, youth, and their parents to engage in active learning and explore the cultural and educational resources that exist within our region. An average of 700 children are impacted by HCEF Mini-Grants each year, and an average of 300 children and 200 parents participate in field trips. All donations to HCEF from private donors go directly toward Mini-Grants and Field Trip Grants.



The **Emergency Education Fund** provides funding of up to \$500 for young people ages 0-24 who are currently in a homeless situation and facing an emergency or critical barrier to accessing or completing educational, extracurricular, or career-related activities. In its pilot year (2016), this initiative funded over 45 requests totaling over \$12,000.

HCEF's **Teen Outreach Program** confronts many of the challenges homeless teenage youth experience and offers a roadmap to success for each teen identified through HCEF's partnerships in Allegheny County. HCEF's teen program consists of four key components: shelter-based college and career readiness programs, targeted high school outreach within schools, peer and professional support networks, and educational and recreational opportunities.