

# THE IMPACT OF EVICTIONS ON SCHOOL STABILITY

Evictions have an outsized impact on children, particularly on their health, education and mental health. It disrupts many aspects of life and separates families, leaving kids worrying about where they're going to sleep, if they'll have enough to eat, if they'll be forced to stay somewhere unsafe.

According to the National League of Cities, a significant factor contributing to student mobility is eviction.<sup>2</sup>

## IMPACTS OF EVICTIONS ON STUDENTS

Students who have encountered housing instability due to an eviction are **6 times more likely to be chronically absent from school and 4 times more likely to not complete high school.** These students are also disproportionately represented among Latinx and Black communities, as well as English language learners.<sup>3</sup>

High poverty schools are more likely to have high mobility rates, increasing disparities to more affluent schools.<sup>4</sup> Students residing in areas with elevated eviction and poverty rates as well as areas with low home ownership rates are also more prone to school transfers.<sup>5</sup>

## NATION-WIDE STATISTICS

Children whose families have experienced an eviction have a higher prevalence of food insecurity and worse educational outcomes than other low-income children living in rental housing. Here are some of the impacts of evictions on students:

- Students in grades 7 to 12, whose families experienced eviction, tend to miss more school days compared to those from non-evicted families.<sup>6</sup>
- Evictions occurring during infancy and middle childhood are linked to lower cognitive assessment scores at age 9. Children evicted at age 9 exhibited cognitive skills assessment scores akin to being a full year behind their peers in schooling.<sup>7</sup>
- Frequent student transfers, often associated with eviction-induced residential instability, can significantly impact academic performance. A student with one or more transfers is only 62% as likely to be proficient in Math compared to a student without transfers.<sup>8</sup>
- Evictions can create emotional distress for students, leading to behavior problems and reduced school engagement heightening the risk of dropping out of school.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>National League of Cities. "The Impact of the Looming Eviction Cliff on School-Age Youth." <https://www.nlc.org/article/2020/09/11/the-impact-of-the-looming- eviction-cliff-on-school-age-youth/>

<sup>3</sup>John W. Gardner Center for Youth and their Communities. (2022). Housing instability and educational outcomes of San Mateo County youth.

<sup>4</sup>Haley, Victor P., Jr. "The Impact of Eviction on Student Displacement: An Atlanta Case Study." Georgia Institute of Technology Repository.

<sup>5</sup>KC-AERC. "Student Mobility in the Kansas City Area." September 1, 2015.

<sup>6</sup>García-Cobán Richter, F., Coulton, C., Urban, A., & Steh, S. (2021). An Integrated Data System Lens Into Evictions and Their Effects. Housing Policy Debate, 31(3-5), 762-784, DOI: 10.1080/10511482.2021.1879201





EXAMPLES FROM  
THE CITY OF READING &  
CHESTER COUNTY

STABLE **HOMES** EQUAL  
STABLE **KIDS**

Eviction prevention could make a difference in school classroom turnover. When children and families are evicted, they are often expelled from their community and have to leave their friends and schools.

IN CLASSROOMS  
IN READING...

Eviction causes children to miss school and have lower skills assessment scores. In Reading's classrooms, there was a noticeable trend of students not remaining enrolled for the entire school year. The Northeast Reading Youth Development Task Force identified eviction as the underlying cause of this issue. In response, they advocated for the implementation of an eviction diversion program.



IN CHESTER COUNTY...

According to Jennifer Lopez, Chief Executive Officer of Friends Association, children's stability in school is one benefit of Chester County's Eviction Diversion Court:

*"We had a mom in the Coatesville court that was facing eviction. Our goal is to prevent an eviction so as to not have the eviction on record. But part of what we do is also help a family determine if this current living situation is affordable in the long term. And so we were talking with this mom about possibly moving. And she said;*

*'You don't understand. I have a child who has an IEP\* in school. I have been working all year to get this IEP in place. It's finally working. I finally have all the pieces together. I don't want to start in another school district. I don't want to destabilize my child by moving. All the other pieces of my life are centered around where I live. I have transportation to my work. My child is stable in school. I can't move, I have to stay here.'"*



Housing Alliance  
of Pennsylvania

<sup>7</sup> Schwartz, G., Leifheit, K., Chen, J., Arcaya, M., & Berkman, L. (2022). Childhood eviction and cognitive development: Developmental timing-specific associations in an urban birth cohort. *Soc Sci Med*, 292(114544), DOI: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114544.

<sup>8</sup> KC-AERC. "Student Mobility in the Kansas City Area." September 1, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Brune, Nancy E., PhD. "The Housing-Education Nexus." Posted on May 16, 2019. Guinn Center. <https://guinncenter.org/the-housing-education-nexus/>

\* An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a legal document under United States law that is developed for each public school child in the U.S. who needs special education.