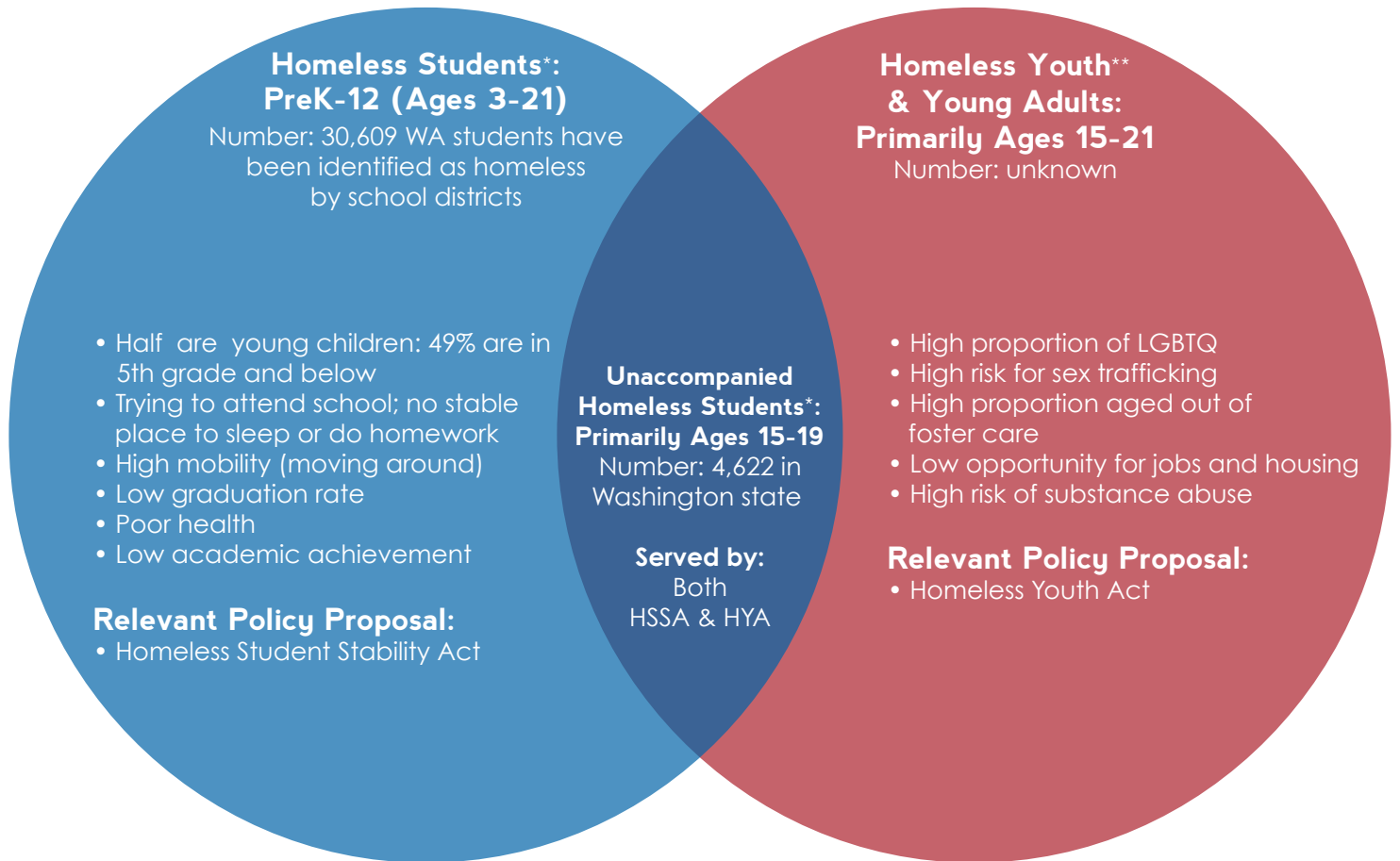


WHO ARE WASHINGTON'S HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH?



The **Homeless Student Stability Act (HSSA)** will provide schools with much-needed support to identify and serve homeless students. It will encourage schools and housing providers to establish partnerships to increase access to stable housing for homeless students and their families.

The **Homeless Youth Act (HYA)** will create an Office of Homeless Youth Programs to more efficiently coordinate efforts to improve the safety, health, and welfare of homeless youth in this State.

*Under the **McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act**, a student is homeless if he or she lacks a fixed, adequate place to sleep. This includes children or youth who are living in shelters or transitional housing; living in parks, public spaces, vehicles, abandoned buildings, or other places not meant for people to live; doubled-up or couch-surfing due to loss of housing or economic hardship; living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camp grounds due to lack of alternative accommodations; and more. McKinney-Vento's definition of homeless also includes unaccompanied homeless youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Under the **Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, homeless youth are defined as individuals who are "not more than 21 years of age...for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment with a relative and who have no other safe alternative living arrangement." This definition includes only those youth who are unaccompanied by parents or caregivers.

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This informational handout is a collaboration between Columbia Legal Services and Seattle University Project on Family Homelessness.