



Much More than just a Warm Bed for the Night

GUIDE FOR PROSPECTIVE VOLUNTEERS

HOW NIGHTSTOP WORKS

1. A young person approaches an agency in the area to present him / herself as homeless. In most cases this will be to a Local Authority Housing Team or Children's Services.
2. The agency concerned works to find an appropriate form of accommodation for the young person. Where it is not possible to place the individual that same day, the organisation may then approach Nightstop and make a referral.
3. The staff member answering the Nightstop phone will ask a number of questions to the referral agency to find out if the young person is suitable to stay with one of our hosts. This is a very comprehensive risk assessment to ensure the safety of all our staff and volunteers.
4. If the young person meets our criteria, an experienced staff member will get in touch with a Nightstop Host to arrange accommodation for the young person for a night.
5. The host will provide an evening meal, a listening ear, a warm bed, the opportunity for a bath or shower and breakfast the following morning.
6. Transport of the young person to the host will be provided by a Nightstop Driver, by Nightstop Staff, the Referral Agency and occasionally by the host.
7. The following day arrangements will be made for the young person to return either to the referral agency or to another organisation where he or she will get help to find more permanent accommodation.

ROLE SPECIFICATION

VOLUNTEER HOST

To provide safe overnight accommodation with regard to Nightstop's Minimum Standards of Practice. Placements are 1 to 3 nights.

HOURS PER WEEK

Variable to suit individual availability

DUTIES

- To provide safe overnight accommodation and support for a young person using the scheme
- To help a young person feel relaxed and comfortable in the household
- To make a young person aware of essential routines
- To act upon any relevant information and to inform professionals where appropriate
- To attend ongoing support and training meetings including annual review

PERSON SPECIFICATION

- Warm and approachable
- A sense of humour
- A passion for helping others
- Good listening skills
- Ability to set appropriate boundaries
- An understanding of the issues faced by young people in accessing suitable accommodation (to be obtained through Nightstop training)
- Can work with Nightstop's Equal Opportunities and Confidentiality Policies

Nightstop will provide expenses of approximately £10 a night for accommodation with any other additional expenses such as travel also claimable.

ROLE SPECIFICATION

VOLUNTEER DRIVER

To provide safe transport to and from host household for young people referred to Nightstop.

HOURS

Variable to suit individual availability.

DUTIES

- To provide safe transport
- To help a young person feel relaxed and comfortable
- To introduce the young person to the hosting household
- Act upon relevant information in conjunction with Nightstop staff
- To attend ongoing support and training meetings, including annual review

You may decide that you only want to offer lifts to certain age groups or gender

PERSON PROFILE

- Access to an appropriately insured vehicle
- Warm and friendly manner
- Good listening skills
- Ability to remain calm and collected under pressure when things do not go to plan
- Driving Licence
- Can work with Nightstop's Equal Opportunities and Confidentiality Policies

NIGHTSTOP VOLUNTEER APPLICATION PROCESS

To become a volunteer please complete the volunteer application form and equality and diversity form. You can return this by email to us.

We will then be in touch to arrange an informal meeting (preferably in your home if you are applying to become a host) to talk more about the scheme and the assessment process.

The assessment process involves a number of home visits and the complete of a Criminal Records Bureau check. You will also be asked to provide two references and we will also carry out a medical check with your GP.

INFORMAL MEETING

If you are unsure if hosting or driving is for you, why not give us a ring at the office and we can arrange for a member of staff to visit you for an informal meeting. This is a chance for you to ask any questions you might have about Nightstop before deciding whether to commit yourself further.

ASSESSMENT & TRAINING

The process of assessment and training can be quite long but is essential for the welfare of everyone involved. To become a volunteer full training is necessary. All training is held in fully accessible buildings or in your home or the home of other trainees. It can take outside normal working hours to fit with the other commitments of our trainee volunteers. We can arrange for you to meet with young people and experienced hosts as part of the assessment process. After completion of initial training you would be encouraged to attend ongoing training.

PLACEMENT OF YOUNG PERSON

It is the host who decides what time a young person can arrive to your house. Hosts are always given full information about a young person before they decide if they are willing to host them. Some young people are only allowed to stay with experienced hosts.

SUPERVISION

Regular supervision sessions with an experienced Nightstop Staff member will be provided. These will take place with increased frequency for new hosts, with future levels being determined on agreed level of need.

ON GOING SUPPORT

Follow up calls are made to you every time that you host and you are provided with all necessary items.

24 hour support is available for all volunteers with an experienced member of staff via mobile phone. Our office is generally staffed 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

ANNUAL REVIEW

Each Nightstop volunteer is expected to take part in an informal review meeting every year.

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AND FINALLY,

IN THE WORDS OF THOSE WHO SEE US IN ACTION.....

“I think it is so great that there are people like this, taking in young people and not getting paid for it. When someone trusts you, then you want to give them that trust back. I wanted to show the host that I respected her so I tried really hard. I said please and thank u and I thought she was lovely.” 17 year old girl with Chester Host.

“I helped the hosts to dig a duck pond! I really love digging and ducks! “19 year old male with Nantwich host family

“She was not posh at all and she lived in my local area. I felt really relaxed straight away! “16 year old female with single female host in Northwich

“I asked them if they would adopt me, even though I am 19!” Young person with Nantwich host family

“I cannot believe people do this! They are so kind. Wow. My host was totally brilliant. Really great. Thank you so much”. 17 year old female with single female host in Crewe.

“We went out for a boat ride on the river and the young person we hosted suggested I tried a mocha coffee. I don’t know who enjoyed themselves more, me or him!” Male host in his 60s living in Northwich

“He was a real chatterbox. He never stopped talking! My own sons took him out for a walk with the dog. They were really moved by his situation and said it made them realise how lucky they were to have a secure home” Single female host in Chester

“Thank you so much. I cannot believe that there has been such support for me!” Very first young person on Nightstop.



SOMEONE'S COMING FOR DINNER (and breakfast)!

Paul and Sue live in Winsford and they were the first family to be approved as hosts. This is their account of their first placement.

"It was with some trepidation that I waited for the arrival of our first Nightstopper. I hadn't had the experience of working with young people that Paul had had (Paul was a headmaster prior to retirement). Would he eat what was provided? Would he be polite? Was it going to be easy sharing our house with a complete stranger?"

I needn't have worried. Nightstop brought us a very polite, well mannered young man who ate everything he was given, sat and watched TV with us, went to bed and got up at the required times and left his room and the bathroom spotless. He came back to us for a second night before a hostel place was found for him.

Our first experience was a good one and we hope they will all be as easy. However, it is clearly difficult for a young person to find their way through the system safely. The system is complex, with a variety of agencies interacting with each other in ways that are not clear even to an adult who is not stressed by the circumstances in which they find themselves. There is the jargon that trips off the tongue so easily but is meaningless to the listener and young people are less likely to ask for an explanation than an adult."