



Give A
home,
Give A
future

Home Base
Supported Lodgings
Scheme

CONTENTS

About Home Base Supported Lodgings Project

Who can be a support host?

Reasons why a young person needs a support host

Emergency, security and on - going support

Keys

House rules

Financial support, payment and tax

Assessment process for hosts

Staff support

ABOUT HOME BASE SUPPORTED LODGINGS PROJECT

Most young people experience some difficulties when they leave home. This can be a challenging time for teenagers of ages 16 and 17. Teenagers who have been forced to leave home due to family problems often find themselves struggling to cope or become independent. Many lack the confidence and basic life skills to live independently often leading to traumatic experiences for them.

West London YMCA with support from the Local Authority, has set up a Supported Lodgings Project. The purpose of the scheme is to provide supportive accommodation in a homely environment for young people to gain the skills required to become independent. The scheme aims to bridge the gap between home and living independently in the community; providing an opportunity for young people to seek help and advice from a caring host with day-to-day living skills. Usually all that is needed is a listening ear, but inevitably some young people will need more help than others.



WHO CAN BE A HOST?

We need people from all walks of life and all cultural backgrounds to become hosts. Being a Supported Lodgings Host is not about having any particular qualifications - it's more about having the special skills and qualities we are looking for.

A host wants to make a positive difference in a young person's life. It may be that you have the skills and qualities we are looking for because you have children of your own, or because you have experience of working with young people.

All that we ask in addition is that you are in good health, have a spare room and are willing to share your home with a young person.

In summary the necessary requirements are:

- A spare room
- An ability to listen and respond appropriately
- Patience and understanding
- A willingness to work alongside YMCA support staff
- Some awareness of the needs of young people
- An ability to provide at least one meal a day – usually breakfast or as agreed by both parties
- A willingness to undertake enhanced statutory checks: CRB – there must be nothing in your background to suggest a young person would be at risk
- You must have an up to date gas certificate (if you have a gas supply to your home)
- You could be a home owner, a council tenant or rent your home privately. However, if you have a mortgage, you should check with your mortgage provider first; if you rent your home, you should obtain permission from your landlord.

Is this for you? Contact us for more information!

In return we offer:

- Ongoing support from staff
- Training
- Allowances

REASONS WHY A YOUNG PERSON BECOMES HOMELESS

Some young people are unable to live at home with their families for a number of reasons including:

- Bereavement of parents
- Family breakdown
- Parents in prison
- Risk of harm at home
- Parents have mental health problems
- Parents in hospital
- Parents on drugs and / or alcohol
- Young person displays challenging behaviour
- Young person at risk of sexual harm and emotional abuse
- Young person beyond parental control
- Family crisis
- Homelessness

With the young person's consent, we will tell you why they have become homeless.



EMERGENCY, SECURITY AND ON-GOING SUPPORT

West London YMCA will provide hosts with daytime and out of hours emergency numbers. Hosts will be trained and expected to know when to call emergency services e.g. police, ambulance and fire services. All hosts are provided copies of relevant policies applicable to emergency situations such as a breakdown policy, emergency evacuation policy etc. A Project Support Worker will make weekly contact with hosts either through visits or by telephone to ensure that the placement is progressing satisfactorily.

The aim of the Supported Lodgings scheme is to show an accepting and non-judgmental attitude to a vulnerable young person who needs support. However, a balance must be struck between duty of care and the promotion of positive risk taking. A young person must not be put in a position where he/she may be tempted to abuse the hospitality being offered whilst on a placement. You should bear in mind that a young person in your home may be in a desperate financial situation, or may have been subject to physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

KEYS

The young person will receive two keys, one for the front door and the other to their bedroom. If they lose the key it will need to be replaced and the young person will pay for the replacement cost.

HOUSE RULES

West London YMCA has developed a fair house rule document which has been revised after due consultation with hosts and young people. This is explained to and signed by all parties before commencement of placement. The house rules set out what is and what is not acceptable.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT, PAYMENT AND TAX

You will receive weekly rent payments for your room that is in line with the Local Housing Allowance. You will also receive additional payments for supporting the young person. Hosts can declare their earnings from the scheme through the rent-a-room scheme that Her Majesty's Customs and Revenue operate. This means that the first £4,250 earned by renting a room in the host's main home is disregarded for tax purposes. However, this must include all the payments made to the host to provide the service. Please check and clarify your particular circumstances with your tax office. The YMCA is willing to provide hosts with a statement of income of their annual earnings from the scheme for tax office purposes.

HOST RECRUITMENT AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

To be considered as a host:

- ◆ Give us a call and we can answer your questions about the scheme.
- ◆ Then if you want to follow this up we can arrange to meet you for a discussion. If at this stage you are interested in becoming a host you can choose to apply.
- ◆ Once you apply we will start a process to confirm you are suitable to have a young person living with you in your home. This includes working with you to carry out:
 - A Health & Safety assessment of your home
 - Checks including a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check for all adults in your home
 - Taking references from people who know you
 - Providing training for you on being a host

Our staff are available to help you through each step of the process.

- ◆ When the assessment is complete a decision will be taken whether to approve you as a Host for the project.
- ◆ Once approved you would then be available as a potential host for local young people. We would contact you when a suitable young person is in need of housing and arrange an initial meeting.
- ◆ Further meetings can then take place and if both you and the young person are happy to proceed the placement will be set up.
- ◆ Remember that you can stop the assessment at any stage if you are not entirely comfortable with the process.
- ◆ The aim is that a young person would then stay with you until they are ready to move on to more independent accommodation, this would normally be a period of 6-24 months.

There is no onus on you to continue through the process any further than you wish, and your personal details are subject to confidentiality agreements throughout.

STAFF SUPPORT

A YMCA Support Worker is responsible for undertaking all initial needs and risks assessments for the young person; however the host will be required to attend all assessment and support planning sessions. The support plan created with the young person is reviewed regularly based on the level of needs of the young person. Support tasks to be undertaken with the young person are also set for the host and are reviewed frequently to see how it is working. Normally the types of support to be given by the host in preparing the young person for independent living include life skills related support such as: cooking, budgeting, shopping, washing, housework, accessing local services etc. The host and young person are free to contact the project worker outside the scheduled meeting times. The support worker provides additional support depending on level of needs.

Frequent host and young persons' forums are held which involve a variety of activities such as training, consultation on policy reviews, social outings, music, dance, drama etc.





FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

West London YMCA
Roxeth Gate
Roxeth Hill
Harrow
London
HA2 OJN

Telephone: 020 8423 0131
Email: supported.lodgings@londonymca.org
Mobile: 0777 3047546

www.westlondonYMCA.org