**Nightstop Cumbria Guide**

* **Always call** Nightstop Cumbria first with your enquiry, to check there is availability that night and discuss the potential referral. If you don’t get through right away and are leaving a message, please make sure you leave your name and contact details so we can get back to you.
* **You can refer using a CAP or First Contact Script form** if you have already completed one with the young person, this means you do not have to complete an extra form to refer to us. If you are not completing either of these forms you can use the Nightstop referral form as usual. However you refer, please provide as much information as possible, essentially – people we can contact for their risk assessment.
* **We accept referrals Monday to Friday 9am-4pm** upon receiving a referral we need to complete a risk assessment on the young person, this can take a few hours and we can not give a decision on whether we can offer Nightstop accommodation, until this is completed.
* **Talk it through** with the young person, they sometimes need a bit of encouragement to use the service in the first instance but, once they’ve used us for one night they are usually then much more relaxed and enjoy using the service. We recognise it can be daunting to stay in a stranger’s home so we ask you to tell the young person that Nightstop provides a safe space in a welcoming home environment. Our hosts are fully trained and vetted, and know that some young people will be in the midst of a crisis situation that they don’t want to talk about. If the young person wants to arrive there and spend most of the night in their room, that is fine! There is no pressure to spend time with the hosts. If a young person is still apprehensive, I am happy to have a chat with them to explain a bit more and as I recruit the hosts for Cumbria, I know the placements well and can let the young person know a bit about where they might be going. Our hosts know how to make a young person feel at ease and usually just start by offering them a cuppa.

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* **Where possible, refer in advance –** if you have a young person whose living arrangements are unstable, or there is a possibility things could break down, that is the ideal point to make a referral to Nightstop. This allows us time to carry out the risk assessment so that if a crisis situation happens, we can turn around the arrangements much quicker and hopefully then accommodate the young person on the day accommodation is needed. Don’t be worried about wasting our time if the young person does not end up using Nightstop, their risk assessment and referral stays on file so that if they need Nightstop in the future, some of the work is done. We find that where a young person has turned down Nightstop initially, just them being aware of the service and having had some contact, helps them to come back to us in the future.
* We have **resources available** to give some more insight into Nightstop, which can be useful and may reassure a young person. Our website [www.depaulcharity.org/NightstopUK](http://www.depaulcharity.org/NightstopUK) contains case studies of people who have used Nightstop, some short films which show some real hosts and young people who have used Nightstop. <https://youtu.be/ow6oRfRUVzA> this is a 12 minute film, featuring young people, hosts and staff which gives a good overview of the service and could be helpful to show to your young people. We also have leaflets, which we have been circulating around agencies; if you don’t already have some of these, email me sharon.jackson@depaulcharity.org.uk and jade.docherty@depaulcharity.org.uk and we will get some to you.

**Did you know….?**

* Nightstop does not only have to be used in a crisis situation. If you have a family experiencing difficulties, Nightstop could be used to provide some **respite** for a young person while some family support is put in place to enable a return home.
* Having a criminal record, history of substance misuse, previous aggressive behavior – **does not** mean someone cannot be accepted into Nightstop. When we do the risk assessment we look into the young person’s current situation, the circumstances around any past incidents, any possible triggers we can be aware of, and information relevant to them being placed in a hosts home. If any risks identified can be managed, and the young person can safely abstain from using any substances while they are with Nightstop, then we could take them. It is our ethos to risk assess with every intention of offering a placement to a young person, rather than looking for reasons not to accept them.
* We will support with **travel arrangements** where we can. Our hosts are often happy to collect young people from the train station or bus stop, or an agreed half way point that the young person can get to. Sometimes we may have Volunteer Drivers available to assist us with transport.
* A nightstop **placement includes** – their own room, access to washing facilities such as shower, washing machine, an evening meal, breakfast the following morning.
* We can **prioritise** a young person who is already using Nightstop, for a placement the following night, we just ask that they or the referral agency contact us before midday so we know they need it.
* **We don’t need** a local connection to be able to place a young person with Nightstop.
* **Unfortunately we are not able** to offer Nightstop to a young person who is bailed to a specific address, which would include being on a tag.
* **All our hosts** are volunteers and do what they do because they want to help young people, and feel they are in a position to. They come from all sorts of backgrounds and they are also.. ‘normal people’!!