

What to do if you are 16 or 17 and homeless

Step One

You have two choices

- Go to the Housing Options Service at Jules One Stop
- Go to Children's Social Care at Rutland County Council
- They will talk to your family to see if you can go back home. They cannot make you go back if its not safe. If you cant go back go onto step two

Step Two

An assesment will be completed

- Children's Social Care will carry out a "Child in Need" assesment and if you meet the criteria should offer you somewhere to stay. If not, go to the Housing Options service who will arrange a place for you to stay and make sure you get urgent advice. (Read top tip 2)
- Housing Options and Social Care work together to do the assesment unless you say you dont want one. (Read top tip 3)

Step Three

If you assesment states you are a "Child in Need"

- Social Care will be responsible for helping you to find somewhere to live and work with other agencies to support you with other things such as education and training.
- (Read top tip 3)

Step Four

If you dont want an assesment or do not meet the criteria for "Child in Need"

- Housing Options will then decide if they are responsible for finding you somewhere to live. If they make a decision you disagree with, make sure you get urgent advice (Read top tip 2)
- Whichever route you take, you should end up with somewhere safe to live. **If**, this isn't the case, get advice (see top tip 2).

Top tip 1

Some areas have special projects to help homeless young people. Ask your Connexions Adviser or Youth Worker at Jules for information. Rutland County Council works very closely with all partner agencies and work together to deliver a joined up approach.

Top tip 2

If you are confused or unhappy with what is happening, seek advice from the Citizen's Advice Bureau in Oakham (High Street, opposite Lloyds Bank) or you can contact 'Shelter's helpline (national homeless organisation) on 0808 800 4444 (open daily from 8am, free to call from main UK mobile networks).

Top tip 3

Why have an assesment? If you are a 'child in need' under section 20 of The Children's Act, Children's Social Care has a duty to help you find a place to live, pay or it, and help with education and training. In some cases, you have the right to this help until 21 or 24. These are very important rights. Don't refuse an assesment without getting advice on what it really means for you.

Local Contacts: Rutland County Council Children's Social Care Duty Team – 01572 722 577/ Housing Options Team/ Connexions and Youth Service 01572 756 655/ Citizens Advice Bureau Oakham – 01572 757 420/ www.raw4youth.com