

## Story from a Host

I first saw an article written about Nightstop a few years before we became hosts, at the time with four teenage sons living at home it wasn't the right time. A few years down the line and only one son at home my husband and I discussed becoming hosts. I couldn't imagine what it must be like for young people with no where to go! My boys had been so lucky, we managed to sort out our problems but they also had close family and friends to turn to.

We discussed it with our youngest son, still living at home, as he would have to be part of the decision. He agreed as long as he could have a lock on his bedroom door. I said to him I don't know why as he had nothing worth stealing and who would want to fight their way through the dirty washing to get in his room? A few years on we never did get the lock, nothing has been taken and the bedroom is still full of dirty washing.

We've now had a few young people to stay. No big problems. They just seem so grateful. Twice I have had to take a big step back otherwise the young person might have become a permanent member of the household, but I'm just so pleased I could help them.

The worst thing that has happened was a young man with bags full of dirty washing. The washing machine was on most of the night. We dressed him in some of my son's clothes and he went away clean, fresh and smiling.

I've always felt supported in Nightstop, help only a phone call away but have as yet never needed to make the phone call for help. I love it when I get a call from Nightstop to say that a young person has enjoyed their stay and says thank you. When I retire I hope to be more available to have young people to stay and to anybody interested in becoming a host, give it a try.

This was something I wanted to do but I had the support of my husband and son. Now the young people go out dog walking with my husband, he is a very good listener and my son plays computer games or watches TV with them; again he is a good listener.

One bit of advice; we decided that our son would not give anyone staying his mobile number but his Facebook address instead (I'm afraid I don't understand Facebook but young people do). He still gets updates from some of the young people who have stayed.

Mary & Peter