



Preventing Youth Homelessness





*'Trying hard
and being well
meaning is not
enough, we
want to get the
results that
help change
young people's
lives'*

St Basils is a youth agency which uses housing as the medium to work with young people aged 16 - 25 to enable them to find and keep a home, to develop their confidence, skills and opportunities and to prevent homelessness. To do this we provide a range of services to young people in Birmingham and some of the surrounding areas of the West Midlands.

We believe that all young people have a potentially challenging journey to make from being a child to becoming a young adult. Most young people can make this journey successfully without the risk of being homeless and without specialist help. However, some young people are more vulnerable and have fewer resources or support at their disposal and for them, becoming homeless during that transition is a very tangible risk with long term consequences.

We know that homelessness or the threat of homelessness is a major barrier to young people making a successful transition and that it adds further risks and complications. Young people and services should not accept homelessness as inevitable for any young person.

This drives us to focus on preventing homelessness in the first place and on preventing repeat episodes of homelessness once the first one has occurred.

- Each year we help over 4000 young people achieve some of the key outcomes they need to avoid homelessness.
- St Basils provides a variety of supported accommodation, ranging from direct access to mother and baby accommodation.
- We provide floating support to young people in their own tenancies
- When young people we work with leave in a planned way, 95% of those sustain their tenancies for at least 12 months.



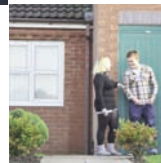
The big picture

St Basils works with young people to enable them to find and keep a home, to develop their confidence, skills and opportunities and to prevent homelessness.

The impact: (the long term change we want to achieve with young people) Young people are able to make the smoothest possible progress into adult life. They will be able to develop and sustain social, emotional and practical networks, form and sustain positive relationships and have the skills and resources to meet their full potential.

The outcomes: (the smaller changes that add up to our Impact) Young people make positive choices and have the knowledge, skills and networks that mean they do not become homeless in the first place. Where some one does become homeless they will have the resources, skills and experiences that reduce the risk of future homelessness and sustains their independence.

Our customers are mostly young people aged between 16 and 25, who are either at risk of being homeless or who are homeless. We also work with young people aged 13 to 19 where we focus on helping them to think about how they can make the challenging transition into adult life and reduce the risk of becoming homeless during the process.





Some of our assumptions and ideas about change

The following are examples of the assumptions and ideas that underpin our work with young people, we could refer to this as our theory of change, or how we think change happens for young people and how we can contribute to that process. It is not a single theory but is based on a mixture of best practice, experience and the views of young people.

- The journey to becoming an adult is a challenging one for all young people, but for some the challenge is either too big or too complex to make that transition without support.
- Leaving home too early increases the risk of a young person becoming homeless.
- Homelessness is not inevitable even for the most chaotic young people, we believe we can move to a point where homelessness can be dramatically reduced and crisis avoided.
- Where a young person does become homeless this adds to the challenge of making the transition to sustainable adult life. Homelessness never makes it easier for people.
- Growing up is about making changes to your world and to how you relate to it.
- It is young people who have to make some of the key changes needed in order to make sustainable lives as adults, these include changes in how they feel, how they act and how they think.
- Families, communities and services have an important part to play in helping young people to make changes in the way they feel, act and think. This does not mean telling young people what to do but creating the conditions that promote positive change.
- Families, communities and services have an important part to play in helping to create change in the material conditions that young people have to deal with during their transition into adult life.
- The more young people can be engaged in deciding about their own lives, their environment and their communities the more likely they are to successfully move into independence.
- When young people have tangible evidence that they can succeed and change their own world for the better they make rapid progress on their journey.
- The more young people can contribute to the running of St Basils the more effective and relevant we will become and young people will see that they can influence the world around them.
- Young people need to understand their experience both from an individual perspective (the inside) and from a collective perspective (the outside) by joining these two perspectives together, young people can develop a critical analysis of the world they live in.
- Positive social networks reduce the risk of further exclusion, increase the range of resources and skills available to a person and help to smooth out the inevitable ups and downs of growing up.
- Services and networks that reflect a young person's cultural and emotional world make it more likely that they will form positive relationships and find positive role models.
- Services that are seen by others as socially valued can contribute to a young person's sense of self worth and promote positive change.

A roof is not enough

We believe that the young people we work alongside need help to create change in many areas of their lives.



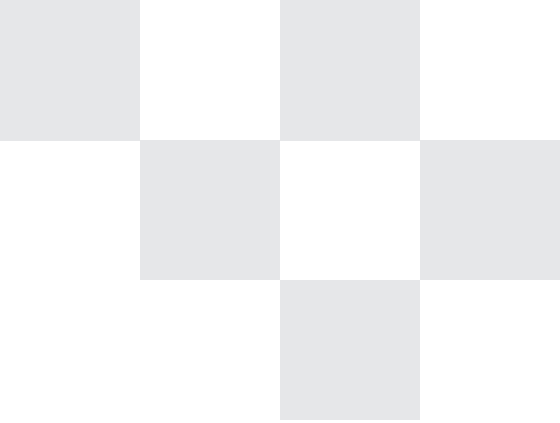
HOW WE DO IT

St Basils' services are all based on prevention, this means both primary and secondary prevention. To achieve the outcomes we want, we work alongside young people and provide a continuum of services that range from mediation, education and advice as part of the primary prevention through to accommodation, life skills and floating support as part of the secondary prevention.

All this work is based on the principles of sound assessment and planning and will only work if we take young people seriously and build strong working relationships with them. We work alongside young people not at them! We work with young people as partners in their individual support, service delivery and development and governance, for example our Youth Advisory Board (YAB).

We have taken on a whole organisation approach to developing St Basils as a Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE). Working with renowned clinical psychologist, Dr Nick Maguire from Southampton University and Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust, we are investing in a range of measures including training for all staff and regular reflective practice sessions to ensure we have the skills to support young people with complex needs.





GOVERNANCE

Youth Advisory Board (YAB): The Youth Advisory Board provides a dynamic and action focused opportunity for young people at St Basils to contribute to the running of the organisation. The Youth Advisory Board has a membership of 15 young people elected by their peers who are advisors to our Board of Directors and provide advice and expertise to the Directors and senior management team.

The YAB members are involved in internal quality assurance inspections, policy and strategy,

decision making activities, delivering peer-led training and advocating on behalf of all St Basils service users. YAB has won the 2012 City Housing Partnership good practice award for Involving Residents.

The YAB recognises and values the unique expertise that young people bring to service direction, delivery and improvement. It contributes to sustainability, cohesion and future-proofing for communities as well as for the organisation.

CONTINUUM OF INTERVENTION



PRINCIPLES THAT WE WORK BY

Our seven Principles to Work by describe what we believe in and helps us describe what this means to all who work with us.

These are:

- Young People First**
- Everybody Counts**
- Strength and Unity through Diversity**
- Working and Learning With Others**
- Delivery and Effectiveness**
- Accountability**
- Forward Thinking**

Our Services

St Basils works with young people to prevent youth homelessness. We provide a range of housing and support services that continue to achieve positive outcomes for young people, these include:

HOMELESS PREVENTION SERVICES

Youth Hub

We work with young people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, to provide housing advice and access to appropriate accommodation and support.

Our Youth Hub service in Birmingham is an integrated partnership between St Basils, Homeless Services, Children's Services and Supporting People, to offer young people the following:

- An individual assessment of their housing and support needs
- Assistance in preventing homelessness incl. Family Mediation, landlords liaison etc.
- Access to a range of housing options incl. Supported Accommodation, Private and Social housing via Local Authority
- Access to individualised Housing Related Support, regardless of tenure (Floating Support)
- Benefits advice
- Access to statutory duties i.e. Homeless application, temporary accommodation and Section 20 assessment
- Access to Accommodation Pathway Services for young offenders and care leavers
- Access to a range of specialist support Providers

Each year St Basils will provide advice and support to around **4000** young people across Birmingham and the West Midlands.

St Basils focus on preventing homelessness happening in the first place and aim to break the cycle of homelessness and exclusion. That's why we provide the following range of prevention services which continue to achieve positive results.



FAMILY MEDIATION

The Family Mediation and Support service is funded by a variety of funding sources.

The aims and objectives of the service are to:

- Prevent homelessness by reducing crisis situations and/or promoting a planned move.
- Reduce the impact of poor relationships within families.
- Support young people to remain in the family home or stable accommodation, where suitable.
- Enable young people to make positive choices about their lives.
- Divert young people from using substances, which may put them at risk of becoming homeless.
- To provide Mediation and support to young people aged 13 - 25, who wish to resolve conflict and improve/ rebuild relationships with people of importance to them.
- To assist in developing young peoples' social and support networks.
- Provide Mediation and support to young people aged 13 - 19, who have substance misuse issues and/or offending behaviour, which are impacting on their relationship with their parent/carer which may result in them becoming homeless.
- To provide advice and guidance to young people and their parents/ carers around risk behaviour i.e. truancy, school exclusion.

PEER LED WORK

St Basils recognises and embraces the skills and knowledge that young people can learn from each other. Young people are encouraged to lead on workshops, group activities as well as operate peer education projects. These have been around issues such as sexual health and drugs & alcohol – creating positive changes in young people's attitudes and practices.

LEARNING, SKILLS & WORK

STaMP (Schools Training and Mentoring Project): The STaMP project focuses on working in schools directly with young people and with the staff who support them. The key outcomes for the project are to ensure that young people have accurate information about finding and keeping a home and that professionals have robust tools that they can use to identify and support young people at risk of homelessness. Key to delivering these outcomes is the role of young people who have been homeless, in particular by acting as peer mentors and trainers.

STaMP won the Life Long Learning Award for Learning in Communities and the CIH Midlands Branch Innovation Award.

Life Skills Award: This is an accredited award that is run through St Basils and makes a unique contribution to young people developing confidence, skills and direct experience of success.

The modules cover topics that are directly relevant to young people, for example sexual health, drugs, cooking, budgeting, solving problems, contributing to the community etc.



When young people complete the course they have an accredited qualification. This has practical implications; FE providers recognise the portfolio building skill required to complete the work and landlords look favourably on the course as essential life skills for sustaining tenancies have been met – thus reducing the risk of become homeless again.

Information, Advice & Guidance: All young people at St Basils are offered a free comprehensive information, advice & guidance service. Young people work with qualified staff to develop an action plan that highlights the appropriate route for them to take in order for them to fulfil their aspirations.



Our Services

ACCOMMODATION & SUPPORT

St Basils has Supported Accommodation projects in Birmingham, Solihull and North Worcestershire accommodating hundreds of young people every night of the year. Young people are offered a package of support in all of our projects which includes intensive key working, access to support services incl. Resettlement & Floating Support; Learning, Skills & Work and Prevention Services.

Emergency Accommodation/ Crash Pads

24 hour access to accommodation is available at two of St Basils Projects in Birmingham, providing Direct Access Emergency accommodation to homeless young people aged 16-25.

St Basils also has designated emergency bed spaces that are specifically for the following groups of 16 and 17 yr olds:

- Young Offenders
- Care Leavers

These bed spaces are funded by Birmingham Youth Offending Service (BYOS), Leaving Care and Supporting People.

Young people can stay in these Emergency bed spaces from two weeks (Time Out) to three months. During this time young people are offered intensive advice, guidance and support that enables them to move on to the most appropriate accommodation that suits their individual needs.

Intensive Support (24 hours)

These projects are staffed on a 24 hour basis and provide high levels of support to enable young people to learn independent living skills and develop their confidence. These projects offer intensive support on education and training and life skills through regular key work sessions:

Supported

These projects provide high levels of support to enable young people to learn independent living skills and develop their confidence. They offer intensive support on education and training and life skills through regular key work sessions. These projects are not generally staffed during evenings and some weekends allowing young people to develop a degree of independence.

Semi-Independent

These projects have flexible levels of support and are seen to be the last step before moving to independent accommodation. Young people receive access to all St Basils services but by now the young people will be engaged into some kind of education, training and / or employment and are waiting for an offer of independent accommodation.

Mother & Baby Projects

St Basils works with young single parents and those who are pregnant. St Basils offer services to young people and over 40 young children. Young people are offered a full service including a resettlement programme in order to find suitable accommodation for them and their children.

STARTER HOMES

Starter Homes combine affordable housing for working young people within communities with a savings fund to help provide a future deposit for permanent housing.

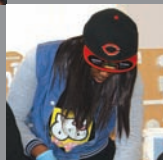
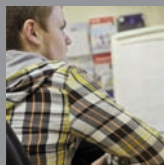
St BASILS CROSS TENURE SUPPORT

St Basils provides floating support to young people in a range of tenures including within their family home, private rented sector and other social landlords. In addition a young person's support worker will continue to support them as they move on from St Basils ensuring consistency in their relationships.

St Basils floating support services have access to permanent accommodation to enable a young person to move on from supported accommodation. The properties are offered via a consortia of Registered Social Landlords, Private Landlords and Local Authorities.

Our Credentials

- Birmingham City Housing Partnership: Winner Resident Involvement 2012
- National Youth Homelessness Scheme - RSL Centre of Excellence 2007-2009
- Housing Corporation Assessment – 4 green lights for Governance, - iability, Management and Development
- Housing Corporation GOLD Award for Tackling Homelessness 2006
- Chamber of Commerce – Diversity in Employment Award 2006
- BME Spark highly commended (services to vulnerable people in BME communities 2006)
- National Housing Federation INbij Award for Customer Engagement 2005
- Consecutive Investors in People Awards 2005, 2008 and 2011
- Level A Supporting People Provider
- Audit Commission Inspection 2003 – Top rating for quality of service and commitment to continuous improvement
- Federation of Black Housing Organisations (FBHO) National Diversity Award
- Matrix (quality Standard for Information, Advice and Guidance
- Foyer Federation Accreditation
- Chartered Institute of Housing Branch Innovation Award for STaMP (Schools Training and Mentoring Project)
- BEST - Construction Industries Employer Awards
- Facilitate National Youth Reference Group



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