



Niagara Resource Service for Youth

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*PLEASE
SHARE*

What is the RAFT?

The RAFT is a not-for-profit charitable organization, which provides resource support, hostel, and outreach services to high-risk street youth.

When was the RAFT founded?

The RAFT was founded in 1994.

Where is the RAFT located?

The RAFT is located just outside the downtown core of St. Catharines at 17 Centre Street. The building houses a drop-in centre, 21 bed crisis hostel and Outreach Support and Community Development Services in West Niagara, Grimsby, Welland, Fort Erie and Port Colborne.

What is the RAFT's Vision?

The RAFT contributes to the welfare of our Community by helping at risk youth become independent and self-sufficient, strengthening their emotional and social well being and acting as a referral source that reconnects youth to the community.

With the help of trained staff, these young people can access services and supports in the community. The RAFT provides a safe place that is free from violence, intimidation, exploitation, discrimination, drugs and alcohol.

We believe that working together, one step at a time, we can make a difference.

What is the referral process?

Direct referrals are accepted from individuals, social service agencies, the judicial system, community service providers, schools, and the police by contacting us via telephone. Shelter intake is coordinated through the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

Who is the RAFT's target population?

The RAFT focuses on supporting high-risk youth who are:

- Homeless or at risk of becoming homeless
- Jobless or in danger of dropping out of school
- Experiencing difficulty accessing community support services
- Engaging in unhealthy lifestyle choices including drug and alcohol abuse
- Without stable family, peer or community supports

What are the services provided by the RAFT?

Services offered at 17 Centre St

- **Drop In Resource Centre:** a safe environment for youth to connect with their peers and obtain support
- **Steps to Independent Living:** a life skills training program that fosters independence
- **The Hostel:** an overnight, youth specific, emergency hostel

Services offered in the Community

- **Outreach Support Services:** Services that help at risk youth get the support they need to stay in their home communities. Offered in Fort Erie and Port Colborne and Grimsby and West Niagara
- **Community Development Service:** A community partnership project that prevents homelessness by engaging high risk youth and building community capacity. Offered in the following community neighbourhoods: Rykert, Manchester and McLaughlin.

How is the RAFT Funded?

The RAFT receives support from all walks of life. The work of the RAFT is made possible through the generous donations of friends and community supporters. Core funders include United Church of Canada, Members of the Niagara Faith Community, Prevent Challenge, the United Way, and Regional Municipality of Niagara.

How do I obtain additional information about the RAFT?

For more information on the RAFT and their community services, please visit our website at: www.therafthelps.ca

Contact

Michael Lethby, Executive Director
The RAFT
17 Centre Street
St. Catharines, ON L2R 3A6
Phone: (905) 984-4365
Cell: (905) 401-9115
Fax: (905) 984-3480
E-mail: mike@theraft.ca

Updated February 2010