



Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the ConneQT Host Home Program!

ConneQT, a collaborative of four nonprofits (Avenues for Homeless Youth, The Link, Reclaim!, and Point Source Youth), is an innovative project in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, focusing on three interventions: individual therapy/community strengthening, short term host home, and rapid rehousing.

ConneQT Host Home, a program of Avenues for Homeless Youth, is a community and volunteer-based response to youth homelessness. All youth who participate in this program are queer-identified and matched with hosts. Hosts in the ConneQT Host Home Program are adults who open their homes and their hearts to young people who need and are looking for short term resources and support. We ask hosts to provide food and shelter anywhere from 1 week to 3 months.

ConneQT Host Home will succeed only because of the involvement and support from the community. The program and the people behind it have a deep commitment to our communities, our youth and social change – not just through the sharing of resources, but through a transformative and intimate process of sharing our homes and our lives. We are thrilled to invite you into this partnership.

We know from research that homeless youth are best supported when they are able to remain in the communities where they are comfortable, have friends, attend school, and go to work. For this reason, the goal of the program is to recruit, screen, and provide support to volunteers who are willing to open their homes to young people ages 16 through 24 in their own communities who are homeless or have unstable housing (16 and 17 year olds will be able to participate with authorization of their parents or guardians).

Being a host is a powerful and unique experience, and far from being easy. The commitment you are willing to make in order to be a host volunteer is an intense one, as is that of a youth who is moving into a host home. In turn, it will hopefully prove to be a gratifying and empowering experience for all involved.

ConneQT Host Home is committed to keeping you informed, being clear about expectations, being up front and honest about decisions made regarding your application, listening to your concerns and feedback, respecting your input, finding the best match for you and a youth, and providing on – going support and training.

Please read carefully the information included in this packet. There is an application form, eligibility requirements, and questions to ponder before getting started. Once we receive the returned packet from you, we will read your application, start the background checks, and set up time for an initial interview. Two representatives of the program will screen applicants and do the initial interview.

Again, thank you so much for wanting to be a part of this program. It is only through the generosity, spirit of solidarity and commitment of people like you that we are able to offer safe and affirming homes to youth.

Sincerely,

Ryan Berg, rberg@avenuesforyouth.org
Program Manger
ConneQT Host Home Program
612-844-2014

APPLICATION & TRAINING OVERVIEW

1. Potential host home applicants attend informational meeting
2. Applicants fill out required forms and mail them to the ConneQT program manager at Avenues for Homeless Youth, 1708 Oak Park Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55411
3. CHHP performs background checks and sends reference requests
4. Applicants attend 16 hours of training
5. Applicants have home interview with CHHP manager and an advisor
6. Applicants are chosen as host volunteers
7. Host volunteers are matched with youth
 - *Youth review host files, including the host letter to youth participants.*
 - *Meeting of youth with potential hosts (with case manager and ConneQT program manager)*
 - *Release of Liability waivers signed*
 - *Review goals, expectations, etc.*
 - *Youth moves in*
8. Host home manager provides support to hosts
9. Hosts attend on – going support training
 - *Monthly support group (hosts and HHP manager, 1 – 2 hours)*
 - *Trainings as part of the support group 3-4 times a year*
10. Youth attend social activities and meet with case manager
 - *Planned for youth, extended family, and friends*

ELIGIBILITY AND EXPECTATIONS FOR VOLUNTEER HOSTS

All applicants must:

1. Have an extra bedroom (providing privacy) for the youth
2. Be at least 25 years old
3. Have lived in the Twin Cities for at least a year
4. Live in the greater Metro area
5. Complete the application form, providing any relevant information
6. Have renter/homeowner's insurance, providing a file copy if requested
7. Provide three references
8. Authorize and pass background checks which include:

- MN Department of Human Services (BCA)
 - Public Records (i.e. arrest reports)
 - IntelliCorp Records, Inc.
9. Complete the initial training session (16 hours)
 10. Complete a question and answer meeting with the program manager and an advisor.

The above criteria need to be successfully completed in order for an applicant to be qualified as a host. Applicants need to demonstrate a strong commitment to work with a youth to build a healthy and trusting relationship, an ability to provide a safe, decent, sanitary, stable and supportive environment and consistently demonstrate skills necessary to meet program objectives.

All applicants must be willing to adhere to all program rules and emergency procedures. They must report any changes in family composition and changes in legal status of any household members to the program manager. If selected, applicants and others in the household must be willing to ask for assistance for difficult situations. Applicants and members of the household must have not sexual contact or any other sexual activity with or around the youth placed in their home.

Participation of applicants may be terminated at any point in the process if the program manager and/or advisor feels the applicant is unable/not ready to be host volunteers.

Host Home Support:

After approval and once hosting, volunteers are provided regular support groups. These meetings will provide the hosts with an opportunity to share their experiences and learn from each other, as well as to learn from outside trainers up to four times a year. Youth involved in the program will receive ongoing support from their case managers. The main support person for the volunteer hosts is the program manager, whereas the main support person for the youth is the youth advocate/case manager. The case manager will work closely with the program manager to ensure that the host home receives the appropriate level of support throughout participation. Participation includes scheduled and unscheduled (if warranted) home visits which will also be a part of the support system provided.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

What are the rules of your home?

Think about sharing your living space with a youth you don't know very well. Think about the rules and expectations that will be important for that person to know (i.e. no phone calls after 10 pm). The youth moving in will also have rules of his/her own (i.e. knock before you enter).

What are your expectations of the youth while s/he lives with you?

The Host Home Program is an opportunity for the youth to live in a safe and healthy environment while s/he works on self – determined goals (i.e. attending/finishing high school, getting their GED, securing a job, learning a skill or trade, paying rent). The youth and his/her case manager will develop a plan with clear goals that everyone formally agrees to (the youth, the hosts, the case manager, and the program manager).

What is your financial commitment to this youth?

You will be responsible for providing food for this youth for the duration of his/her stay. Expect your utility and groceries bills to go up. Aside from food and a safe home, you will not be responsible for other expenses. The case manager and program manager will work with you on setting appropriate boundaries around expenses.

Is your living space ready for a young person?

The youth must have his/her own room or private space. That room/space should be clean when the youth moves in. Make sure that your smoke alarms work and that you have accessible fire extinguishers. If you have alcohol in the house, it should be kept in a safe place where the youth is less likely to have access to it.

Are you open to sharing your home with a LGBTQ youth?

You would need to get acquainted with LGBTQ youth issues and explore your own feelings about sexual orientation and gender identity and learn to be able to talk about and deal with those issues. Even many people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual don't necessarily have much awareness about transgender issues.

Have you explored (personally or otherwise) issues such as white privilege and racism?

The majority of hosts in existing host home programs are white, whereas many of the homeless youth are of color. If you are white, it is extremely important that you become more aware of race, racism, and white privilege and the implications of living with that privilege. Talking about this will be part of the training.

Are you willing to put in some time to create a nurturing relationship with a youth?

Developing a trusting relationship with a youth may take some time and hard work. This may require you to be an active participant in that young person's life (i.e. driving him/her places, helping with schoolwork, meeting with case manager).

Are you capable of living with a youth who may be working through difficult issues?

You need to be conscious that the young people who participate in the host home program will come from all sorts of backgrounds and have lived through all sorts of experiences. Some have been abused, some are in recovery for substance abuse, and some have never had a healthy adult – youth relationship. These issues will also be discussed during the training.



HOST VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Date of Application: _____

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Name of Applicant (Last, First, MI) _____ Gender Identity _____ Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY) _____

Name of Co-Applicant, if any (Last, First, MI) _____ Gender Identity _____ Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY) _____

Relationship of Applicants _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Applicant Contact Information:

Co-Applicant Contact Information:

Home Phone _____ Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

eMail _____ eMail _____

What is the best way and time to contact you? _____

In what school district do you reside? _____

How long have you lived in Minnesota? Applicant _____ Years _____ Months

Co-Applicant _____ Years _____ Months

In what other states have you lived in the past 10 years?

Applicant _____

Co-Applicant _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

Please list all additional adults (other than applicants) and children in your home.

	Name (Last, First, MI)	Relationship to Applicants	Gender	Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY)
1	_____	_____	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	_____	_____
4	_____	_____	_____	_____

HOUSING INFORMATION:

Please check all of the following categories that apply to your home.

Owned
 Rented
 Single Family House
 Mobile Home
 Multi – Unit
 Basement Unit
 Second Floor Unit
 Apartment/Condo

How long have you lived in your current home? _____ Years _____ Months

Do you have homeowner's or renter's insurance: _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, what is the name of your insurance company and your policy number?

Are you able to provide an extra bedroom/private space for a youth? _____ Yes _____ No

Are you planning to move within the next year? _____ Yes _____ No

How much notice would you need for a youth to move in? _____

Between what hours can the Program Manager contact you about a potential move-in? _____

Would you be willing to host a youth for three months? _____ Yes _____ No

Would you be willing to host up to three youth for a total of six months? _____ Yes _____ No

How would you characterize your comfort level with your sexual orientation and gender identity?
 (1 = not comfortable at all; 5 = completely comfortable)

1 2 3 4 5

How easy is it for you to talk about sexual orientation and gender identity issues?
 (1 = not easy at all; 5 = extremely easy)

1 2 3 4 5

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Please provide your employment history for the past 5 years, starting with your most current job.

1	Occupation	_____
	Place of employment	_____
	City, State	_____
	Phone Number	_____
	Period Employed	_____
2	Occupation	_____
	Place of employment	_____
	City, State	_____
	Phone Number	_____
	Period Employed	_____
3	Occupation	_____
	Place of employment	_____
	City, State	_____
	Phone Number	_____
	Period Employed	_____
4	Occupation	_____
	Place of employment	_____
	City, State	_____
	Phone Number	_____
	Period Employed	_____

If you are not currently working, what is your source of income? _____

Have you ever been arrested by any law enforcement officer? _____ Yes _____ No

Have you ever been charged with any offense even if dismissed? _____ Yes _____ No

Have you ever been convicted of any offense? _____ Yes _____ No

Have you ever been charged with or convicted of an offense against a youth/minor? _____ Yes _____ No

Have you ever abused, neglected, or molested any child? _____ Yes _____ No

If you checked yes to any of the above, please explain the circumstances and dates:

Do you smoke? _____ Yes _____ No If yes, do you smoke in your home? _____ Yes _____ No

Do you drink alcohol? _____ Yes _____ No

Do you have concerns about your drinking? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please explain why you are concerned:

Have you ever used illegal drugs? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, do you currently use illegal drugs? _____ Yes _____ No

Please answer the following questions. You may use the back of the page if you need more space.

1 Please write a little bit about why you are interested in hosting a young person in your home:

2 Please describe the age, gender, and other characteristics of a young person you would wish to host:

3 Please describe the characteristics of a young person you would not wish to host:

4 Please write about your strengths, skills and any other relevant information that you would like to share:

5 Please describe all physical and/or mental health problems or concerns in your family that could affect someone living in your home:

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the facts contained in my application to the ConneQT Host Home Program are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Applicant Signature

Date

→ ***Don't forget to fill out and sign the Authorization for criminal and civil record checks, complete your Letter to Youth Participants, and return them along with this application to:***

**Avenues for Homeless Youth
1708 Oak Park Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411**

Thank you!!!

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	City, State	_____
	Phone Number	_____
	Period Employed	_____
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	Place of employment	_____
	City, State	_____
	Phone Number	_____
	Period Employed	_____
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Have you ever been charged with any offense even if dismissed? _____ Yes _____ No

Have you ever been convicted of any offense? _____ Yes _____ No

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Date

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Avenues for Homeless Youth
1708 Oak Park Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411

Thank you!!!

AUTHORIZATION FOR CRIMINAL AND CIVIL RECORDS CHECK

ConneQT Host Home Program

Avenues for Homeless Youth

1708 Oak Park Avenue North

Minneapolis, MN 55411

Phone: 612-522-1690 Fax: 612-522-1633

(please print)

Last name: _____

First name: _____

Middle: _____

Maiden, Alias, Former: _____

Address: _____

City

State

Zip Code

Date of birth: _____ **Gender:** _____

Social Security Number: _____

Drivers License Number: _____

I give permission for the ConneQT Host Home Program to obtain criminal and civil record checks from IntelliCorp Records Inc., the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, Criminal Justice Information Systems Section or other law enforcement agencies for the purpose of determining qualifications for volunteering with the ConneQT Host Home Program.

Signature: _____ Date: _____