

PRESS RELEASE



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STUDENTS EXPERIENCE NIGHT OF HOMELESSNESS

A group of Yeovil College BTEC First Diploma in Health and Social Care students and staff have spent the night at the Yeovil Night Shelter to learn about the life of a homeless person and raise money for the charity.

The Shelter currently has to close two nights each week, so the students were given the opportunity to stay one of those evenings and find out what it is like for a homeless person helped by the charity.

Seven students and two Yeovil College staff retraced the average experience of a homeless person staying at the Shelter. They began by paying 50p to stay the night and choosing clothes to wear from donations, before eating and spending the evening together.

Lizzie Cassidy (16) of Yeovil said *"I was worried about it at first and didn't really want to do it, but I'm really glad I did. It was a huge insight into the life of a homeless person. We did the whole routine. The shelter didn't have any modern equipment, so instead of watching TV we sat around a table after tea talking and interacting. It was quite an experience and we really bonded."*

Chelsea Bennett (19) of Yeovil said *"It was a very worthwhile experience and we're really glad that we did it. Health and Social Care is about not judging people and this experience has really helped us become more understanding of homeless people."*

Health and Care Lecturer Heidi Amor said *"We're really proud of the students. It was their own idea and they took it upon themselves to follow it through. They even gave up their mobile phones and cosmetics for the night! They students have been working with lecturer Denise Hodgson since the beginning of the year raising money for the Yeovil Night Shelter and have already raised more than £500 of the £800 they are aiming for."*

These students and a group studying BTEC Introductory Diplomas in Health and Social Care have held a number of events to raise money, including karaoke and bag-packing at Asda, Yeovil. Several more events are planned so that they can reach their £800 target, including a car wash and car boot sale.

The Yeovil Night Shelter is 90% funded by private donations and the only shelter available for a 40 mile radius. It relies on volunteer support and is currently open Sunday to Thursday each week. For more information, please visit www.yeovilnightshester.com.

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Photographs

The students choose clothes from donations received by the shelter. (Back row, l-r) Ayesha Pitman, Lizzie Cassidy, Emma Cornelius, Sam Thorne and Chelsea Bennett. (Front row, l-r) Claire Hawkins and Sam Paull