

Mark's Story



My name is Mark and at 16 years old, I was working as many hours as I could at McDonald's to pay rent and put food on the table for my mom, my brothers and me.

One night, I found my mom asleep on the floor and drugs on the table. To protect my little brothers, I packed us up and rushed to my grandma's house. But between my brothers, cousins and other family members, her house was too full. I knew I couldn't stay.

With nowhere to turn to, I took a chance and moved to New York City to live with my grandfather. But after a few months, he became convinced that I was doing drugs like my mom and dad. I begged and pleaded that he believe me or drug test me to prove that I wasn't using. He asked that I pack up and leave.

I slept on park benches, if I slept at all. Tired of life on the streets, I found an adult men's shelter. It was a scary place because there were a lot of drugs and violence. An older resident there told me about Covenant House. He said it was a shelter for young people like me.

At Covenant House my dream of going to college and studying aeronautical engineering is closer than ever.

