

# Former homeless teen heads for the hills in charity challenge



A former homeless teenager will join fitness fanatics to launch a charity Munro Challenge at Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh today.

David Middleton (19), who found himself homeless at the age of 17 and members of Burn It Fitness, is launching the fundraising drive for The Rock Trust that hopes to see walkers on top of all 283 Munro's in Scotland next month. The charity works with 16-25 year olds who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless.

In excess of one thousand walkers are expected to take part in this year's challenge on the weekend of the 21st and 22nd of June 2014 to raise over £20,000 for The Rock Trust.



David Middleton from West Lothian, said: "I was 17 years old when asked to leave my mum's house. I suffered homophobic abuse by my neighbours and couldn't take the constant arguing at home with my mum and siblings. I left and found myself alone in Edinburgh with nowhere to go or sleep.

"I've overcome a huge mountain to beat homelessness so this challenge feels right for me. I urge others to take part and help raise money for a great cause that's helping hundreds of homeless youths across Edinburgh and the Lothians."

Rock Trust Chief Executive Kate Polson said the charity has helped almost 2000 young people in Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian since 2010.

She said: "By taking part in our Munro Challenge you can know that with every step, you are helping others climb out of homelessness. It's vital for helping us raise funds to support some of Edinburgh and the Lothians' most vulnerable young people, from crisis point to living in stable secured housing and either working or volunteering.

"That's why we're encouraging local climbers, hill walkers, runners and walkers to sign up to our Munro Challenge."

The Rock Trust offers more than 50 bed spaces each night to young people in Edinburgh. It advises, educates and supports young people to enable them to build the personal skills and resources required to make a positive and healthy transition to adulthood while avoiding or moving on from homelessness.

John Laurie, Director of Burn It Fitness, added: "If we can help put a spotlight on the issue of youth homelessness and raise awareness of the desperate plight that many young people find themselves in, we're happy to help and take part in what will be a fun and challenging experience."

To find out more information or to sign up visit [www.rocktrust.org](http://www.rocktrust.org) or email [events@rocktrust.org](mailto:events@rocktrust.org)