

OUR VIEW

Community can pitch in to help teens on the street

The bright side of a tough situation — cranky neighbors wanting to rid their block of a center for homeless teens — is the heartwarming response from young and old who want to help Santa Fe's downand- out young people.

It started when the Youth Shelters and Family Services' Street Outreach Center lost its lease. Neighbors didn't want homeless youth on McKenzie Street.

That response has lead to an outcry.

A nearby bed and breakfast offered rooms — it's being worked out how the rooms will be used, but owners Paul Margetson and Neil Rosenshein stepped up.

The area's youth, too, have stood up for their fellow young people. They know how wrong it is that homeless teens don't have the services they need or the support they need from the community. Whether camping out, or speaking up in meetings — and even covering the issue in the pages of the newspaper — Santa Fe teens hardly are apathetic.

For too long, the issue of homeless teens has been someone else's problem — out of sight, out of mind, even though shelter officials estimate there are from 60 to 100 homeless teens every day on our streets.

Even before this burst of publicity, Karen Rowell and the others at the shelter worked day in and day out to keep teens safe. If you want to join them and all the other citizens who are stepping up, call Melissa Frank at 983-0586, ext. 21, or visit www.youthshelters.org.

Our community has been given a second chance not just to be generous, but to make a long-term difference in the lives of teens.