



**Building foundations  
to prevent youth  
homelessness**

## **ESSAY HINTS TO COMPLETE A SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION THROUGH KIDS UNDER COVER**

### **1. READ THE DIRECTIONS**

Take a little time to go over the requirements. Check to see if you're eligible for the scholarship and what you need to do to submit your application. Check the deadline, submission page and any other important information you need. Pay particular attention to the purpose of the scholarship and use this purpose to guide your written response.

### **2. USE A GREAT HOOK**

Your introduction is how you grab onto the reader right out of the gate. When writing your responses, have a strong introduction. This can help you stand out among a crowded field of applicants.

Think about things you've read that hooked you right away, like books or articles that have stayed with you a long time. Starting your essay with a surprising fact, compelling anecdote or unexpected question can grab the reader's attention and make a good impression right away.

If you're unsure about what a good hook looks like, take time to read sample scholarship responses online and note what you like about them. Even bad ones can help you see what you should avoid when writing.

### **3. GET PERSONAL**

When appropriate, don't be afraid to share personal stories. Your unique stories are what can set you apart from the crowd.

Whether it's about your education, your lived experiences, your goals or how the scholarship will help you, giving specific examples of how the award relates to your life is more impactful than simply explaining why you deserve to win.

### **4. BE POSITIVE**

Detailing hardships may be difficult for you to share, but showcasing how you overcame those hardships (or plan to with the help of this scholarship) and your positivity regarding your future is important.

Try to leave the reader feeling hopeful about your future by staying positive throughout your essay, even if you're talking about hard topics or feelings.

### **5. GET SOMEONE TO TAKE A SECOND LOOK**

After you've written and revised your essay, it's still not done. Ask a friend, relative or teacher/mentor to give your responses a second look. They can come at it with a fresh pair of eyes and let you know what's missing (if anything at all). Everyone needs an editor, so use your network to see what improvements could be made.