Aims and topics
This paper examines the problem of youth homelessness among black and ethnic minority groups, and how their experiences differ from those of young white homeless people, particularly as they have to contend with the added pressures of racism and discrimination in attempting to gain access to services. The extent to which black young people are represented in categories of people vulnerable to homelessness, such as care leavers, refugees, asylum seekers, people with mental health problems and ex-prisoners, is also considered.

Key findings and recommendations
* The paper notes that the causes of homelessness among young black people were similar to those among young white people: housing benefit restrictions and a shortage of decent and affordable accommodation. These issues are compounded by the location of black households in over-crowded inner-city areas with housing stress, and higher unemployment rates. They are also exacerbated by racism and discrimination.
* The paper provides an overview of the development of hostels and services for black homeless youths, in recognition of the fact that young black people were unwilling to approach agencies and hostels perceived to be run by white people for white people. The Federation of Black Hostels was founded in 1982 in an effort to raise awareness of the problems faced by Afro-Caribbean young homeless people.
* The paper highlights that young single people from Afro-Caribbean communities are over-represented in hostels and Bed & Breakfast places, and argues that they face racist barriers when attempting to enter the private rented sector.
* In Asian communities, the needs of women fleeing domestic violence and oppression is identified as a major issue. Young Asian people are also identified as more likely than their white or Afro-Caribbean counterparts to come from poor overcrowded accommodation.
* Just under half (48%) of refugees and asylum seekers housed by the Refugee Council were between the ages of 17 and 25. Changes to benefit entitlement for asylum seekers means that young people not covered under the Children Act may be left destitute.
* A report by the Greater Manchester Probation Service found that black ex-prisoners were not using hostels provided despite the fact that they are over-represented in the prison population. Reasons for this trend include the fact that few hostels employ black staff and are perceived as being for white people.
* The author concludes that support should be given to black-led services in order to overcome the problems faced by young black and ethnic minority people.

Methods
The research methods are not specified, but the report appears to have been based on a literature review and informal information gathering.

Geographical scope  
National

Comments  
This article provides an interesting overview of the development of services for black and ethnic minority young homeless people. However, given the dearth of research data on youth homelessness among ethnic minorities, it does seem to be based to a large extent on anecdotal evidence, and there is a clear political agenda to promote black-led services.