



NCCS

Nelson Christian
Community School

**Nelson Christian Community
School
International
Program**

**Homestay
Handbook**

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Section 100: International Program Homestay Guidelines

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International Program Staff Contact Information

NAME	POSITION	PHONE	E-MAIL
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Website: www.nelsonchristian.ca

Homestay Contractor Information

NAME	HOME PHONE	CELL	E-MAIL

101: General Information

To facilitate communication and to ensure that the program operates smoothly, we ask you to follow these procedures:

If there is an emergency, it is important to contact the homestay contractor or program administrator immediately.

These are emergencies:

- A health emergency including accidents, death of a family member or the homestay parent has to be away from the home;
- A student is missing;
- An emergency in the student’s family home.

These are NOT emergencies but are important information for the program to be aware of:

- A student is not obeying host family rules;
- A student is skipping or late for class;
- A student is consistently late for curfew.

We ask you to use common sense in dealing with these issues. Treat the student as you would your own child.

If you and your student have issues, then please follow these directions:

- If a student is missing school, is late, or is not completing homework, then please contact the school or the teacher. If the problem persists, then contact the homestay contractor who will liaise with the program administrator about this issue.
- If a student is not obeying host family rules, contact the homestay contractor directly and quickly as it is best to resolve issues when they are small.

102: Requirement to Stay with a Host Family

1. It is mandatory for a student to live with a host family that consists of at least one adult of twenty-five (25) years of age or older with an approved criminal record check on file with the International Program Office.
2. The student acknowledges that if at any time they are not living with a host family as per NCCS's policy, this will lead to his/her dismissal from the International Program. Therefore, if the homestay family is away from the home for any length of time they must notify the homestay contractor to ensure the student has proper supervision at all times.

103: The Day of Arrival

1. It is expected that the host family meet the student when he/she arrives at the airport or designated location and brings him/her to their home. If the host family is unable to fulfill this requirement they must inform the homestay Contractor as soon as possible so that other arrangements can be made.
2. It is important to remember that the first encounter may cause some anxiety for everyone involved.
3. It is suggested that the host family make a sign with the student's name and the host family name on it so that it can be held up at the airport so that the student can locate the host family easily.
4. While some of the students possess a working knowledge of English, others might have only a very basic understanding of English and/or they might be too shy to use the English that they know. Suggestions to help with communication are:
 - a. Speak slowly and clearly, using simple sentences – repetition is often necessary for those unfamiliar with a new language;
 - b. Avoid using “slang” or local expressions that may cause further difficulty with comprehension;
 - c. Remember that the English language is complicated. Synonyms, idioms, homonyms or contractions can be problematic. Therefore, if the student does not understand – simplify it. For example, instead of saying “Would you like something to drink”? Simplify it like this, “You like juice? or “you want juice?”;
 - d. Try writing it down. Many students know how to read something in English but can't understand when it is spoken. Ask the student if they have an electronic translator and encourage them to use it in the early stages.
5. Explain basic household routines. E.g. when bedtime is, when he/she will have to get up for school, bath times, etc. Keep it simple. The schedule might be written out and put on the fridge.
6. Explain meal time expectations, rules around snacks and where to find them.
7. Explain how items are added to the family shopping list.
8. Show the student where to find extra blankets.
9. Explain how to use the washer and dryer. Check for understanding by having the student repeat procedures and verifying that expectations are clear. You still may need to help them the first few times.
10. Explain how to use other household items such as the microwave, TV, stereo or bathroom.
11. Explain how to use the key/alarm to your house and how to get back and forth from home to their school.

104: Communications through the Student's Stay

1. Within two weeks after the student's arrival, the Homestay Contractor will call the host family to check on how the student is settling into their home.
2. Within three weeks, the student will be contacted personally by the contractor to solicit the student's perspective on how things are progressing in the home.
3. It is important for students to join the host family with an open mind to try something different, to participate in family activities and to share in the responsibilities of being "one of the family".
4. Likewise, it is important for the host family to invite the student into their home, to accept and learn from the differences in cultures and to try to make the student feel welcome and respected. Please ask questions about your student's culture.
5. Students and host families are encouraged to try and communicate openly and frequently with each other so that issues do not become big problems.
6. The Homestay Contractors are to contact the family each month by phone or in person to manage and support adjustment for everyone. The goal is to address issues quickly and resolve them amicably and professionally.
7. Host families and students are encouraged to call the Homestay Contractor when any changes have occurred in their home or family. A note of any details that would be helpful to student placement, e.g. a new pet, internet service, illnesses, changes in employment or vacancy from the home.
8. Any concerns about the payment of the remuneration should be referred to the accounting department. **Mary Beth Ringheim: accounting@chekabc.ca**

105: Changing Host Families

1. Occasionally there will be need, on behalf of the student or host family, for a student to move to another homestay because not all matches work.
2. Students may change homestay families, but only after the reasons have been discussed with the Homestay Contractor, another host family has been found and the International Program Administrator has approved the change.
3. If the host family requests a student to be moved, they need to contact the Homestay Contractor immediately to explain the need for the request.

106: End of Year

1. Preparation and communication are keys to ending a homestay experience on a positive note.
2. Things the student should do:
 - a. Ensure they have arranged for any transcripts or certificates they will need to be sent to their home in their home country;
 - b. Pay all fees, close bank accounts, collect any deposits owed to them and pay phone bills to host family if owed;
 - c. Make arrangements to ship home goods that are too difficult or too heavy to carry on a plane (as per the airline weight restrictions);
 - d. Return library books, school textbooks, locks, etc. that have been loaned;
 - e. Cancel phone and/or internet services;
 - f. Be prepared for a swirl of emotions;
 - g. Ensure the whereabouts of the student passport, study permit and airline tickets;
 - h. Sell (or give away) items not returning with them to their native country, or arrange for storage of items left behind if returning.
3. Plan goodbyes and do not just let them happen. This might include: Giving gifts to special friends, homestay family members or attending/holding a farewell party.

107: Students and Homestay Payment Information

1. The agent/student will not make adjustments to the homestay payments made to the International Program if a student arrives early. The payment of \$850.00 per month is inclusive of early arrival as this balances with early departures from the program.
2. It is a requirement of the program that the homestay family pick up their student from the airport on arrival to welcome them and help the student to feel wanted. It is also expected that the homestay family will return the student to the airport when they exit our program at the end of the student's educational time with us. Any questions on this, please contact your homestay contractor.
3. Our educational and homestay program does not include a student's stay through the summer for any time period after June 30 and before September 1st. Should a student choose to stay over the summer months then the options are as follows:
 - a. The student may work out an agreement about storage of their belongings with the homestay family. The program is not responsible for the agreement made between the student and the host family during periods of time when the student is not enrolled in the International Program;
 - b. The student will need to make arrangements for medical to be covered and this will be paid by the student;
 - c. The student will need to work out with the homestay family the remuneration for the summer months for homestay and this will be paid directly from the student to the homestay family and not involve the program.
4. All homestay payments from the program to the family during the regular school year will be made by direct deposit into a designated homestay account.

Section 200: Family Life

201: Chores

202: Meals

203: Transportation

204: Curfew

205: Staying away from the Host Family Home Overnight

206: Travel

201: Chores

1. Ultimately, the matter of chores is between the family and the student.
2. Students are coached to understand that they are not staying in a hotel and that the host parents are not maids.
3. Students are expected to be treated as "one of the family" but they are not expected to be the family's maid.
4. The following are guidelines for chores:
 - a. A general "rule-of-thumb" is that the student could be responsible for doing his/her own laundry, keeping his/her room clean, making his/her own bag lunch, and other light tasks that come out of the student staying in the home.
 - b. The kind of chores should depend on the student's age and capability.
5. Helping with chores may provide an opportunity to practice English speaking skills.
6. Students are not allowed to baby-sit.

202: Meals

1. Three meals per day plus snacks and drinks are to be supplied to the student.
2. The student may be expected to prepare breakfast and lunch for him/herself as long as they have been shown how and if the ingredients are on hand.
3. Breakfast is generally a quick, light meal (toast, juice, milk, cereal, eggs, jam, etc.)
4. Lunch will generally be a bagged lunch and include sandwiches, raw vegetables, cookies, milk/juice and fruit, etc. When students are away on school or program field trips it is expected that a bagged lunch will be provided unless otherwise notified.
5. Dinners are prepared by the host parents and may include rice, meat, cooked vegetables, leftovers, salad and dessert.
6. Host parents are expected to ask the student what foods they like and dislike so that the foods the student likes can be incorporated into the food plan.
7. Host parents are requested to take the student grocery shopping so the student can point out foods he/she likes.
8. Explain how items are added to the family shopping list.
9. Preparing meals provides a good opportunity to share cultural insights.
10. If students have specific foods that they want to eat that are more expensive than foods eaten by the host family, or if the extra food is only eaten by the student, it is expected that the student pays for that food him/herself.
11. If a host family goes out to a restaurant, payment of the food should be discussed beforehand so there are no surprises when the bill comes. It is expected that the host family will pay for the basic meal for the student since all meals are supposed to be supplied by the host family. If the student chooses a more expensive meal than what is offered, then the student pays the difference between the chosen meal and what the host family offers to pay for the meal.

203: Transportation

1. Host parents are encouraged to drive their student from place to place on occasion. Best rule of thumb: if you would drive your own children then you would drive your international student. Whenever appropriate, the student is encouraged to take public transportation or the school bus. Students are responsible to pay for their own public *bus fares or passes*.
2. It is recommended that the host parents review their vehicle insurance policies with their insurance provider to ensure they have sufficient coverage for carrying International students in their vehicles. Refer to your insurance carrier pamphlet or website for details.
3. Although most students learn how to use public transportation, there is a chance during the first few days that a student may get lost. This problem may be relieved by doing the following:
 - a. Try to arrange for the student to take the bus with other students going to the same school from the same neighborhood. Groups tend not to get lost.
 - b. Escort the student to the bus stop, or explain the route and where to get off. Make a note for the student to give to the driver.

204: Curfew

1. Time in the evenings is required for homework, study, family activities, school extracurricular events, etc. However, a student may need to have time with their cultural peers to help bear the burden of being homesick and culturally isolated. Establish a time when students should be in the home on week nights and then adjust this to be more lenient on the weekends.
2. It is expected that students will observe a reasonable (and age appropriate) bedtime so that they will be at their best during class. This may be significantly challenging during times of jet lag and time zone readjustments.

205: Staying away from the Host Family Home Overnight

A student, who wants to be away from the host family home and/or to travel out of town with someone other than homestay family members, is expected to get approval from the International Program Administrator. This contact should be made through the homestay contractor who will facilitate proper protocol for this travel.

206: Travel

1. The student may not travel outside of the Kootenay Region unless accompanied and supervised by an adult who is at least twenty-five (25) years of age. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted on an individual case basis by the International Program Administrator.
2. The student must not travel outside of Canada without first notifying the International Program Administrator so that a letter of permission can be written for presentation at the border and proper Visa documentation can be put in place.
3. Hospital, medical and emergency treatments or expenses incurred outside of Canada are not fully insured. It is strongly recommended that students going out of the country purchase, at their own expense, extra traveler's insurance with GuardMe insurance or BCAA.

Section 300: School Procedures

301: Absence from School and Late Arrivals

302: Academics

303: Practicing English

304: Student Activities

301: Absence from School and Late Arrivals

1. The student is expected to attend all classes in the educational program provided to him/her.
2. The host parent is expected to phone the school before 9:00 a.m. explaining all absences and late arrivals. Unexplained absences and repeated late arrivals may lead to the student's dismissal from the program.

302: Academics

1. The host parents are not responsible for the student's academic progress. However; monitoring completion of homework supports the student's overall success in the school, just as it would your own child.
2. The host family is required to provide a quiet, private place for the student to study.

303: Practicing English

International Students have found these useful ways to meet English-speaking people and practice English:

1. Practice English as part of the normal household routine:
 - a. Talk with your homestay family during dinner and relaxation time;
 - b. Join family events and outings;
 - c. Play with children, etc.
2. Join school clubs (e.g. choir, drama, band) and/or sports teams.
3. Go on school trips.
4. Get involved in community activities outside of school at:
 - a. Local community center;
 - b. Churches;
 - c. Summer camps, etc.

5. Consider getting involved in activities through a variety of ways:
 - a. Act as a volunteer;
 - b. Take part in sports;
 - c. Take courses in art, crafts, music, etc.;
 - d. Make friends with Canadians.

304: Student Activities

1. Some of the international student’s best experiences have to do with participation in homestay travel and excursions, activities at school such as field trips, sports teams, choirs.
2. Many new students need encouragement to participate in activities because of shyness, a lack of self-confidence, a lack of information, or because of language difficulties.
3. The schools offer many possibilities for extra-curricular activities such as sports or clubs. Please encourage your student to become involved and this may take some extra support.
4. The community also provides a host of activities available to young people. If there is something your student would like to do, contact your homestay contractor for support to make this happen.
5. If a student would like to be involved in an extracurricular sport or other activity, this needs to be discussed as a family to ensure family scheduling success.
6. It is expected that the student will receive the host parents’ permission before making plans to be away. This includes telling the parent:
 - a. Destination and reason for travel;
 - b. Mode of transportation and accommodation at the destination;
 - c. What adult will supervise the travel;
 - d. Arrival time and date returning to the homestay.
7. Students who want to invite guests home for dinner or sleepovers are expected to do so with the prior permission of the host parent.
8. The student must always inform the host family if he/she will not be home for a meal by text message or phone call or in person.

Section 400: Other Guidelines

401: Working

402: Telephone Use

403: Cell Phones

404: Computer Use

401: Working

Immigration Canada does not permit students to take a paying job in Canada while on a study permit. However, a student may take a part time or one-time job for which there is no need for a SIN. These types of jobs include delivery of newspapers, shoveling sidewalks, mowing lawns, or babysitting outside of the homestay home.

402: Telephone Use

If a student has their own phone or electronic device, make sure there is Wi-Fi so that the student may call home once per week and immediately after arrival in the homestay home.

403: Cell Phones

Homestays **must not** sign for a student’s cell phone. The program will **not** be responsible for expenses incurred by students in this manner.

404: Computer Use

1. Students do not have a right to use the host family computer – it is a privilege given by the host parents. Please ensure clear instructions for computer usage in your home. If a student has their own computer, please arrange for them to use the Wi-Fi.
2. If the student wants to set up an internet connection for their own personal computer in the home, the student will agree to cover any extra monthly costs for this convenience.
3. The Host Family's acceptable student computer use guidelines might include:
 - a. How much time the student can use the computer such as 3 hours per day;
 - b. When the student can use the computer, evenings, Saturdays, etc.;
 - c. Work should be saved on a flash drive or memory stick;
 - d. The student will avoid downloading information from the internet to protect against viruses;
 - e. The student will not make any changes to the computer settings unless the host parent gives explicit permission;
 - f. Should the student download programs that cause the family computer to become damaged and in need of repair, the student will pay for the cost of the repair;
 - g. Turning off the internet access after 11:00 p.m. or to purchase timers for their routers so that the internet is automatically turned off from 11:00 pm until 7:00 am each day;
 - h. Laptops placed on the kitchen table at a designated hour (11:00 pm) to ensure proper rest by the student;
 - i. The student should not send jokes or chain mail as per the acceptable use agreement he/she has signed to use the computer at school;
 - j. The student will not take part in bullying activities on Facebook or any other social media as this could result in a student's expulsion from the program.

Section 500: Finances

501: Expenses

502: Receipts

503: Money

501: Expenses

1. Host families are not expected to pay for the student's personal shopping, entertainment, or long distance phone calls.
2. Host families should make sure that all calls to parents or friends are made by the student using Skype, We Chat, What's App or KAYAK.
3. Host families normally pay for their students at restaurants since they should be providing all meals. If a more expensive meal is wanted by the student, the student should be told in advance that they are welcome to order the more expensive meal, but that the student will have to pay for the extra cost.
4. If the student goes on a school or program sanctioned trip or sporting event that involves costs, the host family is expected to provide or pay for normal meals for the student. Costs exceeding the regular meal expense are the student's responsibility.
5. Payment of extras like theater tickets, hockey games, swimming or skating passes should be the student's expense. Some families will choose to bear the cost of these extras while others will require the student to cover their own costs. Both options are acceptable but should be conveyed to the student prior to the event.
6. If a student chooses to participate in family holidays and/or travel where costs are incurred, the student is expected to assist in bearing the costs for his/her portion.
7. Where the student chooses not to participate in a family activity or excursion, the host parents must make alternate arrangements for the student and are expected to inform the Homestay Contractor to

ensure the arrangements are acceptable or to request assistance in finding a solution. If an overnight stay is more than a weekend, the interim family will need to have gone through the homestay reference checks.

8. If the student is given the privilege of having their own computer access in their room, the student is expected to cover any extra monthly internet costs he/she might incur due to excessive downloading of movies or other activities.

502: Receipts

If you purchase any item for your student that needs to be reimbursed, you should retain the proper receipts which include specific details. The receipts are then given to the International Program secretary for reimbursement.

503: Money

1. Long-term students are expected to have their own bank account and use a debit card to make purchases or for cash.
2. It is recommended that students not loan money to host family members. Students with spending money allotments should request the support of their Homestay Contractors for procedures.
3. It is recommended that host family members not loan money to the students.
4. Pocket money – students may choose to look after their own spending money however some parents and contractors prefer the homestay family to monitor it.

Section 600: Emergency Procedures

1. Medical emergencies are expected to be handled as if the student was the host family's own child.
2. If a doctor will not accept the student as a new patient, take the student to a walk-in clinic. Remember to bring along the student's medical insurance card.
3. If the host family has a family emergency and it is inappropriate to have the student involved, the Homestay Contractor should be contacted and arrangements will be made for a short-term alternate host family placement.
4. If the student becomes a behavioral problem, contact the Homestay Contractor for immediate assistance.
5. A fire escape route from the student's bedroom in the home should be discussed with the student.

Section 700: On Culture

701: Cultural Differences

702: Avoiding Stereotypes

701: Cultural Differences

1. Learning about Canadian culture is a main reason why students choose to study in Canada. While helping students get acquainted with our norms, it is important to remember that their cultural background may have an impact on the homestay experience.
2. Open communication between the family and student is the key to overcoming barriers, including cultural ones. It may be a good idea to ask the student about different aspects of his/her culture.
3. Sharing cross-cultural similarities and differences, will allow both the family and student to have an opportunity to learn from each other, thereby contributing to a positive homestay experience.
4. Don't confuse cultural characteristics with personality traits. E.g. people from some cultures will always

appear to agree with you, because for them, it would be impolite not to agree, especially with an adult. When you find out that they didn't agree with you, it does not mean that they are untrustworthy.

702: Avoiding Stereotypes

Homestay families and students should avoid stereotypes of different cultures to influence their behavior and communications. There are usually far more exceptions to a stereotype, or generalization, than examples supporting it. As Robert Kohls states in his book, *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*, "the problem with stereotypes, really, is that they prevent us from getting to the richer reality and truth which lies behind them." (Kohls, 1984). Try not to attach "labels" to your student and fall into the stereotyping trap. For example, if your family is matched with a Japanese student, do not assume that he/she will be shy. Tolerance is respecting our differences, sharing our goals.

The homestay experience can bring endless new insights. It involves change, questioning and sometimes frustration. Openness, sensitivity and respect are necessary to ensure a valuable experience for you, your family and your student.

Section 800: Frequently Asked Questions

This information is intended to address the broad range of concerns of new homestay parents. You are advised to speak to experienced homestay parents for more details.

1. Why do foreign students come to British Columbia?

- To learn more about Canadian culture.
- For a one-year intensive English program.
- To become more fluent in English, which will lead to greater employment opportunities in their home countries.
- The desire to be a global citizen and connect with people overseas in meaningful and purposeful ways.
- To pursue more artistic and holistic learning opportunities.
- To be taught by teachers who engage students in more student centered, innovative, and creative learning opportunities.

2. What am I as a homestay parent expected to provide?

As a homestay parent, you are expected to be a kind and judicious parent. This means providing what you would provide for your own family:

- Private bedroom with a bed, desk, window, lamp and closet;
- Three wholesome meals a day and snacks as required;
- A quiet, adequately lit and heated study space;
- Hot water and facilities for bathing;
- Laundry (you may expect a student to do his/her own laundry if you wish);
- Emotional support if the student suffers from homesickness, difficulties at school, etc.;
- Academic support with homework if possible, communication with teachers, attendance at parent-teacher-student interview, etc.;
- Inclusion of the student in family outings, trips to restaurants, special occasions, recreational activities;
- Access to the common living areas of the house;
- Canadian culture exposure and education;
- Access to Wi-Fi for the student (this may be limited to a certain amount of time per day).

Suggestions: Early in the stay, have a conversation with your student about expectations, yours and the student's. Reach a mutual agreement about the amount of interaction between the student and the family and the kinds of activities in which you will participate together. Discuss this regularly as situations change. In order to help a student feel comfortable in a strange land it is best to be caring and warm with the student. Being heavy on the rules will increase the student's stress level when they are already in an incredibly stressful situation living with a new family, in a strange country, where the communication is a second or third language.

3. **What kinds of things should the student pay for himself/herself?**

- Clothes;
- School supplies;
- Toiletries;
- Long distance phone calls. (Many students arrange to have their own phone, in which case they also pay the installation fees and monthly bills);
- Medicines and medications;
- Dental work (pre-existing problem, orthodontics);
- Haircuts or other personal services;
- Personal entertainment and expenses (If your family is going out for dinner or to a movie you should pay for the students. If the student chooses to eat in a restaurant or go to a movie with friends, and your family is staying home or meals are provided at home, the student should pay for his/her own);
- Costs associated with participation in school sponsored activities such as graduation parties, school dances, extra-curricular sports, drama, debating, or musical group trips (other than those specific to the international program);
- Stamps, stationary, books, magazines, CD's, posters, etc.;
- Costs related to renewal of student visas and airplane tickets home.

Suggestions: Please discuss the above list with your student.

4. **What kind of expenses does the program cover?**

Included in the fees paid by the student to the program are the following:

- School course fees, which includes textbook rentals;

Suggestions: Discuss this with your student so that expectations are clear.

5. **What challenges should I be aware of?**

Students may suffer from several overlapping conditions for the first few weeks or in some cases, even month:

- **Culture Shock:** Is what people experience when they are suddenly immersed in a culture which is different from their own. "Culture" means the largely unwritten patterns of behavior that govern the lives of a particular group of people. Culture shock comes from the realization that basic assumptions about life and familiar ways of behaving are no longer appropriate or useful. Remember that your student is struggling with the following new things: language, climate, community, and in many cases strange customs, food, home, family behaving and showing emotions. It is worth noting that if you as a host family have had little or no experience in another culture you may experience some culture shock yourselves.
- **Jet Lag:** Most students have traveled through several time zones to reach the area. They may suffer from the effects of jet lag for up to two weeks, including sleeping problems, drowsiness

at the wrong time of day, loss of appetite, general fatigue and disorientation.

- **Homesickness:** Many students have left their family, friends and pets for the first time, and they are far away. Natural feeling of homesickness may be further exacerbated by culture shock.
- **Loneliness:** Students may feel very alone in this strange new situation. They may feel like outsiders in the community, in the school, even in your home. Limited English ability may contribute to their feelings of isolation.
- **Teenage Mood Swings:** Even though they come from another country, they are still teenagers dealing with the physical and mental changes that all teenagers go through. At times, you may find yourself on the emotional roller coaster so familiar to parents of teenagers!

All of the above may be exhibited in any of the following ways: quiet, unresponsive, withdrawn behavior, crying spells, isolation from the family, long periods alone in the bedroom, lack of appetite, despondent behavior, depression, anger, anxiety, moodiness, lethargy.

Suggestions: If you suspect that your student is suffering from depression please let your homestay contractor know as soon as possible so that we can support the student with counselling support.

6. What kinds of rules apply to the host family and to the student?

The student should be expected to follow whatever rules you have for other members of your household. However; a rigid and overbearingly strict home has proven to cause visiting students an increased level of anxiety. The following rules may be introduced to your student over a month rather than all at once:

- The student at home on school nights by 10:00 pm, unless participating in an organized activity: swimming lessons, study groups, school team, etc.;
- The homestay should set an age appropriate curfew for weekend nights and again this may vary depending on the activity;
- Within reason, the student needs to notify the homestay parents of their activities and when they might change;
- The student needs to respect the house rules regarding smoking or sleep overs;
- Students may have chores or assist with some light duties in the home;
- All members of the family need to discuss ahead of time any needs for rides to special events, or if a student wishes to have friends overnight, etc.;
- Students must never be overnight without adult supervision. Supervision must be arranged if the homestay family parent(s) are away by contacting the homestay contractor to assist with these plans. It is NOT acceptable for the homestay family and the student to agree for the student to be alone as this puts the program in a very precarious position legally;
- Immigration Canada does not permit students to hold jobs while studying at school in Canada. Exceptions to this are part time jobs that do not require a social insurance number such as shoveling sidewalks, babysitting, delivery of newspapers or phone books, etc.;
- The student is expected to attend school every day unless they are ill. When a student is ill, the homestay family needs to alert the school via a telephone call about the absence;
- Even on their own phones, students should not make local telephone calls after 10:00 p.m. or tie up the family phone for longer than a specific amount of time designated by the homestay parents. Students should always be given the opportunity to access Wi-Fi to contact their parents, especially within the first 24 hours of arriving in Canada;
- Homestay parents are advised never to allow students to leave the community overnight on their own or for a weekend without contacting their homestay contractor well in advance of the trip. The homestay contractor with the support of the program administrator will carefully check to ensure that the student's travel is sanctioned by the parents and agent and to find out

what adult supervision will be place for the student. Documents will be sent by the contractor to the homestay family, once the program has been notified of the vacancy from our jurisdiction. This document must be submitted to our office prior to their departure from the home;

- Homestay parents are not to allow students the use of the family car, or to supervise the driving practice of an International student wanting to attain a driver's license in British Columbia. Students are allowed to take lessons from a professional licensed driving instructor in order to obtain a license.

7. What about food?

Canadian food can be a problem for international students at first. Certainly the food you serve in your home will be different from the food your student is used to. People worldwide derive great comfort from their familiar and favorite foods. Eating times, table manners, and methods of serving and presenting food will also be different for the student. Most students adjust quickly to a Canadian diet but some take longer than others. NOTE: Students have been given a demonstration on how to make lunches. This power point will also be presented to their homestay families on the day of their private orientation meeting in the homestay home.

Suggestions: Give your student a tour of the kitchen and the refrigerator, naming items and explaining what they are for. Ask the student what different items are found in the cupboard and refrigerator at home. Talk about favorite foods and what is eaten at mealtimes at home. Take the student food shopping with you especially to a large food store where various ethnic foods are available. Ask the student what he/she would like to take to school for lunch. Encourage the student to prepare a favorite dish so that you can try it and learn about your student's culture. Have a good variety of fresh fruits and vegetables on hand. Rice is an important part of Asian diets. If your student wants rice every day, please provide it.

8. What if my student gets sick?

Students should come to Canada with travel insurance. After 3 months they can apply for MSP.

9. How can I best prepare my family and myself for the homestay experience?

It's a good idea to discuss the expectations of all family members before the student arrives. Children may think that the student will be like a new brother or sister or that they will become best friends. Sometimes this doesn't happen the way it might be expected. Sharing the same home does not guarantee that your own children and the student will have anything in common with each other. An honest discussion about the difficulties of forming a cross cultural friendship, with the added barrier of language, can save disappointment later on. The more you know about the country and culture that your student comes from the better able you will be to understand and support the student. You should at the very least, have an idea of where the country is and what kind of an environment your student comes from. Experienced homestay families can give you lots of helpful suggestions to help you prepare for the homestay experience and also advice about what pitfalls to avoid. Please ask your contractor for a list of homestay phone numbers.

Suggestions: Visit the library and take out some books about your student's country of origin. If you have the books on hand when the student arrives they can be the basis of conversation. Make a list of things to talk about and things to do during the first few days and weeks. Talk to an experienced homestay parent. Your homestay contractor/coordinator can assist you with this.

Prepare a welcome for your student: a sign, a gift, flowers, or any small gesture of welcome.

10. **What should I do during the first few days?**

- Keep the student busy but also give them some time alone;
- Encourage the student to phone home soon after arrival;
- Speak to the parents yourself saying how pleased you are to have their son or daughter with you, even if they don't understand English they will appreciate the gesture;
- Introduce your student to the extended family members, neighbors and close friends and write down names to help the student remember them;
- Take the time to learn the correct pronunciation of your student's name and not rely on the easy Canada name that they adopt to help us out;
- Discuss how you would like the student to address you and other family members;
- Show girls where they can buy personal supplies and discuss how you would like them to dispose of sanitary items in your home;
- Visit other local points of interest and make sure the student knows the route from your home to school. Practice this more than once. It may seem simple to you – but to an international student bombarded by change – it will not be easy;
- Go over school information and discuss the plans and the times for going to school every day;
- Provide a transit schedule for the student and help them purchase a bus pass at city hall;
- Relax! Focus on making the student comfortable and your own feelings of nervousness and anxiety will disappear;
- Celebrate small milestones right away;
- Establish a pattern of daily conversation. Have the student help to make a list of conversation topics to get through the first few weeks.