



Getting Started

The first month or so with a new student living in your home is one of great adjustment for both you and your new student. Please remember that patience and understanding of all that your student is experiencing is critical during this time. Your Homestay Coordinator is there to provide guidance and support when you have questions or concerns. It is our goal to provide a positive homestay experience for both you and your student.

The following is information relating to important steps that need to be taken shortly after your student moves into your home. They aren't designed to assist in getting things started off on the right foot for both you and your new international student.

A House Tour

Show your student your home, both inside and out.

Discuss common and personal spaces.

Standards of privacy and personal space can vary across cultures (e.g., the practice of knocking on a bedroom door before entering).

Show students how window safety latches work as well as other safety locks.



Things to Consider

Tap water is safe to drink in Canada.

Not everything should be flushed down the toilet.

Toilet tissue should be placed in the toilet (not in the garbage can).

Shower curtains go inside the bathtub when showering. (Many bathrooms in Asia are “Wet Rooms”).

Take shoes off when entering the home and how to adjust the room temperature with the thermostat.

Show what is and isn't recycled and where to put it.

Some things on the Internet are not free or legal (torrents and illegal downloads for example).

Many international students may not have helped out in a kitchen, so you may need to demonstrate how to use kitchen appliances.

Provide a list of family members, and home / work numbers. The student should enter them into their phones and take a picture of the list with their phones. More detail on important phone numbers for your student to have is further along in this document.

Explain how 911 works for emergencies (this number is only in North America).

Discuss the house safety plan. Teach your homestay student where to meet in case of a disaster and which neighbours to go to for immediate help.

Show your student how to walk to and from the school (if your home is within a 20-minute walk).

Show your student how to get to bus stops and local amenities (e.g., the library, recreation facilities, shopping malls, etc.).

Help the student to get a cell phone and school supplies, and to set up a bank account, if necessary.

Review with your student your house rules and if you can make a physical list, you can leave it in the student's bedroom. This can also be adjusted and reviewed again after a month living together.

Cell Phones

Most high school students will bring their cell phone from home.

If the Student Has His / Her Own Cell Phone

You will need to take the student to a cell telephone provider such as: Fido, Telus, Koodo, Bell, Rogers, PC Mobile etc. (London Drugs is very helpful.)

The student will need to purchase a new sim card for the phone.

The provider will install the new sim card, activate the cell phone, and provide a new Canadian phone number.

Please make note of the new number for your own use, and also email your Homestay Coordinator the student's cell phone number so that we have it as well

In BC, all phone plans that have data (access to the internet) require an adult signature.

DO NOT SIGN FOR ANY PHONE PLAN.

Encourage the student to select a monthly pay-as-you-go plan. They can use their laptops to check emails and search on the web.

To make their monthly cell phone payments, the student will either return to the place they purchased the sim card or they can make payments online with a credit card (if they have one from home).

If the Student Does Not Have Their Own Cell Phone

Take the student to buy a cell phone. Many shopping centres will have numerous kiosks as well as larger stores such as Best Buy, Walmart, or London Drugs. Help them purchase an inexpensive pay-as-you-go cell phone.

If the student's parents or relatives are here in Canada, they may be able to sign up for a data plan for the student's cell phone.

Elementary students typically do not come with cell phones and cell phones are not necessary.

Students Should Have All of These Numbers Entered Into Their Phones

- Homestay Parents' names and phone numbers
- Homestay Coordinator's name and phone number
- Multicultural Support Worker's name and phone number
- Custodian's name and phone number
- Delta School District International Programs Emergency Phone's number
- Taking pictures of their ID, homestay address, etc. to store on their phone, or their Google Drive, would also be a good safety measure in case of an emergency

Bank Accounts

Your Homestay Coordinator can let you know if your student is paying through us, the School District (in which case, you'll receive a cheque in the first week of each month), or paying the host directly.

When students pay directly, they can either give cash or arrange for a wire transfer. (If the payment is in cash, accompany your student to the bank for safety reasons. Students should be discouraged from carrying a lot of cash.) Please help your student to open a Canadian bank account. It is more convenient to use your own branch.

For a wire transfer to a student or homestay account, the bank will need to provide some of the following information, which can then be forwarded to the student's parents:

- Student name as reflected on their client card
- Homestay address
- The address of the bank home branch
- The bank's financial institution number (e.g., #003)
- The bank's transit number
- The student's account number
- The bank's Swift code
- IBAN code for Europe or CLABE code for Mexico (Routing/ABA#)

When your student moves out of your home, be sure to contact the bank branch in order to stop their mail from continuing to be sent to your address. The student should be reminded to do this before they move out.

If the student is paying you directly, please keep a recording of payments (on Excel or in Word).

If the student overpays please to do accept it. It may lead to more complicated refunding issues later.

House Rules

A careful explanation of the rules you want your student to follow and reasons why they are important to you is best done at the beginning.

A few minutes of friendly, frank explanations may save everyone from later irritation and bewilderment.

Be clear and consistent, and provide an atmosphere that permits discussion.

Students are responsible for following these guidelines:

- ✓ keep their bedroom and bathroom tidy and clean up after themselves if they use the kitchen
- ✓ abide by homestay and school curfews
- ✓ introduce their friends to the homestay parent(s) and request permission to have guests in the home
- ✓ inform the homestay parent(s) where they are going, with whom, and when they will return
- ✓ show respect to all family members, their belongings, and house rules
- ✓ do not consume alcohol or drugs or view pornographic websites or have sex
- ✓ attend school every day and complete all assignments to the best of their ability
- ✓ be reachable by cell phone when going out
- ✓ do not take food or drink into the bedroom without permission from the homestay parents
- ✓ reimburse the homestay family if they cause any damage
- ✓ make an effort to participate in family activities
- ✓ have written permission from a School Board Office District Administrator or the Director and natural parents if travelling outside the Lower Mainland or Canada (NOTE: overnight and out-of-country trips are permitted **only** under the supervision of an adult)

Homestays are responsible for providing:

- ✓ a clean well-supervised environment
- ✓ clean bed linens and towels provided weekly
- ✓ basic toiletries, e.g., shampoo, soap, toothpaste, and toilet paper
- ✓ three meals daily – breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks
- ✓ reasonable use of the home, and utilities, and instruction in their use
- ✓ rules that are reasonable and age-appropriate and in conjunction with School District expectations
- ✓ a private bedroom with a bed and bedding, desk, closet, lamp, dresser, a window that opens outwards, storage space for books and school materials
- ✓ assistance and support if medical or health situations arise
- ✓ updated information to the Homestay Coordinator if any changes occur within the home (e.g., moving, new pets, change of contact information, family break-up, adult children returning home, friends or family moving into the house, serious or prolonged illness within the family, other students hosted from outside agencies or schools, etc.)
- ✓ a key (or code) to the house
- ✓ space, time and opportunity to study and complete all school assignments
- ✓ transportation to and from the airport
- ✓ transportation to and from the school if it is more than a 20-minute walk
- ✓ reasonable transportation for social outings or to sports events, lessons, doctor's appointments, etc.
- ✓ inclusion in family outings
- ✓ correspondence with natural parents, when possible
- ✓ a revisit of house rules and adjustment as needed (later curfews, etc.)
- ✓ an English-speaking environment in the home
- ✓ internet access (it's a good idea to set up a Guest user name and separate password for student use)
- ✓ Adult supervision throughout the night.

