

HomestayNews

February 2022 • Happy Lunar New Year! 新年快乐

Happy Lunar New Year! February 1st welcomed the year of the Tiger on the Lunar Calendar. For those of us with colourful wardrobes, Cerulean blue, fiery red, mint green and imperial yellow are the lucky colours for 2022.



Helping New Arrivals Get Their Vaccine QR Card

Students who just arrived will not have their BC Vaccine Card. They can use their proof of vaccination from abroad (they will have it digitally for the ArriveCAN App) to access locations that require a BC Vaccine Card, but it is in their best interest to create their own card. It is how they can receive information about booster shots when they become available to those aged 12-18. Here is a link to our walkthrough for students to get their BC Vaccine Card. Calling the number helps!

Conversation Starter Topic:

What's the strangest thing you've ever eaten?

Welcoming New Students

In the first week of February, we successfully welcomed nearly 200 new students. Many of them are with our homestay families. Welcoming a new student is exciting but can also present some challenges.

Things we found that have lead to success in welcoming a new student into your home are:

Include them in your lifestyle and in conversations at the dinner table. Many of our new students are interested in being part of a family and spending time together as a family.

Provide them with some simple materials to create a vision board / bucket list. This can help with some planning decisions during their time with you to help them realize some of their dreams and goals for their Canadian adventure.

In the Resources section of our [Homestay Family Website](#) there is a wealth of useful information, including a good handout on conversation starters. Click on the image to visit the full document.



Reach out to your Homestay Coordinator if there are any issues, questions, or confusion. In our experience, it is good practice to reach out early instead of not reaching out and letting something small build into something big.

Budgeting with Homestay - Meatless Mondays (or any Day of the Week)

Having a meal, a day, or more a week that takes meat off the menu can result in budget friendly meals. Meat prices are on the rise, and the recent flooding in the Fraser Valley will not assist in slowing that down.

We are not all vegetarians or interested in a vegetarian lifestyle, but it can't be denied that there are some delicious meals that one can prepare without the need for meat. Here are just a few examples from the internet:

**Feel free to send us your favorite
vegetarian recipes!**



Egg Bhurji Recipe



Spinach Lasagna
Recipe

Covid-19 Booster Shots

Covid-19 booster shots are now available for people aged 12+. If your student has their BC Vaccine Card and their second dose was more than 6 months ago, they should receive an email inviting them to make a reservation for their booster shot.

If they do not receive that email, we have found that calling in and requesting an appointment works well. Here is the number:

1-833-838-2323

March Break Plans?

If you have plans for March Break, please let us know. Forms need to be completed if your student will travel with you and temporary coverage needs to be arranged and approved by our office if you will be travelling without your student this time. The more time we have to plan the better! Reach out to your Homestay Coordinator or Brent with the information.

For those who are staying in town, we have two activities planned for the first week of March Break. Details will be posted on your students' Google Classroom (and emailed to them) in the coming days.

Travelling with your student outside of the Lower Mainland?

Contact [Brent](#) so we can get the documentation and permission in place before your trip!

Please let us know early about travel plans. There are special Covid-19 and travel visa considerations when travelling abroad (including the US) with your international student.

If you are planning a day trip, please let us know. The same documentation is not required but because Karen Symonds, the Program Director, is the custodian for the majority of our students, we do need to know where they are travelling to.

It allows us to stay in the loop and be ready to assist if the need arises.

Valentines Day

This was an article we included in the February Homestay Newsletter last year, but feel it is worthy of reposting.

People celebrate Valentine's Day differently all over the world. In many Latin cultures, Valentine's Day (Saint Valentine's Day) is called Dia de los Enamorados' which also casually means, "The day of lovers." These days it is a couples event, where only couples go out and give gifts to each other.

In Vietnam, you can see young couples wearing "couple sets" or matching outfits.

In Japan and Korea, Valentine's Day is when girls give chocolates to boys. White Day, on March 14th, is when boys return the favour and give candies and chocolates to the girls.

In China, the younger generation tends to follow similar western Valentine's Day traditions, but there is also the Qixi Festival which takes place on the seventh day of the seventh month on the lunar calendar (typically late Summer). It is seen as the traditional Chinese Valentine's Day.



MSP Letters and Bills

Since the introduction of QR codes and cards for vaccination verification, some MSP letters and bills for students are arriving at homestay addresses. This is not common and is simply due to international students being required to create these digital vaccination verification documents. If you receive any MSP letters or bills for your student, please just ignore and shred them.

House Rules

Here is a link to our House Rules form. It is located on our Homestay website. It is a fillable form so each family can add the points that are important to them.

If you would like a printed copy, please reach out to your Homestay Coordinator.



Student Wellness - Exercise

After hopefully enjoying an array of delicious foods and meals over the stay indoors sort of weather we experienced in December and January, now is a better time than ever to get into a new exercise routine. Exercise is a great tool for overall wellness. We encourage our students to find a type of exercise they enjoy and to use it to reduce stress and other issues they may be experiencing. Family exercise time could be great for the whole family!

Homestay Referral Gift Card

We are still actively recruiting more homestay families. If you refer a family who completes the application process and is able to host a student, you will receive a \$100 referral incentive gift card. Need is still greatest in Ladner and Tsawwassen but North Delta families are also more than welcome!

Security Cameras



Students from other countries and cultures may not be used to security cameras on personal property. In some countries it is very common.

If you have installed a doorbell cam and / or other security cameras around your home, please show your student. It can show them that it is for their safety and prevent any confusion, worry, or misunderstandings.

Longer Days are Coming

Since the Winter Solstice on December 21st, the days have begun getting gradually longer. That can serve as some positive encouragement to students who may be feeling gloomy. The weather, rain, and darkness have been tough on many of us these past few months.

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Our dedicated team of Homestay Coordinators are here to support you. Feel free to reach out to them.

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