

HomestayNews

May 2022 • Spring is Finally Here... We Hope!



May is here and that means there are just under two months of school left. For grade 12 students, graduating in BC or not, that means year end events. Please note: non-graduating students do not participate in the cap & gown valedictory event.

Also, a quick reminder to ensure your students top up the minutes on their cell phones. This is about the time that students who arrived in February may be running out and forgetting to re-up their minutes. We need a way to communicate with students without Wifi.

Medications

A few times this semester, we have come to learn of medications that some students are taking. These are medications / prescriptions that they arrived with. This was not something that was disclosed to us during the student's application process, and not an added responsibility that our homestay parents should have to take on. If your student has medications they are taking or that they have come with, please let your Homestay Coordinator know. We can acquire more information about it, and it also assists with our agent partner relationships.

Conversation Starter Topic:

Who would you like to trade places with for a month?

End of School Year Plans

The end of the school year is fast approaching. We are confirming departure flights with students and their agents. We are starting to receive information about students' parents planning to visit Canada and meet them here.

Now is a good time for a reminder that students need to return to the care of their parents by June 30th at the latest. That means either meeting their parents here in BC or returning home. Legal, liability, and medical coverage issues arise when students stay past June 30th.

We will share the confirmed flight information with you as we receive it. Pre-departure testing is no longer a requirement for many countries around the world, but not all. We will share that information when it applies. We appreciate your assistance with your student's pre-departure testing (if required) and taking them into the airport to say good-bye. If your student will go home for summer and return to you for September, they need to pack up their belongings, store them somewhere of convenience to you and your family, and pay \$50 per month as a storage fee. They no longer have the option to pay half the monthly rent to leave their room as is.

As always, you are under no obligation to also host your student's parents or siblings. We do appreciate the heads up when you hear of plans for natural parents to visit.

Concerts / Sports Events

We have become aware of an omission in our Homestay Handbook that will be corrected when the next edition comes out this summer.

Students are not permitted to go to concerts or sporting events (BC Lions, Canucks, etc.) downtown without adult supervision.

If a group of students want to go to a concert, they can always pool together to buy a ticket for one of their homestay parents who is willing to take them.

It is a safety and good decision making issue as those events often let out late. Concerts and similar events in Vancouver will also have alcohol and marijuana consumption outside as well as inside the venue.

Students sign off on this rule in their Participation Agreement.

Bike to Work / School Week

The first Go by Bike Week in 2022 is from May 30th to June 5th.

During the week people are encouraged to ride their bikes instead of driving. Students can join in by riding a bike to school instead of getting a ride from their kind homestay parents!

Click on the bike for more information and history of the event.



Student Gossip

As much as we discourage it, students love to gossip.

We hear from homestay families that students have told them that their friend is allowed to do this, or is allowed to go there. In our experience, that information is quite often exaggerated or inaccurate.

We also instruct our students not to gossip about their homestay families and to respect the fact that they are invited guests in someone's home. It is not nice to then gossip about that person or family. It is not something they would want the host parents to do about them.

If you are not sure if the information your student is telling you is accurate, please reach out. Many times a simple text or email to us can help dissolve any confusion.

Here is the list we shared previously. [Click here](#) for family day trips that you can enjoy with your student.

You can team up with other homestay families to take turns for a more economical / fuel efficient approach.

We are always happy to hear about activities and trips that host parents enjoy with their students.

Budgeting with Homestay

Planning to use leftovers

Eating up leftovers could be something of a new concept to some of our international students.

It is a great way to not waste food, stretch the food budget, and allow for simpler meals throughout the week – cook one big meal one night and have leftovers for a few days to follow.

Talk to your student about how Canadians use leftovers. If you're cooking roast chicken with rice and vegetables for Sunday night's supper, then make chicken sandwiches for Monday's lunch. On Tuesday, use the bones to make a chicken soup and toss in any leftover vegetables and rice.

Last weekend I cooked a ham (it was on sale at Freshco) and even after a family dinner, with invited guests, there was still left over ham.

Tomorrow's dinner will be ham and veggie fried rice or perhaps quesadillas with some ham, peppers, onions, and cheese.



Let us know your favorite "go-to" leftover recipes. We would love to share with other homestay families.

Activities in May and June

The planned activities to wrap up the school year had to undergo a slight adjustment. Originally, we were planning to go to PlayLand on May 28th as the alternative option from WildPlay.

WildPlay is still confirmed for May 28th.

Playland informed us they will not be open by then and not taking school groups (at discounted rates) until later in June. That, coupled with student requests for Stanley Park, has led us to offer a day-trip sightseeing activity on June 4th. We will first go to Granville Island, where students can spend time exploring and also purchase their lunch. Alternatively, they can bring lunch from home if they wish.

FlyOver
CANADA



Then we will move, by boat. Students will take pictures there and also experience FlyOver Canada.

The third stop will be Stanley Park. We will stop by the totems. From there, we will return to the School Board Office.

Students will only be able to sign up and go on **one** of these activities. This is so more students can have the opportunity to participate.

Posters for the two events are posted on your students' Google Classroom and have also been emailed to them.

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 travel visa considerations when travelling abroad (including the US where students may require an ESTA. We will also prepare a travel letter to the US, even for day trips) 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.

September Placements

We are still working on placements for September. If you would like to host again in September and have not informed us, or know a neighbour or family friend interested in hosting, please reach out to your Homestay Coordinator as soon as possible. We aim to have placements completed by the end of June.

We are also still collecting interest for hosting 1 or 2 students for one or both of our 3-week summer sessions in both the north and south end.

Program 1: July 3rd - July 23rd

Program 2: August 7th - August 27th

Students are aged 10+ (most being in grades 9 - 11)

Homestay Fee = \$750

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.

Vancouver Canadians Baseball

Vancouver Canadians Baseball at Nat Bailey Stadium in Vancouver is a relaxed and affordable family activity.

Many of their Saturday evening games are accompanied by a fireworks show at the end. Sundays are typically afternoon games with a family-friendly theme.



Click on the logo for ticket information.

It is not Major League Baseball, but can be entertaining for both students who play the game and those who may not have extensive experience with the sport.

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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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