



**School District #8  
(Kootenay Lake)  
International  
Program  
Student  
Handbook**

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# Student Orientation Procedures

## Host Parents Check List

This list may help you deal with some of the issues facing you as you accept a student into your home.

Please make sure you complete this list and that you contact the office if you have concerns.

1. Student was oriented to the neighborhood and the community.
2. Bank account set up.
3. Curfew rules discussed.
4. Information about security in the home (students require a key).
5. Safety issues discussed.
6. Emergency contacts and laminated student ID card provided.
7. House "rules" discussed and understood.
8. Leisure activities each month have been outlined.
9. Travel rules discussed.
10. Health insurance discussed.
11. Medical procedures discussed.
12. Telephone and email rules discussed.
13. Food concerns discussed.
14. Homework/school attendance.
15. How to make friends.

➤ Due to language differences, misunderstandings can and usually will happen. Discuss and try to solve the issue. If this is not possible. Then please call your Homestay Contractor at: \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Contractor signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Host Parent signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please print and post on your fridge:

**International Program Staff Contact Information**

NAME	POSITION	PHONE	E-MAIL
Sandy Prentice	Administrator	250-505-7033	<a href="mailto:sprentice@sd8.bc.ca">sprentice@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Joy Keefe	Secretary -8am – 3pm Tues., Wed., Thur.	250-505-7026	<a href="mailto:jkeefe@sd8.bc.ca">jkeefe@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Michele LeLievre	Finance/accounting	250-505-7015	<a href="mailto:mlelievre@sd8.bc.ca">mlelievre@sd8.bc.ca</a>

**Fax:** 250-505-7036

**Website:** <http://international.sd8.bc.ca>

**School Contact Information**

SCHOOL	PHONE	Contact	E-MAIL
<b>Secondary Schools</b>			
L.V. Rogers	250-352-5538	Mr. Tim Huttemann	<a href="mailto:thuttemann@sd8.bc.ca">thuttemann@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Trafalgar	250-352-5591	Ms. Carol-Ann Leidloff	<a href="mailto:cleidloff@sd8.bc.ca">cleidloff@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Prince Charles	250-428-2274	Ms. Sharen Popoff	<a href="mailto:spopoff@sd8.bc.ca">spopoff@sd8.bc.ca</a>
J.V. Humphries	250-353-2227	Mr. Dan Miles	<a href="mailto:dmiles@sd8.bc.ca">dmiles@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Mt. Sentinel	250-359-7219	Mr. Glen Campbell	<a href="mailto:gcampbell@sd8.bc.ca">gcampbell@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Salmo Secondary	250-357-2226	Ms. Sandy Ewankiw	<a href="mailto:sewankiw@sd8.bc.ca">sewankiw@sd8.bc.ca</a>
W.E. Graham	250-355-2212	Ms. Laura Moll	<a href="mailto:lmoll@sd8.bc.ca">lmoll@sd8.bc.ca</a>
<b>Elementary Schools</b>			
Adam Robertson	250-428-2051	Mr. Rod Giles	<a href="mailto:rgiles@sd8.bc.ca">rgiles@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Blewett	250-352-5314	Ms. Mary Ann Gaschnitz	<a href="mailto:mgaschnitz@sd8.bc.ca">mgaschnitz@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Canyon/Lister	250-428-4161	Mr. David Falconer	<a href="mailto:dfalconer@sd8.bc.ca">dfalconer@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Erickson	250-428-2363	Ms. Nancy Devuono	<a href="mailto:ndevuono@sd8.bc.ca">ndevuono@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Hume	250-352-3186	Mr. Vic Manson	<a href="mailto:vmanson@sd8.bc.ca">vmanson@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Rosemont	250-352-3182	Ms. Cathy Spear	<a href="mailto:cspiers@sd8.bc.ca">cspiers@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Salmo Elementary	250-357-2214	Ms. Sandy Ewankiw	<a href="mailto:sewankiw@sd8.bc.ca">sewankiw@sd8.bc.ca</a>
South Nelson	250-354-4139	Ms. Kimberley Jones	<a href="mailto:kjones@sd8.bc.ca">kjones@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Winlaw	250-226-7217	Mr. Ron Sherman	<a href="mailto:rsherman@sd8.bc.ca">rsherman@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Brent Kennedy	250-359-7292	Mr. Mike Hurley	<a href="mailto:mhurleyl@sd8.bc.ca">mhurleyl@sd8.bc.ca</a>
Redfish	250-229-4224	Ms. Jann Schmidt	<a href="mailto:jschmidt@sd8.bc.ca">jschmidt@sd8.bc.ca</a>

**Homestay Contractors Information**

NAME	HOME PHONE	CELL	E-MAIL
Ingrid Savard		250-354-8865	<a href="mailto:eslhomestay@gmail.com">eslhomestay@gmail.com</a>
Joanne Martens - Creston	250-428-7332	250-254-9511	<a href="mailto:jowregina@yahoo.com">jowregina@yahoo.com</a>
Misoon Jang	250-352-0442	250-551-3370	<a href="mailto:mj_rose@hotmail.com">mj_rose@hotmail.com</a>
RJ Warren	250-352-7247	250-551-0604	<a href="mailto:rjwarren@telus.net">rjwarren@telus.net</a>

## **Student Responsibilities**

The student is responsible for:

1. Abiding by:
  - a. All the laws of BC and Canada
  - b. The rules, regulations and policies of School District #8 and the enrolling school.
2. Appreciating the opportunity to live and learn in a host family environment.
3. Living with a homestay family that consists of at least one adult of twenty-five (25) years of age or older.
4. Obeying the host family rules.
5. Showing respect for host family members.
6. Explaining all absences from the host family home.
7. Giving the Homestay Contractor advance notice why he/she wants to move to a different host family or to leave the program.
8. Using a phone card to make long distance telephone calls. When this doesn't happen, the host family will be reimbursed by the student for all long distance telephone charges that he/she has made.
9. Accepting the obligation to attend all classes in the education program provided to him/her and that they understand they must carry a full course load. Spares are not an option for high school students. (Contract obligations on this are outlined on page 2 of the student's application form and contract.)
10. Requesting a phone call (or note) from the host family to be presented to the school secretary/administration to explain all absences from the school.
11. Not traveling 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.
12. Not traveling outside of the Kootenay Region without the permission of the Program Administrator.
13. Showing an interest in his/her schoolwork and make an effort to do his/her best in all classes.
14. Cleaning up after him/herself in the home.

15. Assisting with light household chores when necessary or requested.
16. Keeping the home safe by locking the door when leaving and when needed, setting the home security alarm.
17. Whenever possible, participating in family activities and outings.
18. Learning to speak English and requesting a tutor if necessary.

### **Homestay Contractor's Responsibilities**

1. Create a homestay family database for homestay placement (student/family matching).
2. Arrangement for airport pickup and delivery when a student enters and exits the program. In the event that more than one trip must occur to safely support the student in their entrance or exit from the program, the second or subsequent trips may be billed for mileage by the contractor.
3. Reserving short-term accommodation or in home care if required.
4. Formal orientation session for all students and homestay families within 2 weeks of arrival in Canada.
5. Follow up homestay visits to ensure student satisfaction within two weeks of a student's arrival in the program. These may be unannounced to ensure student safety and care.
6. Homestay contractor maintenance visits with students each month, face to face, to determine satisfaction with the home and family members on a monthly basis.
7. Transportation during settlement services.
8. Resolve homestay problems.
9. Screening of families and ensuring criminal record checks are completed.
10. Liaise with the administrator of International Programs to facilitate timely and effective homestay placement and communicate problem situations.
11. Become acquainted with agents and communicate with them regarding homestay issues and successes.
12. Follow the district homestay procedures as outlined in the International Program Policy Manual and guide book.

13. Personal guidance for success in the community which may include information on: telephone cards, medical services, restaurants, libraries, etc.
14. If required, referrals to doctors, dentists, cultural societies, professional organizations, churches, shops and markets, sports, recreation centers, etc.
15. Directions/maps of Nelson and public transportation systems.

### **Program Administrator's Responsibility**

1. To oversee all aspects of the International Program in order to support each student in their goal to learn English and have a safe, nurturing environment.
2. Provide student support.
3. Provide homestay support and liaise with Homestay Contractors.
4. Custodianship.
5. Hiring of tutors as requested by students or agents.
6. Provide program support to the teachers, administrators, tutors, etc.
7. Discipline.
8. Coordinate recruitment activities and materials for the district.
9. Work with the agents to support students and recruit new ones.
10. Liaise with the superintendent as the need arises.
11. Work with the Program Financial Officer to set program budget and collect fees.
12. Work with the Program Secretary to ensure timely processing of student applications and legal documents.

### **Student Orientation Meeting**

1. Student will be notified by the contractor of the orientation date, time, and place within the first two weeks after arrival.
2. The Homestay Contractor will meet with each student or group of students at the scheduled time.
3. Items covered at the meeting include:
  - a. Introducing the student to the International Program Administrator.
  - b. Informing the student about the program, rules and expectations.

- c. Student safety, e.g. what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior and what to do if the student feels unsafe.
- d. How to have a good homestay experience
- e. Encouraging the student to speak up if they encounter problems. Tell them who to contact if they have a problem.
- f. How to make friends.
- g. Activities.
- h. Who pays for what?

## Student Code of Conduct

Students are expected to:

1. Attend all classes and complete all school assignments as required by the classroom or subject teacher.
2. Become a part of the family by embracing the opportunities provided by the family to travel, help prepare meals, visit family friends, and be part of family in home activities such as watching movies, playing board games, and playing electronic games.
3. Respect the dignity of the host family (their pets) and others in the community.
4. Respect the privacy of the host family.
5. Follow reasonable family rules.
6. Do chores that are reasonable when asked.
7. Not physically humiliate members of the host family or take part in behavior that hurts, puts down, embarrasses or frightens others.
8. Take part in the monthly activities provided by the International Program in order to meet friends from around the world and learn Canadian culture.
9. Not borrow money from, or lend money to the host family.
10. Use common sense with dress, especially if wearing sleep-wear around the home.
11. Act responsibly at all times and enjoy your time in Canada by embracing every opportunity offered to you.
12. Honor the integrity of their study permit while in Canada and this means that students are not allowed to hold a job for which they need a SIN.
13. Notify the homestay contractor of any travel with the homestay family outside of the Kootenay area, especially when visiting the USA.
14. Notify the homestay contractor of any travel without the homestay family outside of the Kootenay area.

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature

## **Communications through the Student's Stay**

1. A week after the student arrives. The Homestay Contractor will call the host family and ask them to report on how the student is settling into their home.
2. Within two weeks, the student will be contacted personally 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.
5. Students and host families are encouraged to try and communicate with each other if they are having concerns or problems.
6. The Homestay Contractor is required to ask monthly if the families and students have any concerns so that little problems are dealt with before they become big problems. The goal is to address issues quickly and resolve them amicably.
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 long term students living in the home from another program should be recorded by the Homestay Contractor in the host family file.

## **Evaluation**

1. A homestay program evaluation should be filled out by each student and host parent during the time they are together.
2. The Homestay Contractor will administer the homestay evaluation.

## **Changing Host Families**

1. Occasionally there will be a need, on behalf of the student or host family, for a student to move to another homestay because of unresolvable differences.
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 Administrator has approved the change.

3. If the student requests more than one move, an extra fee will apply of \$100 and be the responsibility of the student/agent.
4. If the student is allowed to move, it is best that the original family has at least two weeks' notice.
5. If it is determined that the student needs to be moved:
  - a. The Homestay Contractor should speak to the student to make a list of what he/she is expecting from a new homestay placement and try to determine priorities.
  - b. The Homestay Contractor will use the information to determine which available host family most closely meets the requests.
  - c. Availability of the new host family should be checked.
  - d. If possible, it is best that the move be made at the end of a pay period.
  - e. The Homestay Contractor should try to maintain communication with the new and original families to keep them abreast of progress.
  - f. The Homestay Contractor should arrange how and when the student will move.
  - g. The Homestay Contractor must inform the Program Secretary about the changes so payments are made correctly. The original family should be paid up to the day the student leaves.
  - h. Sometimes the student will decide that the original homestay family is the best option. In that case, it is important that the Homestay Contractor follow-up and monitor the situation in case the student should be moved anyway.
6. If the host family requests the move:
  - a. They need to contact the Homestay Contractor immediately to explain the need for the request.
  - b. The Homestay Contractor will proceed as outlined in 5b - g above.

### **Allegations of Abuse**

1. In the event that there is an allegation of abuse either by the host family or the student, the student will be automatically moved to another host family or dismissed depending on the culpability.
2. The allegations of abuse will be investigated as per School District #8 Board Policy.
3. Procedure to remove student from home:
  - a. Contractor investigates allegations by talking to student.
  - b. Contractor discusses allegations with Program Administrator.
  - c. Contact is made by Program Administrator to Family Services.
  - d. Contractor removes student from the home with or without prior notice.
  - e. Student remains in new homestay until Family Services deems it safe for the student to return.

## **Chores**

1. Ultimately, the matter of chores is between the family and the student.
2. Students are expected to remember 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 should be responsible for keeping his/her room clean 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.

## **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.
5. Dinners are prepared by the host parents and may include rice, meat, cooked vegetables, leftovers, salad and dessert. There may be opportunity for the student to prepare a meal for family with the support of the host family to show the student how appliances work in the kitchen and safety features of using knives and working with hot pots and cooking elements.
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 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. But, 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.

### **Damages**

1. If the student damages or loses an item belonging to the host family, it is expected that the student will reimburse the family for the damages.
2. If someone in the host family damages or loses something belonging to the student, it is expected that the family member will reimburse the student for the damages.

### **Transportation**

1. Although the host parents are encouraged to drive their student from place to place on occasion, the host parent should not be considered to be a chauffeur and the student is encouraged to take public transportation or the school bus on most occasions.
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 insurance policy.
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 others from the same neighborhood. Groups tend not to get lost
  - b. Escort the student on a bus, or explain the route and where to get off. Make a note for the student to give to the driver
  - c. Encourage the student to purchase a bus pass, or to take the correct change.

### **Absence from School**

1. The student is expected to attend all classes in the educational program provided to him/her. Spares are **NOT** an option without the express written permission of the program administrator

2. The host parents are expected to phone the school before 9:00 a.m. and write a note explaining all absences and lates from school. Unexplained absences may lead to the student's dismissal from the program.

### **Academics**

1. The host parents are not responsible for the student's academic progress. This is monitored closely by the teachers, counselors and the International Program Administrator. However, the host parents will be able to give the school valuable feedback as to how diligently a student works at home to complete homework assignments.
2. The host parents are required to provide a quiet place for the student to study.
3. Questions and concerns regarding the student's academic achievement should be directed to the school teachers and counselors.
4. The student is expected to give the host family a copy of his/her current course timetable and a copy of interim and regular report cards.

### **Graduation Program**

#### **Course Programming for BC International Students:**

BC has a 3 year graduation program.

##### **1. First Language Credits**

Every international student entering our program is entitled to, and will receive credit for, his/her first language under one of the following four provisions. International students are entitled to receive a total of 12 credits (grade 10, 11 and 12) depending on the level of language study they completed in their home country. Students will receive these credits automatically upon entrance to our program:

- Equivalency (for Ministry-authorized courses such as Japanese, Mandarin, Spanish, German, French, Italian, Punjabi and Korean).
- External Language Certificate (for other languages such as Thai, Urdu or Cantonese).

##### **2. Credits for ESL as BAA Courses**

Our program offers BAA (Board/Authority Authorized) ESL courses for our international students to ensure that international students receive credit for ESL at the grade 10, 11 and 12 levels, and to encourage students to take ESL instruction when they need it.

##### **3. External Credentials**

All B.C. students are entitled to receive credit for external credentials. An external credential is one that has been developed outside of the Ministry of BC and is earned either outside or in a regular classroom setting for which students can receive credit.

#### **4. Equivalency and Challenge for Courses Other than Languages**

Equivalency can be used to give students credit for courses taught outside the BC school system that “substantially (80%) match the learning outcomes” of Ministry authorized courses or BAA courses.

When there is not a match but the student clearly has the background, then the Challenge process can be used. Challenge is for undocumented demonstrated prior learning.

Equivalency and Challenge for courses other than languages should be used when a student has completed the equivalent of grade 10, 11, or 12 in another country and is of an age where spending three more years in high school does not make sense.

#### **School Staff**

School Staff are more than willing to help the international student adjust to the new learning environment in a friendly and supportive way.

- **Principal:** the Principal is in charge of all programs at the school and works closely with staff, students and host parents.
- **Vice-Principal:** The Vice-Principal assists the principal of the school in maintaining the orderly operation of the school and discipline.
- **Teachers:** Students have different teachers for different subjects. You can call the teacher Mr. Ms. or Mrs. as appropriate and the person’s last name (e.g. Mr. Smith), rather than “teacher”.
  - **ESL Teachers** help students learn English.
- There may be school specialists who work with teachers and help students learn. These people include:
  - **Teacher-Librarians**, who help students access resources in Internet and learn about books, tapes, videos, and magazines
  - **Counselors**, who assist in planning students’ educational program and applying to University. Counselors also can tell you about other services and programs provided by the school district and your community.
  - **Office Secretaries**, who assist in registering students, do the school’s office work, and answer phone calls
  - **Teaching Assistants**, who help teachers in the classroom
  - **Resource Teachers**, who help students who require additional assistance
  - **Custodians**, who keep schools clean and make sure buildings are operating safely and properly.

#### **Studying in Canada**

You may find some differences between the educational values/system in your home country and that in Canada. It is essential for you to understand the appropriate and accepted roles for students in the Canadian educational system. Here are some of the general characteristics of the Canadian educational system:

- Students are encouraged to ask questions for clarification, to challenge information, or to extend thinking. The philosophy of education in Canada includes the idea that

students should be involved in an interactive learning process. That is, they should not sit passively and accept or memorize what the teacher says.

- Teacher-student relationships tend to be relatively informal compared to those in many Asian countries.
- Group work is an important part of the school learning. It values cooperation, tolerance and compromise.
- Discussion is often used as a means of teaching. Students are expected to be able to discuss in order to develop their ideas and opinions and to present them for reactions. One of the main objectives of a discussion is to arrive at a mutually satisfactory understanding or a solution to a problem.
- Students learn not just information, but how to arrive at conclusions, to solve problems, and to analyze. As part of this process, students are often asked how they got an answer, rather than just what the answer is.
- Plagiarism (submit the work of another person as your own/copy the work of another person and present it as your own) is a serious offence.

### **Tips for Studying in Canada**

1. Don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand. Teachers expect to be questioned. Make sure you understand assignments that are given. If you're quiet, that will be taken as a sign of understanding. Teachers are usually available before and after school for questions and extra help.
2. Be on time for class. If you can't attend or be on time, notify the school in advance and explain the reason. If you miss classes, see the teacher the next day to find out what was missed.
3. You will probably find the classes more informal in Canada. You will also have to organize your own time since you won't be given a schedule to cover non-class time. Plan your time carefully, balancing school work, English practice, and relaxation.
4. Hand in all assignments on the day they are due. If you are not able to finish your assignment on time, talk to your teacher before it is due. If you miss any assignment/quiz/exam, see the teacher and ask if there is any way to make up.
5. Organize your notes. Keep all handouts from your teachers.

### **Practicing English**

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

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

- Churches
- Summer camps, etc.
- Consider getting involved in activities through a variety of ways:
  - Act as a volunteer
  - Take part in sports
  - Take courses in art, crafts, music, etc.

### **Student Activities**

If a student would like to be involved in an extracurricular sport or other activity, this needs to be discussed with the host family to ensure family scheduling success.

1. It is expected that the student will receive the host parents' permission before making plans to be away or to have friends over. This includes telling the parent:
  - a. Where he/she would like to go.
  - b. How they will be getting there and back.
  - c. Who they will be with.
  - d. When they will be home.

### **Curfew**

1. Time in the evenings is required for homework, study, family activities, school extracurricular events, etc.
2. It is expected that students will observe a reasonable (and age appropriate) bedtime so that they will be at their best during class. Students who stay up late working or playing on computers are often too tired to focus well in class the next day.

### **Staying away from the Host Family Home Overnight**

A student, who wants to stay overnight 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 host parents who notify the homestay contractor in order to ensure the proper process is followed.

### **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 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.
4. Please visit BC Medical Services website, [www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/msp/infoben/benefits](http://www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/msp/infoben/benefits), for more comprehensive information on the medical coverage for our international students.

### **ID Wallet Card**

Your homestay contractor will provide you with an ID wallet card to include Homestay family name, address, home phone, and work numbers for host parents and an emergency contact person such as a neighbor or relative. Your host family should introduce students to neighbors so students have a greater comfort level in asking for assistance should they need it. Your homestay contractor's information will also be on the card in case you need to contact them.

### **Working**

Immigration Canada does not permit students to take a paying job in Canada without a proper work visa and a study permit is not the required permit to work.

### **Driving**

Students are not allowed to drive unless they have taken the required BC government course work and road test to have a BC license. Once a student has a license they will only be allowed to drive a vehicle that they own or that they have rented.

### **Telephone Use**

1. Students are encouraged to ask to use the host's telephone.
2. Acceptable use guidelines might include:
  - a. Limiting phone calls to 15 or 20 minutes each.
3. Purchase and use a calling card for long distance telephone calls.

### **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.

### **Computer Use**

1. Students do not have a right to use the host family computer – it is a privilege given by the host parents.
2. If a 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 use guidelines might include:
  - a. How much time the student can use the computer.
  - b. When the student can use the computer.
  - c. Work should be saved on a USB 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.
4. If the student is not allowed computer access in the host's home, a student account may be set up for internet access at the school.
  - a. 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.

### **Expenses**

1. Students are expected to pay for their shopping, entertainment, long distance phone cards, batteries, bus passes etc.
2. Students should make sure that all long distance calls made by the student are done so by calling cards.
3. Host families normally pay for their students at restaurants since they should be providing a meal anyway. 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 over that will be the student's responsibility.
5. Payment of extras like theater tickets, hockey games etc. are 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. However, this is the host families' choice, not the students.
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, 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 have to be screened prior to the students stay.

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.

### **Money**

1. The long-term student is expected to keep their own bank account and use a debit card to for purchases or to obtain cash.
2. Students must not loan money to host family members.
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.

### **Emergencies**

1. Always know where your medical card is and keep it in your wallet with you at all times.
2. The hospital is only for emergencies – all students should go to the walk in clinics to see a doctor for ailments, flu, cold, sore stomach, rashes, sore muscles, etc.
3. If the host family has a family emergency and it is inappropriate to have the student involved, the Homestay Contractor must be contacted and arrangements will be made for a short-term alternate host family placement.
4. You should know the fire escape route from your bedroom in the home and discuss this with your homestay family.

### **Avoiding Stereotypes**

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 which lies behind them.” (Kohls, 1984). Try not to attach “labels” to your homestay family members. Instead, do your best to have an open mind. Avoiding pre-judgment will increase your enjoyment of the time you spend with your homestay.

### **Canadian Customs**

1. Canadians leave for work and school early each morning.
2. Dinner is usually around 6:00 p.m.
3. Canadian meals:
  - a. May not take long to prepare.

- b. Usually have potatoes instead of rice.
  - c. May use canned or frozen food.
  - d. Do not eat much fish or raw fish.
  - e. Eat raw vegetables, such as broccoli and cauliflower.
  - f. Do not always peel their fruit.
4. It is considered polite to say “Good morning” when greeting family members in the morning.
  5. It is considered polite to say “Good night” when preparing to go to bed.
  6. It is considered polite to say “Hi” or “Hello” when greeting people you know on the street.
  7. Some men and women when they greet each other might hug each other if they know each other well.
  8. Business acquaintances or a person who is not known very well is generally greeted more formally with a handshake.
  9. Homestay parents may be called by their first names since they will become more familiar.
  10. Other adults – especially teacher – should be addressed as Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Miss.
  11. Typical ways of saying goodbye are:
    - a. Talk to you soon.
    - b. I’ll talk to you later.
    - c. Goodbye or Bye.
    - d. See you soon, see yah or see yah later.
    - e. It should be understood that these are just manners of speech and students should not feel slighted if they aren’t called in the next few hours or days by the person.
  12. It is not polite to ask a person their age.
  13. It is not considered to be polite to ask about financial status or what someone has paid for things.
  14. Religious beliefs and political choices are considered private and are often not topics of conversation.
  15. If you accidentally bump into someone it is polite to say “sorry” or “excuse me”.
  16. Some people say “sorry” when they feel they have made a mistake. This can be done too often, which decreases the effectiveness.

17. It is considered polite to hold heavy or swinging doors open for other people. This action can be done by men or women.
18. If a door is closed, **do not enter** without knocking— especially if it is a bedroom or bathroom in a home or someone else’s classroom at your school. In this case, if the door is closed, **wait** until the person opens the door or until they say “enter” or “come in”. If it is the student’s classroom door that is closed, the student does not need to knock before entering.
19. When preparing a drink, lunch or snack, it is polite to ask if other family members would like something made for them. In many families, cooking meals is a shared activity and it is polite to offer to help prepare the meal or help out when asked.
20. When speaking to other people in Canada, it is customary to:
  - a. Maintain eye contact with the person you are talking to.
  - b. Stand half to one meter apart.
21. If you understand what the person is saying to you, it is customary to nod your head to show that you understand.
22. If you don’t understand what they are saying, it is good to say, “I’m sorry, I did not understand you. Please tell me again.”
23. Practice good dental hygiene and personal hygiene. Talk to your family about shower protocol.
24. It may be necessary to adjust your speaking tone to be loud enough for others to hear you clearly. Lift your head to speak and don’t place your hand over your mouth.
25. In Canada, toilet paper is placed in the bowl and not in the garbage receptacle.
26. Conserve energy and turn off lights when you leave a room.

### **Homeward Bound (Prior to Departure when Returning Home)**

1. Preparation and communication are keys to ending a homestay experience on a positive note.
2. Things to do before you leave:
  - 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.
  - 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, text books, locks and other things loaned to you.
  - e. Cancel phone and/or internet services.

- f. Be prepared for a swirl of emotions. This is normal – but focus on being happy because in the end, *all is well that ends well*.
  - g. Ensure you know the exact location of your 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; do not just let them happen. This might include:
- a. Giving gifts to special friends or attending and holding a farewell party.
  - b. Saying thank you to teachers and people who have helped to make your time here enjoyable and special.
  - c. Thank your homestay family with a card that tells them everything you appreciate about them.