



**Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic
District School Board**

Homestay Guide



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Students main reasons for coming to Canada are: To learn English, or in some cases to improve their English, to prepare for entrance into a Canadian university, and to experience the North American culture and family life.

This booklet has been designed to explain the general policies of the Homestay Program. Rules and expectations are meant to be a guide only. Homestay Parent(s) and students are asked to review the information upon arrival and adjust the information to suit their individual situations.

Homestay Parent(s) Role

1. Go over household rules with your student. i.e. curfews, phone & internet use, showers, etc. Start communication off on the right foot.
2. Provide your student with a key to the house.
3. Encourage students to speak English and be part of your family activities.
4. Ensure that your student is not required to babysit.
5. Help your student understand and adjust to Canadian culture.
6. Inform your student if you will be away for a meal and show the student how to prepare for a meal.
7. Please attend the Homestay Parent meetings.
8. If you have any questions or concerns with the homestay situation, please contact the Homestay Supervisor.

The Student's Role

1. Go over household rules with Homestay Parent(s). Start the communication off on the right foot.
2. Offer to help with light household chores.
3. Respect all members of your family and try to become a part of their family.
4. DO NOT drink alcohol, smoke, or use any drugs.
5. Be considerate in terms of transportation requests - Homestay Parents are not chauffeurs.
6. Keep your room clean and clean up after yourself.
7. Speak English with your family and friends.
8. Pay all your long distance phone bills and internet bills on time.
9. Call your Homestay Parent if you are going to be late or not home for dinner.
10. Make sure you have your Homestay's permission to have friends in your room.
11. Be responsible with your house keys. If you lose the key you may have to replace the lock.
12. Canadians are very concerned with the environment. Do not take long showers and be sure to conserve household supplies (i.e., soap, detergent, etc.).
13. Be responsible with your money. Your Homestay is not responsible if you lose or spend all of your money. Do not carry large sums of money.
14. Try to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Healthy eating, exercise, and proper sleep makes for a happy individual.
15. Students will pay at the beginning of each month and it is suggested that they do not pay Homestay fees for months in advance.
16. A student may request a Homestay change prior to the end of the semester, but casual requests WILL NOT be entertained. Only request supported by evidence of a problem will be seriously considered.



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The Homestay Parent(s) is expected to provide

- A private room with a desk, chair, closet, dresser and bed complete with bedding and linens
- Three meals a day seven days a week for the duration of their stay
- Availability of laundry facilities
- Adequate heat, light and ventilation
- A smoke detector near by and fire drill procedures should be discussed with the student
- Transportation to appointments, church and other places within reason

We suggest that the Homestay Parent(s) discuss with the student what can be put on bedroom walls and how to attach items when decorating their personal space.

Phone

Students will have access to the household telephone. Local phone calls are included in the homestay fees; however, students should not abuse their telephone privileges and should be considerate of the length of time they spend on the telephone.

Long distance phone calls are the responsibility of the student. Some students may wish to install their own phone line in their room. Students wishing to do so must incur the cost of the installation, the monthly rental fees, and all long distance phone charges. A phone card is recommended.

Internet

Since most of our International Students will require an Internet connection, this should be discussed with the Homestay Parent(s) to determine the use of the family's computer, connections to the Internet and installations if needed.

1. Do not give out personal information on chat lines or bulletin boards.
2. Students will abide by federal and provincial laws regarding copyright, threatening or obscene material, racism and sexism or all other immoral, unethical or illegal activities.
3. Students will refrain from using diskettes which are known to contain viruses.

Curfews

Homestay Parent(s) and students need to discuss curfews. Students are reminded to respect the individual rules of the household. Items to be discussed may include school night curfews and weekend curfews. The type of activity and age of the student should be factors in determining curfew times. The International Program supports 10:00 p.m. on school nights (these should be limited to once or twice a week) and 12:00 on weekends, or for older students or special occasions a 1:00 a.m. curfew on Friday and Saturday nights.



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Sleep overs

Sleeping over at a friend's house during the week is not permitted, as it typically distracts from the learning process. However, there might be circumstances when the Homestay Parent(s) may need to make alternate sleeping arrangements for their student.

Social Plans

When visiting with school friends, detailed information should be provided to the Homestay Parent(s) (where the student is going, how they can be reached, phone numbers and when they will be back). Students should be reminded that if their plans change and they are going to be later than anticipated, they should contact their Homestay Parent - immediately! Good communication between the student and the Homestay Parent(s) is important to prevent confusion, misunderstandings and to develop a good relationship. Students should ask for permission before going out or making plans. Homestay Parent(s) may enforce limits on the amount of socializing or leisure time spent outside of the home.

Showers/baths

The International students must respect the needs of all family members. The length of shower/bath and the time of day for a shower/bath must be mutually agreeable within each family. This is a good point to discuss early in the relationship.

Smoking/Alcohol/Drug Use

Smoking is discouraged by the International Student Program. The legal age for purchasing tobacco products in Ontario is 19 years of age. If the International student has the permission of their homeland parents to smoke, a letter should be sent to the Homestay Supervisor. The student is expected to respect the rules of the Homestay Parent(s), the school they attend, and the Provincial and Federal laws in this matter.

The legal age for drinking alcohol in Ontario is 19 years of age. Drinking underage, excessive drinking, the use of illicit drugs and the use of false identification to purchase alcohol is strictly prohibited and may result in expulsion from the program.

Travel

Travel plans by the International student should not interfere with academic studies and should be limited to designated school holidays and/or weekends. Traveling students must provide a detailed itinerary of their travel plans, including the names and addresses of those they will be traveling with and/or staying with during their excursion. The International Program takes no responsibility for students during travel holidays. Furthermore, unapproved travel is a serious infraction of International Student Program rules and may result in expulsion from the program.

Students under 18 years of age are not permitted to go on trips by themselves. The student must be escorted by a guardian that is 25 years of age or older on overnight trips. A trip with the homestay family is allowed if permission from homeland parents is submitted by fax or email prior to travel.



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If students are going on a trip with an adult, the Homestay Supervisor and the Homestay Family must be informed in writing, of the destination, length of the trip and the adult supervisor's name.

Students are permitted to visit relatives, close family friends and student friends only if there will be adult (age 25 years or older) supervision and adequate notice is given to the Homestay Parent(s). Homestay Parent(s) should contact the hosting family and ensure that adequate arrangements have been made.

Students 18 years of age and older are permitted to go on overnight trips by themselves providing that we have signed permission from their parents. Students must provide the homestay parent(s) with their destination, length of the trip and a contact number for emergencies.

Travel outside of Canada is not recommended for security and Immigration reasons. If parents give permission for a trip outside of Canada, the student and the homeland family will have the responsibility to research and obtain the necessary visa or official papers from the embassy or consulate from the country to be visited.

Homestay families may want to include the International student in their travel and holiday plans. Students are encouraged to participate. Please note that travel within Ontario with the Homestay family does not require parental permission. Travel outside of Ontario with the host family requires homeland parental permission.

Medical Insurance

All students are covered by the T.I.C. International Student Medical Plan. Students must keep the insurance card with them at all times. Both the student and the Homestay Parent(s) should know where the insurance claim forms are kept. These forms, when possible, should be taken with you to the clinic or hospital for the doctors verification. Please read over the insurance package with your student when it arrives. Please note the exclusions.

School Attendance

Students must attend school on a regular basis. Any absences must be explained by a note from the Homestay Parent. Un-excused absences will be reported to the Homestay Supervisor and the Homestay Parent(s). Excessive absences may result in a loss of credit(s) or expulsion from the Program.

The Homestay Supervisor will visit the school on a regular basis to meet with students, on a one on one basis. At this time the Homestay Supervisor will also meet with ESL teachers and guidance counselors for academic and attendance updates.

Student Report Cards, Progress Reports and Attendance Reports will be mailed directly to homeland parents or guardians. Homestay Parent(s) are encouraged to attend Parent-Teacher interviews to discuss the performance of the International student.