

HOMESTAY FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

Hosting international students is a wonderful opportunity to develop friendships, learn about different cultures and develop global citizenship. Strong relationships are usually formed as a student learns to trust and feel comfortable with a group of strangers and the homestay family embraces an additional member with acceptance, patience and respect. Often these relationships become lifelong, and the benefits to your family of hosting international students continue long after the student leaves.

The following pages have lists of expectations to help homestay families understand their role as adult caregivers / homestay parents for international students. It is important to remember that international students should be welcomed into your home and treated as you treat your own children. However, their parents' wishes and limitations should be respected, especially regarding independence, romance, sexual activity, etc.

One of the main sources of discontent with hosting international students is misaligned expectations. If families are unsure of any expectations or want clarification regarding specific situations not listed here, we hope you will contact the Homestay Coordinator (Cyndy Loewen; homestay@kcschool.ca).

Our expectations of host families are the following:

- to attend the Homestay Family Information meeting in August (mandatory)
- to arrange all transportation to and from the airport on arrival and departure
- to provide or arrange for safe transportation to and from school each school day
- to accompany student to and from school for the first week or until you and the student feel sure they are comfortable getting to and from school on their own (walking or biking)
- to provide a safe, supportive, and welcoming home environment for the student
- to treat the student with respect, patience, and support
- to speak to the international student every day
- to introduce the student to all household visitors
- to clearly communicate the household rules, including around use of phone and Internet
- to clearly discuss expectations regarding independence, food, privacy, problem solving, etc.
- to be patient with the student's mistakes, especially in the adjustment period (first 2 months)
- to show the student how to use the plumbing facilities, security systems, household technology, safety equipment, etc.
- to provide basic guidance on communicating in English around the home and with the family
- to provide a separate bedroom which minimally includes a lockable door, bed, light, window and closet, and ideally also has a dresser and desk; the window must be no more than 1.5m from the ground, have an opening of 3.75ft² (with no side shorter than 15"), and have a minimum of 21" of clearance outside (for basement windows).

- to provide a healthy breakfast, lunch, dinner and reasonable snacks daily for the student unless other arrangements have been made for the day
- to provide an English-speaking environment in the household
- to do the student's laundry (or provide laundry facilities and guidance if the student does their own laundry)
- to explain/show the student what is expected in cleaning their bedroom and bathroom (provide supplies and guidance)
- to orient the student to the city, your neighbourhood, and the neighbourhood of the school
- to involve the student in all family activities whenever possible
- to encourage the student to learn about Canadian culture, lifestyle, and family life
- to take an interest in the student's progress at school and provide reasonable homework support as you would with your own children
- to respect the rights, privacy, and culture of the student
- to demonstrate appropriate behaviour toward the student at all times
- to have a minimum of \$2 million insurance on the vehicle(s) used to transport the student
- to allow students to have a set of keys to the house
- to take the student to a doctor or counsellor (only after notifying the school) when necessary

In addition to the expectations, it is important that all members of homestay families understand their limitations. **KCS requires that homestay families not:**

- engage in romantic or sexual relations with the student
- share a bed with the student
- allow students to drive any vehicle that is not the student's vehicle. Student must have written permission from students' parents and agency.
 - The student must have written permission from their parents allowing them to take the driver's test.
 - All instruction and practice driving hours **MUST** be done through a driving school, **NOT** with the homestay parents or any other person.
 - If the student's parent purchases a vehicle for their child, the homestay family is released from all obligation in regards to the vehicle (gas, registration, repairs & maintenance, tire changes, etc).
 - The student is not allowed to drive the homestay vehicle or any other vehicle except their own.
- allow students to stay overnight at home alone without written permission from students' parents and agency.
- have or allow the student to babysit
- have the student do unreasonable cleaning or cooking not required of the family's other children

- *ask for rent or damage deposits from the student*
- *request contributions to household bills from the student*
- *pay for medical expenses on behalf of the student*
- *enter into any contracts with or on behalf of the student (e.g. for a cell phone)*
- *serve alcohol to the student*
- *allow the student to use illegal drugs*
- *unfairly restrict student usage of the phone or Internet, especially for contacting their family*
- *permit the student to be sexually active (Please contact the school if you are concerned about this.)*
- *attempt to make any changes to the student's visa*