

HOMESTAY FAMILY + INTERNATIONAL STUDENT 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 document briefly lists the expectations to help homestay families understand their role as adult caregivers / homestay parents for international students. One of the main sources of discontent with hosting international students is misaligned expectations.

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.

Additionally, the payments homestay families receive are intended to cover the expected costs associated with housing the student. 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).

HOMESTAY FAMILIES

SHOULD:

- Speak to their student every day
- Treat their students with patience, support and respect
- Accompany their students to and from school for the first week; then as agreed with homestay coordinator
- Provide basic toiletries and shared household items (ex: toilet paper, soap, hair dryer, laundry soap, etc.)
- Provide a bedroom and three meals a day plus snacks
- Include their student in all family events
- Celebrate birthdays and Christmas with their student (ex: provide a modest gift)
- Pay for small outing and entrance fees (ex: going for an ice-cream or swimming)
- Introduce their student to all household visitors
- Arrange transportation to and from the airport
- Allow students over 12 years to have a set of keys to the house
- Take the student to a doctor or counsellor (only after notifying the school)
- Clearly communicate the household rules, including around use of phone and Internet
- Clearly discuss expectations regarding independence, food, privacy, problem solving, etc.
- Clearly discuss expectations regarding affection and physical contact (names, hugging, kissing, etc.)
- Be patient when students make mistakes, especially in the adjustment period of the first two months
- Show their students how to use the plumbing facilities, security systems, household technology, safety equipment, etc.
- Request all electronics must be brought out of the students' rooms (to a separate place where parents can see the devices) at 10pm on weekdays and 11pm on weekends

SHOULD NOT:

- Allow students to drive any vehicle that is not their own and without written permission from students' parents and agency
- Allow students to stay overnight at home alone without written permission from students' parents and agency.
- Have their students babysit
- Leave their students home alone overnight
- Be expected to buy expensive or non-standard hygiene or personal items (hair dye, organic shampoos, humidifiers, etc.)
- Have their students do cleaning or cooking that isn't required of other children in the family
- Ask for rent or damage deposits from their students
- Pay for medical expenses on behalf of their student
- Enter into any contracts with or on behalf of their students (ie: for a cell phone)
- Serve alcohol to their students
- Share a bed with their students
- Unfairly restrict student usage of the phone or Internet, especially for contacting their family
- Engage in romantic or sexual relations with their students
- Permit students to be sexually active (Please contact the school if you are concerned about this.)

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

SHOULD:

- Speak to their homestay families every day
- Respect the rules of their homestay families
- Engage in family events and activities as appropriate
- Keep their bedroom tidy and clean up after themselves in the bathroom and main living areas
- Participate in expected and reasonable household chores
- Communicate any concerns or doubts about food, safety, disagreements, etc.
- Treat all family members and pets with patience and respect
- Tell their homestay parent of any medical concerns (including emotional and mental health)
- Pay for any non-standard or expensive toiletries and hygiene items, including those for exclusive use of the student (e.g.: non-communal flat irons, expensive shampoos, special creams or soaps, make-up etc.)
- Follow KCS's International Student curfew and any household rules regarding curfews

SHOULD NOT:

- Smoke, drink alcohol or use illegal drugs
- Drive vehicles, even if they can legally drive in their home country
- Stay overnight at friends' houses without permission from a homestay parent
- Engage in sexual activity
- Enter the bedrooms of other homestay family members without express consent
- Shower or bathe with homestay family members
- Be in the bedrooms of family members with the door closed
- Borrow money from their homestay family members
- Get a job
- Get piercings or change their hair colour