Homestay Handbook for Hosts of International Students

NECHAKO LAKES
The natural pathway to success

International Education

School District 91

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KEY SCHOOL DISTRICT CONTACTS

In the event of an emergency, host families should contact the Director of Instruction responsible for International Programs. Currently this is Mr. Manu Madhok and he can be contacted at:

(w) 250-567-22284 (loc. 243)
(cel) 250-996-1025
(H) 250-996-8851
email: *mmadhok@sd91.bc.ca*

In the event that you are unable to reach Manu, please contact any of the other members of the senior leadership team as listed below:

Charlene Seguin	Superintendent Of Schools	250-567-2284
Rick Pooley	Assistant Superintendent	250-567-2284
Eugene Marks	Director of Instruction	250-567-2284
Darlene Turner	Secretary Treasurer	250-567-2284

QUICK REFERENCE LIST

PRE-ARRIVAL

- Complete Criminal Check, Host family/Student agreement forms.
- Confirm adequate house insurance.
- Write the student an introduction letter and mail to their home country.
- Prepare and finish bedroom for student's arrival.
- Cut house key and provide local maps.
- Prepare house rules and emergency numbers list.
- Familiarize yourself with host family handbook.

ARRIVAL

- Pick student up from the airport (not always required.)
- Encourage student to phone home and confirm arrival to parents.
- Set up bank account if needed.
- Make appointment and take student to school to set up timetable and meet school counselor and principal.
- Show student how to get to and from school.
- Tour home, show how things work since toilets, showers, faucets and appliances sometimes function differently in other countries.
- Review with student the list of rules for your home, leave list with student in bedroom.
- Provide list of all family members, home and work numbers.

- Explain how 9-1-1 works for emergencies.

DURING

- Arrange to accompany student to school on the first day.
- Depending on the number of students arriving and the time of year, the SD 91 International Education department may host an orientation session for students. Please ensure that the student attends this session.
- You are the Canadian family. Plan to attend student/teacher/parent interviews or relevant meetings organized by your student's school.
- Correspond with natural parents, even if natural parents do not read English.
- Occasionally revisit house rules and adjust if necessary (later curfews, etc.).
- Inform program coordinators immediately of any changes within the home environment *(moving, obtaining pets, family break-up, adult children moving home, friends or family moving into home, serious or prolonged illness within the family, etc.).*

DEPARTURE

- Assist your student with forwarding boxes of possessions back home.
- Drive student to airport, arriving three hours prior to scheduled departure time.
- Advise homestay coordinator if you would like to continue with program.
- It is important to note that duration of the homestay as well as the personality of the student may influence the extent, timing and impact of the three stages. In particular, these stages may not apply to the following:
    - Brief stays of less than 12 weeks.
    - Students who have already lived with other host families.
    - Students who have previously lived in Canada and possess a strong sense of our culture and language.

STAGE 1: ARRIVAL

For International Students, stage one can be difficult. We have been anticipating the students' arrival, sometimes for weeks or months. We greet them enthusiastically and welcome them into our homes. Not only might your student be dealing with an adrenalin surge from the excitement, combined with jet lag, the student may also be dealing with confusion from the simple gestures such as a welcoming hug (greetings may vary from culture to culture) to cultural shock (an intense disorientation and anxiety resulting from an interruption in what is logical and familiar).

Following are a number of suggestions which may assist the student in adjusting with this initial settling in stage:

PERSONAL SPACE (BEDROOM)

- Arrange the student's bedroom as their personal private space.
- Allow student to personalize with pictures, posters, etc.
- Thanks to Hollywood and the film industry in general, many students arrive with a preconceived notion that the 'Canadian Basement' is a dark, scary place, full of spiders. If your student is in a basement bedroom, a suggestion is to paint it a light colour, even if you are painting over wood paneling, provide bright light, and be sensitive to their fears. To them, their fears are very real.
- If you have other children, teach them that the student's room is private and they must have the student's permission to enter.
- On the bedside table or desk place a "welcome kit" containing the following items:
    - *A list of all family members names, home and work phone numbers*
    - *Emergency numbers and emergency contact information*
    - *House key*
    - *Map of community with important landmarks including school*
    - *A welcoming card from you and your family*
- Knowing from initial arrival what the routine and expectations are of your family will provide the student a sense of security. Many students fear that they will make a mistake because they do not know what is expected of them.

SAFE ARRIVAL COMMUNICATION

Encourage your student to contact home within 24 hours of arrival. The student's parents will be relieved to know that their son/daughter has arrived safely and that there was someone at the airport to pick them up. Also, they will want to hear that the assigned homestay family is friendly and that the home and student room is suitable.

Now is a good time to write a note to your student's parents, briefly introduce yourself and thank them for the opportunity to share their son/daughter with them. Continue corresponding with the student's parents throughout the duration of the student's stay, even if the parents cannot read or write English. They will find someone to translate.

If your student has arrived as part of a group, have a phone list available of the other host families so the student, if they wish, can contact a friend for reassurance.

JET LAG

International flights, combined with changes in time zones, weather, food and the downside of the initial adrenalin surge, can leave a student exhausted. Temporary, minor disruptions in their health such as stomach upsets, minor headaches and moodiness may be apparent. Remember the disruptions are temporary and will pass as the student recovers from the exhaustion and the disorientation. If minor disruptions continue, contact the program coordinators.

Plan welcoming parties and major outings after signs of recovery are apparent. Remember the student will be with you for a length of time. The large welcoming dinners and special meals may be more appreciated when the student is less exhausted. Many long-tern students do not even remember the first few weeks after their arrival. The big events such as seeing you for the first time at the airport and the first day of school are memorable but the other events are lost in their exhaustion.

DECISIONS ABOUT NAMES

Some International students may adopt a 'Canadian' name just prior to their arrival or shortly after. Do not be alarmed if the name you have been rehearsing for the past several weeks has been changed to something the student finds more appropriate for their stay. Many students have difficulties with pronunciation of our names, as we do with their names. From first introductions with your student it is important to:

- Clarify pronunciation of student's name. Out of politeness and to avoid risking embarrassment the student may allow you to mispronounce his name rather than correct you.
- Discuss how the student will be addressing you (first name, mom, dad, etc.)
- When extended relatives arrive discuss with the student and the relative how each should be addressed. Many students are comfortable calling the host relatives by the greeting the host siblings' use, such as Aunty, Uncle, Grandma, Grandpa, etc.

LANGUAGE FATIGUE

Immersing in an English-speaking environment can be frustrating and exhausting especially when you compound it with the many other foreign stimuli and adjustments demanded of an International student. Be clear regarding "yes" and "no" questions. Avoid negative questions, such as "Are you not tired?" because the answer will likely be "Yes, (I am not tired)" instead of "No, (I'm not)". Try to minimize lengthy and complex statements.

- Give the student plenty of time to respond to your questions and statements. What may seem like a long pause of silence to you may actually feel like a short time for the student. It is important to not rush the student.
- Use of an international dictionary, translation app and/or drawing pictures can help with some of the communication barriers.

- During the first weeks, students may make many language errors. Correct those that may cause the student embarrassment or difficulty and ignore the minor errors temporarily.
- Comprehension may be lower than verbal skills. Your student may indicate that they understand when they do not. Have the student repeat back to you the important messages to ensure understanding.
- Leave a list of house rules in the student's room so they can go over the list at a pace that they can comprehend. Review the house rules with the student in the first few days and then do another review and make adjustments once the student has settled in and is comfortable with the family routines.

MEAL-TIME

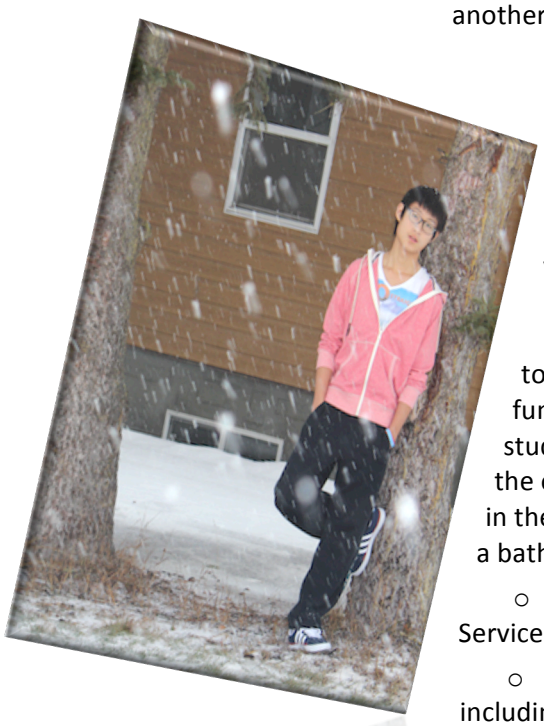
Table manners and food preferences vary from culture to culture. Explain Canadian eating habits and discuss food preferences with your student. Some students will be grappling not only with the tastes and smells but also, how to serve the food, use of the utensils as well as table etiquette. It may be helpful to your student if you consider these points:

- When food is passed around the table, encourage family members to go first so the student can observe proportions and eating etiquette of the various foods. Foods such as putting an open face hamburger together or assembling a quesadilla may be a new experience for your student.
- Just like you may never learn to like "sushi" or "refried beans" your student may never learn to like some of your favorite entrees. This does not reflect on your cooking, it is just a personal acquired preference.
- Some cultures chew with their mouths open and make slurping and smacking of the lip sounds while eating as a way of showing their appreciation for your fine cooking. If your student is paying homage to your fine culinary skills in this manner and you find it disturbing, at an opportune time, you can quietly suggest that noisy eating habits can mean something different in our culture.
- Some cultures do not use verbal manners as part of their everyday conversation. To help them fit in it might be helpful to teach your student a few courtesy phrases such as, "Please pass the..." or "Thank you for the...".
- At first, participation in mealtime conversations may be limited as speaking English can be stressful, as well as, some cultures do not encourage conversations during meals.
- Even though a certain food may be a favorite within your family, your student may choose to not even try it. There are many reasons people choose to eat, or not eat, different foods:
    - *Religious (eating cow, pig, eggs)*
    - *Social values*
    - *Individual taste (liver, chicken kidneys, porridge)*
    - *Allergies*
    - *Individual cultural or family values*
- Respect that your student may feel strongly about not eating or even trying certain foods.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Welcome the student into your home and offer the same privileges and responsibilities that you would your own children of the same age. If parenting a teen is new to you, the program coordinators or other host families may be a valuable resource.

- Include your student in family outings such as visiting friends and relatives and participating in special family activities such as going to a movie or out for dinner.
- If you are planning a family vacation, remember that the student is part of your family. If you need to be away from the home overnight without the student, arrangements must be made by you for your student to be in the care of a responsible adult. You can contact another host family of a friend of the student, or you may choose to have a family member come to stay with your student while you are away.
- Assign a task that helps the student feel like part of the family, such as setting the table before dinner or helping to clear the table after dinner. Many families find this is a good time for informal discussions. Keep in mind that these tasks need to be light household duties.
- If your home is a busy home and you would like the student to do their own laundry, provide a basket in their bedroom and show the student how to use the appliances. It is much easier to start this routine from day one than it is to ask the student to start doing their own laundry after you have been doing it for them for the previous couple of months.
- If your family attends church or belongs to a particular religion you may ask your student to join you and your family but if the student opts to not participate, you must respect their wishes. Also, your student may practice a religion or belong to a religious group contrary to your beliefs. This is a great opportunity to gain insight into practices of another belief.



ORIENTATION

Upon arrival, give your student a general tour of your home. Some points to remember include:

- Show how things work and remember toilets, showers, faucets and appliances sometimes function differently in other countries. In many of our student's home countries, people wash and shower in the open in the main part of the room (there is a drain in the floor), rinse off and then get into their version of a bath tub to soak.
- Teach your student how to use 9-1-1 Emergency Service.
- In a central place, post the family schedule including work schedules, sport and hobby times, mealtime, and family curfews.

- Show your student the family system on receiving messages and use of the phone. Some students may request to have their own phone line installed in their room and if the host family is ok with this, the student will be responsible for installation costs. The charges associated with such a line should be charged directly to the student's or their natural parent's credit card.
- Introduce your students to important places in the community such as: How to get to and from:
    - *school*
    - *Bank*
    - *Pharmacy / convenience store*
    - *School Board Office*
    - *Medical clinic*

Prior to the first day of school, plan to take your student to their assigned school for timetable selection and to meet the Counselor and the Principal. This can be an intensely overwhelming and frightening experience for your student. It is difficult enough on Canadian kids just moving in from out of district, it is hard to imagine how this experience is for a foreign adolescent who do not know the culture, language, or what is considered 'normal' teenage behaviour. Many students report that the first few weeks can be a very intimidating experience.

Shortly after arrival the student ***may*** have to attend scheduled orientation meetings and exams. These orientation meetings and exams are mandatory; please ensure that your student attends.

PETS

Many Canadian households own pets. Different cultures view pets in many different ways. Some cultures view man's best friend, a dog, as unclean (some religious codes prohibit them from being touched) while other cultures view them as a food source. Some cultures fear cats (especially the cats eyes), as being superstitious links to the unknown (eyes of darkness). Do not be insulted if your student shows genuine fear or discomfort to be around the family pets. Quite often it just takes time and patience for the student to adjust. Therefore, limit the exposure, at first, of your pet to the student.

- Ask the student to keep the bedroom door closed if they do not want the pet in their room.
- Respect their discomfort and fear because to the student, it is very real.
- Slowly expose the student to the pet in a controlled manner.

Some students arrive from very large cities that have populations' equivalent to that of all of Canada. Because of population density and cultural belief about pets, many students have not been exposed to pets before their arrival.

CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is best described as awareness that your basic assumptions about life, and your familiar ways of behaving are no longer appropriate or functional. The students find themselves in a foreign culture where people relate to different expectations, where language is different, and where the rules for polite and socially acceptable behaviour bear no reflection to what has governed their existence within their own society. Culture shock may appear at any time within the student's stay and can occur on more than one occasion.

Symptoms of culture shock may occur in many different forms:

- Difficult to carry on normal conversations.
- Complain about feeling unwanted or unloved.
- Withdraw, become moody and irritable, ignore rules and describe confusing situations as "stupid".
- Become defensive or argumentative over innocent remarks.
- Spend hours in the bedroom, crying and isolating them self.
- Wishing to be home where people understand.
- Frequent and lengthy phone calls home.
- Changes in appetite, sleeping patterns, depression.

Some things you can do to help during this stage include:

- Identify that it is culture shock and then explain to your student what culture shock is.
- Acknowledge that the feelings are normal and temporary.
- Offer yourself as a sympathetic shoulder to cry on.
- Remind yourself that the student's cultural shock is not a reflection of your hosting ability or a sign of rejection; it is a normal stage many students experience.
- Allow the student time to be alone.
- If conflicts between the student and your children escalate, try and minimize the time they spend together.
- Encourage extra rest.
- Encourage the student to talk about their feelings with other students.
- Tolerate your student's intense feelings.
- Reduce stress and minimize complications such as pressuring for better grades at school, teasing the student about what the student is experiencing, leaving the student alone for extended periods.
- Offer your student some, 'one on one', away from the home and other siblings. This may include, going for a walk, going out for a tea or coffee, going shopping together, sharing a quiet time talking about the student's family and friends back home or looking at the student's family photos.
- Take the student out to a restaurant that specializes in their ethnic food. Sometimes a familiar food can be comforting.

- The severity of cultural shock and the duration that the student experiences it are influenced by many factors. These include, the length of the student's stay, individual personality, the relationship between the host and student, stresses such as the academic course load of the student, sleeping and eating habits, peers, a sudden change in routine, etc.

Culture shock can be experienced at any time during the student's homestay experience right up until the student returns home, where there, they can experience a 'reverse culture shock'. The severity and the duration are determined by many factors. If the student experiences prolonged symptoms or symptoms of more severity, it is advisable to contact the program coordinators for guidance.

STAGE 2: BECOMING PART OF THE FAMILY

International students, like the host families, don't have much information about their new family before they arrive. They too may create the perfect host family in their minds. It can be such a disappointment for the students when they arrive to discover that their host family is not the perfect 'Hollywood family'.

Eventually, students will find their comfort zone within the house and involve themselves in the family routines. The shift from waiting for invites from the family to do things to actively participate as a family member happens gradually. This shift will happen when the student has a sense of each member's place as well as their own place in the family.

CLARIFY EXPECTATIONS

Approach discussions as a learning experience for both of you. Discuss how their parents would deal with a similar situation.

- Review house rules; make adjustments if needed.
- Customize the rules to fit the student's age, maturity level, and experience.
- Be aware of spoken and silent rules both in your house and what the student is accustomed to from their own home.
- Be patient, learning new rules and fitting in, takes time and continual readjustments.

UNDERSTAND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Some students will drop their heads and not reply to questions when they feel they 'are in trouble'. You may feel that they are being rude by not answering you or taking part in the discussion but the student may feel that they are respecting your authority by not questioning or participating in the discussion, even if you ask them a direct question. In some cultures making eye contact is considered disrespectful.

BEING OVERPROTECTIVE VERSUS FREEDOM TO DISCOVER

Part of maturing and learning is making mistakes and learning from them. Allow the student to make discoveries, not only with your family, but also on his or her own.

Many of these students have had years of experience with public transit travel. They might start their day with a bus ride into the nearest train station, a train ride (on a very crowded train) to the city where their particular school is situated, and then up to a 30 minute walk through a major metropolis to their school of choice. They typically will do this starting from the age of 12, unsupervised, 6 days a week.

Set age and maturity appropriate rules and curfews. You are the student's acting parents and should have a sense of comfort in the rules and curfews that you set for your student. For the host families that are new at parenting teenagers, it is not uncommon for these young adults to be out until 9:00 pm on school nights and 11:00 pm-12:00 am on weekends. It is important to know where your student is and with whom. Peers play a very important role in the students' development. If your student were younger their curfew would be adjusted to reflect one that is age appropriate.

Allow the student to be included as one of the family members.

Contact the hosts or parents of your student's friends. The other host families can be a valuable resource, as they will be sharing many of the same experiences as you. Great friendships between hosts have been developed through their students. Many hosts trade weekends off. Their student might go spend a weekend with another student's host family and then that host family can reciprocate at a later date. Some hosts take part in a car pool arrangement with their students.

SETTLING IN

In the process of adjusting to a new family member, compounded with the arrival excitement fading, there may be some unpleasant "letdown" feelings as minor difficulties arise.

Often it is noted that the maturity level of students from some countries in comparison to the students from many Canadian families can lapse. This is often a reflection of cultural expectations, not development. Because teens can still be somewhat egocentric in development, during the first few months the maturity difference can been seen as annoying and embarrassing instead of just a difference in cultural maturity. The lapse of maturity shortens with age and length of stay.

Even a good adjustment has its rough spots for both the host family and the student. There will be disruptions and adjustments needed. Try to keep in mind that some disruptions are inevitable. Just as you are grappling with all these disruptions and frustrations your student at the same time will be trying to adjust to a "foreign everything" and searching for their niche in the family. It is important to understand that this irritation is with the changes and disruptions of familiar routines, not with the international student.

- If you are bothered by these changes you can develop new patterns and adapt old routines.
- If increased traffic in the bathroom is causing problems set up schedules for morning and evening use. Some teenagers like to take longer showers than others and can take their showers in the evening.
- Television preferences should be considered. The student may have a program that they like to watch. If you are a family of young children, remember teens have different interests in programming.
- Set out guidelines for telephone use and clarify what time at night you expect telephone use to end.
- Because of difference in time zones there may be occasions when the student will have to get up during the night or very early in the morning to contact their parents overseas.
- Establish guidelines for internet and computer use.
- Teenagers quite often have ravenous appetites and you may notice an increase in food consumption.
- Write out the household rules and leave a copy in the student's room.
- Setting clear, age appropriate boundaries and establishing expectations, might prevent some unpleasant difficulties.

Ask your student about some of the different customs and cultural differences in their country. You may be surprised about some of the things that we do that may be seen as rude or disrespectful in their cultural.

Typically in Canadian homes children call each other by first name. In some countries the younger siblings show respect by calling their older sibling as "brother" or "sister", not by their first name. There are many reasons why people act in a certain way. Having a sense of what is the norm for your student might help you have a bit of an insight into how difficult it may be for your student to adapt.

Remember that your disappointment and irritation will be temporary. As you and the student adjust and settle into new routines you will be ready to learn from each other and discover not only about another culture, but also, you may discover things about yourself and Canadians, seen through the eyes of a foreigner.

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

Even with the best of host families and the best of international students, things can go wrong. All family members, like the international student, are individuals with unique personalities. Sometimes, personalities clash. Occasionally, a solution to conflict of differences may not be apparent. If you find yourself and your student in a situation that together you have not been able to resolve, the program coordinators are available for assistance. It is important to not wait until the difficulty that the host family or student is experiencing is magnified, making it harder to deal with effectively. Quite often the problem that both parties were experiencing, at the time felt ominous and irreconcilable, but was resolved through mediation, developing a plan and following up.

Sometimes the difficulty cannot be resolved and in this situation it is in the best interest for both the host family and the student, to move the student to a new homestay. This is not necessarily a reflection of the quality of the hosts' ability to parent or a reflection of the student but a resolution to irreconcilable differences.

On the rare occasion a situation may arise where the coordinators might have to use their judgment and move a student even when both host family and student are happy with their living arrangements and do not want change.

These decisions can be difficult to make and much thought and discussion between the program coordinators and involved parties take place prior to a major decision being made. A balance of happiness for all parties is always the goal but sometimes this may not seem apparent to all parties at the time.

In the event that a student should leave the home prior to the completion of the calendar month, the host family will refund the school district the balance of the homestay fee paid for that month.

FINDING THEIR NICHE

One of the most difficult adjustments any teenager has when they move to a new school is fitting in and making friends. This task is even more daunting for the international student. The student will have to deal with the typical barriers of teenage subculture, compounded by language difficulties and not understanding what is the normal social expectations and behaviour of a Canadian teen. Many students come from cultures where there are strict school dress codes (uniforms, no dyed hair, no jewelry), silence in the classroom, utmost respect for the teachers, where individual competition is frowned upon and where less importance is placed on extracurricular activities. All this is confusing especially when the student discovers that their presence in the school may go unnoticed by their peers because of the multicultural make up of Canada. A Canadian student in a Japanese classroom or Mexican classroom will quite often be treated as special and may be well looked after by the students of that school. The foreign students attending classes here may not have the same experience because of the cosmopolitan mix.

- Help your student find extracurricular activities that offer the opportunity to meet others, such as; join a fitness club, dance class, community sports, swim club, school programs and clubs, etc.
- Encourage your student to take the first step in making friends at school but sympathize with the frustrations the student will experience along the way.
- Attend student/teacher/parent interviews and ask the teachers for suggestions of how your student can make friends in the classroom.

DEEPENING THE RELATIONSHIP

For many, this stage is a time when an overall comfort and a desire to deepen the relationship are experienced. Friendships, as well as a mutual respect for each other's differences are shared. During this stage the language skills are developing to the extent that there will be a lingering at mealtime discussions and in depth discoveries of each other's cultures.

It is important to note that many cultures have deeply rooted attitudes and customs that have been developed and shaped for thousands of years and work for that particular culture for reasons we may never understand. Gaining an understanding of a culture is to learn tolerances for different value systems and different ways of behaving. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way, just different. Learning about your student's culture is an exercise in nonjudgmental acceptance of different values and different behaviours.

Well after the student has settled in, there will also be awareness that the student's stay is temporary and there may be an urgency to do the many things together that you have not yet experienced. Also, this is a time when the student may be seeking your advice on their personal issues back in their native country.

STAGE 3: PRE-DEPARTURE & DEPARTURE

This stage normally sneaks up on you before you even realize it. The student often is very excited and nervous at the same time. When you reflect back to when the student first arrived you will be astonished with the changes that have taken place in a relatively short time. Following is a list of some errands that will need to be taken care of before the student departs:

- Make sure the passport is not mailed home accidentally with the belongings that are sent back.
- Close out bank accounts.
- Mail the student's belongings back home (post can take up to 4 weeks and is the cheapest, air is very expensive and can take up to one week).
- Ensure that the International Education Department has the student's current home address (final report card was the whole reason for studying abroad).
- Arrange to pick up medical and dental files if there was a major illness.
- Arrange the student's transportation to the airport, arriving at least 3 hours prior to scheduled departure.

Try and prepare the student for the difficulties they may experience with the transition back into their home country. In some cultures girls especially seem to have a difficult time finding their niche back at home. There tends to be intense but short-lived friction between mothers and daughters. Boys on the other hand have learned to do laundry, set the table, make their own meals and other chores traditionally taken on by the mothers or hired help, making it

easier for them to fit in. Also, generally speaking, because of expectations of boys in comparison to the expectations of girls, from many cultures, the boys are praised for their accomplishments in graduating abroad and learning the English language (even though the girls experience the same achievements), but the girls may be expected to fit back into the traditional roles expected of their cultures and their gender.

Students can also experience the reverse of the culture shock that they may have experienced when they were trying to adjust to life in Canada.

Letting go and saying good-bye can be a difficult experience for both the student and the host family. Relinquishing your role of parenting back to the student's natural parents is not terminating a bond. As a host family, during a very impressionable stage of your student's development, the bond that you developed will stay with your student for the student's entire life. The student's homestay experience, the good and the bad, will have such a profound impact on whatever path they choose through life.

Acknowledge the feelings of loss and then accept them. Reflect on what you have gained from the experience and what the student taught you about yourself and about their culture.

APPENDIX A: HOST FAMILY AGREEMENT ***Family Name:***

The goal of the host family and student relationship should be for all participants to learn from each other and foster friendship which will bring new cultural and linguistic understandings between Canadian families and international students. This agreement delineates the responsibilities for both students and host families and addresses the school district's expectations with regards to the financial arrangements made between the parties.

1. **It is understood that:**

   Host Parents will supply the students with three (3) meals per day and a reasonable use of the house and facilities. Suggested furnishings for the student's bedroom include a desk, chair, dresser, closet, night table, lamp, and bed. The term "reasonable" implies that the visiting student would enjoy the same privileges and opportunities enjoyed by the family's own children of similar age. Students will be welcomed into the home with the spirit that they are new members of the family and the family agrees to provide them with the appropriate supervision and discipline that is consistent with being a responsible parent. They will be invited to partake in family outings and other activities. In short, they will be treated like a member of the extended family.

   - The host family will act as the student's representative at such functions as Parent/Teacher nights, etc. and will accept the responsibility of being the contact person, should problems develop at school.
   - That host families will strive to develop a close relationship with the student through communication and inclusion of the student in the day-to-day activities of the family.
   - The family will help the student set up bank accounts.
   - Further, if it is requested by the natural parents, it would be helpful if the host parents could look after the finances of the student - i.e. making sure that they are not spending exorbitantly. This is not an "expectation" per se and it is solely within the purview of the host family to decide the limit of their involvement.
   - The host family cannot remove the student from the home without the involvement of the home stay coordinator. Any home stay changes require 30 days notice (exceptions may apply).

   In more specific terms, the following are some expectations and guidelines as to what we expect under the terms of "reasonable use of the house and its facilities".

   - The student is not responsible for purchasing their own linens, blankets, towels, etc.

- The use of family toiletry articles, such as shampoo, soap, etc., is open to students, but, if they have special requests or needs in this area, it is reasonable to ask them to pay for these themselves.
- The student is responsible for all of their own mobile phone costs. If the student and the host agree to the student having their own telephone line, the student is responsible for all costs incurred including installation and monthly charges.
- The use of the family television, Internet, stereo and other such household items is under the control of the host parents. If it should become apparent that the student should be spending more time on study (as reflected in school marks, comments), use of these items may be restricted by the host parents.
- The student understands that s/he is ultimately responsible for all of their own personal entertainment costs and personal supplies, including school stationary supplies.
- The host family is not responsible for housing the student's visiting family members (if any) during the course of the year unless they are amenable to it.
- It is expected that the host families will transport the student to and from the airport for arrival and departure of their stay.
- It is expected that students and families will neither borrow money from, nor lend money to, each other.
- Because of the special nature of the student/host family relationship, and because the philosophy of the home stay program is that the students are to enjoy the privileges and responsibilities of being a "member of the family", the students will not be charged a separate fee by families in the form of a security or damage deposit, nor any similar fee.

The above are, within reasonable expectations, inviolate. However, there is thought to be sufficient "flex" within them to allow student and host family relationships to find their own balance - and every relationship is going to be slightly different, as are all families. The program coordinators are available to render assistance in interpreting these expectations when requested, but it is hoped that families and students will be able to come to arrangements that are satisfactory.

2. In return, it is understood that:

The student will share the same responsibilities to the host parents and to the general household as those held by the family's own children of similar age. The student agrees to follow all house rules regarding behavior, curfews, attendance at meals, etc. and to occasionally share in the performance of household duties normally undertaken by the household's own children.

3. With respect to the home stay fee, the following understanding is agreed to by both host parents and students:

- That the fee is to be paid to the host family by the school district at the beginning of each month.
- If a student who has paid the monthly fee, should leave the home prior to the completion of the month, due to the following reasons, quitting the program, being

expelled by the program, or changing home stay, the Host Parent agrees to provide a refund according to the following schedule:

- for each week the student is present, the fee is pro rated.

- for each day the student is present, the fee is pro rated.

4. **It is also understood that:**

- Students will not pay a damage deposit, security deposit, nor any other similar moneys to host families.
- Students will be responsible for any outstanding bills or other expenses, which are directly attributable to the student, that come to the family following the student's departure from the home stay.
- Host families will receive the home stay fee, in full, for each ***academic*** month regardless of date school begins/ ends or absences dues to Christmas holiday, Spring break etc.
- If a student remains in the home stay during a non-academic period and is not attending or participating in a School District No. 91 program, then the details for the homestay arrangement and the payment for the home stay fee will be between the host family and the student.
- If a student arrives prior to the first of the month, the Host Family will be paid according to the following schedule:
    - for each week until the end of the calendar month the student is present, the fee is pro rated.
    - for each day the student is present until the end of the calendar month, the fee is pro rated.
- Students and Host Parents will not lend or borrow money from each other.

5. **Host Parents agree to the above by signing below:**

_____	_____	_____
Printed Name of Host Parent	Signature of Host Parent	Date

For office use only

Approved: _____

Not approved: _____

Signature: _____

International Education
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APPENDIX B: ***HOMESTAY FAMILY BANKING INFORMATION***

Payments to Homestay Families will be made by direct deposit to the bank account of the family's choice. A confirmation statement of payment will be provided to the family by email.

To ensure payment is processed, please complete the following information, attach a void cheque and return to:

School District 91 – Nechako Lakes
Attn: International Programs
PO Box 129 – Vanderhoof, BC – V0J 1P0

If you do not have a chequing account, please provide a confirmation letter of your account details from your bank.

Last Name: _____ **First Name:** _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ **Email:** _____

Telephone: _____ **Bank Name:** _____

Branch and Transit No.: _____ **Account No.:** _____

I hereby authorize School District No. 91 to deposit my Homestay Family payment owed to me into the above bank account. I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the Homestay Administrator of any change to my banking information.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print
Name: _____

APPENDIX C: ***RCMP CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK***

Procedures for Host Families

- Criminal Record Check requests must be made in person by each family member 19 years of age or older in order to be eligible to host International students. Individuals must also pick up his/her own completed Criminal Record Check.
- The following Current Criminal Record Checks (CRC) forms must be completed:
    - RCMP GRC 3584e: Consent for Disclosure of Criminal Record Information
    - RCMP GRC 3923e: Consent for a Criminal Record Check for a Sexual Offence for Which a Pardon has been Granted
- An RCMP staff member will ask you for two pieces of ID: o drivers license with current address
    - *care card*
    - *password*
- The original, completed RCMP GRC 3584e: Consent for Disclosure of Criminal Record received back from the RCMP must be received by the SD 91 International Department before student placement can proceed.
- You will be notified by our Homestay department when your CRC is about to expire. A CRC from the RCMP is good for 3 years in our program.
- Criminal Record Checks from School Districts, volunteer work or sports related are only accepted if done through the RCMP. The RCMP Criminal Record Checks are more thorough with a larger number of charges being checked through their computer systems.

APPENDIX D: ***MEDICAL COVERAGE***

School District 91 International Students are provided medical coverage through either Guard Me International Insurance (*www.guard.me*) or the Medical Services Plan (MSP) depending on the circumstances and how long the student has been in Canada.

Families are expected to take great care of the health needs of their student. The family's doctor should be consulted whenever a health issue arises or, if not available, consultation at a medical clinic must be sought. Please treat the health issues of your student in the same manner as you would a member of your own family. Err on the side of caution and extra-care. Your doctor may choose to directly invoice the insurance provider upon the delivery of services. This is our preference. However, if you are billed directly, keep copies of the receipts and notify the District Person Responsible for International Programs (DPRIP) immediately. All costs will be reimbursed.

This insurance is administered by the School District and any questions should be forwarded to the International Programs department.

International students do not come to Canada with a dental plan. If dental care is required, please contact the DPRIP, who will make sure the family is willing to pay for the treatment and have made arrangements for the payment with their son/daughter.