

# WELCOME!

Welcome to the International Education Program of the Upper Canada Leger Centre for Education and Training. We are responsible for the Program on behalf of the Upper Canada District School Board. We are pleased that you have chosen to become part of our Homestay Family team. You have been selected as a Homestay parent because we believe that you will be able to provide a welcoming, nurturing family environment for a student from another country. You will act like the parent and family of your student. This is a very significant responsibility, and one that we know you will take seriously. It is our hope that you will find this experience enriching and rewarding for all members of your family.

## HOMESTAY/STUDENT RESOURCE GUIDE

This Resource Guide was developed to provide information to both our International Students and their homestay families. It should be used as a guide and as a first source of information.

It is hoped that this binder will provide a resource for host families and International Students, and will ensure a consistent and effective experience for all.

### How to use this guide:

- ❖ Please keep this binder in a handy location so that it can serve as a resource and reference for host families and students alike.
- ❖ When you receive Program updates, please insert them into the appropriate section of the binder.
- ❖ Please insert school information and calendars.

### Staying up to date:

- ❖ You will occasionally receive a replacement page with new information or updates. Please discard the old page and insert the new page in its place.
- ❖ If you think there is an error or something needs clarification, please contact your assigned Homestay Coordinator.
- ❖ If you have a question or concern, please check the Resource Guide. It will be helpful to have it on hand if you are phoning the Homestay Coordinator.

**The Homestay/Student Resource Guide is the property of the UPPER CANADA LEGER CENTRE. If you decide to withdraw from the Homestay Program, please return the guide to your Homestay Coordinator.**

# SUPPORT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

## Program Director

Questions or concerns regarding the Program staff, Program operations, or resource allocations should be forwarded to the Program Director.

The Homestay Coordinators and the Program Director review the academic achievement and progress of the students on a regular basis. All Interim and Final Reports Cards are communicated directly to the parents in the home countries.

## Homestay Coordinators

The International Education Program has Homestay Coordinators who are very willing and able to help you with issues and difficulties that may arise. They are experienced in parenting and Homestay relationships. Their suggestions may be “just the thing needed”.

For Homestay support, the Program is divided into three zones, made up of Cornwall and surrounding area, Brockville and surrounding area, and Smiths Falls and surrounding area.

All contact information should always be at the front of your binder.

Homestay Coordinators are available to help the Host families and the International Students. For Host Parents, they are the first people to call if there are questions or difficulties concerning the students, or your role as parents trying to support your student. For the International Students, the Homestay Coordinator is a source of information and answers to questions and out-of-school experiences.

You may also call the administrative office at **613-936-5294** or e-mail [international@uclc.ca](mailto:international@uclc.ca).

For all issues such as school rules, student activities, academic progress, visa renewals, medical insurance etc. please contact your Homestay Coordinator.

The Homestay Coordinator or Director **MUST** hear from you if:

- ❖ There is a serious event such as a student going missing, being involved in an accident, or being apprehended by the police;
- ❖ you believe your student may be depressed or suicidal;
- ❖ you suspect that your student is seriously ill;
- ❖ you suspect that your student is experiencing discrimination, harassment, threats or inappropriate advances;
- ❖ you suspect that your student is sexually active or is pregnant;
- ❖ you suspect that your student has an eating disorder;
- ❖ you suspect that your student is involved with alcohol, illegal drugs or banned substances;
- ❖ you suspect that your student may be involved in acts of violence or bullying, either as victim or perpetrator;
- ❖ charges are laid by the police against any member of the household;
- ❖ you student causes damage in your home;
- ❖ there is a theft in your home;
- ❖ you are planning to change residence;
- ❖ a resident of your home turns 18 (police check);
- ❖ your student plans to leave the district without permission from the Program;
- ❖ your student plans on changing school or Homestay, or leaving the Program.

We **expect** to hear from you if:

- ❖ You believe your student may be experiencing financial difficulty;
- ❖ you notice a change in the pattern of his or her behaviour;
- ❖ you are offering a change in accommodation;
- ❖ there will be a new resident in you home or if someone is leaving your home;
- ❖ there is a change in your home/work contact information;
- ❖ you will be away from home overnight so that we can be sure that adequate supervision has been arranged;
- ❖ a resident of your house has a communicable disease.

**For emergency calls after hours, please call your Homestay Coordinator or the Director of the International Education Program.**

**We are here to assist and support you!**

# CUSTODIAN

## Responsibilities

All minors under the age of 18 who intend to study in Canada for more than 6 months need to have a "Custodian" adult in Canada as a condition of receiving a student authorization (visa) from Immigration Canada. The Custodian must be legally appointed and be a Canadian citizen or Landed Immigrant resident. In most cases, the Director of the Program is the Custodian. In a limited number of cases, a family friend or relative may be the appointed Custodian for a student. If this is the case, Homestay families should have that person's name and contact information.

The Legal Custodian is a person who makes decisions concerning the student's welfare, in the absence of the student's birth parents. The student is expected to be guided by the directions given by the Custodian. In addition, Homestay parents play an important role in supervising and directing student behaviour on a daily basis, but they are not legally responsible for the student's behaviour.

In some cases, the student resides with an individual who has been chosen by their parents to be the Legal Custodian.

## EXPECTATIONS OF HOMESTAY PARENTS/FAMILY

### As a Homestay parent, we expect you to do the following:

- ❖ Provide a safe, nurturing home environment;
- ❖ provide regular nutritious meals;
- ❖ ensure your student attends, and is punctual for school each day;
- ❖ ensure your student completes all assignments to the best of his/her ability;
- ❖ monitor and support the physical and emotional well-being of your student;
- ❖ include your student in your family outings;
- ❖ assure your student has proper winter clothing;
- ❖ help your student open a bank account;
- ❖ provide a private bedroom;
- ❖ set fair and consistent rules and regulations;
- ❖ cooperate and dialogue regularly with your Homestay Coordinator;
- ❖ alert the International Education staff immediately if you suspect the student is planning to leave the homestay parents' home.

## Helpful Hints For The Host Family

- ❖ Give the visiting student the name, address, and phone number of your Homestay Family on a card that will fit in a wallet.
- ❖ Supply exact bus route information to and from school.
- ❖ Explain how to use a pay phone.
- ❖ Speak English to the student as much as possible.
- ❖ Make a point of engaging the student in conversations. This will require very careful questioning and often paraphrasing in the beginning.
- ❖ Treat the student like a member of the family, not like a guest.
- ❖ Support the student's learning and development.
- ❖ Set reasonable household rules for the student. Be sure he/she understands the rules and has a chance to request changes.
- ❖ Communicate clearly with the student and let him/her know when there is a problem.
- ❖ Be specific and take the time to ensure the student understands.
- ❖ Communication with your Homestay Coordinator and the school will assist your student in being successful.

**Courtesy** – Help your student understand the Canadian expectation of pleasant conversation at meal times and appropriate greetings, or saying “Good night.” Students should be home on time for meals and make arrangements whenever they will be late or will miss a meal. Likewise, students need to understand that inviting friends for dinner requires prior discussion with parents.

## Being a Homestay Family

International Students are usually teenagers, and just like Canadian teenagers, they exhibit varying degrees of confidence and doubt, responsibility and forgetfulness, industry and laziness. The level of supervision required varies according to age and to personality type.

International Students face the same range of feelings and behaviours, but they are dealing with them far from their parents, in a culture that is very different from their own. The key to success with International Students involves patience, consistency, flexibility, and good communication.

Homestay families are an integral part of the life of the students who live with them. Families provide more than just room and board. They become friends and guides in a new culture. The experience is usually enjoyable and rewarding for both students and families.

As might be expected, there is often a period of adjustment, or getting used to each other. In the beginning, the student needs a lot of information from their families. For many, it is their first time away from home and the first time they are required to make all of their own decisions. Many students do not speak English well and often find our customs confusing. In many cases, they are reluctant to ask for clarification.

Your student will not be able to absorb everything the first day and in fact, will not be able to understand everything you say. You may need to explain things more than once. Though we sometimes enjoy the humour and novelty of cultural differences, we also need to be sensitive to discomforts and difficulties. People of different cultures present themselves in various ways. What you take as indifference, coolness, slowness, thoughtlessness, or rudeness in the student, may only be a mutual misunderstanding of signals. Hopefully, problems and frustrations will be rare and students will feel welcome. Be patient!

Homestay families should expect a certain amount of "shyness." Some Asian students, for example, are perceived to be very shy and the outward affection we often show each other, such as hugging, is generally embarrassing to them. You should also expect homesickness, some difficulty in communicating, and the occasional bout of tears. The academic workload is also very demanding in the beginning because of the English language. Be supportive, understanding, and comforting.

Children in homestay families may find it difficult with another youth in the home, and may need support and understanding while they adjust. Take time to check the perceptions of both your own children and the International Student.

You will find that interacting with other homestay families will be of great assistance, both in giving you new ideas and in reassuring you about the pace of the development of your relationship with your student.

## **Getting Ready to Be a Homestay Family**

UCLC will normally have given the student family a description of your family and home. Ideally, pictures were sent ahead of time. However, please feel free to write a letter or e-mail to your student. Describe your family, pets, lifestyle, and your neighbourhood. Relate funny or typical family incidents. Include photos of your family, home, neighbourhood, city, map, and local newspaper.

Write or e-mail to your student's parents. Reassure them that you are looking forward to hosting their son/daughter. Encourage them to write to you.

Do some homework. Study a few words of your student's language. Purchase a dictionary (English-native language). Read up on the history and culture of your student's country of origin. Learn to pronounce your student's name correctly.

Prepare your student's room. A room of his/her own is essential. The room should include a desk, lamp, bed, closet, and dresser. Towels and bedding are to be supplied by the Homestay Family. Other niceties would be putting up a welcome banner, and providing magazines or a small gift appropriate for the age of the student. Please remove all family photos and other pictures to allow the student to make the room his own.

## **Date of Arrival**

Students are asked to contact the Program/Administrative Office with arrival information. Once this information is received, your Coordinator will contact you. If your student advises you directly of arrival details, please contact the Program office and pass along this information.

Study Permits are sometimes delayed, so there is no guarantee that the student will arrive as planned. If there is an expected change, you will be notified.

Homestay Families are encouraged to go to the airport to greet the International Student. You will be given the student's name, birth date, and country of origin in writing on letterhead. This letter will identify you as the designated caregiver for the arriving student. **Please take this letter with you to the airport in case you have to identify yourself or verify the arrival information (date, time, and carrier).**

In some cases, parents or agents of International Students accompany them to Canada. The responsibility of the Homestay Family is to be available to meet with them at the request of the Program, and to allow them to view the student's bedroom and the home's amenities.

## **Holidays and Date of Departure**

Often students will return home for the Christmas vacation period. In such circumstances, if the Homestay Family provides the transportation to and from the airport, the homestay fees will not be reduced for the absence time. If the homestay is unable to transport the student, then the Homestay Coordinators will assume that responsibility. However, the homestay fees for the absence time will be reduced to cover the transportation expenses.

International Students will have the services offered by the UCLC's International Education Program up to the completion of the school year and until June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Unless special provisions are made, after June 30<sup>th</sup>, the staff of the Program:

- ❖ WILL NOT be responsible for the International Students;
- ❖ WILL NOT provide supervision;
- ❖ WILL NOT supervise the activities of the International Students in the homestay or in the community;
- ❖ WILL NOT provide medical insurance coverage for the International Students.

## **Special Considerations**

Under agreed-upon circumstances, e.g. Summer School, or for related circumstances, the Director of the International Program may approve the extension of the student's stay during the months of August and September.

Homestay parents are responsible for driving their student to the airport for Christmas holidays and for their final return trip home.

If this is not possible, contact your Homestay Coordinator or the Program Director.

# THE FIRST DAYS...

## Getting Started, Getting To Know Your Homestay Student

It is important to get to know some very basic information about your Homestay Student early in your relationship. Use the categories below to provide a basis for discussion. It is useful to record this information on a separate page.

- Student's name
- Country of origin
- Date of birth
- Native language
- Home address
- Home phone number
- Names of parents
- Names of siblings
- Name of custodial adult
- Phone number and address of custodial adult
- Names of relatives in Ontario/Canada
- Name and phone number of agent if applicable
- Health insurance information
- Student visa expiry date
- Duration of stay
- Number of years studying English
- Favourite subjects
- Special prizes or awards
- Club activities
- Sports
- Interests and hobbies
- Musical instruments
- Favourite foods
- Religion
- Allergies

It will be helpful to both you and your student if you have a discussion of family rules and schedules shortly after arrival. Patience will be required in all your explanations to the students. If they seem to have difficulty understanding you, it is often valuable to write things down. The student often has a greater comprehension of written English than he/she does of spoken English. You may even want to make a set of labels to put on various locations and items. Having the labels up for the first month helps the student learn the English names through association. Examples would be: fridge, stove, laundry, etc.

When you guide the students through your home, it is a good idea to show them how to use some of the facilities. Encourage them to ask questions and try to use simple language in your expectations. Since we learn best by doing, involve the student in trying out devices such as the washing machine, dishwasher, shower, etc. Students who use cooking appliances must be provided with adequate instruction and supervision.

The Program is not responsible for any damage that results from household misuse or accidents.

**Go over emergency procedures with the student -911- and the numbers for police and fire that should be in an accessible location.**

## Food and Eating

To a student from overseas, Canadian cooking may seem very exotic. Just as you may find raw squid a little unusual, your student may be puzzled by a bowl of cereal. The whole idea of Homestay is for the student to experience Canadian life, so don't make drastic changes to your family meals. Most students enjoy trying new food. However, you should become aware of your student's preferences.

Everyone has a strong attachment to mom's cooking. Sometimes, homesickness can be cured by a familiar bowl of noodles or a cup of tea. Also, vegetables such as cauliflower or broccoli served raw or heavier meats may cause digestive problems for Asian students, in particular.

A trip to the grocery store with your student, and a cooking lesson from your student may be ways to solve any food-related problems.

Teenagers like snacks; this is a universal phenomenon. Please discuss this topic with your student explaining what snacks and drinks are available, how to prepare them, and when it is appropriate to have a snack. You might also wish to include the topic of "cleanup" in this discussion.

Homestay students are not just guests, but hopefully will become a part of your family for the time they are with you. Inviting them to join in a few household responsibilities will help them become involved. Shyness may come from not knowing what to do. Setting the table, helping with lunches, and so on, when clearly defined by you at the outset, can become activities to further your communication. Clearly inform students of meal schedules in order to avoid confusion. Students are expected to let you know (well in advance) if they will be late or absent for a meal, so that you can make adequate plans.

Mealtime is a very personal arrangement in the family, and some of the best times spent with your students will be during meals. If your student is helping with preparations, give careful guidance. In many cases, Canadian meal behaviour is much more casual than what is expected in other countries. Explain how food is served, whether the whole family sits down together, second helpings, and any other aspect that seems unfamiliar.

Teach your students a few of the "Please pass the ..." phrases in order to help them feel comfortable at the table. If the students are going to a restaurant, inform them that they must wait to be seated, and of the appropriate tip that should be left.

**Who Pays:** Families are asked to provide all bedding and towels, soap, laundry, cleaning materials, meals including breakfast, lunch and dinner, and access to healthy snacks.

When the student accompanies the family to a restaurant or the movies, the family should pay the bill. The school will pay for all materials that are part of the student's learning program. Students are responsible for paying for their own clothing, personal items, gifts, bus fares (if a bus pass is not provided by the school), food, and entertainment, i.e. ski passes if they go out with friends.

## **The Bathroom**

The bathroom is probably the most puzzling room in your house for overseas students. Start with a guided tour: show your student where the extra towels, toilet paper, and soap are. Show them how to work the toilet and the shower. Discuss the length of shower time and keeping excess water to a minimum. Please make room for their personal items, whether in the bathroom or their bedroom.

Discuss cleanup after bathroom use.

Toothpaste, toothbrush, exotic soaps, hair sprays, shampoo, and cosmetics are the responsibility of the student.

## **Sleeping Arrangements**

Here, again, your guidance is essential to help your student feel at home. Define clearly where the student can put his/her clothes and belongings, and make sure that he/she understands how the covers on the bed work! Show your student how to make the bed. Let the student know at what times you will be retiring and getting up for breakfast. This will facilitate setting up schedules and getting into your family's routine. Students may be used to different sleeping patterns. It is important that you help them establish routines that are compatible with your family's lifestyle. Please note that in some cultures, students are expected to stay up late to study. Therefore, remain flexible, but they are not to disrupt your family either.

## **Getting Around on the Bus**

Students will use public and private transportation to and from school, as well as for some extra-curricular activities away from the school. You will have to explain that exact change is needed for the bus, and teach them about asking for a transfer, and how to use it.

Homestay parents should show the student how to safely travel between home and the closest shopping center and services.

Homestay parents are to drive their student to agreed-upon outings at a **reasonable** frequency as required for their safety and well-being.

## **Family Customs**

Customs vary from culture to culture. Your student may require some guidance from you in order to avoid embarrassment. If your family wears shoes inside the house, let your student know that it is common in Canada and acceptable in your home.

## **Laundry**

Please inform students about arrangements for laundry in your home. Students need to know where to put laundry and the timetable for washing it, as well as their specific responsibilities with their own laundry. Some may prefer to do their own laundry. Arrange a schedule that suits everyone.

## **Visitors**

Your home is the student's home. It may be that he/she wishes to invite a friend home to be sociable or to work on homework. Please discuss this in advance with your student and agree on notice, times, and any other aspect such as snacks. Likewise, please inform your student if you are expecting guests, and what would be expected of them.

## **Sleepovers**

When we don't know where our students are, it is both a worry and a safety concern. Please follow these guidelines:

- ❖ There must be advance notice to the Homestay Hosts;
- ❖ both sets of parents must exchange full information;
- ❖ there must be verification of name, address and phone number of the location of the sleepover;
- ❖ sleepovers are not permitted during the school week (Sunday-Thursday);
- ❖ parents must be present;
- ❖ anyone staying in the house at the time of the sleepover, and over the age of 18, must have a police background check.

## **Internet**

This is an important communication tool for your student. This is an inexpensive means of staying in touch with family and friends in their home country. In addition, it is critical to school studies and success. Many students will arrive with their own laptop computer. If not, they will expect to have access to your home computer system. The Upper Canada Leger Centre can offer an extra computer, if required. A portion of the homestay fee is expected to cover the expense of high-speed Internet connection where available. For assistance, please contact your Homestay Coordinator or administrative office.

## Use of Telephone

Please set definite guidelines regarding phone. Students are encouraged to purchase international phone cards to pay for their long distance. Many come with their own cell phones.

Shortly after arriving, your student may wish to call home. If necessary, explain how he/she can make a collect call. Make it clear that the cost of long distance calls is the responsibility of the student. No local calls should be made or received after 10:00 p.m. unless there is an emergency. Students should not be on the phone for long periods. They should be discouraged from phoning home more than once a week. Please monitor your student's use of the computer and telephone, as you would your own children. Should you feel that this is a problem area, please contact your Homestay Coordinator.

## Alcohol and Drugs

**The rules are clear and inflexible in this area.** International Students are not permitted to purchase, use, or have alcohol or any kind of non-prescription drugs **regardless of age**. Any such behaviour is grounds for immediate expulsion from the Program.

## Household Chores

The Homestay Family will not impose unusual household duties, except those related to the maintenance of the student. The student should maintain a clean room; clean up after food preparation, leave the bathroom clean etc. Their time here is to concentrate on studies and acquire English language skills.

## In Case Of Illness Or Accident

The expectation is that you would follow the same procedures as you would for your own children.

### **Steps to follow if it is necessary to seek medical attention for your student:**

1. Call the number on the health card and describe the illness to the operator;
2. Write down the CLAIM NUMBER;
3. Take student to the walk-in clinic or hospital emergency department;
4. Fees will probably be required at the time of service;
5. Ask the Doctor to sign and date the form;
6. Fill in the CLAIM FORM;
7. Mail to the address on the top of the form with original receipts (make copies);
8. The cheque (payable to the student) will arrive in approximately 2 weeks.

**Notify the Homestay Coordinator and ask for help if necessary.**

# THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AS A MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY

## Privacy and Security

Privacy is an essential element when several people live together. It is important that Homestay Parents make it clear to students of any areas in the home that should not be entered. In most cases, these would be the bedrooms of each family member. A home office or workshop would also require this definition. The student's privacy should also be respected. The student's room should be considered "off limits" to family members and visitors. This also applies when the student is away for a few days. Parents of young children will need to help the children understand this rule. Of course, cleaning the room is necessary and parents should work out an arrangement that may include "permission" to be in the student's room for cleaning.

At no time is it appropriate for a family member or visitor to "borrow" possessions (walkman, computer, CD's, etc.) without prior approval. Everyone should also keep in mind that approval once doesn't mean approval on an on-going basis. Parents should also explain carefully to the student which items are open for use, and which are not.

Please be clear about the procedures for securing the home and items, such as bikes. Explain about locking windows and doors, as well as which entrance to use. Also, explain when and how to use the heating system, electrical appliances, and home alarms, if present.

**Go over emergency procedures with the student -911- and other numbers such as police and fire.**

## Driving and Owning a Car

The student may have a driver's license from his/her own country and may even have an international driver's license, BUT, students are **not** permitted drive Host Family cars. They may not purchase a car of their own.

## Religion

Respect your student's religious beliefs. Invite him/her to join you if you go to Church, but understand if he/she chooses not to. **Absolutely no attempt should be made to change your student's religious beliefs.**

## Homestay Parents' Absences

If the Homestay Parents must be absent overnight, International Students must not be left alone at home without adult supervision. Arrangements must be made with the agreement of the Homestay Coordinator or Director for temporary supervision.

## **Babysitting**

An International Student is not to be asked to babysit, and is not to be placed in a position of authority or responsibility.

## **Mutual Respect & Confidentiality**

Homestay Family members and students are to treat each other with dignity and respect at all times, and shall not make threatening or sexual advances (implied, physical, or psychological). Confidences must be respected. Nevertheless, if a student complains of any form of abuse, the Homestay Coordinator or Director must be notified.

## **PROBLEM SOLVING**

### **Student**

If you have a problem, disagreement, or argument in your Homestay, there are ways that you can get the help you need:

#### **You can:**

- ❖ Ask for help from your Host Family.
- ❖ Ask for help from your Homestay Coordinator.
- ❖ Contact the Program Director.

#### **It is important to ask yourself some questions:**

- ❖ What is the problem?
- ❖ How big is the problem?
- ❖ Am I being honest with others and myself?
- ❖ What do I need to help me feel better? Feel respected? Feel supported?
- ❖ How can I help myself?
- ❖ Do I have all the information?
- ❖ Did I ask enough questions?
- ❖ Am I being fair? Considerate? Respectful? Truthful?
- ❖ Am I stressed and causing my own problem?
- ❖ Am I blaming others for my problem?
- ❖ Am I avoiding working out my problem? By myself? With someone I trust?

## **What are some of the things that may cause problems in the Homestay?**

- ❖ Bedroom: too cold, not enough light, too noisy, etc.
- ❖ Food: not what I like or am used to, not enough to eat, meals are too late or too early, etc.
- ❖ Children or other International Students: too noisy, don't talk to me, going into my bedroom, using my things without asking, etc.
- ❖ Personalities: a loud voice, using hand gestures, facial expressions I don't understand or appreciate.
- ❖ House rules: helping with house chores and meals, doing laundry, calling when I won't be home, eating with my Host Family, curfew times, sleepovers, etc.

Some of the difficulties in talking about and solving problems are because of language barriers, cultural differences, and because the Homestay Parents are not the real parents. The student may want independence.

Please remember that there are Program rules, and each Homestay will have specific rules and expectations. Please also be aware of Canadian laws that all students must follow.

**When you have a problem** in Homestay, you must talk to your Homestay Coordinator who will help you work on the problem. You may tell the Homestay Coordinator some very personal things, as these will be kept very confidential. Sometimes, students ask that we do not tell the Host Family about the problem as they could be embarrassed to let the parents know about it. The Homestay Coordinator understands that your information is sensitive and personal, and it is our policy to respect that. It is also very important that we speak openly and respectfully to each other so that the problem can be solved. *(See Dispute Resolution at the end of the binder dealing with situations that are not repairable.)*

### **The Homestay Coordinator may:**

- ❖ Talk with you over the phone;
- ❖ Communicate by e-mail;
- ❖ Meet you at school;
- ❖ Visit you and your Homestay Family.

Please remember that there is a solution to every problem. Many people in the Program can help you.

The Homestay Coordinator will help the student find solutions and deal with the issues.

The Homestay Coordinator will help the student and family to....

- ❖ Work together to solve problems;
- ❖ be willing to deal with the problems;
- ❖ be willing to move beyond someone winning, and someone losing;
- ❖ collaborate so that all people feel like winners;
- ❖ learn to trust;
- ❖ create a plan to work together for a solution;
- ❖ live up to each side of the agreement.

## **IF THE STUDENT MISBEHAVES...**

Students are required to follow the Program rules as a condition of remaining in the Program. Some rules are “heavier” than others, and these include:

- ❖ Attendance at school and a sincere effort to maintain a passing average through completion of all assigned work
- ❖ No cars
- ❖ No independent apartments
- ❖ No involvement with alcohol, drugs, pornography or gambling
- ❖ No fighting, criminal activity, police charges

Young people do make mistakes! This isn't a function of being from outside Canada, but being away from home sometimes makes the impact of mistakes greater. As a school system, we are in the business of helping kids grow up. We sometimes have to help them when they have made bad decisions. While Program staff, teachers, and Homestay Parents are supervising the young people in our care, we are also trying to guide them. We cannot prevent every mistake. We hope that we can teach to avoid repeating the same mistakes. Decision-making is an essential skill and it must be learned. Don't assume this ability.

Where a student's behaviour, attendance, or academic achievement is substandard, he/she will not be re-admitted to the Program for the following year.

Where a student's behaviour involves serious misbehaviour or excessive absence, he/she could be dismissed at any time. In such cases, every effort is made to correct the behaviour and ensure that the student's parents have been fully informed. We hope that dismissal is not required, but we will not tolerate abuse of our standards.

The Program Director of the International Student Program will review and determine the seriousness of the student's behaviour, and will make all decisions as to which disciplinary measure should apply.

The Homestay Coordinator and Director will consider many strategies when dealing with the student misbehaviour.

- ❖ Interview the student to determine all of the circumstances
- ❖ Interview the Homestay Family
- ❖ Notify birth parents
- ❖ With the cooperation of the student, create a remedial plan of action.

The Homestay Coordinator will conduct regular and even stringent follow-up supervision.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

### **Student Participation Agreement**

- ❖ Students must abide by the laws of Canada and by school rules.
- ❖ Students may only use drugs if prescribed by a doctor.
- ❖ Students are not permitted to purchase or drink alcoholic beverages.
- ❖ Students are also not permitted to smoke on the school grounds.
- ❖ Smoking is discouraged.
- ❖ Students are not permitted to possess or to purchase weapons of any type.
- ❖ Students are not permitted to drive any motor vehicles.
- ❖ Students must attend school on a regular basis. A note from the Homestay Parent must explain any absences.
- ❖ Students are expected to obey their teachers, and to follow reasonable rules established by Homestay parents.

**Infractions of the above rules may result in immediate dismissal from the International Student Program, and termination of the student's acceptance in the Program. Students who are expelled are not eligible for a refund of fees.**

- ❖ Students are expected to attend all classes and complete all homework and assignments. Minimum expectations for daily homework are:
  - ◆ Grade 9/10: 1.5 hours plus review
  - ◆ Grade 11: 2 hours plus review
  - ◆ Grade 12: 2.5 hours plus review
- ❖ Students with no formal homework should be reviewing past work, working on subject-specific vocabulary, or reading in English.
- ❖ Students should maintain satisfactory academic achievement to remain in the Program.
- ❖ Students must use English as much as possible during the program.
- ❖ Students are not permitted to visit such places as pornographic shops, adult theatres, or drinking establishments.
- ❖ While living in a Homestay, students:
  - ◆ will show respect for their families and act as a member of the family;
  - ◆ will obey family rules;
  - ◆ will voluntarily help with reasonable household chores;
  - ◆ keep Host Parents updated about important events, etc.
- ❖ Students are encouraged to purchase phone cards. International phone calls require Homestay approval when using the Homestay telephone. Payment for any phone calls must be made to the Host Family immediately. Students are not permitted to run up large phone bills.
- ❖ Students are not permitted to talk about the family's private affairs to others.
- ❖ Students cannot change Host Families and schools at will. All changes in Homestay will be done through the Director of the International Education Student Program. Placement in particular schools is the decision of the Director.
- ❖ Students are to remain in the school district. Students are not permitted to go on trips by themselves. A trip with the Host Family is allowed. If permission from the student's parents or guardian is submitted beforehand, a trip with another adult person is permitted. A travel application form must be submitted to the Program office two weeks prior to travel.
- ❖ Students are permitted to visit relatives, close family friends and student's friends only if there will be guaranteed adult supervision and permission of the Host Parent. These visits should be of an occasional nature, and Homestay Parents should contact parties involved to make sure there is no inconvenience to the Hosting Family.

**Any continuous failure to abide by the above guidelines may result in dismissal from the International Student Program and termination of Student's Visa.**

## **ADVICE TO STUDENTS: Being Successful In The Homestay**

**We believe that International Students have three major goals:**

1. learn English and understand Canadian culture;
2. achieve academic success;
3. mature into responsible persons.

Homestay Families play an important part in helping students achieve those goals. We select families who will support students and we urge their active involvement in each student's success. Participation in the International Education Program is a privilege. Students agree to follow the Program rules, which include cooperation with their Homestay Families. This list is provided to help students be successful.

**Students are expected to:**

- ❖ Be polite and courteous with all family members. Talk to them about how your days are going and ask about their work or activities. Try hard to share the family experience. Use "please" and "thank you".
- ❖ Treat the home and its possessions in a caring, respectful manner. Your family will then be respectful of your things.
- ❖ Maintain security of the home: close, lock windows, and doors as requested.
- ❖ Understand the operation of the heating thermostats and when to use them. For example, don't leave heat at the high setting when leaving in the morning. Talk over the use of the shower to be sure the arrangement is suitable for all family members. Showers should not be too long as they are a large expense.
- ❖ Be home at the agreed time. Mealtimes with Host families are very important and should not be missed except for important functions. Students should discuss food concerns with Host Parents. Tell them if a type of food is disliked or if there is a wish for a particular food. Sometimes families enjoy a traditional dish cooked by the student; after all, the family wants to learn about another culture too. Be sure to tell the person who cooked the meal if you enjoyed it.
- ❖ Follow the evening curfew rules. Curfews are established for the health and safety of students. It is expected that students will be home studying during most evenings. If they do go out, it should be after homework is done. It is also expected that students will be home at the agreed time after weekend evening activities. Be sure to phone home if some emergency comes up that will delay you. Do that as early as possible, not at the curfew deadline.

### **Curfew guidelines:**

#### **Grade 9 – 10**

- ◆ Sunday – Thursday - 9:30 p.m.
- ◆ Friday & Saturday - 11:30 p.m.

#### **Grade 11 & 12**

- ◆ Sunday – Thursday - 10:00 p.m.
- ◆ Friday & Saturday - 12 midnight

**Note:** However, your Homestay parents may require you to be home earlier.

- ❖ Having guests over without Host Parents at home needs prior permission.
- ❖ Having guests of the opposite sex in the student's bedroom is not allowed.
- ❖ Be considerate in the use of the phone. Phone calls should be short and should be made during the hours the family is active. Late night local calls after 10 p.m. to or from friends are not acceptable. Late night calls to or from family overseas should be made after discussion with Host Parents to avoid waking the family.
- ❖ Arrange in advance with Host Parents for paying extra bills such as phone bills. If a student has questions about cost or bills proposed by families, the student should call the Homestay Coordinator.
- ❖ If you wish to invite a friend for dinner or to stay overnight, this request must be discussed with parents first. Likewise, if you want to stay at a friend's house, talk to your Host Parents in advance to see if they agree.
- ❖ If you have travel plans, be sure to discuss them with your Host Parents at the earliest possible date. Sometimes they can help you with arrangements. Do the same if your parents or other relatives are going to visit – talk to your Host Parents about the plan and the dates. If you are away from home and your return plans must be changed, call your Host Parents immediately so they won't worry.
- ❖ Remember, if you have a group of friends visiting, Canadian custom suggests that it isn't acceptable to use a language some people in a group cannot understand. Speak in English, at least part of the time, if family members or other members or other Canadians are present.
- ❖ It is a good idea to help at home. If you see that family members are usually busy or have some difficulty situation to fix, perhaps you can help by setting the table or taking care of a younger child for a half hour.
- ❖ If you are lonely, worried or feel sick, talk to your Host Parents. They may be able to help you. It is a normal feeling to be worried or sad at times, and parents understand those feelings. If you are sick, it is difficult to study successfully.
- ❖ If you have a concern or problem at home, talk to your Host Parents about it. It is the Canadian style to discuss any disagreements or concerns as soon as they arise. If a student is uncertain about how to discuss a problem, the student should ask the Homestay Coordinator for help.

**Remember, a good Homestay relationship can be one of the most helpful things that can happen for an International Student.**

**It is also important to remember that both the student and the family have a responsibility to help each other build a successful relationship. Start working for success immediately and do something positive each day.**

# LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

The primary reason for the student's visit to Canada is to study English. Therefore, it is good to try to engage your student in conversations at home. Speak in short basic sentences to help reduce confusion. Avoid negative questions such as, "Don't you want more?" The answer would likely be "yes" (I don't want more) instead of "No" (I don't). Many languages respond to the verb rather than the meaning of the sentence. Be clear regarding "yes" and "no". **Many times students will indicate that they understand when they do not.** This is because they do not want to bother you. You need to paraphrase often and check that they understand clearly. This is particularly important when giving instructions so that students don't let you down.

## Tips For Communicating With An Individual Who Speaks Little English

*By Arthur J. Moore University of British Columbia*

### Assume:

- ❖ The other person speaks at least one language well.
- ❖ The other person is translating into his/her own language-this takes at least twice as much time as usual.
- ❖ The other person is probably just as intelligent as you.
- ❖ Non-verbal communication is even more important than usual.

### Tips:

- ❖ Don't yell, but speak clearly
- ❖ Take your time, speak slower than usual, but avoid "talking down".
- ❖ Communicate words in order of importance.
- ❖ Avoid idioms (or explain them).
- ❖ Do not try to imitate their accent; use your best Canadian accent.
- ❖ Non-verbal communication:
  - ◆ Make sure it's consistent with your verbal.
  - ◆ Remember: gestures may have a different meaning in another culture.
- ❖ A smile, nod, or "yes" from the other person often doesn't mean "I understand". If it is important, ask a question and look for a paraphrase response.
- ❖ 50 % of communication is based on context-use it. Make sure the other person understands which part of the context you are referring to.
- ❖ In information gathering or liaison:
  - ◆ Don't get "down to business" too quickly
  - ◆ Empower the other: avoid being louder or higher than the other person
  - ◆ Consider personal space.
- ❖ Laughter may communicate embarrassment-this is considered inappropriate in our culture, but not in most other cultures. On the other hand, laughing at a mistake may be insulting i.e. if a person cannot understand the joke, laughter may convey disrespect. If something the student does or says seems amusing, explain the humour.

## Some Thoughts for “Parents” of International Students ... from an ESL Tutor

Living and learning in a foreign language is *exhausting*. Often one’s brain is on overload. Physical exercise, sleep and humour are helpful and important. Sometimes talking in one’s own language is a good relief.

Check that the student is writing down each school assignment in his *agenda*. Go over the list each day to find out if he understands what is required for homework. Tell the school or tutor if you feel you cannot help the student understand what he is to do.

Asian students, particularly, are not used to answering questions that require critical thinking. They learn facts to give back on a test or find the right answer to a math question without having to show how they got it.

A baby listens to language for two years before she begins to talk. Encourage your student to talk, but have *patience* if she says little at first.

Take the time to explain necessary information slowly in normal English. It’s tempting to talk like he may, “We go town”, but remember, you are a *model* for the English he came to Canada to learn.

Show interest in your student’s country, customs and family. A language learner can feel like a nobody because he cannot express who he is, his passions, and his talents. Encourage him to show you *who he is*, as well as introducing him to life in Canada.

Canadian food may give little comfort to a newcomer in a totally strange environment. When possible, try to provide some food that your student is accustomed to.

While some international students may be very shy, others may think that being in North America represents “freedom” as they want to interpret it. Your student has the same needs and desires as Canadian teen-agers, so be aware of the friends they are keeping company with, just as you would with your own children.

For an Asian student, losing face can be devastating. If you are making a serious correction to him, do it privately.

Enjoy learning from your guest as she learns from you. It will be a life-changing year for all of you.

## STUDENT SOCIALIZING

International Students are teenagers and their social life is of great importance. In fact, we encourage our students to socialize, especially with Canadian students. **Anything families can do to support new friendships that provide opportunities to speak English is appreciated.** On the other hand, no student can be successful in his or her studies if overtired by late nights and “good times”.

The hours that students keep will vary with age. Of course we expect the student to fit into the family pattern, so there is room for individual schedules to suit each family. Curfew times vary with age and demonstrated responsibility.

Friends are important to young people and we encourage International Students to make as many Canadian friends as possible. However, part of growing up is learning to make good judgments about friendships. Our students sometimes need adult supervision and advice.

The following is offered to assist Homestay families in supporting students in maintaining a healthy social program:

- ❖ Friends should be close to the same age. There is often a problem where a young student has “friends” 5 or 6 years older.
- ❖ Students should be able to go out. In all cases, insist that you are told where the student is going, and whom he/she is accompanying. If you don't know the friends, your student should arrange for you to meet them.
- ❖ You should be given a phone number to contact your student when he/she is at a friend's house.
- ❖ No sleepovers are permitted during the school week (Monday –Thursday).
- ❖ It is never acceptable for a student to phone at the last minute and announce he/she will be staying overnight with a friend.
- ❖ Socializing should be done only on weekends when school attendance is not required the next day. Exceptions might be a school event, or a special occasion such as a birthday celebration.
- ❖ Set firm curfews and require that your student observes them.
- ❖ Establish clear phone policies and insist on cooperation. This is the case even if the student has his/her own phone. We do not support students running up extraordinary phone charges or spending lengthy periods late at night on the phone.
- ❖ **Having guests of the opposite sex in the student's bedroom is not allowed.**
- ❖ **Having guests over without the Host Parents at home requires prior permission.**

## STUDENT'S FRIENDS:

NAME	PHONE	ADDRESS	PARENT'S NAME

## SCHOOL REGISTRATION & COURSE SELECTION

The Homestay Coordinator and school Guidance office assist the student with the selection of courses. The Homestay Parents can be useful in helping the student to understand this process. UCLC also has an Educational Consultant available to assist in the student's educational plan.

Whether students are in an English Development Program or a graduation program, we discourage free/study periods. Students should be taking a full load of courses.

Students will be registered in a minimum of 4 courses per semester. Students from Brazil require a fifth credit.

Homestay Parents are invited to attend parent/teacher meetings and to dialogue with the Program Homestay Coordinator about the student's progress at school.

Parents are required to notify the Program about "skipping", "lates", suspensions etc.

## **SUPPORT FROM THE SCHOOL**

### **School Contact**

In most cases, a designated individual is responsible for the International Students. This individual is usually a Guidance counsellor. Please call the Guidance office as your first line of contact regarding academic and/or attendance concerns and inform your Homestay Coordinator.

### **Report Cards and Interim Reports**

Reports: Report cards are issued 4 times a year. Students must show their report card to their Homestay Parents, as it needs to be signed and returned to the school promptly. Pay particular attention to work habits and attendance, but keep in mind that beginning students often have low academic marks or no marks at all –just an anecdotal comment. That should change after the second report the student receives.

If you have questions about the report, or if it is unclear, feel free to enquire at the school. If questions remain, contact your Homestay Coordinator.

Interim Reports: Teachers provide interim reports when a student is experiencing difficulty, failing to attend or hand in homework, or if a student has done particularly well. Feel free to contact the teacher if you need more information, and then discuss with your student a specific action plan to correct the situation. Involve your Homestay Coordinator.

Please contact the school if you are unsure about when interim reports are issued, or whether your student has received one. Sometimes students are reluctant to show their reports to Homestay Parents, but interims serve as an excellent first warning system.

### **After School Tutors**

The Program Director or Homestay Coordinator will consult with the student's birth parents should the student require after school tutoring. The Program have four options under the Student Assistance Program whereby qualified teachers/tutors may meet a student at a convenient time and place, and for the agreed upon number of hours. There will be an additional charge for this service.

## ADVICE TO STUDENTS: Being Successful in School

Teachers and other school staff play an important part in helping students achieve those goals. Local teachers and area schools are committed to excellence, and they are willing to assist students who are working for success.

Participation in the International Student Program is a privilege. Students who are accepted into the Program agree to follow the Program rules, which include cooperation with their school.

This list is provided to help students be successful.

### Students are expected to:

- ❖ Attend all classes, be on time, and have proper books and materials.
- ❖ Follow all school rules. Complete all assigned homework. Even if the work is difficult, students should do their best to complete it.
- ❖ Students should plan on a minimum homework schedule such as:
  - ◆ Grade 8-10: 1.5 hours per day plus review
  - ◆ Grade 11: 2 hours per day plus review
  - ◆ Grade 12: 2.5 hours per day plus review
- ❖ Be sure that you understand exactly what to do. Ask your teachers to explain the assignment if you are uncertain. Also, ask your teachers or counsellors about help with improving study skills.
- ❖ If you have no homework assignments, spend the time reviewing past work, or work you had difficulty with.
- ❖ Read in English for at least 30 minutes per day. Use the newspaper, magazines, or novels if you wish.
- ❖ Be polite and courteous with all teachers and school staff.
- ❖ Be friendly and cooperative with other students. Try to participate in school activities such as school teams, the choir, clubs and social events.
- ❖ Ask for extra help if you find difficulty with the work or if the class is moving too quickly.
- ❖ Make vacation arrangements that do not cause you to miss classes.
- ❖ **SPEAK ENGLISH!** It does not help you to spend time with other International Students who speak your home language.

## **Travel Regulations**

International Students are required to remain in the area and are not permitted to travel to other cities without specific permission.

Students who wish to travel must apply to the Program Office, through their Homestay Coordinator, for permission.

## **Dispute Resolution**

Even though every effort is made to make a perfect match, sometimes things just do not work out!

For any number of reasons the match between the Homestay and the International Student is not functional.

All reasonable attempts to rectify the situation will be made, but at one point, it becomes evident that it will not work out.

This should not be taken as a negative reflection by either party.

When such circumstances exist, it is in the best interest for all involved to move the student to another Homestay. We will try to make this as easy as possible for all concerned.

Fees will be prorated between the two Homestays.

## **International Education**

**Upper Canada Leger Centre (UCLC)**

[international@uclc.ca](mailto:international@uclc.ca)

613-932-5294

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## Parental Permission for Personal Travel

Students who wish to travel while they are participating in the UCLC International Education Program must provide written permission to the Director of the Program or to his/her designate Homestay Coordinator **at least 48 hours prior to travel.**

Personal travel cannot be supervised by the UCLC personnel.

Therefore, authorization to travel must be given in writing by the student's natural parent. Such travel is the entire responsibility of the student's parent. Neither the UCLC nor the Homestay Parents can assume any responsibility for the student during such travel. **Unauthorized travel by an International Student is not permitted.**

### PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

STUDENT:

SCHOOL:

DATE:

DESTINATION:

CONTACT OF WHERE STUDENT CAN BE REACHED:  
(NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE)

DEPARTURE DATE FROM HOST CITY:

RETURN DATE TO HOST CITY:

I GIVE MY CHILD PERMISSION TO TRAVEL AS STATED ABOVE

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Signature of Parent

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information please feel free to contact the Upper Canada Leger Centre Administrative Offices

1950 Montreal Road, Cornwall, Ontario, Canada, K6H 6L2

Tel: 613-936-5294 | Toll free: 1-866-380-UCLC (1-866-380-8252) | Fax: 613-936-5292

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