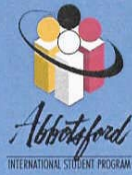
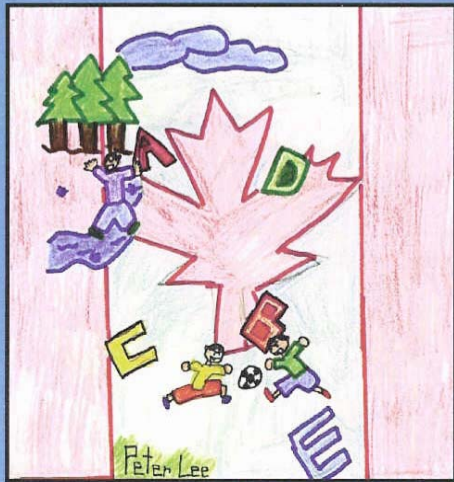


# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM HANDBOOK

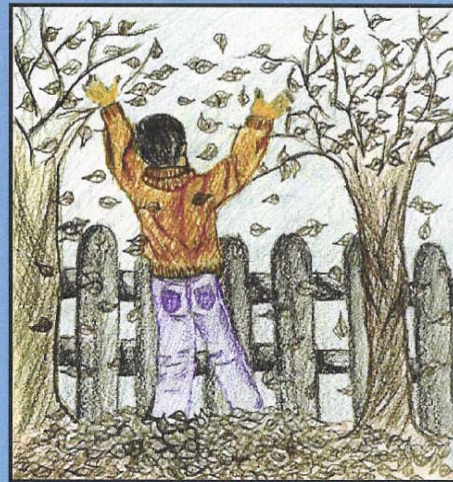
Abbotsford School District  
International Student Department



*Opening Minds...  
Touching Hearts*



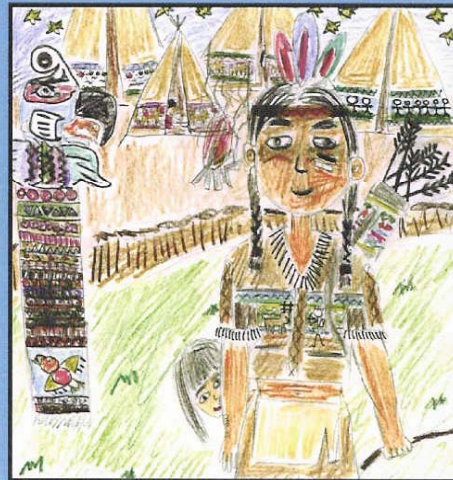
*Byung-Chan Lee Grade 5 Dr. Thomas Swift Elementary*



*Kim So Young Grade 9 W.J. Mouat High School*



*Hye-Sim Shin Grade 1 Mountain Elementary*



*Jin-A Lee Grade 6 Abbotsford Middle School*

**WELCOME TO THE ABBOTSFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS:**  
**KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12**

*ENGLISH VERSION*

**HANDBOOK FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS,  
PARENTS and HOMESTAY FAMILIES**

*Expanding my language  
enriches my life.*

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## **1. INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Welcome to our International Program and the community of Abbotsford. Congratulations on your acceptance into our program! This handbook contains information on the most commonly asked questions that new international students have, especially in the first few weeks of your arrival. Keep this as a resource for the future.

### **What We Believe**

We are proud leaders in our holistic approach because we care, respect, and feel a responsibility for the experiences our students, parents, agents, and community have in our district.

We uphold the highest integrity in providing guidance and support in understanding cultural, educational, societal, and familial differences.

Our success is dependent on unique partnerships within a complex international environment.

Through openness and communication, we foster life-changing experiences leading to a critical and compassionate world-view locally, nationally, and internationally.

### **International Program Staff**

Marcy Criner, District Principal of International Programs and ESL

Kathy O'Hare, Program Administrator

Elizabeth Cho-Frede, Program Coordinator

Kimberley Skinner, Homestay Recruiter

#### **Program Assistants**

Henriette Young

Jocelyne Seguin

Email: [jocelyne\\_seguin@sd34.bc.ca](mailto:jocelyne_seguin@sd34.bc.ca)

Phone: 604-851-4585

Fax: 604-504-7629

#### **International Assistants**

International Assistants (IAs) help international students integrate into the school community. They facilitate communication between the families, homestay parents, and the schools to ensure clear understanding of expectations, events and issues. They also assist students with renewal documentation. Each International Assistant is responsible for specific schools. Your International Assistant will meet you at orientation and provide you with their business card, pager number and work hours. International Assistants do

not work on the weekend or outside of their working hours. The followings are the main elements of their duties.

<p>Intake responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Centralized orientations</li> <li>• Individualized orientations</li> <li>• School based orientations</li> </ul>	<p>Attend meetings called by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IP staff</li> <li>• School principals</li> </ul>
<p>Documentation monitoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student information sheets</li> <li>• Study Permit renewal</li> <li>• Passport renewal</li> <li>• Renewal application forms</li> <li>• Bi-monthly Student Homestay Survey</li> <li>• Homestay application and homestay move request form</li> <li>• Online student exit survey</li> <li>• Online local parent survey</li> </ul>	<p>Home-country responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At supervisor request, phone parents regarding issues of significance</li> <li>• Prepare school reports for mailing</li> </ul>
<p>Participate in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training sessions for IAs</li> <li>• Some parent-teacher interviews</li> <li>• Field trips, when appropriate and with supervisor's permission</li> </ul>	<p>Maintain regular contact with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students &amp; schools</li> <li>• Homestay parents</li> </ul>
<p>Report and maintain records of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intake English assessment scores</li> <li>• Student/teacher contact</li> <li>• Weekly Reports to supervisor</li> <li>• IA student notes</li> </ul>	<p>Monitor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student attendance</li> <li>• Student illness</li> <li>• Student progress (academic, social, home)</li> </ul>

## 2. APPLICATION TO RENEW

### March

Every year, students must reapply to attend school. Renewal Application Forms are given to the International Assistants who will schedule appointments with each student. The form must be filled in even if students do not plan to return to our program the next year.

It is very important that all the information is double-checked, especially your parents' contact information in your home country (address, home phone number and fax number.)

If you want to transfer to a different school, please be aware that the request must be from your parent. The request detailing the reasons for the transfer needs to be attached to the renewal form. The request is reviewed by the International Program's Review Committee, which makes the final decision.

Please understand that the committee bases its decision on the student's needs, not the parent's.

Closing date for transfer requests is April 4<sup>th</sup>. No transfers will be made beyond this date.

### April

A letter will be sent to your parents, your host family here in Abbotsford, and one to you, which states that full payment of fees is due by June 1st. If we have not received payment by June 1st, we cannot guarantee school placement. We do not accept partial payments (installments).

**International Students may only apply for either a full academic year, or half academic year.**

## 3. STUDENT AUTHORIZATION RENEWAL (VISA)

A package will be given to your International Assistant (IA) 8 weeks prior to the expiration date on your present student authorization. Instructions will be in the package and the IA will help you through the process. If you have any questions, or need assistance in completing the package, you can call the office and we will help you as well.

When you have completed the application and followed all the steps, your IA will bring it to the International Programs Office.

Please ensure the package is complete and includes a copy of your passport, student visa and a bank statement. We will check the information to ensure it is correct, and add the letter of attendance. We mail the package from our office. Please note that it takes approximately six weeks for your visa to be processed and returned.



**Please note: If you plan to go home for the summer, it is IMPORTANT that you make sure your student visa is still valid at the time of your return to Canada. If not, contact your IA prior to departure.**

#### **4. PASSPORT RENEWAL**

Please be aware of your passport expiry date. To renew your passport you need to contact the Consulate of your home country. Phone numbers for Consulates can be found in the blue pages of the telephone book. Here are a few:

##### **Consulates**

Korea	1600-1090 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 3V7 Phone: (604) 681-9581, Fax: (604) 683-1682, 681-4864
China	3380 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC Phone: (604) 734-7492
Taiwan	Taipei Economic & Cultural office 2008-925 West Georgia St. Vancouver, BC V6C 3L2 Phone: (604)-689-4111
Japan	800-1177 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 2K9 Phone: (604) 684-5868, Fax: (604) 684-6939
Brazil	77 Bloor Street West, Suite 1109, Toronto, ON M5S 1M2 Phone: 416-922-2503, Fax: 416-922-1832
Germany	704-999 Canada Place (World Trade Centre), Vancouver, BC V6C 3E1 Phone: 604-684-8377, Fax: 604-684-8334
Thailand	1040 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC V6Z 2R9 Phone: (604) 687-1143, Fax: (604) 687-4434
Mexico	710-1177 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6E 2K3 Phone: 604-684-1859, 684-3547, Fax: 604-684-2485

Passport renewals require a letter of attendance that is issued from the International Program. Please talk with your International Assistant who will contact the office and ensure the letter of attendance is done. When you receive your new passport please send a photocopy of the first page with your picture on it and the new expiry date, to our office.

## 5. PROGRAM RULES AND POLICIES

### Refund Policy

In the event that a student does not come to Canada or decide not to attend or to leave the International Program for personal reasons, only a portion of the paid tuition fee will be refunded. In all cases, the application fee will be retained to cover administrative expenses. The following refund policy will apply for each student:

- Full refund (less application fee) if the Study Permit Authorization is not approved by [Immigration Canada](#) and supporting documentation of this rejection is supplied (student must provide a letter of rejection from High Commission).
- 2/3 of the tuition fee will be refunded to the student who withdraws prior to the commencement of program.
- 1/2 of the tuition fee will be refunded to the student who withdraws within first month of studies.

#### **No refund will be granted:**

- For whatever reason, if the student withdraws after 30 days of participation in the program.
- If the student who is found to be in violation of the Program Participation Agreement and asked to withdraw from the program.
- As the result of the School District being unable to provide education due to causes beyond its control.
- To a student who receives Landed Immigration status during the year (October-June).

### School District No. 34 Homestay Policy

All students who are **under the age of 12** follow these guidelines:

- A parent must accompany the child, reside full-time in Abbotsford, and provide care and custodianship for their child. If the parent(s) must leave Abbotsford (i.e. return to home country) while the child is enrolled in the international program, the child must go with them.
- If requested, the District will permit students under the age of 12 to reside with a direct relative. We define direct relative to mean that the parent(s) are related to the individual by bloodline or by marriage. If the child is to be cared for by a relative as defined above then the parent(s) and the relative must provide the School District with a letter of verification that has been notarized by a lawyer stating that the relationship is in compliance with this policy.

All students who are **12 years of age and older** follow these guidelines:

- The student is not permitted to live independently while enrolled in our program.
- Students must live in a homestay, which has been approved by the School District.
- If the student is living with a parent, the parent must not leave Abbotsford while their child is enrolled in our program. If the parent must leave Abbotsford then they are

required to make the necessary homestay arrangements to cover for their absence and notify us of these changes.

**Note:** Failure to follow this policy may result in the student's removal from the International Program.

## **Drugs**

Possession of drugs is illegal. The penalties are severe if you are convicted of an offence, such as jail and deportation. Involvement with illegal drugs is grounds for immediate dismissal by the Abbotsford School District.

## **Traveling**

Travel outside of the city of Abbotsford must be authorized by the host family and your natural parent(s). The International Program is the final authority on any overnight travel outside the city of Abbotsford.

## **Smoking**

Smoking rules in the community, at school, and in the homestay must be followed. In Canada, the legal age to smoke is 19 years of age. A store clerk may ask you for proper identification if purchasing cigarettes.

## **Drinking**

- a) Laws about alcohol in British Columbia are the strictest in North America.
- b) The legal drinking age is 19 years and over.
- c) Driving under the influence of alcohol is a criminal offense. This can result in deportation. It is also grounds for immediate dismissal from the Abbotsford International Program.
- d) If you are asked to get into a vehicle driven by someone who has been drinking **JUST SAY NO!** This is very dangerous!
- e) If you are in a vehicle with open liquor, or if you are walking with open liquor, or if you are with people drinking in a public place, you may also be charged by the police.
- f) If you are 19 years or over and give alcohol to someone under the age of 19, you are committing a criminal offence.

## **Learning to Drive**

The Abbotsford School Board does not encourage or endorse its international students to own or drive a vehicle. It is important to know that neither the Abbotsford School Board nor the host parents will be held responsible for any accidents or liabilities arising from the student owning or operating a motor vehicle.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Seat belts are mandatory in British Columbia. **EVERYONE** in any vehicle must buckle up his or her seatbelt. A driver or passenger without a seatbelt can be fined up to \$200.00

## 6. MEDICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE



ALL International Students in British Columbia must have Medical Insurance.

Your Medical Insurance is maintained through the International Program.

### **MEDICAL COVERAGE: Two phases**

**PHASE ONE:** You will be on Private Medical Insurance for your first three months in Canada.

If you are sick or have an accident, there is a Claims Procedure as follow:

- 1) At the time of treatment, you will pay for the medical service (for example, a visit to the doctor's office).
- 2) Keep the receipt you are given at the time of the medical service.
- 3) Send a letter with the original receipts, within 30 days to:

Strategic Financial Services  
#500-2950 Douglas Street  
Victoria, B.C. V8T 4N4  
Phone: 1-800-663-7603

Note: Keep a copy of your letter and a copy of your receipts. Strategic Financial Service will reimburse you by sending you a cheque in the mail.

**PHASE TWO:** You will be on the Medical Services Plan of British Columbia (MSP)

If you are sick or have an accident, you only need to present your Carecard at the time of treatment. The health care service (e.g., the doctor's office, or hospital) needs to see the number on your card. You will receive your Carecard in the mail and it can only be used by you – the person to whom it is issued. Carry your Carecard in your wallet or purse at all times. There are no receipts – this medical plan pays the health care service directly.

**Benefits Covered by MSP:** The Medical Services Plan provides the following benefits:

- a) Medically required services provided by a physician enrolled with MSP;
- b) Maternity care provided by a physician;
- c) Diagnostic services, including X-rays and laboratory services provided at approved diagnostic facilities, when ordered by a registered physician, podiatrist, dental surgeon or oral surgeon;
- d) Dental and oral surgery, when medically required to be performed in hospital \*  
Surgical removal of an impacted third molar (wisdom tooth) is an MSP insured service only when hospitalization is medically required, due to the extreme complexity of the extraction and where there is associated pathology. The removal of healthy wisdom teeth, even if impacted, is not a benefit;
- e) Eye Exam – Medically required eye examinations only are a benefit for all MSP beneficiaries.

**Benefits Not Covered by MSP:** The Medical Services Plan does not provide the following benefits:

- a) Services that are not deemed to be medically required, such as cosmetic surgery:
- b) Dental services, except as outlined above:
- c) Routine eye examinations for persons 19 to 64 years of age:
- d) Eyeglasses, hearing aids, and other equipment or appliances:
- e) Prescription drugs:
- f) Chiropractic, massage therapy, naturopathy, physical therapy and non-surgical podiatry services:
- g) Annual or routine examination where there is no medical requirement:
- h) Services of counselors or psychologists:
- i) Physical medical examinations, certificates or tests required for:
  - Driving a motor vehicle
  - Employment
  - Life insurance
  - School or university
  - Recreational and sporting activities
  - Immigration purpose

## 7. ABBOTSFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

All students in the Abbotsford School District are expected to behave with respect for others. This is called the District Code and Conduct. That means that you and the Canadian students you meet are expected to:

Be honest and forthright	Attend school every day
Treat others with respect and courtesy	Be on time
Respect other people's property	Work to the best of your ability

The School District works actively to keep schools free of:

Lying	Prejudice	Cheating	Racism
Theft	Violence	Intimidation	Harassment
Weapons of any sort	All illegal substances		

Any student, whose behaviour affects a school environment or operation in a negative way, is considered to be in breach of the District Code of Conduct. Students who behave this way will receive a reprimand and may be suspended from school. In very serious cases, an international student may be asked to withdraw from the Abbotsford School District International Program. In addition, each school can provide you with their specific rules.

### Harassment

The Abbotsford School Board is committed to fostering an environment within which all individuals are treated with respect and are free from harassment. Harassment or bullying is against the District Code of conduct and will be dealt with severely and quickly.

Harassment or bullying includes inappropriate remarks, jokes, taunting, comments, gestures, sexually suggestive comments or actions that create an uncomfortable or hostile environment. A bully is someone who:

- a) Uses power to hurt others or harm their possessions.
- b) Purposely scares or intimidates others.
- c) Often hurts the same person repeatedly.
- d) Is sometimes supported by other people who just watch.

### Complaint Procedures

If you are being bullied or harassed you should take the following steps to try and stop the harassment or prevent it from happening again. You deserve to feel safe at school. Report all incidents to a person of authority at your school, your IA, your parent, or an adult you trust. It is important to tell your parents or homestay family of any incidents of bullying or harassment that may occur at school, at school functions, or on your way to and from school.

If the bully or harasser is an adult from within your school, then it is important to report this immediately to your parent/host parent, your IA or an adult you trust outside of school. You and the adult should contact the Principal.

The IA assigned to your school is there to help you. If you are unable to contact any of the above, please talk with your IA at any time.

It is important to report all incidents of bullying or harassment; however, false allegations are a serious matter and can damage a person's reputation. Students are held accountable for making false allegations.

## **8. SCHOOL LIFE**

### **Abbotsford Schools have:**

- a) A friendly school climate.
- b) An environment in which students are academically challenged.
- c) Enthusiastic staff that ensure all students reach their full potential.
- d) Small groupings so that learners develop positive relationships with peers, while at the same time maximizing learning experiences.
- e) Schools in which all students can explore, experiment, and discover through a variety of learning styles.
- f) A setting where students are guided to becoming responsible for their own behaviour.
- g) Opportunities for building partnerships between families and the community.
- h) An array of social settings appropriate for learners.
- i) A school culture that fosters the celebration of diversity while promoting tolerance and social responsibility.

Our schools advocate parents as partners in their child's learning. Home support for each child's development in emotional, physical and intellectual growth is expected. The school will do its best in providing a safe, caring and stimulating environment in which your child may grow in all of the above areas.

### **Parent Advisory Council (PAC)**

Every school has a Parent Advisory Council whose goal is to develop an understanding of the educational process and policies in order to act as a resource center for others. By attending monthly meetings, parents can get a better idea of what is happening at schools. You can find out more about PAC at your school.

### **Parent Volunteers**

Parents are a vital part of the educational process. Schools that have high levels of student success also show high levels of parental involvement. Our schools welcome and encourage parents to assist in school related activities. Assistance may be given in a number of ways. Just a few examples are:

- a) Demonstrations of cultural activities, e.g. art, cooking, crafts, etc
- b) Service in the library
- c) Coaching sports
- d) Classroom help
- e) Taking part in the PAC sponsored activities
- f) Helping at elementary schools on 'Hot Dog Days' and other school activities
- g) Volunteer drivers

## **Attendance**

Parents/homestay parents are asked to notify the school, before classes begin, if their child/student is going to be absent for the day.

## **Communicating Your Concerns**

In almost all cases, problems are most easily dealt with at the early stages. If parents have a concern it should be communicated right away to the person most directly involved with it. International students can find the process of integration into the classroom stressful. Of course it varies, but, if your child/student exhibits any signs of withdrawal, anxiety, fatigue, resistance to change and/or is unresponsive, he or she may be experiencing culture shock. In order to ensure a successful educational experience for your child, please talk with the teacher if you feel your child/student is undergoing any of these behaviours. The teacher will adapt the instruction in order to help your child feel less stressed. You can also talk to the teacher by using your International Assistant to interpret for you at a meeting.

## **Emergency Closure of Schools**

Schools will be closed to ensure the greatest possible level of safety for students and staff during emergency situations. The Superintendent is responsible for all decisions relating to school closure.

In the event that inclement weather requires a school closure prior to the start of the school day, the School District will advise the radio stations as early as possible of the details of the closure. The following stations will broadcast that information.

- a) FM Radio – STAR
- b) AM Radio – Chilliwack
- c) AM Radio – CKNW

The information will also be available on the voicemail systems at the School Board Office (604-852-2366) and the Facilities and Transportation Office (604-855-5278).

## **Emergency Procedures**

All schools follow a comprehensive emergency plan. Periodic fire, intruder, and earthquake emergency drills are held at schools. Students practice specific safe responses to the emergency being rehearsed. In the event of a real emergency, the school staff will



notify parents. Do not call the school as the phone lines become overcrowded and cannot make any outgoing emergency calls. Listen to 107 FM STAR RADIO for local advisories.

### **Reporting on Student Progress**

Our district requires that students progress be reported to parents five times during a full academic year, one formal written report each term/semester. For secondary students, they will be end of January and June, with interim reports at mid-course. Students in grades 4-12 receive letter grades and comments, while students in Kindergarten to grade 3 receive comments but no letter grades. The comments inform the parents of their child's standing in relation to other children of the same age. In addition, there are two informal reports that may be done in writing, or by telephone, or by appointment. It is the teacher's responsibility to contact the parent when reporting informally and to log the activity in writing. Teachers are available to discuss student progress during the year. Contact your child's teacher by note or by phone, or with the assistance of your IA to arrange an appointment.

### **Additional Student Fees**

International students in full year or half year programs **DO NOT PAY** for:

- a) Student agendas
- b) Student course fees
- c) Locker rental fees
- d) Student activity fees
- e) Curricular field trips
- f) Monthly bus passes (if applicable)

Note: Students who become Landed Immigrants during the year, they don't pay above fees until the end of the semester.

International students in full year or half year programs **DO PAY** for:

- a) Additional project material fees in courses such as woodwork, art, etc.
- b) Athletic fees (to participate on school teams as per school policies, including uniform rentals)
- c) Extra-curricular field trips
- d) Parking fees (if applicable)
- e) Yearbooks

### **Textbooks**

Classroom teachers loan textbooks to students. Some books can be kept for the whole course. Some books are loaned for a short time. The student is responsible for returning the book to the teacher who loaned it to them. If a textbook is not returned, or is lost or damaged, the student must pay for the textbook.

## **9. ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) SERVICE**

### **Elementary and Middle School ESL**

ESL services are delivered in numerous ways, including, but not limited to:

- a) Separate ESL instruction, where students are taken out of their regular classroom
- b) Support services within a mainstream classroom, where an additional teacher comes into the regular classroom
- c) ESL specialist support to the classroom teacher, where additional planning and materials may be provided for the classroom teacher

Integration is the key that allows students to be included in educational settings with their peers, and to be provided with the necessary tools to be successful.

The language learning process is a long one and some students may find school life challenging and exhibit some, or all, of the following:

- a) Enthusiasm that can turn into frustration and anger;
- b) Often feeling unwell, or not wanting to attend school;
- c) Refusing to speak any English at all;
- d) Rejecting their own culture and language;
- e) Changes in behaviour at home and at school

### **Secondary School ESL**

Secondary ESL instruction is a block course, like any other course it is offered during the instructional day.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Course placement

- a) All students are assessed at orientation for their level of English language abilities. Only students with a test score of advanced proficiency will be exempt from taking ESL.
- b) Students identified as needing an ESL support, will be enrolled in ESL.
- c) Discuss your timetable with your counselor so that it matches your English ability, academic background, and your interests. The International Assistant will be there to assist in this process.
- d) The amount of time spent in ESL courses will differ from person to person. ESL classes are vital to your success in other courses. International students gain valuable English skills in ESL. The number of regular academic classes you take will increase as your English improves.

## **10. SECONDARY SCHOOL**

### **Academic Life**

- a) International students are expected to take the same courses as Canadian students.
- b) International students must maintain a grade average of C. If not, they must improve their academic performance. If there is difficulty with a course, first talk to the teacher. Tutoring is available at the student's expense.
- c) The Principal has the right to make the final decision about a student's grade.

### **Planning Your Courses**

- a) This is very important and it can be difficult.
- b) You must find out what you need to take to get into specific courses, which lead to graduation, and those which meet admission requirements for college/university.
- c) Be realistic; find out what you are good at doing and what you are interested in studying.
- d) An appointment with your counselor has been made for you to talk about course planning.

### **Your School Counselor**

- a) You will be assigned a counselor when you arrive at your school.
- b) Your counselor will help you with your academic program and give you information you need to help you at your school.
- c) Your counselor will also help you answer questions or talk to you about personal issues.
- d) Get to know your counselor – keep him/her informed of your progress at school.
- e) If you are having academic OR English difficulties DON'T WAIT! Talk to your counselor as soon as you realize you are having some problems. The longer you wait to ask for help, the more difficult it is to correct the problem.

### **Peer Tutor**

- a) A Peer Tutor is a Canadian student who will help you in any subject in which you are having difficulties.
- b) Apply for a Peer Tutor through your Counselor.
- c) If you need a private tutor, your International Assistant can help you locate one.

### **Extra-curricular Activities**

You are encouraged to participate in sports, clubs, and activities at your school. It is an important part of your cultural and educational experience. The more involved you are in school life, the easier your adjustment to Canadian culture. You will make new Canadian friends!

## Bus Passes

Your IA will explain to you who is qualified to receive a school bus pass or a city bus pass.

## Grades

Grades for each course are based on some or all of the following:

🍏 quizzes	🍏 classroom participation	🍏 work done in class	🍏 final examination
🍏 projects	🍏 homework	🍏 mid-term examination	

Each course you study will have a letter grade. The following table shows you the letter grade, how many points to calculate your Grade Point Average (GPA), what percentage you need, and what each letter grade means.

Letter Grade	Grade Point Average	Percentage	Interpretation
A	4.0	86 - 100%	Excellent
B	3.0	73 - 85%	Very Good
C+	2.5	67 - 72%	Good
C	2.0	60 - 66%	Satisfactory
C-	1.5	50 - 59%	Passing
IP	0	0	In Progress
Fail	0	0 - 49%	Fail

- The Grade Point Average is a standard set by the Ministry of Education. It is important, especially if you plan to continue to college/university.
- If you receive a C- on a final exam, the report card will say, 'Pass'.
- Each secondary school varies in its implementation of honor roll status for students.

## **11. CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT**

Do you think each person who comes to Canada to study feels stress? If you said yes, you're right!

Each person will feel some stress because of the differences between their home culture and Canada. Some people feel very stressed! Some people feel very little stress! Everyone is different.

### **What do you think might be some signs of culture stress (shock)?**

Anxiety, confusion, withdrawal from people activities, silence/unresponsiveness, fatigue, distractibility, resistance to change, feeling disoriented and feeling depressed are all real signs of culture stress!

Some people will become physically ill after a month or two – especially if they are from a different climate. Some people get headaches, stomachaches, or colds.

Recognize that these symptoms are real and are a sign that you need to take care of yourself and talk with somebody who understands. There are many places in the community to talk with people who have undergone the same experience. Anyone in the International Program would be very glad to help you through your transition and assist you in finding a cultural contact.

### **What do you think is the biggest difference between your culture and Canadian culture?**

If you answered food, you are among the majority of students. Food, weather, language, and different ways of behaving, are the top 4 things that students find very different from their own culture.

### **What qualities do you need to adjust?**

A sense of humor: You need to be able to laugh at some of the problems.

A sense of adventure: Be willing to try different things even if you discover you really don't like it, you don't have to do it again.

Have an open mind to other cultures. Canada is a multicultural country and there are international students from many different countries. Establish relationships with people both in your own culture AND others!

Participate, participate, and participate! Get out and join a club, go swimming. Make Canadian friends.

Find out how to solve problems that come up. Find out whom you should talk to about problems that come up. It may be a teacher, a counselor, or your host mother and father.

Expect change. Traveling and studying in another country brings about personal change, so expect yourself to change. This is the cycle of change you will experience while you are here.

Stress → Change → Learn & grow → Adapt

### **How do I know I am experiencing culture stress?**

Usually, before you leave your home country and come to Canada, you probably feel a mixture of excitement and fear! You do not know what you will see and experience when you get here.

When you arrive, you may still feel excited and afraid – but many people feel very excited and have a high level of interest because life seems exciting and full of new experiences.

After a while, you may begin to feel worried – many new students are worried about their English abilities and are mostly concerned about not understanding what people are saying in English. They may be concerned that they cannot keep up a conversation in English. Perhaps you often feel sick to your stomach or have headaches.

One day, you may feel really ‘up’ – then the next day, feel really ‘down’. Reactions to your new culture are different from person to person – but everyone will experience cultural stress.

Remember – some stress is good for you! It helps you to learn about your new culture, your new language, and about yourself.

Culture stress is the extreme feeling of being alone. Some people may experience depression (negative feelings about themselves). But many people have negative feelings about their new culture.

#### **If you:**

- Stay in your room more often than being with your family
- Feel like you are alone in the world
- Cry and are not sure why you are crying
- Have a constant headache
- Refuse to change anything about yourself and are angry, especially at your new culture,

Then, you probably are experiencing culture stress.

### **What should I do about culture stress?**

Talk to your family and with any other international students/parents that have been here for a while, they truly understand about culture stress.

You can also talk to your International Assistant at school, or your school counselor. They are there to help you. Here are some ideas for you:

- Ask yourself what you know about Canadians. Do you know about Canada and Canadians from television and movies? Perhaps you expected something else before you came here.
- Can you laugh at yourself when you make a mistake? Don't get angry with yourself or other people. A sense of humor will help you through stress.
- Can you talk about your feelings to someone? Again, talk to your host family, a school counselor, the International Student Director, or a friend when you begin to feel lonely, homesick, or discouraged.
- Are you critical about Canadians because they do things differently than you do at home? Be open-minded. Try to understand why things are done differently in Canada than in your home country.
- Can you change and adapt to your new culture? This does not mean you completely give up your own culture – but listen when people talk about your new culture. Learn as much as you can about your new culture.
- You will not like everything you do or see in Canada. It is natural for you to feel that your own culture, customs and beliefs are the best.
- Accept that different does not mean better or worse and that judging Canadian culture as being of lesser value than your own will create a block to your learning.
- Be respectful. Think about your relationship with your family, your teachers, and your friends.

By trying to follow these suggestions, you can enjoy your learning experience in Canada!!

### **Cultural Note:**

You may not understand everything you hear and see – and you may not agree that everything you hear and see in Canada is right! That's OK – it is normal to feel that your customs and culture are the best. But remember – KEEP AN OPEN MIND! Different does not mean wrong. Positive thinking and talking can create greater understanding with your host family, your school life and new friends. Have responsible fun! Think before doing.

## 12. BANKING

### Types of bank accounts



### Chequing Accounts

This is a safe and convenient way for you to pay rent, tuition fees, and other bills. This type of account pays low interest and there is a low monthly service charge.

### Interac

Although writing a cheque is still common practice, most people use the Interac service. This is a bankcard that looks like a charge card. The bank will assign one to you and give you a private identification number. You may use this card at any store when making a purchase and the money is directly debited from your account.

### Savings Accounts

You can withdraw cash at any time. You can make out money orders from this account to pay bills. A Savings account pays a higher interest rate than a chequing account.

### Bank charges

Bank charges (service fees) and interests rates are different from bank to bank. When you open an account, ask if there are any restrictions or service fees charged on your account.

### Important

Ask if the bank can receive money sent from your home country. Some credit unions cannot do this.

### Bank Drafts

Money sent to you from home is best in the form of a bank draft. It can be sent directly into your Canadian bank account. Be sure to get a receipt from the bank as proof. Also, expect a bank draft to take at least two weeks to clear (that means it takes at least two weeks to get the money from your home country into your bank account).

### Opening a bank account

You will need your passport to open a bank account.



### 13. TELEPHONE NUMBERS

**FOR LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCIES, CALL 911 FOR FIRE, POLICE, or AMBULANCE.**

#### **Elementary Schools**

Aberdeen Elementary (K-7)	604-856-5137
Abbotsford School of Integrated Arts-North Poplar campus	604-859-3101
Alexander Elementary (K-5)	604-859-3167
Auguston Traditional Elementary (K-5)	604-557-0422
Barrowtown Elementary (K-7)	604-854-5996
Blue Jay Elementary (K-5)	604-852-0802
Bradner Elementary (K-7)	604-856-3304
Centennial Park Elementary (K-5)	604-853-9148
Clearbrook Elementary (K-5)	604-859-5348
Dave Kandal Elementary (K-5)	604-856-7342
Dormick Park Elementary (K-5)	604-859-3712
Dr. Roberta L. Bondar Elementary (K-5)	604-864-8572
Dr. Thomas A. Swift Elementary (K-5)	604-853-7730
Dunach Elementary (K-7)	604-856-2186
Godson Elementary (K-5)	604-853-8374
Harry Sayers Elementary (K-5)	604-852-9665
Jackson Elementary (K-5)	604-859-5826
John Maclure Elementary (K-5)	604-853-6450
King Traditional Elementary (K-5)	604-857-0903
Margaret Stenersen Elementary (K-5)	604-859-3151
Matsqui Elementary (K-6)	604-826-8181
McMillan Elementary (K-5)	604-859-0126
Mountain Elementary (K-5)	604-852-7299
Mt. Lehman Elementary (K-7)	604-856-5083
Prince Charles Elementary (K-5)	604-852-9323
Ross Elementary (K-7)	604-856-6079
Sandy Hill Elementary (K-5)	604-850-7131
South Poplar Elementary (K-5)	604-853-1845
Ten-Broeck Elementary (K-5)	604-850-6657
Terry Fox Elementary (K-5)	604-859-8403
Upper Sumas Elementary (K-7)	604-852-3900

#### **Middle Schools (6-8)**

Abbotsford Middle	604-859-7125
Abbotsford Traditional Middle	604-850-3511
Chief Dan George Middle	604-852-9616
Clayburn Middle	604-504-7007
Colleen & Gordie Howe Middle	604-859-8700
Eugene Reimer Middle	604-504-5343
William A. Fraser (3-7)	604-859-6794

## **Middle / Secondary School (6-10)**

Abbotsford School of Integrated Arts-Sumas Mountain campus 604-850-5207

## **Secondary Schools (9-12)**

Abbotsford Collegiate	604-853-3367
Abbotsford Traditional Secondary	604-850-7029
Rick Hansen Secondary	604-864-0011
Robert Bateman Secondary	604-864-0220
W.J. Mouat Secondary	604-853-7191
Yale Secondary	604-853-0778

## **Community Recreational Facilities**

Abbotsford Recreation Centre -34690 Yale Rd.	604-853-4221
Matsqui Recreation Centre – 3106 Clearbrook Rd.	604-855-0500
Centennial Pool (Emerson Street)	604-855-0500

\*Swimming, skating – Call to find out about schedules including cheap times for swimming and skating.

## **Movie Theatres**

Towne Cinema Centre, 1518 McCallum Rd (24 hr Info)	604-859-5019
Clearbrook Cineplex Odeon Cinema,32500 S Fraser Way(24 hr Info line)	604-850-2233

## **Libraries**

There is a lot more to libraries than books! Community libraries have free internet access, CD ROM encyclopedias, videos, magazines and access to over one million books! Check out the website at <http://www.fvrl.bc.ca> for great homework sites, current news and entertainment sites.

Clearbrook Library – 32320 George Ferguson Way	604-859-7814
MSA Centennial Library – 33660 South Fraser Way	604-853-1753

Note: The library offers on-line FREE tutoring for cardholders.

## **Sports / Athletic Clubs**

Abbotsford Judo Club (Mr. Tokue Suda)	604-852-8014
Abbotsford Karate Club (long distance)	604-792-3941
Abbotsford Kyokushin Karate Club	604-819-2830
Abbotsford Minor Soccer	604-859-3033
Athletes in Action Friday Night Basketball	604-854-5150

Badminton Club (all levels of players)	604-853-6316
	604-852-9218
Bowling – Galaxy Bowl	604-853-1366
Dogwood Bowling & Billiards	604-859-6721
Mini Hoops Basketball	604-853-5141
Volleyball – free mixed drop-in, Oct to May	604-859-3134
Abbotsford Youth Commission (outings/drop-in)	604-854-8785

### **Transportation**

Central Fraser Valley Transit (local bus system) (Get your bus schedule and book of tickets at the Library, City Hall, Shopper’s Drug Mart, McMillan Pool, Pharma save or Abbotsford or Matsqui Pool).	604-854-3232
Airport Link Shuttle	604-852-2399

### **Arts / Drama**

Arts Council, enjoy volunteering to teach arts & crafts	604-852-9358
Creative Edge School of Arts (drama/art/music lessons) 500-3033 Immel Avenue, Abbotsford	604-855-3343

### **Personal Services**

Planned Parenthood / Family Planning Clinic Health Unit – 2391 Crescent Way (Nurses and a doctor available to answer your questions, confidentially)	604-855-7111
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### **Grocery Stores**

MingMing Produce & Groceries (Korean, Chinese, Japanese) 152-31935 South Fraser Way	604-864-9588
Oriental Food Market (Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, Japanese) 1-2686 Langdon	604-859-9163

T&T – Various locations throughout Vancouver specialize in Asian foods. Check the Vancouver phone book for addresses.

## **14. HOMESTAY PROGRAM: ABBOTSFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### **A reference for homestay parents and international homestay students**

#### **Homestay Family Guidelines**

Welcome to the Abbotsford School District Homestay Program. This section contains ideas and suggestions for making this international experience an enriching and enjoyable one, as well as answers to questions that are most commonly asked by host families or students. The homestay experience is the cornerstone of international education, allowing the student to have the adventure of living as a Canadian while the host family is exposed to and learns about another culture. This is an opportunity for an entire family to share a cultural experience together.

#### **Homestay Family Responsibilities**

Homestay families undergo a very lengthy and meticulous screening process in order to be accepted into the International Program. All approved homestay families must comply with the highest standards, expectations, and guidelines.

1. Family members must be able to communicate effectively in English.
2. Family members should be prepared to support the student through a cycle of adjustments due to homesickness and differences in environment, language, and customs.
3. Attend homestay information/orientation sessions and two sessions related to youth development parenting of non-biological youth.
4. Orient the student to your home, neighborhood, and the Abbotsford community.
5. Orient the student to fire, earthquake and other emergency safety procedures.
6. Provide the student with a safe, clean, and friendly home environment.
7. Provide the student with a clean, private room with basic furniture such as:
  - Comfortable bed (including linen, duvet cover, blanket, and two pillows).
  - Night table, dresser, lamp, and alarm clock/radio
  - Work desk with chair and desk lamp with sufficient lighting
  - Closet and mirror
8. Provide a keyed lock on the student's bedroom door and a house key.
9. Provide three wholesome meals every day and nutritious food for snacks.
10. Provide access to bathroom, laundry, and other shared facilities and discuss instructions on use.
11. Enforce all house rules as explained to the student. Be open and honest, tolerant and respectful in communicating with the student. Issues related to imposing consequences shall be logical and related to the broken rule. If unsure, please call Kathy O'Hare, Program Administrator.
12. Complete written evaluations of student placement bi-monthly.
13. Notify the Program Administrator of any changes that may affect the student, such as: illness or a change in household members (i.e. children leaving, parents separating, long term guests staying).
14. Host one student (single placement) at a time.
15. Ensure you have read and understood all of the Homestay Program Policies and Procedures.

### **Homestay Student Guidelines:**

It is a privilege to be invited to stay in another's home. It is an honour for another to take on the parenting role for a teenager from another country. It is a precious relationship, a cultural exchange, English language integration, a time to blend the lives of international students with local families and community. In order to get the most out of the Canadian experience, it is imperative for the student to be immersed in living their daily life within the context of Canadian culture, rules, and responsibilities.

### **Homestay Student Responsibilities**

As set out in the International Program Student Participation Agreement, the school district has expectations of students accepted to study in our program. These expectations include important obligations on the part of each student, and we set a high standard in requiring all students to meet their obligations. As a homestay student you are expected to be open, honest and accountable, and to honor your responsibilities and obligations as outlined. When you conduct yourself in this manner, the relationship with your homestay parents will be a positive experience based on mutual trust and communication.

As a homestay student you are a part of a family and therefore must respect and adhere to guidelines/rules for living in the household as given by the homestay family as follows:

1. Behave respectfully toward all family members, and their personal belongings and household pets.
2. Treat the home and its' properties with respect, care and attention. Participate in the daily upkeep of the home by assisting with chores.
3. Request permission, a day or two in advance, to have a guest in the home. It is customary for students to introduce their friends to the host parent(s).
4. Inform host parent(s) where you are going, with whom and their phone number, and when you will return. **This is very important!** All parents expect their family members to do the same – they are responsible for your safety and well-being.
5. Do your very best to keep your room clean and tidy at all times. Food is not to be taken into your bedroom. The hosts shall request a periodic inspection of the bedroom to ensure that the room is tidy, clean, and without damage to walls or furniture.
6. Pay your homestay fees on time in accordance with the homestay programs rental policy.
7. Meet all personal expenses for travel, entertainment, telephone calls, medical expenses, and other personal and incidental cost.
8. Complete written evaluations of homestay placement bi-monthly.
9. Ensure you have read and understood all of the Abbotsford School District Homestay Policies and Procedures. Refer to these documents when you are unsure.

## **Homestay Program Policies, Procedures and Guidelines**

### **Moving**

It is preferred that students do not move during their school term. Families and students are expected to make every effort to make the homestay a success. Contact your International Assistant or the Program Administrator right away, if you are experiencing difficulties. Your International Assistant will try to help you resolve the problem through offering support in the form of clear communication between parties. Remember to be open and honest when discussing your problem. Disguising a problem to “save face” can create confusion and may not be the best way to deal with a problem. Often, what appears to be a problem may be based on cultural difference, or communication and can be easily solved when brought out into the open. If after meeting with your International Assistant and the Program Administrator and a move is deemed necessary, a two-week (14 days) notice must be given to the International Program Department and the homestay family.

It should be further noted that if a student requests a move from the School District Homestay Program to a Private arrangement there are a number of conditions that must be met before the private placement can proceed. You will need to provide your IA with the following information that will then be verified:

- Full details on the adult person you will be living with to include their age, first and last names, address, home and work phone number.
- The name of the person who found you the homestay.
- Written consent from your parent or custodian permitting the move.

*Only after this information has been verified will the School District permit you to move.*

### **Homestay Placement Fee**

The Homestay Placement Fee that the student pays to the Abbotsford School District International Program, is for the placement and monitoring of your homestay. Please note that the placement fee does not cover rent payment.

### **Homestay Rent and Damage Deposit**

#### **i) State of Accommodations:**

Homestay hosts must ensure that the student treats the home and all its' properties with care and respect. The hosts shall request a periodic inspection of the bedroom to ensure the room is tidy, clean and without damage to walls or furniture. They shall also ensure the environment is free of garbage, dirty dishes, food etc. It is the host's decision to permit food and eating in the student bedroom.

#### **ii) Move In – Move Out Check List**

On the date of move in the student and host should refer to the **Move In – Move Out Check List**. This document should be completed by both parties at the time of move in and referred back to at the time of move out. If the room has sustained damages beyond normal wear and/or the room was not left clean and tidy then a claim may result. If this were to occur then an assessed amount, as determined by the Program Administrator, would be deducted from the student's damage deposit as compensation to the homestay.

#### **iii) Damage Deposit**

The damage deposit the student pays does not cover first or last month rent. The deposit will be refunded to the student at the end of the homestay. If there is any reported damages students are not to deal directly in these matters. The Abbotsford School District International Department will act on the

student's behalf to settle any claims. ***If at any time there are damages, the homestay host must contact the Program Administrator to arrange for a home visit to verify and assess said damages.***

#### **iv) Rent Payment and Refunds**

- The rent period is from the first to the last calendar day of each month.
- The rent is \$700.00 per month.
- To accommodate mid-month arrival and departure, a nightly rate of \$23.50 will be charged for that portion of the month.
- Students should pay their homestay fee by cheque to the homestay parents directly.
- Rent Refunds are given from hosts to host student when the student does not require accommodations for the month paid. As an example:
  - a) A student leaving on June 15<sup>th</sup> - the homestay fee would be  $\$23.50 \times 14(\text{nights}) = \underline{\$329.00}$ . The homestay hosts would reimburse the student:  $\$700 - \$329 = \underline{\$371.00}$
  - b) A student leaving on June 27<sup>th</sup> - the homestay fee would be  $\$23.50 \times 26 (\text{nights}) = \underline{\$611.00}$ . The homestay hosts would reimburse the student:  $\$700 - \$611 = \underline{\$89.00}$
  - c) A student gives notice on June 20<sup>th</sup> and plans to move out on June 25<sup>th</sup>. To calculate the rent, the 14 night notice needs to be included and would cover the dates June 20<sup>th</sup> to July 2<sup>nd</sup>. In this case, the student would owe additional rent for July 1 & 2 calculated at  $2 \times \$23.50 = \underline{\$47.00}$

#### **v) Rent Payment when the student is away**

During Christmas break, if a student is going away for longer than one week they will pay the nightly rate of \$23.50 for the nights they will be in home-stay and half the nightly rate (\$11.75) for the nights they are away.

During summer break, if a student wants their host to hold their accommodation for them, with the understanding that no one else will use their room while he/she is gone, the student will pay 50% of the normal homestay amount for the time he/she is gone. ***This amount should be paid in advance before departure.*** If the student takes all his/her belongings with him/her, no payment is required for the summer months.

#### **Summer Vacation**

The School District Homestay Program provides homestay to students attending our academic school year which runs from September – June. Homestay is not normally available to students during the summer months and the expectation is that students return to their home country during summer break. There are exceptions to this only if the student/parent have made arrangements with the International Program **in advance**. The following criteria must be met and understood:

- a) To qualify for homestay during the summer months, students need to be enrolled in Summer school or an equivalent program. Students are not to remain in Abbotsford if they are not enrolled in a program of study.
- b) Due to host family holiday schedules, it may not be possible for the student to remain in their current homestay and a temporary homestay may need to be arranged.

***If you meet the above conditions you will need to complete our form “Current Student Homestay Placement – Summer Homestay” Your IA will help you complete the form.***

#### **Host Parent Travel**

Students are not permitted to stay on their own. If the homestay parent(s) are going to be absent overnight then an immediate responsible adult, over the age of 25 years, must be present in the home

to care for the student. If you do not have such support, please notify the Program Administrator of your request for a temporary homestay family for the duration of your absence.

### **Outings and Vacations**

Students come to Abbotsford for cultural and academic experiences. Enrich the student's experience with the occasional day trip to areas of interest. If the host family plans an overnight trip and would like to take the student along, the host family must make contact with the Program Administrator in the early stages of trip planning. There are formalities involved with this request, one of which includes the district receiving written permission from home country parents. In conjunction with parental consent, the International Education Program Administrator must also give consent for the student to go on family trips. If the student accompanies your family on holidays, outings, or trips you pay for the travel expense, accommodations, and food. In terms of entertainment, the student pays for his or her admission tickets and/or personal expenses.

### **Computer and Telephone Usage**

#### **i) Computer:**

- Most students will have a computer and require internet access. If your student's room is currently setup for internet access and you have internet service, you do not charge the student a fee for the monthly service.
- If a router is required for the student's computer, it is at their own expense.
- If you do not have internet service and your student requires it then the student pays for the cost for installation and the monthly service fee.

***We strongly advise that host parents not permit their student to use the family computer. If your student did not arrive with a computer they should speak to their parents and arrange to purchase one. If the homestay permits the student to use the home computer they do so at their own risk of computer repair and/or computer replacement.***

#### **ii) Telephone:**

- If a student wants to have a phone jack in his/her room and the host agrees, the student will pay for the cost of installation. You do not charge the student a fee for the monthly telephone service.
- If a student wants to have their own phone line installed (separate phone number) and the host agrees, then the student will be responsible for the cost of installation and the monthly telephone service fee.

***Any other expenses charged must be pre-approved by the homestay program. Please ensure you retain all receipts.***

### **Healthy Time Management**

After school and weekend hours shall be spent in healthy age appropriate activities. All children and teenagers need a certain amount of 'free time'. If students tend to gravitate to television and computers, we ask that homestay parents set limits to computer use and television viewing. We encourage students to participate in outings and activities with families and friends. Student socialization with their Canadian family and friends is of the utmost importance for optimum cultural integration. It is important to cease opportunities to venture to festivals, hiking, camping, day trips, etc.... with your student. A family that plays together stays together.



### **Curfew**

All teenagers have curfews, students will have one too! It is the time when you must be home. **It is a serious issue and curfews must be followed.**

- Curfews are imposed for safety.
- Encourage and teach teenagers a respect for rules
- Parents care about their teens and worry about them when they are not home.

### **Sleeping over at a friends house**

- Has the student asked permission to spend the night at a friend's house?
- How much planning was done? Was this a last minute request?
- Who is going to be at the friend's house?
- Have you spoken to the parents living in the house where the sleep over is going to happen?
- Do you have all of the contact information?
- Have you met the parent/family before? If not, do you want to meet them before you approve your student sleeping over at their home?
- Is this sleepover plan as you would want it for your own child?

### **Household Chores**

The host parent(s) may assign household chores for which the student will be responsible. In Canada each member of the family assumes chores to maintain the cleanliness of the house. This may include making your own breakfast and lunch. As a member of the family, it is important that the student participates in the household routines and chores. Families appreciate it when help is given in the home. Ask what you can do to help.

### **City Bus**

Newly arrived students will not be familiar with our city or the bus system. In most cases they will have little or no English and understandably will be apprehensive in getting around on their own. Host parents need to take extra time with their student and show them how the bus system works. Show the student how to get to school and provide them with an orientation of the city. This may involve walking the student to their bus stop and possibly riding the bus with them the first few times they use the system. City bus pass may be purchased at their school office.

### **Transportation**

- Students are to discuss their transportation needs with the host in advance. The student will also need to understand that it may not always be possible for the host to accommodate their request.
- Hosts are to provide, within reason, transportation to their student. Hosts are to exercise the same level of responsibility for their homestay student's safety as they would for their own under age child.
- Hosts do not charge their student for transportation within a 35 km radius of their home. Should there be a transportation requests beyond this range the host could request payment for gas and parking expenses if required.

### **Visiting Parents**

The Homestay Program provides housing for students while they are attending school. Visiting parents should make arrangements to stay in one of our local hotels.

### **Paid Job While in Canada**

Immigration Canada does not permit students to take a paying job in Canada while on Study Permit.

### **Babysitting**

Students should never be asked to babysit or be responsible for younger children at any time.

### **Bank Accounts**

Host parent(s) are to immediately assist their student in opening a bank account. It is advisable to use your own branch. Students should be encouraged to have a chequing account and to use cheques to pay Homestay rent. When opening the account the student should use the name they have in their passport. It is also advisable that a \$100 limit be set on the student's bankcard. Students should be discouraged from carrying a lot of cash on their person.

### **Money**

Students are expected to provide their own spending money to cover incidental expenses, such as personal items, or school supplies; however, when the family goes out to an occasional movie, or to dinner at a restaurant, the student should not be asked to pay. The host needs to discuss these financial matters with their student at the beginning of the Homestay. Even though this may seem awkward, it prevents hard feelings later on if you're clear from the beginning.

### **Receipts**

As a host, if you purchase any item/services that you need to be reimbursed for, please retain the receipts. This creates a paper trail that will help if any questions arise at a later date.

### **House Keys**

The host is required to provide the student with a house key. Students should ask their host parents about locking up the house. The host needs to ensure that the student understands security measures and that the house key is the student's responsibility. The key is not to be lost!

### **Bedroom Door Lock**

The Homestay Program requires the student's bedroom door to have a keyed lock.

### **Laundry**

If the student is doing his/her own laundry, the host must give clear instructions on how to use machines, size of loads, amount of detergent, separating colours etc.

### **Bathroom**

Hosts will make sure the student understands the differences between Canadian and Asian bathrooms. In particular, that there is no floor drain, and that water must be kept in the tub or shower, and that the shower curtain goes inside the tub, or the shower doors are closed. Students should keep their own bathrooms tidy.

### **ID Wallet Card**

The host should provide the student with an ID wallet card that includes the host family name, address, home phone, work numbers for both host parents, and an emergency contact person, such as a neighbor or relative.

### **Home Insurance Policy**

The host is advised to notify their homeowner's insurance company that they have an additional person living in their house. Ensure that you have adequate liability insurance coverage. This is called, "Insurance for a Paying Boarder" and premiums vary with different companies. Also check to see if the student's personal belongings are covered by your insurance policy while he/she is residing in your home.

### **Insurance for Personal Belongings**

In most cases the Host Family Home Insurance policies do not cover a student for their personal belongings in the event they are lost, damaged or stolen. The host should discuss this with the student and have the student contact his/her parents to ensure the necessary arrangements have been made to have their child's personal property insured while studying abroad.

### **Asking For Help**

Homestay parents and students should feel comfortable getting in touch with the Homestay Department or the International Assistant regarding any problems that arise. Host parents are also advised to have contact with the international parents. We encourage host parents to network and keep in touch with other host parents of International Students.

Please realize that the student is a young adult. He/she is lonely, often disoriented with the new physical and social environment and may be struggling to learn a new language. The culture shock often produces a sense of insecurity. Be tolerant, honest, and courteous when communicating with your student.

### **When does student isolation require additional attention from district staff?**

- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Extreme home sickness
- Negative view of new culture
- Not wanting to be around people different from themselves
- Sadness / Loneliness
- Anxiety / Frustration
- Trouble concentrating
- Don't care attitude with most aspects of daily living

If your student is displaying any of these conditions then a trained counselor is the appropriate support person and you should be raising your concerns with the school counselor. The IA's role in these cases is to ensure that you are put in contact with the School Counselor.

### **When a student leaves**

#### **i) Transportation - Airport**

Students often return to their home country for Christmas and summer breaks. The student and the hosts need to communicate about travel dates well in advance to ensure transportation needs, to the airport, are in place. Host families are responsible for making these arrangements on behalf of their student. Although it is preferred that the host parents drive the student to the airport, this may not always be possible, therefore we have provided you will some alternative transportation services.

- Airport Link Shuttle                      Website: [www.airportlinkshuttle.com](http://www.airportlinkshuttle.com)  
Phone: 604-852-2399 or 604-852-1999
  
- Language Limousine Services        Web: [www.languagelimousine.com](http://www.languagelimousine.com)  
Phone: 604-988-7639  
Email: [information@languagelimousine.com](mailto:information@languagelimousine.com)

**ii) Returning Students:** The student and their host need to communicate about return date well in advance to ensure transportation needs, from the airport, are in place.

### iii) Closing out Student Bank Account

If a student is leaving and not returning then they will need to close their bank account. Host families should remind students and assist them if required.

### International Student & Homestay Family Fun Activity Ideas

#### **At Home:**

Movies	Cooking	Sports Board Games	Crafts
Arts	Sleep Over	Family Fun Nights	

#### **In the Community:**

Shopping	Movies	Restaurants	Sight-seeing
Berry Picking	Camping	Hiking/Cycling	Karaoke
Flea Markets	Garage Sales	Abbotsford Air Show	Birchwood Dairy
Libraries	Museums	AgriFair	Castle Fun Park
Volunteering			

#### **Other Areas to Explore:**

White Rock Beach	Fort Langley Festivals	PNE
Harrison Lake	Cultus Lake	Water Slides
Granville Island	Victoria	Golf Island Day
Trips		
Whistler	Vancouver	Stanley Park
Science World/Vancouver Aquarium	New Westminster Quay	North Vancouver
Quay		
Richmond Night Market	Capilano Suspension Bridge	Steveston
Minter Gardens	Grouse Mountain	