

Host Family Handbook



HIGHROAD

A C A D E M Y

PURSUING GOD, PURSUING EXCELLENCE



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WELCOME to Highroad Academy's Homestay Program

Dear Host Family,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the Highroad Homestay Family. Thank you so much for opening your home and sharing your family, values, and beliefs with one of our students. You will be creating a wealth of memories that your student will cherish the rest of their life. Your hospitality, kindness and Christian values are the core of our program.

Highroad Academy takes the care and supervision of the student in our programs very seriously. We aim to meet and exceed all legal and regulatory requirements as well as provide safe, healthy Canadian experiences for our students.

Each host family is unique. Through your family routines, faith, habits and customs you will be sharing a special part of the educational experience with your new student will learn so many things from being in your home.

As you journey on your new multicultural experience you and your student will get to know one another in many different ways. Through your sharing you will discover much about a different culture, the world around you and about yourselves as well. Often life long friendships are developed.

We also understand that although the next months will be exciting and new, you may face some challenges. We have outlined information in this handbook, which will help answer some of the questions that may arise. Issues such as culture shock, homesickness, and dealing with language barriers are discussed within this handbook. This handbook is intended to be a guide. Using it along with your natural parental intuition, we have confidence that you will have a positive experience.

Sincerely,

International Department

The information in this handbook reflects and incorporates the BC Government Ministry of Education's International Student Homestay Guidelines (http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/internationaleducation/home_stay_guidelines.pdf)

Who are we?

Highroad Academy is an independent Christian school, fully certified by the British Columbia Ministry of Education. International students have been a part of our student body since 1998.

Our Mission

Our mission is to expand international education by providing:

- An introduction to Christianity and discipleship and support of our student’s spiritual journey.
- An opportunity to learn and thrive in a loving and rigorous educational environment.
- An amazing homestay experience with a Christian family.

Our staff

At Highroad Academy the entire staff of administrators and teachers, work together to provide an exceptional experience for International students. Information about programs, whether long-term or short-term, summer camps or winter camps and home stay opportunities or questions can be directed to the International Student Department.

Jenine Basaraba - International Student Coordinator
jbasaraba@highroadacademy.com

Sarah Johnston - International Student Homestay Coordinator
sjohnston@highroadacademy.com





Our Programs

Highroad Academy offers a variety of programs for our international students.

Long Term Student Program

Long-term Student – students enrol for one or more years and participate in a fully integrated educational experience, enjoying learning alongside their Canadian classmates. Additional ELL classes are also offered to them. Families who can commit to a long-term home stay are rewarded with an opportunity to build a lasting relationship by adding an extra child to their family.

Short Term Student Program

Short-term Student - students enrol for 12 months or less. These students are considered visitors to Canada, but they receive the same great classroom instruction and ELL classes as our long-term students

Winter Camp Program

Winter Camp – in January we host International students for two or three weeks. This is during the student’s scheduled holiday time in their home country and is a combination of, ELL classes and field trips. We do double placement for our winter camp Discover. This is a fun way to get to know students from other countries and familiarize yourself with the world of home stay.

Summer Camp Program

Summer Camp– in July and August Highroad Academy hosts International students in our camp Discover. Some days are spent in the classroom with a dedicated ELL teacher and other days students go on a variety of field trip outings and cultural activities. We do double placement for winter and summer camp.





How to become a host family!

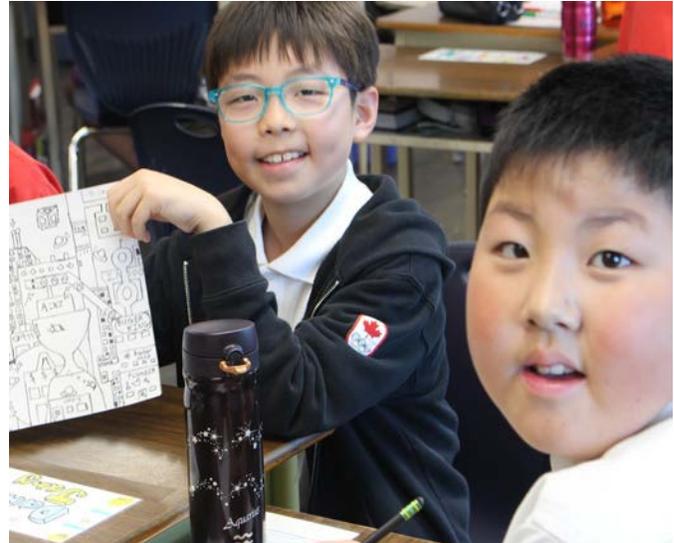
Here's what you will need to do:

- Fill out and return a Host Family Application form to the Homestay Coordinator.
- Send us a photo of your family and a picture of the potential students room.
- Have a successful home visit.
- Send us a criminal record check for yourself and for all members of the household who are 18 years old or older. The cost of a criminal record check is \$55.00.
- We will accept a valid criminal record check from a volunteer organization, such as your home church.
- Students who are staying for our long-term program will need a private room preferably with a lockable door.
- The room must have a comfortable bed, a dresser and a desk as well as a window and adequate lighting.



Suggestions For a Successful Home Stay

Successful host families acknowledge that the student is coming to Canada to learn about living in a different country and improving their English language skills. They want to experience the way that Canadians live, how we respond to the world around us and understand reasons behind our way of life. The impression that a student takes home of Canada will to a large extent be formed by his or her relationship with you and your family. On the other hand, we are given the opportunity to learn about the student's home country and culture.



If students are allowed to help themselves to food in the refrigerator, show them what they may eat. If you have a sideboard or table in the dining room we encourage you to leave a fruit bowl or snacks for your student to snack on.

Canada is a fabulous country and a great place to live; but we must remember that International students do not need to be convinced that Canada is better than their home country. One of our goals is to develop mutual respect and understanding of their country and culture. People naturally tend to think that their own culture, customs, beliefs and moral values are the best ones. We need to accept that different does not mean better or worse. Try to withhold value judgments and create an atmosphere of mutual respect to encourage greater understanding.

Your student may not be familiar with many customs that we may take for granted. Some differences may be subtle, such as the roles of men, women, parents and children; others may be more obvious, such as smoking and drinking. International students are expected to follow the same code of conduct as our Canadian students.

Your student may be accustomed to more or less independence than you give your own children. If a student comes from a protected environment, he or she will need the security of being told what to do. However, the student who is accustomed to coming and going without supervision may need to be given certain instruction for their own protection. Follow whatever policy you would for your family and community. The student must tell you about plans they have made or where they are going. Be sure to let them know this is for their own protection and safety, it is not because you don't trust them.

Suggestions For A Successful Homestay.

For long-term placements we have a 30 day notice rule. Either the student or the home stay family may request a change, which would take effect at the beginning of the month following the 30 day notice. If the school is made aware of a situation that is deemed by school officials to be of a serious nature, the student may be removed from a home and placed in a new home without invoking the 30 day notice rule. Some situations may include, a student being placed in an unsuitable room, inadequate food and nutrition provided to a student. There may be other situations that are serious enough nature to have to remove a student.

Try to avoid stereotypes of different cultures; there are usually more exceptions to stereotypes or generalizations than examples supporting it. For example, we should not assume that all Japanese students are shy. Avoiding cultural pre-judgments will increase the chances of having a good home stay experience. It may be helpful to prepare for your student's arrival by researching his or her homeland. This can also be a great way to start simple conversations – by asking questions about their country.



As a member of your family your international student should share equally in the pleasures and duties of your home. Normal family responsibilities should become part of the student's daily routine. The student should be encouraged to make their own bed, keep their room clean, help clean up after meals, take out the garbage; the same as your own children are expected to do. When you meet your student for the first time, he or she may be feeling a little insecure. Who knows, you may be feeling the same way. Even though this is stressful try to enjoy the experience. Your student may be unusually silent due to fatigue, struggling with a new language or jet lag.

Dealing with conflict - Every family has it's ups and downs as part of everyday life. This may also be part of your relationship with your homestay student. For our program we follow the Matthew 18 principle, which simply means if you have a problem with someone first take it to them. Try talking with your student if you are having issues of any kind. It really helps to remember that your student (most likely) is a teenager and in addition to culture shock and unfamiliarity with western routines also has the same experiences and feelings that any normal teenager may have. Practical love goes a long way in solving problems. We are also happy to work with you if you find your issues are continuing without any resolution or if you feel like you need help with communication. We want to support our families to ensure the best possible experience for everyone.

Your Home

It will take your student a few days to settle in and feel at home. Your student may feel awkward about how to address you. If you are comfortable with being called by your first name please suggest it to them. You do not need to go overboard to please your student, this is not necessary. Be sure to give them a tour of your house and show them where each room is. Take time to explain to them even how the simplest household items work. Don't assume they will know how to use them. Here are some handy tips for helping your student settle in.

Laundry: Will the student do his or her own laundry or will you do it? These are details that you need to talk about with your student. You will have to give very specific instructions on how to operate the laundry equipment. Most students will not have done their own laundry at home and most will not be familiar with our style of clothes dryer.



Family Schedule: You can give your student a typical daily schedule. This will help the student know when to go to bed, when to get up, when to shower, eat meals, etc.

Religion: Living with a committed Christian family is a huge part of our Homestay Program. How we treat each other and how we demonstrate Christ's love on a daily basis is important. Don't be afraid to include your student in your daily family devotions, ask them questions and give them a chance to ask questions about your faith. As Christians it is also important to be respectful of your student's religious beliefs. However, having said this when an international student agrees to Highroad Academy's code of conduct they are agreeing to attend church/youth group on a weekly basis. This does not mean that we are forcing them to become Christians.



Your Home

Bathroom: Please be clear with the family rules for use of the bathroom. Let your student know how often and when they should bath or shower. They may not know how full to fill the bathtub or how long they may shower. Tucking in the shower curtain and turning on the bathroom fan. This may include appropriate use of the toilet with regards to what can and cannot be flushed.

Chores: Your student may not be used to doing chores that are naturally done in your household. However, if your children are expected to help with these chores, your student will be expected to help as well. If your children don't help with the chores, then your student shouldn't be expected to help either.

Sharing Opinions: You may be surprised by some of the normal things your student likes or dislikes. Encourage him or her to speak freely about their feelings. A comfortable setting such as living room or dining room could be a safe place to have such conversations. Try to have these types of conversations one-on-one to avoid unnecessary embarrassment. Your student may not know how to tactfully mention something that is of bother. This is normal and a part of dealing with cultural differences and new English language learners. By following your example your student will soon learn an appropriate manner of expressing his/her opinions.

Physical Contact: In most situations it is not appropriate to hug, kiss, tickle or be overly physical with your student. This is an area that can lead to misunderstandings, allegations of improper behaviour and in the worst-case scenario to criminal charges. For your own protection be very careful!

Family Room: Let your student know what they can do in your home. Can they turn on the TV or do they need to ask permission first? Do you have rules around internet use?

Meals: Please let your student know what your family meal schedule is. If your family helps themselves to breakfast and snacks please let your student know what they may have. You may need to encourage them to help themselves. Your student can learn to make their own lunches with food provided by you.



Culture Shock it doesn't go away right away!

Culture shock is the physical and emotional discomfort one suffers when his or her surroundings, language, food and social norms are no longer familiar. Symptoms may be strong feelings of frustration, unusual anxiety and uncertainty.

First Stage

The incubation stage- when your student arrives they may be excited about all the new things they encounter. This time is called the "honeymoon stage, as everything encountered is new and exciting.

Second Stage

The second stage -frustration stage, may present itself on a daily basis: Daily life may be filled with frustration and crises. For example, communication difficulties may occur frequently. Frustration may come across as impatience, anger, sadness and feelings of incompetence. Your student is trying to adapt to a new culture that is very different from their own. Transitioning between the old methods and those of the new country can be a difficult process and takes time.

Third Stage

The third stage- when your student begins to feel comfortable with the new culture, foods, people and the environment. A new feeling of pleasure and sense of humour may be experienced. The new arrival may not feel as lost and may begin to have a feeling of direction. The individual is more familiar with the environment and wants to belong. This initiates an evaluation of old ways versus new.

Fourth Stage

In the fourth stage - the acceptance stage. The person has a realization that they do not need to completely understand the culture and environment to thrive in their new surroundings. Often this integration is accompanied by a feeling of belonging. The person starts to define him/herself and starts to establish goals for living.





Signs Of Culture Shock

- Staying in their room more often than being with host family
- Feeling like they are alone in the world
- Crying without knowing why
- Having a constant headache
- Refusing to change anything about themselves
- Feeling angry, particularly at the host culture
- Students coming from different climates may experience headaches, stomach aches and colds

Suggestions To Help With Culture Shock

- Encourage them to come out of their bedroom and spend some time with the family
- Encourage your student to make friends with people of other nationalities not just their own
- Involve your student in activities that do not require constant communication such as sports, cooking, music and art.

Language Difficulties

Most students experience some difficulty speaking English. The English language that you will use is different from the English that they have learned in their home country.

- When speaking with your student remember to slow down and speak clearly. Don't get discouraged when students get tired or frustrated. Try to help with pronunciation. This type of interaction is one of the best ways for them to improve their English language skills. If students are open and earnestly try hard, you will be surprised how quickly they will learn new phrases.
- Language difficulties are often contributors to culture shock. Your student may seem quiet or disinterested when they are really too tired to concentrate or talk in a foreign language. If you've never been in this situation it can be difficult to understand the amount of concentration and effort required for a person to attempt speaking in a new language and to grasp complicated conversations.
- Many students find interacting with children to be much more relaxing and less stressful than their host parents. Don't be hesitant to encourage your student to play with your children as this is a great way to help them learn English.

Emergencies

If your student needs emergency treatment, please take the appropriate measures needed. You may need to call 911 or take the student directly for medical care at a clinic or a hospital. Once you reach the hospital and the student is settled please call the homestay coordinator immediately.

Medical

Students who are in BC for six months of the calendar year must apply for MSP. There is a waiting period of three months for medical coverage. The International Department will help students apply for MSP.

While the students are waiting for MSP they will be fully covered by Guard Me Canada student insurance. Guard Me covers illness, eye exams, dental, injury and loss of life. Guard Me coverage applies to prescriptions, emergency dental and life insurance. Guard Me coverage starts upon the students boarding the airplane in their home country. After three months the students have coverage both with MSP and supplemental coverage with Guard Me to make sure your student has the best support if needed.

If your student is ill or injured, please treat them the same as you would your own child. You may take them to your family doctor or to one of the several walk-in clinics in the area. While students are waiting for their MSP the clinic will require payment at the time of the visit – this payment is the responsibility of the student. Under no circumstances will a host family be held responsible for payment of a student's medical bills. Please make sure that you get a detailed receipt from the Doctor or clinic and ask your student to bring them to the International Student Office. We will help them make a claim to the insurance company.

If a doctor or medical facility requires more information concerning insurance coverage and procedures they should contact the International Student Coordinator at Highroad Academy or the Homestay Coordinator after hours.

You may contact the school office at any time if you have a question as to whether or not to take your student to a doctor or clinic.



FAQ's

1. Who signs permission forms?

Permission forms sent home from the school are to be signed by the International Coordinator, who is their legal guardian. Students can bring them into our office during school hours. If your student is going out of town on their own they will first confirm with the host family. Secondly they will ask for permission from the International Coordinator. Finally, the students parents will send in a signed form to our office with the address of where the student will be staying and for how long. We will then email you to let you know when your student will leave and return.

2. Do I need to pay for my student's personal items and incidentals?

No, your student is responsible to pay for their clothing, school fees, field trips, and entertainment. Students are also expected to buy their own personal items and incidentals.

3. Do I need to pay for my student when we go for dinner and go on family outings?

Yes! If you bring your family out for diner you are expected to pay for your student as well. If you go for a family day trip and there are expenses you are also expected to pay for your student.

4. Can my student drive motor vehicles?

No, for insurance and safety reasons students are not permitted to drive any kind of motorized vehicle, including automobiles, mopeds, motorcycles, lawn mowers, tractors, motorized boats, quads or jet skis. This includes anything with an electric motor such as go-carts. If students have an accident while operating any motor vehicle their medical insurance becomes void.

5. What about WIFI?

Part of being a host family is providing WIFI for your student. The internet is one of the main ways your student will keep in touch with their family. Students will also use internet for educational purposes. Your student is expected to follow your house rules. Often we get asked about excessive internet usage, you are not alone! We recommend that you set some restrictions, such as time limits and websites that are acceptable. If time limits are not being respected, you can consider turning the internet off after 10:00 or 11:00pm.

6. What can I do if my student is spending all their time in their room?

There are many things you can do to encourage your student to spend less time in their room and more time with your family. One of the best ways is to plan out of the house activities and invite them to come along. You can have them help with your children so they feel helpful and useful. Often when students interact with kids they feel less vulnerable when speaking English. Try to involve your student in activities that don't require a lot of speaking like board games, card games and even household chores.

7. Am I expected to drive my student outside of school activities?

Any transportation requests outside of school activities are at the discretion of the host family. If driving requests become an inconvenience, suggest alternate transportation (e.g. the city bus). Families are expected to drive their student to school sports and events outside regular school hours, within reason.

8. Who can my student stay with if we need to go out of town?

If you need to leave your student behind, you can ask another host family that is part of our homestay program. For overnights (one night) with another international student, our office does not need to be notified. You will be expected to pay the family \$28.00 per night. Please let your International Coordinator know where your student is staying and how long they will be staying there. If you are not able to



Proverbs 11:25 A generous person will prosper;
whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

Appendix A - Student's Commitment

This section must be read and understood by all students. Students applying for entrance into grade four through twelve must sign below, indicating that they have read and commit to abide by these standards. Please check the following:

As a student of this Christian school:

- I will act in an orderly and respectful manner. I will maintain Christian standards in courtesy, kindness, morality and honesty.
- I will strive to be of unquestionable character in dress, conduct and all other areas of life.
- I agree to abide by the above standards of conduct and other regulations of Highroad Academy. I will uphold the school's standards against cheating, swearing, smoking, pre-marital sex, drinking alcoholic beverages, gambling, using or talking favorably about narcotics and using indecent language.
- I will not give the impression to students, parents, faculty or the community that I am not in harmony with the goals, aims and standards of this Christian school.
- I understand the scriptural importance of being committed to a local church.
- I am committed to weekly attendance at my local church.
- I am committed to weekly attendance at my local church's youth group.
- I want to attend this school.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____



Appendix B

Discipline Policy

Offenses are classified as:

1. MINOR
2. MAJOR
3. SEVERE

1. MINOR offenses are those that are annoying but not likely harmful to the student committing them or others around them. The staff member involved handles minor offenses on the spot. MINOR offenses include, but are not limited to:

Minor classroom rules, running in the building, hats on in the building, messes in common areas, throwing objects (food etc.), put-downs, unkind remarks

Late for class, late assignments, chewing gum, lack of courtesy, inappropriate noises Untidy equipment, supplies, uniform and appearance standards

2. MAJOR offenses are behaviors which are disruptive, disrespectful to people or property, insubordinate, or potentially harmful. MAJOR offenses are referred to the principal for immediate implementation of the "Discipline Cycle". MAJOR offenses include, but are not limited to:

Defacing property, skipping class, class disruption, out of bounds, stealing, cheating, lying, threatening Filthy talk, causing division, promoting heresy Repeated violation of MINOR offenses, racial slurs, disobedience, bullying

Truancy, leaving campus without permission, continual unproductiveness, leading an unruly life, disrespect for authority or peers

3. SEVERE offenses are those that require the immediate removal of the student from the school temporarily or permanently. SEVERE offenses include, but are not limited to:

Promotion or use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or other harmful substances, actions that purposely bring harm to others or property, immoral behavior, use or possession of a weapon.



Discipline Cycle - Grade 7 - Grade 12

The discipline cycle operates on a “three strikes” principle. It applies only to MAJOR offenses and repeated MINOR offenses. The purpose of the discipline cycle is to assist parents in the corrective process of their children by:

1. Making clear the consequences of inappropriate behaviour
2. Making clear that opportunities exist to develop responsibility for one’s behavior
3. Requiring students to evaluate their own behaviour
4. Giving students positive alternatives for inappropriate behaviour
5. Providing immediate, consistent, and logical consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

At each step of the discipline cycle, the following steps will be taken:

6. The teacher will refer the student to the principal
7. Parents will be notified that the discipline cycle has been implemented
8. The student will be required to make appropriate restitution
9. The violation will become a part of the student’s permanent record

1. First MAJOR offense (or repeated MINOR offenses): The student will complete a project evaluating the violation, stating the natural consequences of the behaviour, and offering positive alternatives. The student may be required to serve a one-day suspension.

2. Second MAJOR offense: An at-home suspension for two or more school days will be served. A meeting with the school board or discipline committee will be held to discuss the student’s record of behaviour and possible further action including the possibility of expulsion.

3. Third MAJOR offense: The student will be dismissed from the school for the remainder of the school year or permanently.

Appeals process: If a parent or student has any concerns about disciplinary action, an appeals policy is in effect at Highroad Academy. Please contact the office for further information on this process.



Appendix C

Things You Can Do With Your Student

Create Conversation Opportunities: Have a conversation with your student every chance you get. This is one of the best ways for them to develop fluency in speaking English.

Inexpensive Activities:

- picnics
- roller-skating
- ice skating
- bicycle riding
- bowling
- horseback riding
- sports
- make a scrapbook
- go berry picking
- bake a pie or cookies
- bake bread

Share:

- your picture albums
- baby books
- your hobbies
- home movies/pictures on computer
- wedding albums

Visit:

- flea markets
- museums
- U of the FV
- Chilliwack Fair
- parks
- garage sales

Go:

- Shopping
- wave pool
- Canadians baseball game
- Hell's Gate
- Crescent Beach
- Cultus Lake
- Celebration of Lights
- Othello Tunnels
- Castle Fun Park
- Harrison Hot Springs

It's Fun To:

- go to the movies
- go camping
- play board games
- walk on the beach/park/trails
- have student make dinner
- play cards

Have the Student Accompany You To:

- the grocery store
- visiting friends
- your children's activities
- your weekend activities
- events at church

Keep your student involved. There is no need to overspend. It is important to keep a normal family routine. If you wish to take your student out to dinner or a paid attraction, tell them the cost and ask them if they would like to go. Have fun!



Appendix D

Letter From the Host Family to the Student

If you receive information about your student before they arrive in Canada it's a nice gesture to send them a letter by email or post.

You might like to include the following information:

Describe your family

- adults
- the names by which you wish to be called
- your occupations and interests
 - children
 - ages, gender and their interests
- include photos of your family, your pets and your home
- describe your community and it's attractions. If mailing a letter you may want to include a brochure from the local Chamber of Commerce which describes the community. If sending an email, include the website of your city's tourist page
- add any information that would be useful for the student during his/her stay with your family
- it would be a sign of respect to address the letter to the student's parents as well as the student
- the letter is to be written in English, as it can easily be translated
- your children may want to add a line or two or draw a picture
- include your home mailing address as well as your email address



Appendix E

List of Recommended Hotels in Chilliwack

For parents of Highroad Academy International Students:

Please note that these are recommendations based on the International Department's knowledge of Chilliwack. It is not a complete list, but does list some of the better, clean hotels and suites that we are aware of.

They are in alphabetical order, not preferred order.

We have chosen hotels and suites that are close to the school for easier access.

Coast Hotel

45920 First Avenue 604-792-5552

www.coasthotels.com/hotels/bc/chilliwack/coast-chilliwack-hotel/

*central to downtown Chilliwack, clean, highly recommended

Cozy B&B

9630 Young Road 604-702-1845

www.cozybnb.com

* bedroom only – friendly hostess, close to downtown Chilliwack

Magnolia Manor – bed and breakfast

46013 Gore Avenue 604-702-5696

www.magnoliamanorbc.com

*close to downtown Chilliwack – weekly rates available

Red Tulip Inn -suite

45356 Hodgins Avenue

604-792-9645

cell: 604-316-2704

*this one bedroom suite has a kitchen, bedroom, bathroom and living room.

*close to downtown Chilliwack – weekly rates available

An internet search of Chilliwack hotels, and bed and breakfasts will give you many more options in the surrounding area.