



## INTERNATIONAL SERVICES

LETHBRIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT #51

433 - 15 STREET SOUTH

LETHBRIDGE ALBERTA

T1J 2Z5

PHONE: (403) 380-5323

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[www.internationalservices.lethsd.ab.ca](http://www.internationalservices.lethsd.ab.ca)

### Lethbridge School District Family Homestay Hosting Tips and Rules

As a homestay family, you are about to begin a great adventure with your visiting student. Following are a few ideas which will help you prepare for your guest and assist you in ensuring that the visit is fun and rewarding both for the student and for your family.

#### IN PREPARATION

- Students must be provided with their own bedroom. Bathroom facilities can be shared however.
- Remove things that you usually store in your guest room so no personal effects are present. Family members should not need to get things from the student's room.
- Where the student shares a bathroom, one drawer or shelf in the medicine cabinet could be cleared for his or her effects.
- Your family's children could make a welcome banner or card for the student's room. This makes the student feel special right from the start and helps to make the children feel an important part of the hosting experience.
- You may wish to put some flowers or an English-language magazine (fashion, sports, etc.) in their room.
- Make sure that you know the date and time that the student will be arriving and where you will be meeting him or her. Please be on time at the arrival place.

#### Upon Arrival

- When you introduce yourself, use the name you wish to be called by: 'Hello, I'm John Smith. Please call me John.' Review all the names of the household members and what everyone prefers to be called, including pronunciation. Be sure to find out the same information from the student.
- Allow the student to contact home to reassure relatives of a safe arrival. This may be via email or telephone. If phoning, the student should make all calls collect or by calling card.
- Early in the visit communicate your expectations regarding home rules and behavior expectations in a simple, direct, yet friendly manner. Include the times that meals are served, when the family arises in the morning. This puts the students more at ease as they adjust to a new home and makes them feel a part of your family.
- Take the time to introduce your student to the idiosyncrasies of your home and habits – doors or gates that must stay closed or open, etc.
- Be sure that your guest knows how to operate the shower, washing machine, dishwasher, and so on. The student should be prepared to do his or her own laundry; but if you wish, you may do it.
- Give the student a file card with your name, address, home phone number and work or emergency contact phone number.
- If making a computer available to the student, be sure to set ground rules: how long to be on, hours when to use, etc. Students do have computer access at their school. Students are told that they are not permitted to use a laptop or computer (even their own) unsupervised such as in their bedrooms.





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### Communicating with the Student

- Speaking English may not come easy for the student, thus requiring much patience and understanding from family members. Keep your sentences simple, avoid slang, speak slowly and clearly, use direct questions, and face the student when talking. Because many students read and write English better than they hear or speak it, writing something down on paper, especially during the first few days, is often helpful.
- The kinds of activities you plan with the student will also help with communication. Activities which require simple communication, such as playing board games or cards, will work well in this regard.

### During the Stay

- Proceed with your life as you normally do. Keep your hospitality simple and spontaneous, not lavish.
- Provide your student with a nutritious breakfast, bag lunch on most days, and a well-balanced dinner. It is perfectly acceptable for your student to make his or her own breakfast and lunch.
- It is your student's responsibility to use public transportation, although rides at times will be appreciated. Please ensure that your student is familiar with our public transportation system. Transportation will be discussed with the students at their homestay orientation at the school.
- Although students have pre-arranged activity schedules, which you will also have, please be prepared for some changes. Such schedule changes will normally be sent home in print form a day or two before the day of the change.
- As you would with your own children, please be prepared to communicate with the school especially with regard to excusing absences during an illness.

### Cautions

- Students are not permitted to drive.
- Use of alcohol and/or tobacco is not permitted.
- Host families are advised not to show or use guns in the student's presence.
- Host families may not charge students extra fees. If a student damages an item in the home, or accrues a long distance phone charge, work through the Homestay Coordinator to collect reimbursement.
- Discussion around political and religious topics can sometimes raise different opinions and feelings. It is best to avoid such topics unless the student brings them up and demonstrates a desire to discuss them.
- Immediately contact your Homestay Coordinator if you have issues or concerns.

**Finally**, you can make your student's experience in Lethbridge positive by:

- providing a warm, caring home environment.
- assisting your student in overcoming culture shock, loneliness and homesickness.
- being a friend and sounding board for questions raised by new experiences.

