



Canada Homestay International

GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

Welcome to the CHI Homestay Program—we're glad you're staying with us! You will probably have a lot of questions about life in a Canadian homestay, so we have designed this with the help of students like you—but we know it can't answer all of your questions.

That is why we want you to stay in touch. Call! Email us! Speak with your coordinator when he or she visits your school. We are always glad to hear from you. We are here for you!

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Questions or concerns? Call Us!

Our regional co-coordinators are easy to reach, toll free, at the numbers below:

Toll Free (in North America) 1-877-441-4443

We're also easy to reach through our regional head offices:

Toronto	Contact: Jacqueline Kok Tel: 416 926-0355 x 2011 Fax: 416 853 0924 generalinfo@canadahomestayinternational.com
Ottawa	Contact: Brenda St. Jean Tel: 613 686 6764 x 2040 Fax: 613 693 0878 573 Cole Avenue, Ottawa ON K2A 2B4 ottawahosts@canadahomestayinternational.com
Victoria	Contact: Aleisha Connorton Tel: 250 412 3813 x 2030 Fax: 1 866 844 9062 1031 St David Street, Victoria BC V8S 4Y7 bcgeneralinfo@canadahomestayinternational.com

In the event of a medical emergency, first call 911. Afterward, or in the event of any other kind of emergency, please telephone the toll-free or local number of the nearest CHI office with your name, the name and the nationality of your student, and a number where we can reach you (with the area code, please), and we will return your call shortly.

Preparing for Your Homestay Experience

Every host is different—just like every student.

What our hosts have in common is that they are committed to providing a safe, caring environment for you. We choose hosts who we feel will provide the same sort of caring environment and personal attention they would ask a host family to provide for their own children: a comfortable, healthy and supportive home that promotes cultural understanding and provides opportunities for learning, growth and development.

Why do we trust our hosts? Because we've met them in person and toured their homes, we've talked with them about their experiences in the world and in Canada, and we've helped them adjust to being hosts. We have also asked students like you to evaluate them. If they fail to meet our—and your—expectations, we won't work with them again.

If you're not happy with your match, tell us. We can't help you if you don't ask.

Reasonable Fees, Reasonable Expectations

Students who get the most out of their homestay experience recognize that they are not paying for the hospitality of their host family. Your homestay fees represent a courtesy, not a payment for a service. Homestay is NOT a hotel or a hostel—in fact, a homestay costs far less than a hotel, and even less than a hostel.

CHI works hard to ensure that you are placed in a family that best matches the needs of both you and your host with regard to proximity to the school; special dietary needs; children in the home; pets in the home; interests (including sports and hobbies) and allergies (including allergies to pets).

What Makes A Great Homestay?

Your homestay experience will largely depend on your own attitude and friendliness. How can you make the most of living in Canada? By coming with an open mind. By coming ready to embrace the ways in which Canada and the people you will meet here are different and unique—in the very same way you would like people to appreciate you.

We know that living in a new country, with new people, with a new language, can be hard—emotionally and intellectually—but your attitude will make a big difference. Your host family has invited you into their home because they are eager to learn about you and help you learn about Canada. Be patient with them, just as they will be patient with you.

We can guarantee it: Every effort you make to respectfully communicate your thoughts and feelings to the people around you, and every effort you make to participate in their lives with a cheerful attitude, will be rewarded, more and more, every day.

So be yourself! Speak up, and have fun!

Getting Settled

The first few weeks living in a new country with a new family can be difficult. You may feel homesick and frustrated with your new environment and the language. This is natural. Give yourself time to adjust to your new surroundings. We've found that going through a few of these rituals when you first arrive will help you feel settled. And please remember: you're not alone. We're always here to help.

Arriving at the Airport

Your transportation from the airport to your host family may or may not be included in your Homestay fee. If you have requested airport pickup in your application, and have informed us of your flight arrival information, you will be met at the airport. Otherwise, you are responsible for making your own way to the host's home.

In either case, please inform us of any changes to your arrival details immediately. We have a Homestay representative available 24 hours a day during arrival weekends to answer your call.

Depending on the airport, you may need to collect your luggage before you exit the passenger area. In other airports, you will exit the passenger area and meet the driver before collecting your luggage. When you come through the arrival gate, and you see a crowd of people greeting the other passengers, look for someone holding a sign with your name on it. It may be very crowded, so be patient when looking for the sign.

If you don't see anyone waiting for you, please:

1. Step aside and go to a place that is not crowded.
2. Wait for the crowd to clear out. Eventually, most people will leave.
3. Once the crowd is thinner, look again for someone with your name on a sign.
4. Listen for an announcement calling you - sometimes the driver will have you paged.
5. If, after about 30 minutes, you are sure that no one is there for you, call our Homestay representative on the toll-free number. If you are in the Toronto/Ottawa area, press "1" after the recorded greeting and your call will be forwarded to our Homestay representative. Sometimes, both you and the driver are there, you just don't see each other. You will be instructed where to go, where to wait, or who to look for.

PLEASE don't leave the airport without speaking to us first!

Note. Your host is not required to drive you back to the airport upon your departure. Please contact CHI if you would like to arrange a limousine to take you back to the airport.

A Tour of Your House

Please ask for a tour of your house when you first arrive. Your host should show you where everything is, with special care to point out your bedroom and bathroom; the kitchen and

dining area; the laundry room; the linen closet (or wherever clean linen and towels are kept); and so on. Please make sure you understand how to use:

- The bathroom, including the bath/shower, toilet and sink;
- Appliances and entertainments, like the TV, microwave;
- The fire extinguisher, as well as what to do in the event of a fire (for example, suitable exits and emergency phone numbers).
- See below for a discussion of the laundry facilities, telephone and the computer/internet.

Once you have familiarized yourself with the house, make yourself at home! But please—respect everyone’s right to privacy and quiet. Always knock and announce yourself before entering someone else’s room, and be considerate when using common areas.

Make sure you have the chance to meet all members of your host family. Repeat their names so you can remember them.

A Tour of the Neighborhood & Local Transportation

Ask your host for a tour of your new neighborhood, including directions to and from your school and any local attractions or meeting places.

Ask your host for help using buses and subways—you will want to ask how and where to buy fares and you will want to familiarize yourself with local routes.

Make sure you understand how to recognize public telephones, and ask your host to help you write a list of important contact numbers which you can keep with you at all times.

If your host is unable to show you how to get to school before your first day and cannot arrange for anyone else to help, please contact CHI for assistance.

As a courtesy, the homestay family may provide reasonable local transportation, particularly in an emergency. However, this does not include daily transportation to and from school. The only exception is for some short-stay groups, for whom daily transportation has been arranged as part of the Homestay fee.

Life at Home

Household Rules and Customs

Your host family will have unique habits and preferences concerning daily life in the house. This includes when to have baths and showers (bathroom etiquette in Canada may be different when compared to your own country); where food can or cannot be eaten; how to do laundry; curfews; smoking (or non-smoking) policies; limits on the use of the television/stereo/VCR and other family property; family schedules & bedtime hours; when it is OK to have friends over, and so on. There may be areas of the house your host will ask to

keep “off limits”. Your family may even ask that you limit your use of perfumed toiletries while in the home. Please be sensitive about upholding all of these customs.

All the rules or guidelines that apply to your family members also apply to you—life for your homestay family should go on as usual, with you as an equal participant. We ask our hosts to arrange a family meeting to go over the house rules at the beginning of your stay.

For any students under the age of majority (18 years old in Ontario and Quebec; 19 in British Columbia) years old), the following rules will be upheld in addition to household customs:

- No smoking (and No purchasing cigarettes)
- No drinking
- No driving

It is your responsibility to understand and observe all household rules. If you are having any difficulty doing so, please contact us for assistance.

Household Chores

Your host parents will welcome you into their home as a member of the family. This means that you will be treated more informally than a “guest” would be. As part of the household, you will be expected to complete your share of chores. For example, you will be responsible to keep your room clean, in addition to keeping other areas of the house tidy, as you use them. You should also be prepared to help with meal preparation, cleaning of dishes, and doing your own laundry.

In many cases, you may also be an older brother or sister to your homestay family’s children. You will certainly be expected to set a good example for behaviour. Once again, this offers numerous opportunities for growth and learning, especially since young children will immediately bond with you. However, we do not expect your host to ask you to babysit.

Laundry

Please check with your host at the beginning of your stay to work out a laundry schedule. They may ask you to do your own laundry. Please ensure that you have a full load and are not washing a few items every few days.

Bedrooms

Your bedroom will include a window and smoke detector nearby; bed and bedding; a dresser, desk, chair, and lamp for studying; a closet; and adequate heat, light and ventilation. Please ask your host to show you how to use the bed and blankets if it looks different than what you are familiar with, and where to find extra blankets if needed.

Your homestay family will discuss with you what can be put on bedroom walls and how to attach items. As a courtesy, and to conserve energy, please turn off the light before leaving your room. Your host may also ask you to turn down the heat in the room when you are gone for the day, if it is operated on a thermostat.

Bathrooms

Please try to leave the bathroom clean and dry after you use it. Your host will explain their expectations concerning the use of the bathroom- especially when and for how long. Most students will share their bathroom with one or more family members or other students.

While it is not necessary for you to wait until your host parents have showered before using the bathroom, please ask your host how long it is customary to use the bathroom for. Each Canadian home has its own 'hot water tank' with a limited supply of hot water. Once the tank is emptied, it may take a couple of hours to reheat. If there are several members of your household, please be considerate with the use of hot water, which might run out in the mornings!

Telephone & The Internet

Please make sure you know how to use the telephones in the house. **In case of emergency, dial "911"** and you will be connected with an operator who will be able to send the police, fire truck and/or ambulance. This number should be posted by the telephone and you should discuss other emergency numbers and what to do in the event of a fire or emergency.

Your host is expected to provide reasonable use of the house phone for local calls. To avoid any complications over payment for long distance calls, please call collect or use a calling card or credit card when phoning home.

Your host family may have rules about the use of the phone—especially if there are other children in the household—when it comes to the length of calls and making or receiving calls late at night (or early in the morning). Please do not talk on the phone for too long at a time (more than 15 minutes) and ask your host what they consider "early" and "late". Your host may agree to allow you to use a separate phone line, but you should expect to pay for it.

Similar rules may apply to the use of the internet (if your host has an internet connection—some do not, and you cannot be guaranteed an internet connection unless you specifically request one when you register). As with a private phone line, if your host agrees to let you have a private Internet connection installed, you should expect to pay for it.

Please note: CHI recommends that you do not use your host family's computer.

Meals

Everybody likes different foods. Part of the fun of homestay is learning what Canadian families like to eat, and teaching your host family what you like to eat. As with every aspect of the homestay experience, this one improves with communication and participation. Tell

your hosts what you like to eat, and try helping with the preparation of a meal. Perhaps even make a meal for your host family that is considered traditional in your home country. This is a great way for you to eat something familiar and comforting for a change, if you are feeling homesick!

Your host family will always provide your meals—but this doesn't mean that your meals will be served to you. Sometimes your host will not be at home for every meal—and sometimes your host family will have different customs than you are used to for certain meals, like breakfast—so when you arrive, please ask where the food is stored and how to make a simple breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Here is what you can expect in a typical Homestay regarding meals:

- **Breakfast.** Each host family has its own unique morning schedule, so it is important to decide on a routine that will work best for everyone. Weekdays, breakfast is a quick, light meal. On weekends, families may prepare breakfast together. Some families eat a hot breakfast; others prefer to have something cold, such as cereal or toast, and juice.

Your family might leave it up to you to decide what to eat in the morning—please ask them to show you where the food is kept and how to prepare your own breakfast if this is the case.

If you're not sure what the rules are, discuss the meal with your host when you arrive or whenever you're unsure of what to do—they will always want you to be fed and never want you to go to school hungry.

- **Lunch,** eaten midday, usually consist of a light main course (soup, a salad, or a sandwich), a drink (water, milk, or juice), and a dessert of fruit or cookies. Since lunch is ordinarily eaten at school, your family will provide you with a bagged lunch to take with you. Usually, Canadians have sandwiches, raw vegetables, cookies, fruit and a drink. Sometimes you may be able to take some dinner from the night before that you can heat up at school, but this depends on whether or not the school you are attending has a microwave that you can use.
- **Dinner.** Your host family will try to have a sit-down dinner—which is usually the largest meal of the day and may consist of a main course, with or without a salad—as often as their weekly schedule allows. It is the most important meal of the day. It is very important that you communicate with your family when you will be home for dinner (dinners are usually eaten between 5:00 and 7:00 pm). To be considerate, if you will not be home for dinner, you MUST phone your family and tell them before dinnertime. This way, they will not expect you, they will not worry, and they will most likely leave the leftovers for you in the fridge.

Please try to keep this family dinner hour as often as possible as this is the best time for families to talk about their day and for you to bond with your host parents and host brothers and sisters.

It is important that you are happy with the food prepared for you—we can speak to your host if you're not happy, so please tell us if you are not happy with your meals. If you have special dietary needs—if you have extreme likes or dislikes, or any allergies—please discuss them with your host as soon as you arrive.

Life Outside the Home

Canadian families spend a few evenings each week engaged in leisure activities and relaxation. While we encourage you to spend as much time as possible with your homestay families, it's perfectly alright to spend a few evenings each week out with your own friends from school.

Night Life

When you do go out, please provide detailed information to your homestay families about where you will be going, and how you can be reached (including all relevant phone numbers); when you will be home (respecting, of course, all relevant curfews, discussed below); and who you will be with. Communication of all of this information is essential, for your safety and for your host's understanding.

Please do not ever assume your homestay family knows where you are, or remembers plans you have discussed in advance. Always review your plans with your homestay family on the evening you're going out.

Always tell your host when you will be coming home—and always call if you're going to be late. They will worry if you're not home when you're supposed to be! And when you do get home, please enter the home quietly!

Curfews

House rules include the hours you will be permitted to spend outside the home, especially in the evenings. Factors determining curfews include whether it's a school night or the weekend, what types of activities you're involved in, and the ages of family members in the homestay.

For students under the age of 18 (19 in British Columbia), CHI supports a curfew of 10 p.m. from Sunday to Thursday night, and from midnight to 1 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Different arrangements can be made for special circumstances.

Please phone your host if you are delayed past your curfew, or require help, at any time.

If you are disrespectful of your homestay hosts and do not conform to these limits, you may be expelled from your homestay and the CHI Homestay Program and your Custodianship cancelled.

Visitors

Students under the age of 18 (19 in British Columbia) are not permitted overnight visitors or visits in any event.

CHI generally discourages overnight visitors or visits. If you wish to have a guest then you must ask for permission. No overnight guests are allowed unless your host invites them, and they could be asked to pay \$35.00 per night.

In cases when your homestay host needs to make alternate sleeping arrangements for you, the CHI Homestay Program Coordinator must be notified and approve such arrangements in advance, including the names, address and telephone number(s) of the alternative homestay host and residence.

Travel outside Canada

Students enrolled in CHI programs may not travel over the Canadian border. You might not have the necessary documentation or visa and may be refused entry into a foreign country, or re-entry into Canada. This rule applies to all forms of travel, whether it's alone, with your host family, or with a school group.

Travel With Your Homestay Host or School Group

It's not uncommon for Canadian families to spend weekends or short holidays in the country, in a cabin or a second home, with family or friends. Some families spend school vacations in other parts of the country or abroad. If you cannot or do not want to go with your host family, please contact us to make other arrangements.

Students under the age of 18 (19 in British Columbia) are not allowed to travel outside the city, even with their host parents, unless they have the permission of their parents.

A "Parental Permission to Travel" form (which is attached to the Student Participation Agreement) must be completed and signed by the biological parents of all students who are under 18 (19 in British Columbia), for each trip outside of their host's city. If the student is traveling without their host parents, they must give their host with a detailed itinerary of such travel, including the names and addresses of those they will be traveling with and staying with during such travel.

Travel Alone or With Friends

While students are encouraged to explore and experience Canadian culture through travel during their stay here, it is expected that travel will not interfere with your academic studies and, generally speaking, should be limited to designated school holidays. And while CHI assumes no responsibility for you while you are away from your homestay, you must receive written authorization to take a trip.

If you travel without written authorization, you may be expelled from your homestay and the CHI Homestay Program and your custodianship cancelled.

Driving

Driving without a license is strictly prohibited. You must have a legal driver's license to operate a motor vehicle in Canada. While the legal driving age in most areas of Canada is 16 years old, international students who are under the age of 18 (19 in British Columbia) will not be granted permission to take driver's education classes or driver-training instruction.

CHI strongly discourages adult students from owning cars, in consideration of the associated risks and the high (and unpredictable) cost of car ownership and insurance.

Smoking

Canadians observe strict rules about smoking, and they must be observed in the CHI homestay program. It is illegal to buy cigarettes in Canada if you are under the age of 18. Students under the age of 18 in the CHI homestay program are not allowed, under any circumstance, to smoke in Canada—at home, at school, or elsewhere.

For students who smoke, who are over the age of 18, you are expected to observe all municipal rules about smoking. This means: no smoking in public buildings, on public transportation, and, in many cities and towns, no smoking in public places indoors at all, including bars and restaurants.

If you want to smoke at home, you may do so at your host's discretion—some hosts may allow you to smoke inside the house, some hosts may ask you to smoke outside the house, and some hosts will ask you not to smoke at all. You are expected to respect their wishes.

If you break these rules, you may be expelled from your homestay and the CHI Homestay Program and your Custodianship cancelled.

Alcohol and Drugs

The legal age for drinking alcohol in every Canadian province except Alberta and Quebec is 19 years old. In Alberta and Quebec the legal age is 18.

You will be expelled from the CHI homestay program and your custodianship will be revoked if: you drink alcohol underage; drink to excess if you are of legal drinking age; use or distribute illegal drugs including marijuana; use false identification.

Money and Valuables

Pocket Money

Please bring an adequate budget for incidental expenses such as meals out of the home, movies, and so on. Your homestay fees do not cover the costs of extra-curricular school activities or meals that you choose to purchase on your own outside the home.

Also, your Homestay fees do not include costs of major family outings. Although your homestay family may choose to pay for some activities, if you choose to participate in family holidays and/or travel where costs are incurred, you should expect to assist in bearing the costs. (If you choose not to participate in such activities, you and the host family must make alternate arrangements that are acceptable to everyone.)

While theft is not common in Canada, it can and does happen. To keep yourself and your valuables safe, please do not carry or display large amounts of cash at any time. Displaying wealth can also lead to uncomfortable situations among your peers: money attracts attention, and if other students think you have a lot of it to spend, they may start expecting you to pay for their meals and activities.

You should not be expected to lend money to, or borrow money from, other students or members of your host family household.

When you arrive in Canada, for your own security and convenience, it's a good idea to open a bank account. This is common practice in Canada and is the most reliable and safe way to handle money. The Bank of Canada insures bank accounts; you are not risking anything by depositing your savings with a bank. It's also convenient: you can access your funds at ATMs (Automated Debit Machines) and even pay for meals, retail purchases and tourist attractions with your bank card.

Valuables

Theft is not common in Canada—but it happens. Please make sure you take care of your valuables at all times.

It is your responsibility to obtain travel insurance to cover loss, theft or damage of your personal belongings. If you purchase anything in Canada, please ensure that your policy will cover your new valuables.

It's a good idea to make two copies of important documents (such as airline tickets, health insurance forms, and your passport): one for you to keep with you, and another for your hosts. Keep the originals in a safe place—they should not stay in your school bag or suitcase.

Healthcare and Medical Emergencies

All students should have their own personal medical coverage; this can be purchased before you come to Canada. Please contact your agent for more information on purchasing health insurance before your trip. Payment for any medical services not covered by the insurance company is the responsibility of the student.

So that you (and your hosts) are prepared for any emergencies, please make copies of your insurance policies and cards and keep them in a safe place at your homestay. Make sure your host knows the name of the insurance company, the policy number and the emergency number provided by the insurance company (you will have to translate this information for your host if the insurance policy is not written in English).

If you don't have insurance, please notify CHI immediately.

In the event of a medical emergency, please call 911 from the nearest phone. This is a toll-free call to a centralized national switchboard that will send medical, police, or fire services to you immediately. Then call the **Emergency Telephone number** located in the front of this Guide. The CHI coordinator will assist you to contact your host family as well as notify your own family if/when necessary.

Life at School

Behaviour

The CHI Code of Conduct is based on the governmental Code of Conduct for students in public schools and applies to all students.

Attendance

Regular school attendance is mandatory for all students participating in CHI homestay programs. If you feel sick and can't go to school, please ask your homestay host to telephone the school for you.

If you are absent without authorization or a meaningful explanation, there can be serious consequences: you may lose academic credits; you can be expelled from your school; you may be expelled from your homestay and your Custodianship may be cancelled.

Reports

Student Progress Reports Cards may be shared with your Homestay Host.

Conversation

You have come to Canada precisely to become more confident and assertive in English, so be brave! You might make mistakes at first, but your host family will be encouraging and supportive. They are here to help (and so are we). The best way to improve your English is to practice!

Using English With The Whole Family

Use your English in events that include other members of the household, such as:

- Looking at family photo albums and videos
- Playing cards/board games
- Planning holidays and weekend outings
- Having a picnic/barbecue, instead of eating at home

Using English One-on-One

Try to use English in as many simple daily activities as possible, such as:

- Conversation, especially at dinner;
- Setting the table, meal preparation, gathering, etc.;
- Accompanying your host on errands (a trip to the supermarket is an interesting event for both of you, to identify and describe your favourite foods)
- Exercising (run, walk, aerobics, swim, etc.)
- Watching TV (programs which stimulate conversation and the sharing of ideas).

Techniques for Mutual Understanding

Accept invitations to talk about yourself—don't be shy! Try to give full answers to questions—explain how you feel and why, rather than simply saying “yes” or “no,” or offering lists of things you like and don't like.

Ask your hosts to explain idiomatic expressions and slang. These can be hard to understand at first—and lots of fun to use. For example, “hang on” is equivalent to “one moment, please” or “please wait.”

If someone asks, “Do you understand?” be honest! Don't just say “Yes” for the sake of harmony! Instead, ask for help. Ask if your host understands you. Try to rephrase what you've said, or what you've heard. It can take effort—but it will always be worth it.

Smiles, laughter and genuine warmth are known and understood in all cultures. Liberal doses will go a long way to avoid and ease misunderstandings.

Tips to Encourage Communication

Conversation may be very difficult at first—but we must keep trying! As you go, keep in mind that it helps to:

- Speak English at all times.
- Speak slower, not faster, if you're having trouble making yourself understood. Try rephrasing the same ideas using different words.
- Listen to the expressions your hosts use in English, make sure you understand them, and try to use them, too.
- Use charades, pointing, and body language!
- Try writing items down—sometimes your reading and writing skills will be ahead of your verbal skills. Make the most of them!
- Purchase a Foreign Language—English dictionary.

If all else fails, call CHI for assistance! We have interpreters available and can arrange to get you extra help at school.

Common Challenges

A Word About Communication—And Compromise

We hope that your time spent at home will be deeply rewarding and enjoyable. There may, however, be moments when you encounter difficulties—often the result of poor communication, miscommunication, or a mutual inability to compromise.

If you experience any problems the following process is helpful; please try it:

1. Speak with your host family immediately. Often, what appears to be a big issue really isn't unless it is left unattended. One small incident can snowball into a very large problem simply because nobody talked about it and each person was left to think about it and make it worse. Therefore, if you have a problem, if you are unsure about something, if you feel that your family is upset by something, talk with them about it. Most families will be happy to talk to you and to find out what can be done to resolve the problem.
2. If the problem cannot be resolved by speaking with your family, please call CHI for help. We have lots of experience helping when all sorts of problems arise, and we know Canadians who understand your culture and can speak your language. We are here to help and we cannot help if we do not know what is happening. Please do not call your parents or Agent before you speak to us. We can help you better and more quickly if we hear about the problem from you directly. You can always call them later if you are not happy with our solutions.

Persistent Problems

If a problem comes up again between you and your host, the first thing we ask you to do is to contact us for assistance. Our goal is your (and your host's) safety, happiness, and health;

we've found that most problems, even persistent ones, can be resolved through a mediated series of conversations where we listen to one another's feelings and thoughts.

Although it is unusual, it is quite possible that you may wish us to relocate you, or that your host may wish you to be relocated. In such cases, we work quickly to find an alternative homestay. (In a typical year, more than 90% of our students rate their homestays as satisfactory or better; many say they love their hosts and don't want to go home! Of the less than 10% who request a move, more than half have allergies or food restrictions they failed to tell us about. Of the fraction of students moved for personal reasons, less than 1% requested a second change.)

Please complete our form, Request for Change of Homestay and give it to the CHI representative at the school. We will schedule an appointment to meet with you and discuss the issues you are having.

Why Would You Be Moved?

A student may be relocated (and may even be sent back to his or her home country) if he or she is disrespectful toward his or her host family or refuses to abide by the family's rules. By the same token, we are very strict about how our host families should treat you. We will relocate you immediately if any member of your homestay household:

- Regularly fails to provide adequate and/or healthy food.
- Neglects you, by failing to include you in suitable family activities, or by failing to pursue constructive communication and conversation with you.
- Willfully disrespects you, either through lack of consideration or insensitivity toward your feelings and/or culture.
- Fails to provide a clean and adequately maintained physical environment; or
- Continues in unresolved personality conflicts with you, individually or in the family;
- Steals your property;
- Harasses you in any way—verbally, emotionally, physically, or sexually.

Final Thoughts (For Now!)

Almost every difficulty our students face in homestay is connected with poor communication. It's not surprising—in your first weeks in Canada, you may have a hard time helping your hosts understand what you need and how you feel—and your hosts may have a hard time helping you understand them. This is totally natural and to be expected.

Sometimes the difficulty communicating can result in either the student or the host seeming rude or insensitive—or both. Sometimes we can all just become frustrated and unhappy. But we're here to help. We know it can be hard at the beginning, but **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!** We've helped lots of people like you get through the first, hard, days and weeks.

Here are a few things to keep in mind while you adjust:

- We know that the hardest thing for you to do is complain. We know that lots of ordinary things about your homestay may make feel strange at first, and we know that you won't want to seem ungrateful or unhappy. But it's okay to ask for help. Please don't say things are "fine" if they aren't. (But don't make insults, either!) Please be patient and try to be as specific about your needs and feelings as possible. Ask specific questions, whether you're concerned about laundry or dinner.
- It's okay to need some quiet time to yourself—but sometimes the best way to grow more comfortable at home is to keep busy and involved, to meet people, and most of all to talk—your hosts have welcomed you into their home because they want to know about you. If you're feeling overwhelmed (or even a little homesick), then why not practice your English by telling your host family all about life at your home!

IN THE MEANTIME, PLEASE STAY IN TOUCH!

And Remember:

HAVE FUN!