



ST. ANDREW'S INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM GUIDE FOR HOST FAMILIES



CONTACT INFORMATION

Michael Durkan

Director of International Education

250-479-1414

mdurkan@cisdv.bc.ca

Nina Timm

Host Family Coordinator

403-771-2519

homestay@cisdv.bc.ca

St. Andrew's Regional High School

880 McKenzie Ave.

Victoria, BC V8X 3G5

Canada

Phone: 250-479-1414

Fax: 250-479-5356

Email: sarhs@cisdv.bc.ca

Web: www.standrewshigh.ca

Office Hours: 8:00am - 4:00pm, Monday to Friday

Who to Call

School Office : - Attendance

Michael Durkan: - School-related Issues
- Health Insurance
- Field Trips
- Travel Permission
- Medical Emergency

Nina Timm - Homestay Issues
- Medical Emergency

Bell and Block Schedule *Please refer to school website for details*
(www.standrewshigh.ca)

School starts at 8:25 am and ends at 3:05 pm every day except Wednesday.
Wednesday is a short day and ends at 1:50 pm.

Table of Contents:

Introduction to the Program.....	4
Why students come to BC?	5
What are we looking for in a host family?	6
Expectations of a Host Family	7
Arrival and Departure	8
The First Few Days	9
School Start	10
Money Matters	11
Medical Insurance	12
Health and Safety	13
Communication is the Key!.....	14
Computers and Gadgets	15
Adjustment Issues	15
School Attendance + Academic Performance	18
Things not working out?	19
Other Issues	21
Frequently Asked Questions	22
Student Travel	23
Activities - A Word of Caution	25
Appendix A - How to be a Careful Host Parent	26
Appendix B - Harassment	27

Introduction to the Program:

The St. Andrew's Homestay Program strives to provide quality homestay experiences for international high school students attending SARHS. We believe that a positive homestay experience requires a healthy relationship between all parties involved in the program. This relationship shall be governed by kindness, respect and understanding.

For over 25 years, St. Andrew's High School has been welcoming students from all over the world to their international student program. St. Andrew's offers a safe and culturally accepting environment where students receive the highest quality learning experience from our knowledgeable and experienced staff. Whether the student is coming for a one-year language experience or the three year graduation program, St. Andrew's can accommodate the individual student. There are opportunities outside the classroom to make new Canadian friends with our Conversation Partner Program. Students are able to practice their English by attending our monthly international activities with their conversation partners who are specifically involved to enhance communication skills in English. This program along with living in a homestay, is ideal for developing their English while studying at St. Andrew's.

Not all international students at St. Andrew's are placed through the St. Andrew's Homestay Program. There are a number of students who have their homestay arranged by the agency that handled their school application. In these cases, a local agent representative often acts as the custodian. Other international students may live with family members (parents, Aunts/Uncles, close family friends). ***The St. Andrew's Homestay Program is only responsible for those students who have been placed by the St. Andrew's Host Family Coordinator.***



Why do students come to BC?

Many students choose BC because of the moderate climate and appealing natural surroundings. Canadian cities (especially Victoria) are also recognized as very safe and provide a variety of indoor and outdoor activities for young people.

There are several reasons why students attend high school in Canada:

- To improve their English language skills, which will lead to more job opportunities in their home countries.
- To experience Canadian culture and lifestyle.
- To earn a BC High School graduation certificate (Dogwood Certificate) to gain admission into a North American University or College (in some countries, university options are extremely limited).

Where do the students come from?

St. Andrew's has developed a diverse international student program with students from China, Japan, Mexico, Brazil, Germany, Spain, Vietnam, Korea and India. They may find out about the program by attending educational fairs in their home country, through recommendations from participants, through the school website or through agencies which specialize in international high school programs.

It is a fairly expensive endeavor to come and attend high school in Canada. Therefore, most of the students come from affluent backgrounds in their respective home countries. This can also mean that they may be used to a very different lifestyle at home than what they will experience in their Canadian family.

The responsibilities of an international student:

- Treat the host family with respect and kindness.
- Integrate into family life as much as possible.
- Demonstrate a willingness to learn about Canadian culture and customs.
- Share the family chores and adapt to the family's customs.
- Follow family rules and respect curfews, etc.
- Comply with all rules and guidelines as established by the Island Catholic Schools' International Program



What are we looking for in a host family?

One day one of your children might want to participate in a program like this – What kind of home would you like them to live in while in a different country?

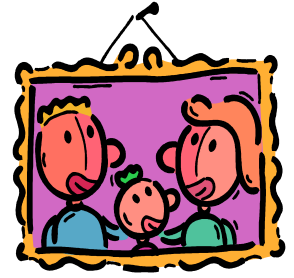
Becoming a host family is not a decision that should be made lightly. It takes openness, kindness, and a willingness to tolerate and understand a person from a different cultural background. Any student placed in your home will essentially have to become part of the family. It is important to discuss your decision to host a student with all family members. Children may assume that they will become best friends with their new host “brother” or “sister”, when in fact there is no guarantee that this will be the case – language barriers and cultural differences often present obstacles. Preparing them in advance will avoid disappointment later. However, having someone from a foreign country share in your life will hopefully be a very rewarding experience for all family members. A great host family sees that potential and uses the time as a period of growth for both the family and the visiting student.

Hosting an international student should in no way be viewed as simply a means to supplement your family income. We realize that for some families the host family remuneration is a welcome addition to their monthly budget. BUT, at no time should a family rely on the remuneration to meet their monthly financial obligations. As we cannot guarantee the placement of a student in your home at any point in time, we strongly caution any family to count on this “income”. We need to be assured that you will not suffer financial hardship if a student is moved from your home, or a student cancels their participation prior to arrival.

Every member of the household age 18 or older (including older children living at home) is required to submit a Criminal Record Check every five years.



Expectations of a Host Family



You will be expected to provide a student with the same support as a family member, which includes:

- A safe, secure, welcoming home environment.
- A separate bedroom which includes a bed, closet, dresser and desk, with adequate heating and light.
- A healthy breakfast, lunch and dinner daily unless other arrangements have been made for the day.
- An English-speaking environment in the household.
- Laundry (or provide laundry facilities if the student wishes to do their own laundry).
- Orientation to Victoria, your neighbourhood and to the neighbourhood of the school.
- Involvement in all family activities whenever possible.
- Support for a student who may wish to attend church.
- Encourage the student to learn about Canadian culture, lifestyle and family life.
- Provision of internet/wifi access at home.
- Take an interest in the student's progress at school.
- Respect the rights, privacy and culture of the student.
- Ensure household prescription drugs, marijuana and alcohol are not readily accessible to the student.
- Demonstrate appropriate behaviour toward the student at all times.
- Provide safe transportation to and from school each school day (car, walking, bus, cycling).
- Pick up/drop off the student from Victoria International Airport at the beginning and end of their stay.
- Make other arrangements if you are unable to pick up/deliver the student to the airport.
- Inform us of any changes to your home situation (e.g. new baby, additional student, move to new home).
- Provide criminal record checks for all adults in the home 18 and over.

The Logistics of Arrival and Departure:

When will the student arrive?

Most students will arrive at the start of the school year in September (Semester 1). We will see a smaller intake of students in late January for Semester 2.

We encourage students to arrive the weekend before school starts, which, in September, is the Labour Day weekend. It is therefore important that you arrange to be in town to welcome your student at that time. Depending on flight availability, your student may arrive a few days before the weekend. ***Please contact your student directly to confirm arrival dates as soon as possible.***

Should you encounter difficulties getting in touch with your student, please contact the Host Family Coordinator or the Director of International Education.

It is your responsibility to pick your student up at the airport or ferry/bus terminal.

Depending on the exact start and end dates of school in September and July, the possibility of a late August arrival and/or early July departure exists.

Please refrain from making plans for a family holiday trip during those time periods.

When will the student leave?

Most students will leave soon after the end of term or after their final exam.

IMPORTANT: Please confirm your student's departure date well before the end of term. Some students will need to confirm their return flight to ensure a seat. This should be done as early as possible.

It is your responsibility to bring your student to the airport or ferry/bus terminal and ensure their check-in.

Extensions:

Some students may decide to extend their stay. If your student talks to you about a possible extension, please notify us as soon as possible.

The First Few Days:

Initially the experience of living in a different country will be a daunting prospect for most of them. This could be their first time away from home for an extended period of time. Jetlag may be an issue for students from countries in different time zones. Please take it easy on your student for the first few days and take the above into consideration when making plans. Most students also need to adjust to living in an English-speaking environment. The task of constantly translating in your head what you hear and what you would like to say can be an exhausting exercise.

Some students may be returning to the program for another year or are coming to us from similar programs in other school districts. Their greatest challenge will be to settle into a new host family and their routines.

The first few days are very important – please set aside time to make your student feel welcome during this impressionable period.



Things to do

- **Orient the student to his/her new surroundings.** Take him/her for a tour of the neighbourhood/city; clarifying the best route to and from school, important landmarks and the main streets. Use a map of Greater Victoria to help the student understand where he/she will be living for the next while.
- **Take a trip to the grocery store** and establish what kinds of food they enjoy eating. They will definitely appreciate it if you are able to offer some familiar foods which are readily available in the International Foods aisle at Fairway, Superstore, Walmart, or perhaps a specialty store.
- **Cell Phones.** Students are generally anxious to get their cell phones adapted for use in Canada. Wireless Wave at Mayfair Mall offers plans with multiple carriers. It is usually \$10 for a Canadian SIM card and then they pay for their monthly plan of choice. **Please do not sign for any cell phone contracts on behalf of your student.** We suggest a “pay as you go” plan.
- **House Key.** You will need to organize a house key for your student. It is also expected that you allow the student to be in the house on their own (not overnight of course).
- **Student Bank Account.** Students who are here to graduate will generally open a bank account in Victoria. If necessary, advise the student on a convenient bank location. You may need to assist in this matter if they are not confident in their language skills.

The Start of School

Start and End dates:

Start of the school year:

September – Usually the Tuesday after Labour Day weekend

Start of Semester 1:	Beginning of September
End of Semester 1:	End of January
Start of Semester 2:	Beginning of February
End of Semester 2:	End of June

End of the school year: End of June

The First Day of School in September:

An orientation for ALL international students (returning and new) will be held prior to the first week of school. Host families will be advised by e-mail of the precise day/time closer to the date.

Students are to bring their passport (including study permit if applicable) on the first day of school for photocopying purposes only.

All International Students will cover the following very important aspects of Orientation:

- Timetable/Course Selection if needed
- Student Agenda Book
- Policies and guidelines including attendance
- Travel policy/form
- Medical Insurance (students to bring passport and study permit)
- Lockers: locks and lockers will be available
- Homestay Orientation
- Curfews by grade level

Money Matters:



How will you be paid?

Monthly homestay payments to families will be made by direct deposit through the school account. Each host family is required to complete and sign an Authorization Form with their bank details (original copy required) in addition to submitting a void cheque. Void cheques can be printed directly from your online banking service to avoid using a cheque. Your banking information is kept on file for one year. If you take a break from hosting for more than a year, you will need to resubmit the paperwork.

Who pays for what?

You are expected to pay for items that you would pay for your own children, i.e. going out for dinner, ice cream or snacks while away from home and so on. If you are planning a bigger outing, i.e. a ski trip to Mt. Washington, it is not expected that you pay for the student other than his/her accommodation. Please discuss the associated cost with the student as early as possible so that he/she can plan for the expense and will be able to join the family activity. So, for a ski trip, you would be responsible for accommodation costs and meals, the student would be responsible for any equipment rentals and lift tickets.

It is the student's responsibility to pay for **public transportation** unless on an outing with the family. Bus passes are provided by the school. They will be issued with a monthly pass for September at the orientation, and a full-year pass by the end of September.

The host family is expected to let the student use the **personal hygiene items** available to all family members. The student is responsible to cover the expense of special brand items or additional products.

Prescription medication: Should a student be required to take prescription medications, we assume that the student has made adequate financial provisions or will arrive with enough medication to last for the entire stay.

Medical Insurance:

One of the program requirements is for the student to maintain adequate healthcare insurance for the duration of their stay.

All full-year students are covered by MSP with an additional ‘top-up’ from ‘Guard Me’. **However**, as it takes three months for MSP to take effect, the first three months are covered by ‘Guard Me’. **New students, here for six months or under, will be covered by ‘Guard Me’** <https://www.guard.me>. If they extend their stay beyond six months, they will transfer to MSP + Guard Me ‘top-up’. Students receive their personalized MSP/“Guard Me” card on their first day at school. If a student requires medical attention, they will need to pay \$100 fee to see a doctor in-person.

Guard Me offers the option for students to set up an account for a virtual appointment with a Canadian doctor online at any time. This can avoid a long wait at a walk-in clinic or Emergency Room. Virtual doctors can treat or issue prescriptions for: • Cold & Flu • Coughs • Earaches • Hives • Infections • Pink Eye • Sinus Infections • Sore Throat • Urinary Tract Infections • Vomiting / Diarrhea, amongst other things. Students over 14 yrs old can set up the account themselves at: <https://www.guard.me/mobiledoctor.php>. Students under 14 yrs will need the host family to help set up the account. *(Please note that there is one question in the set-up process that asks if you are the legal guardian, please answer YES – Guard Me reps are aware that host families are not necessarily legal guardians and this is OK).*

It is important that all receipts for medical services and prescriptions are kept and submitted for reimbursement with the “Guard Me” claim form, which is distributed to students at their orientation. It usually takes about two weeks for students to get reimbursed.

Once on **MSP**, there are also many virtual appointment options available online.

Please direct all questions and concerns about medical insurance to Michael Durkan: 250-479-1414 mdurkan@cisdv.bc.ca

Nurses Hotline: 811

Health and Safety:

In case of illness or injury:



Whenever we are faced with an illness or injury it may cause some extra anxiety. Imagine what it would be like to fall ill or get injured in a foreign country away from your own family... **Let's hope that** very few of our students will be faced with this, but if they do, we truly hope that you as the host family will feel compelled to support them. You will remain responsible for the student in case of illness or injury, meaning that you need to act as the primary care giver at that time.

It is your responsibility to assess each occurrence of illness or injury as a careful parent. This means that you will do what every careful and reasonable parent would do. ***Should a major medical issue arise, please inform the Host Family Coordinator or the Director of International Education.*** This is necessary to meet insurance requirements and to decrease potential liability issues.

If deemed necessary, the Director of International Education will pass information on to the natural parents and/or agent of the student. You may very well have established some kind of relationship with the student's parents via e-mail yourself and may inform the parents regarding any health concerns.

Please refer to Appendix A for a more detailed definition of the role and responsibilities of a careful host parent.

Eating Disorders:

Please see "Adjustment Issues – Eating Habits" for more information.

Vaccinations:

Your student may bring vaccination permission forms home from school. **The student will need permission from his/her natural parent(s) to partake.** As a host parent you are not authorized to make that decision for your student. Please encourage your student to discuss this with his/her natural parents and if a vaccination is desired to please contact the Director of International Education.

Marijuana, drug & alcohol abuse:

Prior to arriving in Canada, the students are advised that the consumption of any alcohol and/or drugs, including marijuana, is not permitted during their stay. The repercussions of alcohol and drug use while in Canada are clearly outlined to them in their orientation. Any student infracting on this rule may be sent home immediately at his or her expense. We ask that any prescription drugs, marijuana, or alcohol you may have in your home, are not readily accessible to the student.

Should you become aware or suspicious of alcohol and drug abuse by your student, please contact us as soon as possible.

Operating a motor vehicle:

The operation of a motor vehicle and/or motorcycle is only permitted if the student has a valid BC Drivers License. Host families are advised not to let the student use the host family vehicle(s) for any purpose.

Communication is the key!

Open and honest communication is the most important ingredient in your successful relationship with your student. Some students may not be used to this kind of interaction with adults or people of authority. It may take a while for them to adjust and to open up and really start communicating with you. Please do not give up.

Explain your “house rules” shortly after their arrival. We will provide you with a “Homestay Environment Questionnaire” which will help you establish household routines in a positive and collaborative way. If there are other things that are important to the smooth running of your household, the student should be made aware of them as soon as possible. This is intended to help the student understand the workings of your family. Please take the time to explain why you have these rules and expectations.

Breaking the language barrier

When a student applies to St. Andrew’s International Program, the Director of International Education will evaluate their academic transcripts for the last two years. This is done to ensure some level of English proficiency prior to admitting a student. As you can imagine, transcripts don’t always provide an adequate picture of one’s English abilities. Most students will also have English proficiency testing once they have started attending school. Students will attend some special ESL classes at school, while participating in regular classes.

It is inevitable that you and your student will experience some kind of language barrier. The degree may vary greatly from one student to the next. In the past, host families have used a number of tools to help them deal with this - dictionaries, picture books and magazines. Now, there are many translation Apps and websites to be found on the internet. For example google.translate.com.

If you are really at a loss and are unable to communicate, please contact us.



Computers and Phones:

Students will usually bring their own laptop with them and communicate with family and friends via WhatsApp, Messenger, Wechat etc.. One downside to this is that it may promote the isolation of the student in their own room. Please encourage your student to get more involved in person-to-person contact. Whenever possible, try and have meals together as a family at home, giving the student as much conversation time as possible. We recommend a curfew of 11:00 pm to shut down all electronic devices (may be earlier depending on age of student) to ensure that the student is not disrupting the rest of the household and getting enough rest to be able to function at school the next morning.

Adjustment Issues:

Adjusting to a different climate:

This may be an issue for students from countries with very different climates. What seems to be a moderate and comfortable temperature to us may be too cold for some students. **Please check with your student as to whether or not their room temperature is comfortable for them and explain to them how the temperature can be adjusted if needed.** Hopefully they will quickly get used to our climate and your family's home temperature. Please provide extra blankets if necessary.

Adjusting to cultural differences and customs:

It can be quite a challenge and a shock for some students to adjust to the Canadian culture. Your role as a host family is very crucial in making their stay in Canada a success and as enjoyable as possible. The most important thing is kindness and a willingness to learn and understand each other. Some students, depending on the country they come from, may not require any adjustment period and they will blend in almost immediately. Others may struggle for a while and will need the support of their host families. Some of the international students may seem very withdrawn for quite a while and it will take patience and persistence on the part of the host family to draw these students out of their shells.

Physical contact:

Some students may crave physical contact such as a hug or a 'pat on the back' from their host family and friends. Others, especially students from Asian countries, may feel very uncomfortable with physical contact. Open communication and observing body language should help you assess what level of physical contact your student is comfortable with.

Courtesy and Respect:

The host family and the student deserve to be treated with courtesy and respect. Nevertheless, different cultures have different norms and expectations in this regard. The words 'please' and 'thank you' are used very frequently in our interactions. This may not be the case in the home country of your student. Please, do not jump to the conclusion that your student is not polite or acts entitled, simply because they are not displaying the level of courtesy, respect, and appreciation you would expect. Make the effort to explain your expectations and our acceptable norms in this regard.

Food dislikes and intolerances:

One of the biggest adjustments for some will be getting used to our food. If this is the case, your student will most likely be very grateful if you can find a specialty food store with food from their home country. You may also want to suggest that he/she prepares a customary meal from their home country for your family. This may go a long way in feeling accepted into a new environment.

Some students may be very picky eaters and they may have some food items they will absolutely not eat as part of their diet.

Hopefully this, and any food allergies, were indicated in their application profile. Nevertheless, it is a good idea to ask your student whether or not there are some foods they will not eat as part of their diet.

Please do not be too alarmed if your student is somewhat of a hesitant eater at the beginning of the stay. After time he/she should be able to adjust and get used to our kind of food and eating habits.

Eating Habits:

Eating disorders, such as Anorexia and Bulimia Nervosa, seem to be on the increase among today's teenagers. At times an event such as moving to a foreign country for a while, may trigger significant emotional changes in a student affecting their normal eating habits.

Should you notice any concerns regarding the student's eating habits, please discuss your concerns with your student and/or the Host Family Coordinator. Emotional reasons may be the underlying cause for these changes, and we may need to check with the natural parents to assess if reasons for concern exist.

Some students choose to join a gym while they are here, and occasionally, some choose to "bulk up". In the process they may attempt to consume enormous amounts of food, protein shakes and bars. This topic will be covered during student orientation and students informed that they will be responsible for purchasing additional food items that go beyond regular meals/snacks.

Preparing your own meal:

Some students may not be used to preparing their own breakfast, lunch, snacks, or, on rare occasions, dinner. Please explain to them that it is customary in Canada, for all family members to help and partake in the task of preparing food. Our expectation is that you as the host family will provide the student with three nutritious, well-balanced meals per day and access to snacks. If the student has to prepare their own lunches, this will require some initial help on your part – having foods that they enjoy on hand, giving suggestions and ideas on how to put it together, and explaining the importance of making time for preparation.

Dinnertime:

Some students may arrive with the expectation of a sit-down dinner with all family members in the evening. If your family's schedule does not allow for this every night, you may wish to explain your family's dinnertime routine early in the student's stay. However, dinnertime is an important family social time which will greatly benefit conversation and relationship-building with the student. We encourage families to do this whenever possible.

Chewing with the mouth open:

In some cultures, chewing with your mouth open is viewed as a sign of appreciation to the cook.

Not asking for things:

In some cultures, it is customary to decline any offer for food and drink at least three times before accepting. Do not hesitate to ask your student several times if they would like something to eat/drink.

Drinking Water:

Some students may be used to drinking carbonated water exclusively. They do not realize that this kind of water is rather expensive to buy here and usually not consumed very often. Some students may not be used to drinking water directly from the tap. Please assure them that our drinking water is perfectly safe here in Victoria.

Pets in the family home: Some students may be very hesitant towards pets in the home (dogs and cats in particular). If you detect hesitancy on the student's part in this regard, please introduce your "non-human" friends slowly.

Personal Hygiene:

Some students may want to take long showers, or enjoy a bath later at night. This may be a disruption or disturbance to you. Please use the 'Homestay Environment Questionnaire' to set expectations for shower time and use. In certain countries, it is not customary to bath or shower every day. Please accept this as a cultural difference and not ignorance on the student's part.

Some students may never have had to use a shower with a shower curtain. To avoid embarrassment on their part and the potential flooding of your bathroom, please explain that the shower curtain needs to be on the inside of the tub.

You may also want to explain to your student what kind of things can be flushed down a toilet and what items cannot to avoid expensive repairs.

Socializing with friends:

In some countries, especially those with a warmer climate, it is customary to delay socializing until the later hours of the evening. Please explain to your student that this is not acceptable to most Canadian families.

Curfews and consumption of alcohol/marijuana use:

Some of the students will not be used to having a curfew. They may also be of legal age to consume alcohol in their home countries. Nevertheless, they have decided to come to Canada and experience Canadian culture. Please explain to them your family expectations regarding curfews and the laws of this province regarding alcohol consumption and marijuana use (Illegal under 19 years of age). Please refer to the "Health and Safety" section for information on what to do if you suspect that your student is drinking alcohol and/or abusing drugs.

The school has introduced a general outline for curfews depending on Grade level. This will be shared with students and host families. Weeknights are work nights and not for sleepovers. Exceptions to the set curfew would be a school event or family outing. Please take into consideration how the student will get home safely. Contact the Homestay Coordinator if you require additional guidance on this.

Public Transportation:

The public transportation system in the student's home country may be very different from the one in greater Victoria. This may frustrate them, especially if coming from a major city with excellent subway, bus, and train systems. Others may have never used public transit if considered unsafe in their home country. Please take the time to explain our system to your student and maybe even do a trial run with him/her. The more comfortable the student feels moving freely within the area, the more independent they will become. BC Transit has a free App that students can download called 'Transit' which is a great resource for routes and timetables. Many will use Google. They can also refer to the BC Transit website (www.bctransit.com).

School Attendance and Academic Performance:

Regular school attendance and satisfactory academic performance are requirements for continued participation in the St. Andrew's International Program.

- **Your student is sick and will have to miss school:**
Please notify the school that your student is at home due to illness. Keep phoning the school every day the student is away from school. Please refer to the Contact Information on page 1 for the school phone number to excuse your student's absence. Any absences are considered "missed learning opportunities" so please remind your student to check with each subject teacher about missed school and homework. It is the student's responsibility to catch up on the missed work.
- **You receive a call from the school that your student was absent:**
Please notify (by phone or e-mail) the Director of International Education and confirm whether or not this absence was legitimate, i.e. due to illness.
- **You receive an interim report or other correspondence from a teacher about your student's poor academic performance:**
Please notify the Director of International Education so that she may follow up with the student and the student's teacher(s).

What if things don't work out?

Hosting an international student should be an experience that both the family and the student enjoy. At no time should it become a burden so unbearable that you can hardly wait for the day the student leaves.

Expectations you might have:

One important thing to consider is that the students are generally normal teenagers who will exhibit normal teenage behaviours. These may include mood swings, forgetfulness, excessive sleeping, and a desire to spend almost all their time with friends. Most likely there will also be times when your student will do something they were not supposed to. When this happens please try and put the event(s) into perspective and in relation to typical teenage behaviour.

Please address any situation that bothers you as soon as possible. Find a convenient and appropriate time to address the issue in a relaxed setting. In our experience, most conflicts can be resolved by open communication from the onset.

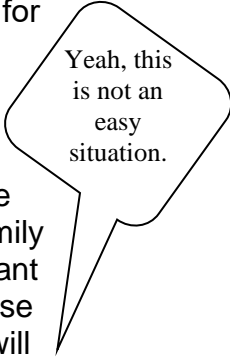
Should a situation persist and you feel that you have exhausted your capabilities of dealing with it, contact the Host Family Coordinator to discuss the situation. We may decide to facilitate a meeting with all parties involved, looking for a solution that will work for everyone and/or we may decide to "officially" note the undesirable behaviour on the student's record to allow for stronger disciplinary action should the behaviour continue.

We strongly support the concept of mediation and mutual respect between the family and the student throughout this process.

If a situation has deteriorated beyond reconciliation, we will make arrangements for an alternate placement as quickly as possible. Please be understanding while we work through the process of finding a "new" family for the student.

Students requesting a Host Family change:

Under certain circumstances your student may not feel comfortable discussing issues/concerns with you. Some of these issues may be a sense of "not being wanted in the family", little or no opportunity to interact with family members, house rules which are deemed too restrictive, or simply a significant personality conflict. Some students believe that the only way to address these concerns is to ask for a new host family. The Host Family Coordinator will discuss the request for a 'new' host family with the student and encourage him/her to reflect on their attitude and behaviour in the home and how it could have affected the homestay situation.



Yeah, this is not an easy situation.

Please trust that we will carefully evaluate any request to be moved from a home and will only consider the request if the reasons given are deemed to be valid, and where mediation has either failed or will most likely not be successful.

If a student's natural parents and/or agent request a move for the student we may need to do so without an attempt at mediation.

If we have a “new” home available, the student may be moved fairly quickly. We understand that this can be surprising and/or hurtful for the original host family. We assure you that this kind of occurrence does not disqualify you as a host family nor do we assign any kind of responsibility for the failure of this match to any party involved. When making the decision to move a student, it is based on the fact that the student has paid a significant amount of money to come and stay in a Canadian family. Our goal will be to find an arrangement that will work for them within the program parameters and expectations, so they can enjoy their time here in Canada. We will also attempt to provide some kind of closure for the host family by discussing our motivation for a “surprise” move after the student has left your home.

Any kind of sudden departure of a “family member” can be traumatic especially for younger family members. You may wish to discuss with your younger children the possibility that any international student you may be hosting, may leave the household rather suddenly (intentionally or non-intentionally).

Host Families that have gone through the sudden departure of a student have told us that at first they felt a lot of anger. This anger then changed into disappointment and at times frustration if the family didn't have the opportunity to discuss the reasons for the move with the student. We fully understand this reaction especially since families put so much into the relationship with their student. Putting closure onto such an event is important, for you as a host family and for us as program organizers. We want to maintain the best relationship possible.

Dismissal from the Program:

A student may be dismissed from the program for serious infractions of program rules and failure to meet program expectations (after warnings have been issued). These expectations include appropriate conduct in the host family home and at school.

In the case of a dismissal the student has to leave the host family home as soon as possible – the student may return home or may start in a different program. This usually occurs within a matter of a few days. The Director of International Education will liaise with you should your student be dismissed.

Some rather delicate issues:

Switching host families before month-end?

It may be at the request of either the host family or the student that we move a student to a different home. Any move is usually arranged for mid-month or end month, providing two weeks' notice. We try and organize the move with as little disruption as possible. Understandably, the period of transition for both parties can sometimes be uncomfortable, so your understanding and cooperation during this period is greatly appreciated. If you have already been paid for the full month, we may need to ask you to e-transfer the remaining homestay fees in order for us to pay the new host family.

In case of a student dismissal before end of month, you are entitled to keep the remuneration received for the month in which the dismissal occurred.

What if the student causes damage to your home/property?

It is important that you maintain adequate home and content insurance at all times. You also need to check with your insurance provider regarding hosting an international student. It may affect your premium. Damages, such as soiled carpets or broken furniture, should be fixed or dealt with before a student's departure. Please contact us to discuss the scope of the damage and then address it with your student. He/she will be responsible to pay for damage caused. Please keep in mind that regular wear and tear are to be expected. We recommend an inspection of the room two weeks before a student's departure for any major damage in order to organize potential compensation.

Lost and/or presumed stolen items:

The student's insurance should cover all lost and/or presumed stolen items of the student. Should you as the host family lose (or presume stolen) any items, please submit a claim to your insurance provider. The St. Andrew's International Student Program cannot compensate you for any lost or presumed stolen items.

A student's right to privacy:

Please respect a student's right to privacy in their own room. Most teenagers are very protective of their privacy and international students will be no different. Always knock before entering their room and talk to them about your need to enter the room when they are not home. You have every right to ensure that the room is kept to your expectations, but please respect their need to a private and safe space.

You may not search their belongings at any time.

Charges at the airport drop-off:

Some of the students will be faced with additional charges at the airport due to excess luggage weight. We recommend that you ask your student to research weight restrictions and to weigh their suitcase(s) before heading to the airport. If not, they need to be prepared to leave things behind or pay for the charges themselves.

Frequently asked Questions:

Who is the legal custodian of the international student?

A representative documents to act as custodian for all international students, stating that the care and supervision of the student has been arranged. For the St. Andrew's Homestay Program it is The Director of International Education. The host family will be the primary care provider and act in place of the natural parents.

What does it mean: "in place of the natural parents"?

As the primary care provider of an international student you have the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding **minor emergency medical care** and **education related issues**, such as report cards, parent teacher interviews and so on. This includes signing consent forms for the student's health care (minor medical treatment, except Vaccinations), and educational or extracurricular / recreational activities. The **legal custodian** (Director of International Education) will make decisions about any **major medical situation (emergency or not)**. When in doubt, please check with Michael Durkan. Please notify the school and the Host Family Coordinator about any medical situation with your student. For additional information refer to Appendix A - "About being a host parent".

What does adequate supervision mean?

Adequate supervision is the same level of supervision you would provide for your own children of the same age as the international student. Please discuss with the student your standard of adequate supervision and what information regarding the student's whereabouts you require at what times. **At no time may you leave the student unsupervised overnight.** Should a situation arise where you are unable to ensure this level of supervision, you may make alternate arrangements, such as ensuring that another responsible adult is staying with the student or arranging for the student to stay somewhere else where a responsible adult is present. You need to contact the Host Family Coordinator and provide information regarding the type and length of the arrangement you have made.

What do I do when the student's parents/siblings come to visit?

It can happen that family members of the student come to visit while the student participates in the program. The host family is under no obligation to accommodate these relatives in their home, nor entertain them at their expense. Of course, it would be wonderful if the relationship with your student was such that you would welcome the opportunity to meet family members, spend some time with them, and even invite them to your home. But only do what you feel comfortable with and are willing to provide.

Student Travel

Travel should not interfere with academic studies and should be limited to designated school holiday periods or weekends.

Some students will think it's quite "normal" to want to go out-of-town on their own or with a few friends. This may be something they would do in their home countries. The St. Andrew's International Student Program has developed guidelines for such requests.

The following does not apply to any travel or fieldtrips organized by the school as part of the International Student Program.

Travel (with the Host Family) under your supervision within the Province of BC:

You do not require approval by the Director of International Education but please follow these steps:

STEP 1: Please ensure that the student's parents are aware of any travel plans you make with your student and that they consent to any arrangements made.

STEP 2: You or your student should notify Michael Durkan of the travel plans by providing info on dates of travel, destination, and reason for travel. Please e-mail this information to mdurkan@cisdv.bc.ca.

All other travel is subject to approval by the Director of International Education in consultation with the host family.

Unapproved travel is a serious infraction of the Program Rules and may result in expulsion from the Program.

Approval is required for:

- Any **unsupervised** travel;
- Any travel **supervised by someone other than the student's own host family** (this includes travel with another student's host family)
- Any travel **outside the Province of BC or Canada** (with or without the student's own host family)

An **International Student Travel Application Form** (a copy is available on the next page) must be completed for each trip falling into the above categories. The student must provide the Program with a detailed itinerary of his/her travels including the names and addresses of those he/she will be traveling with and staying with during the travels.

Should the destination be outside of Canada the student will require an official letter from the school confirming his/her international student status in Canada. This letter will be important when going through Customs and Immigration at international border crossings.

The International Student Travel Application can be downloaded from the website:

If approval is granted, we will inform you by e-mail. Only then is the student allowed to travel.



ISLAND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
International Student Program
Student Travel Document

To be completed by all international students at least two weeks prior to an anticipated out-of-town trip. Students who do not receive advance permission and who leave the city/town may be subject to discipline including suspension from the program.

NAME: _____

DATE OF APPLICATION: _____

DESTINATION: _____

DATES OF TRIP:
 Leaving on: _____
 Returning on: _____
 Departure time: _____
 Return time: _____

REASON FOR THE TRIP

Travel is by:
 Bus _____
 Airplane _____
 Other _____

Accommodation:
 Family name _____
 Phone number _____
 Address _____

I support do not support this request _____
 Director of International Education
 I support do not support this request _____
 Host Family

APPROVAL Status (for office use only)	
Date received in office _____	Reviewed by _____
Request approved _____	Not approved _____
Student Informed _____	

Activities – A Word of Caution

- **Swimming:** Students should only swim in locations where a certified life-guard is present.
- **Cycling:** Please ensure that students wear helmets when cycling. It is the law in BC, but not in many other countries.
- **Trampoline:** Students may not participate in trampoline activities. This advice comes from BC Ministry of Education, Risk Management branch. An accident could lead to litigation.
- **On the Water:** When participating in activities ON the water, such as boating, kayaking, river tubing, etc. students must wear life jackets.
- **Surfing:** Students may not participate in surfing unless they participate in a Surfing School program which has liability insurance, accompanies students in the water, and prepares for the activity with a safety lesson. Also, students must be able to swim.
- **Extreme Sports:** Extreme sports, such as bungee jumping, para-gliding etc. are not permitted.



Any skiing activities will require a travel form. This will go through the Director of International Education who will ensure that the necessary permission is received by the natural parents.

It is also a good idea to have some communication with the parents and keep them informed of activities that their child may be involved in. Even if they don't understand English, they will find a way to get your message translated.

Appendix A

How to be a Careful Host Parent

Your responsibility as a host parent is to do **everything a prudent and reasonable parent would do**. In essence, the host parent needs to **act as a careful parent**, who foresees dangers and risks.

There is no duty of care to foresee every accident or supervise a student for every second of the day.

A careful parent will do the following:

- Provide adequate supervision and communicate expectations and rules clearly
- Will not allow the use of improper, inadequate, defective equipment
- Will warn of dangers and caution the student
- Will train the student in safety and proper use of any equipment
- Will take reasonable precautions against injury
- Will treat an injury that has occurred
- Will institute actions/measures after a previous incident

A careful parent will make reasonable and thoughtful decisions based on:

- Age of student
- Nature of activity and degree of adult supervision
- Student's language abilities and how well you are able to communicate instructions and risk of injury.
- General awareness of situation
- Foreseeable risks based on previous incidents

Appendix B

Harassment:

We expect all relations to be free from any behaviour that can be identified as being personally or sexually harassing in nature. Such behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

For purposes of this policy, harassment shall be defined as follows:

Personal Harassment

- Any improper behaviour that is directed at or offensive to another person, is unwelcome, and which the person knows or ought to reasonably know would be unwelcome; or
- Objectionable conduct, comment or materials or displays that demeans, belittles, intimidates, or humiliates another person; or
- The exercise of power or authority in a manner which serves no legitimate purpose and which a person ought to reasonably know is inappropriate; or
- Such misuses of power or authority as intimidation, threats, coercions and blackmail.

Sexual Harassment

- Any comment, look, suggestion, physical contact, real or implied action of a sexual nature which creates an uncomfortable environment for the recipient, made by a person who knows or ought reasonably to know such a behaviour as unwelcome; or
- Any circulation or display of visual material of a sexual nature that has the effect of creating an uncomfortable environment; or
- An implied promise of reward for complying with a request of a sexual nature; or
- A sexual advance made by a person in authority over the recipient that implies a threat or an expressed or implied denial of an opportunity which would otherwise be granted or available, and may include a reprisal or a threat of reprisal made after a sexual advance is rejected.