

# *International Student* Homestay/Custodianship Guide

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International Education Services

**YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**



NOVEMBER 2018

International Education Services  
Dr. Bette Stephenson Centre for Learning  
36 Regatta Ave., Richmond Hill, ON L4E 4R1  
T 905.884.2046, ext 237 | F 905.773.2406  
<http://www.yrdsb.ca/international>  
[international.education@yrdsb.ca](mailto:international.education@yrdsb.ca)



## QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

### PRE-ARRIVAL

- Familiarize yourself with this guide.
- Complete the Orientation Module of PAL (Pre-arrival Learning)

### ARRIVAL

- Once you arrive at your host family home, call home to confirm your arrival with your parents.
- Your host will provide you with a tour of the home and will point out how things work since toilets, showers, faucets and appliances may function differently than your home country.
- Your host will also review a list of rules for their home, which must be followed.

### FIRST WEEK

- If you have pre-arranged a local cell phone number, share it with your host family. If you do not have a cell phone number, your host will assist you in acquiring one. It is recommended that you avoid contracts and arrange a pay-as-you-go plan.
- Your Host will take you to the bank to open an account. You must bring your passport as identification to open an account.
- Write down the homestay family member names, telephone numbers and address and keep this information with you at all times.
- Your host family will help you become familiar with public transportation, how to get to school, and local shops and amenities within the community.
- Share your medical insurance policy with your host once you receive it. Carry your insurance card at all times.

### DURING YOUR STAY

- Within the first two weeks, a YRDSB homestay representative will contact you to set up a meeting with you and your host family. S/he will meet with you at your homestay home and at school regularly during your stay.
- Inform your homestay representative or YRDSB Homestay Services immediately of any concerns or problems you have with respect to your homestay experience.

### DEPARTURE

- **Graduating Students:** Confirm your departure details with YRDSB Homestay Services (date, time, etc.)
- **Returning Students:** Notify your Homestay Representative, and your host family of your desire to remain with the current family.
- Your room must be left clean and neat as you found it. A Homestay Representative will visit you upon your departure or move-out date from the host family to ensure you have packed everything and left your room clean.

## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

### General Inquiries

International Education Services (905) 884-2046  
[international.education@yrdsb.ca](mailto:international.education@yrdsb.ca)

### Homestay

Homestay (During Business Hours) (905) 884-2046  
Homestay 24-hour Emergency Number 1-866-694-1323  
[homestay@yrdsb.ca](mailto:homestay@yrdsb.ca)

Contact the Homestay 24-hour emergency number or your Homestay Representative if you become lost and cannot reach your host family or to report an emergency situation in which you are involved that does not present immediate harm or danger.

### Academic Liaison

Student Liaison Officer (905) 884-2046  
Admissions Officer (905) 884-2046  
[admissions@yrdsb.ca](mailto:admissions@yrdsb.ca)

### Medical Insurance

INGLE Insurance General Inquiries 1-800-663-0399  
INGLE Insurance (Medical Emergency) 1-866-883-9787  
Mental Wellness (Available 24/7) 1-877-234-5327

### Police

York Regional Police YRP (non-emergency) 1-866-8POLICE  
**To report any emergency; however, call 911 for urgent medical emergencies.**

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## Introduction

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Welcome to the York Region District School Board (YRDSB) International Student Program. YRDSB is proud to welcome international students from all over the world into its schools. We are also pleased that local York Region families are welcoming and ready to host you in their homes and provide custodian services.

YRDSB Homestay Services has designed this guide to help explain the homestay/custodianship experience and to outline some common rules and expectations for international students while living with homestay families in York Region. These rules and expectations are intended to make the experience of homestay rewarding for both homestay families and international students.

## Homestay/Custodianship Program Summary

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Leaving your family and home country to live with a host family abroad can be challenging and equally rewarding. There will be an adjustment period for both you and your host family. Be patient and understanding while you settle into your new life and family in Canada. Remember to always contact the International Education Services Department if you have concerns ([homestay@yrdsb.ca](mailto:homestay@yrdsb.ca) or 905-884-2046 ext 237)

There are a number of people available to support you during your stay in Canada: our homestay team, staff at your school, the Admissions Officer and the International Student Liaison Officer are all available to ensure your success at home, school and within your new community.

Below is a summary of important information for your reference:

- Keep homestay contact information with you at all times, such as the names of your host family members, home address, and mobile and home telephone numbers
- Cell phones are encouraged for all international students. If you have a cell phone, arrange to have it adapted for use in Canada. If you do not have a cell phone, please arrange to purchase one. We discourage long-term mobile contracts, and your host cannot sign a cell phone contract on your behalf.
- Share your cell phone number as well as a list of phone numbers (home and cell) and names of friends and local relatives you spend time with so you can be reached at all times with your host family. Please remember to always call your host if you are out and will be late in returning home.
- Communicate with your host family and the Homestay Representative on a regular basis – always tell us how you feel and what you need – if you do not openly communicate, it may lead to misunderstandings. Do not hesitate to contact your Homestay Representative by phone or email to discuss any concerns you may have.
- Orientation of your home – if you are unsure, ask your host family for an explanation of how the water faucets, toilets, bath/shower, and appliances work. Do not place anything other than toilet paper in the toilet since too much paper or foreign objects will cause water to overflow and damage the home.

## Homestay Fee

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The homestay fee does not cover extra-curricular school costs or provide individual tutoring. The homestay fee does not cover travel with the host family. If you are invited to attend a social activity or travel, which requires payment, this must be discussed and agreed to beforehand.

## Homestay Families - A Safe and Friendly Place

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You can expect the following from the host family:

1. A private room with:
  - a window
  - nearby smoke detector, carbon monoxide detector
  - adequate heat, light and ventilation
  - bed and bedding, dresser, desk, chair, lamp, closet
  - explicit directions regarding what can be put on bedroom walls and how items can be attached to walls
  - an explanation of fire drill procedures and the location of fire extinguishers
2. Access to bathroom, bathing facilities, and basic toiletries
3. Three nutritious daily meals and snacks. The homestay family will discuss responsibilities around meal preparation, family mealtime routines. For example, you can prepare breakfast and lunch, and dinner is prepared by the host family and eaten together at home.
4. Access to laundry facilities and explanations on how to use them
5. An explanation of any other family expectations regarding household routines and procedures

## Role of the International Student - A Member of the Family

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The homestay environment provides the greatest opportunities for learning and acquiring the English language. It is also the ideal setting for learning new skills and experiencing daily Canadian life. The Homestay Program aims to integrate you as a family member as much as possible. You should not expect to be treated as a "guest", but should expect, rather, to be included in family life and activities like any member of the family. As such, you will be expected to complete your share of household chores, which are, in fact, excellent learning opportunities and sharing moments among family members.

Examples of household chores:

- keep your own room clean
- keep the bathroom clean (wipe water from the counter)
- vacuum or dry mop bedroom floor

- help to maintain tidiness in other areas of the house
- make your own breakfast
- make your own lunch for school
- help with preparation of other meals
- help to set or clear the dining table
- help to wash/dry dishes or load/unload the dishwasher
- do your own laundry

In many cases, you may be seen as an older brother or sister to the host family's children, and as such, will be expected to set a good example of behaviour, as you would in your own home. This role offers numerous opportunities for growth and learning, especially since young children bond easily with visitors and interaction with them offers ideal opportunities for speaking English.

As a member of the family, you are expected to have dinner at home during school nights.

## Roles/Responsibilities of the Host/Custodian

- Your host is responsible for your supervision while you are in their care. This responsibility includes providing for your physical needs and supervising you to ensure your safety. The standard of care expected of a host family is that of a reasonable parent.
- Your parents and Host also are responsible for educational decisions and any consequences resulting from those decisions. All academic/school issues should be shared with the International Student Liaison Officer. Host parents are encouraged to help the international student learn English and to assist, in a general way, with homework. If tutoring is needed, you are encouraged to meet with your school guidance counsellor to find tutoring or extra help which is available.
- Your Host is authorized by your parents to secure medical treatment in the event of illness or injury in their absence.
- Your host will meet reasonable transportation needs; however, this does not include daily transportation to and from school.
- Responsibility for you does not extend while you are travelling inside or outside Canada without your homestay family or YRDSB. A Parental Permission to Travel form (appended at the end of this guide) is to be completed for all travel outside of York Region and the GTA (Greater Toronto Area) that is not associated with the York Region District School Board or your host family. This form must be submitted five business days prior to the occurrence. Approval is required by IES before travel may take place. Once approved an email will be sent to the Host/Custodian, parent and student by IES.
- Hosts are not responsible for your finances and the spending choices you make. Hosts, or members of the household, must not ask for money directly from you or for you to pay for damage to their property. You should never give money to your host, or members of the family, for any reason.

## Request to Change Host Family/Problem Solving

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Communication with your host and YRDSB Homestay Services is necessary to avoid a change in homestay. Casual requests to change host will not be considered – only requests supported by evidence of ongoing problems will be considered. YRDSB Homestay Services, together with you and your host, will determine a reasonable solution that will satisfy all parties in case of a problem. YRDSB Homestay Services will make final decisions.

In some cases, the host/homestay situation may change which will require a move to an alternate host/homestay location. YRDSB Homestay Services will ensure the move is within a reasonable distance from your school. If the relocation is permanent, you will be offered up to three different choices for relocation.

In cases where you desire a change, because the expectations outlined are not being followed, or rules are too harsh, you should contact your Homestay Representative or YRDSB Homestay Services at (905) 884-2046 to seek advice and resolution. All requests for change or termination are subject to the Termination Policy as described in the Student Participation Agreement (part of the student homestay application).

If you do not follow the rules and expectations, you may be withdrawn from the program. The Homestay Services staff will meet with you and your host family, assess the situation and determine a reasonable solution for everyone. If an acceptable resolution involves a change in host family, a reasonable time will be required to make these arrangements. YRDSB Homestay Services reserves the right to move a student without the usual advance notice if the situation is unsatisfactory. YRDSB Homestay Services will make final decisions.

Early withdrawal from the Homestay program is subject to a financial penalty. If you have questions or concerns regarding any homestay policies, please contact a member of YRDSB Homestay Services. In case of serious issues or medical/other emergencies, please notify YRDSB Homestay Services on the 24 hr. toll-free emergency phone at 1-866-694-1323.

## Health Care & Well Being

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Health Insurance is mandatory and is purchased through York Region District School Board. Medical insurance coverage information, provided by Ingle Insurance, will be distributed to you during the orientation period. Once received, you are encouraged to share the policy number with your host so that this information can be used in a health emergency. You will be responsible for paying any medical services not covered by the insurance company. You must carry your insurance card with you at all times and be prepared to pay for some services in case of an emergency visit to the hospital or doctor. Returning students will receive renewal insurance forms from their school staff.

Keep your **Ingle Insurance** package in a safe place. Your Ingle insurance wallet card should be kept with you at all times and you should be prepared to pay for some services in case of emergency visits to hospital or doctor. To make a claim, contact Ingle Insurance at 1-800-663-0399. Payment for any medical services not covered by insurance is your responsibility. You must report any hospital/emergency visits within 24 hours to the Intrepid 24/7 line: 1-866-883-9787.

## Spending Money

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You should never carry or display large amounts of cash. The cost of living in York Region is generally reasonable. The use of bank accounts and banking cards is common practice among Canadians and is the best way to protect your money. For security purposes, you should open a bank account conveniently located near your homestay.

Excessive amounts of money can attract unwanted attention, from other students, who might expect you to pay for meals and extracurricular activities. You should never borrow or loan money to other students or members of your homestay family.

Families are responsible for providing three daily meals. Meals may be a family meal in the home, a meal ordered in, a meal at a restaurant or the Host may provide you with lunch money to make a purchase at school. The host should pay for any meals ordered in or eaten at a restaurant.

Families are encouraged to include the student in family and local activities. The student should pay for admissions and other related expenses.

## Driving and Riding a Bike

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**You must not rent, lease or own a car during your stay in homestay for reasons of safety and liability.**

**You must wear a safety helmet when riding a bicycle, skateboarding, rollerblading, etc.** For your personal safety you are discouraged to ride a bicycle or engage in other unsafe activities after dark.

## Travel Outside of York Region/GTA (including sleep-over requests)

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Students are encouraged to explore and experience North American culture through travel during their stay in York Region; however, this travel should not interfere with academic studies and should be limited to designated school holiday periods.

Travel outside of York Region and the GTA, not associated with YRDSB, or your host family requires completion of Parental Permission to Travel form each time. A “**Parental Permission to Travel**” form must be completed and signed by your biological parents for each trip outside York Region and the GTA, not associated with the York Region District School Board or the host family. A copy of the “Parental Permission to Travel” (PPT) form is included at the end of this guide. Please inform IES of your plans to travel by submitting the completed PPT five business days prior to the start of the event.

No employees of the Board or members of the homestay family are responsible for your well-being or actions while you are traveling unsupervised outside of approved Board or homestay family travel.

Travel outside Canada typically involves securing a visitor's visa for the destination country. Please note that final authority in admitting the student to a country outside Canada is the Customs Officer. Most of these visas require written permission from your parents, or custodian. You must obtain all required documents well in advance of your trip.



Your host family may want to include you in their own travel and holiday plans. You are encouraged to participate in such travel ensuring all necessary documentation is completed.

**Please note: Travel within Ontario and Quebec with the host family does not require parental permission; however, Homestay Services must be informed. Travel outside Ontario and Quebec with the host family will require parental permission.**

## Host/Custodian Rules & Expectations

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The following general explanations on International Student Program rules and expectations are meant to be a guide only, and will be reviewed with you upon your arrival.

### Curfew

Rules and curfews are in place to protect and support you – respect them. Your host has been chosen and accepted by you and your parents; they are acting on behalf of your parents to make sure you are safe, happy and healthy. Being away from your own parents and country does not mean you can do whatever you wish... your first priority is school, and in order to have a successful experience you must respect your host family and the rules and guidelines provided by YRDSB.

Your host family will tell you what time you should return home in the evenings. This will ensure you come home and go to sleep at a reasonable hour. **Local police will be contacted if you do not return home within a reasonable time after curfew.**

As regular members of the family, you are reminded to respect the individual rules of the household. This includes the hours that are spent outside the home. Factors determining this may include school night vs. weekend activities; your age, and the age of the children in the family. Please note that you must ensure any school commitments be met prior to participating in extracurricular activities.

The International Student Program supports that international students must respect established curfews determined by the host. A guideline for curfews is provided:

Age	Suggested Curfew	
	School Night (Sunday to Thursday)	Non-school Night (Friday & Saturday)
14	8:00 pm	10:00 pm
15	9:00 pm	11:00 pm
16-17+	10:00 pm	12:00 am

You must text/telephone if you will be delayed, or if you encounter a problem. Special arrangements can be made, in advance with your host, for different circumstances, but all appropriate members of the family should be informed if you will miss your curfew.

Students will be asked to withdraw from the Homestay/Custodianship Program when curfew has been missed more than three times in one semester.

### Lights Out/Computer & Music Off

A curfew is also in place to ensure that you go to sleep at a reasonable hour. Your host family will tell you a time when your lights must be out, and your music and computer are turned off.

## Damage to Host Property

Any damage you cause to your host's property must be reported to your Homestay Representative as soon as possible.

## Use of Telephone and Internet

You must obey household rules regarding the use of the telephone, computer and Internet especially with reference to timing and duration of use.

## Sleepovers

Homestay families are not obligated to receive your visitors. The International Student Program supports decisions made by host families with respect to students inviting visitors to their homes. Please have this discussion with your host family if you anticipate a visitor.

The International Student Program does not permit sleeping over at a friend's house during the week or on weekends. However, there may be emergencies when the host family may need to make alternate sleeping arrangements for you. In such cases, the Homestay Services must grant approval and know your whereabouts.

A Parental Permission to Travel (PPT) form must be fully completed and signed by the host and natural parents, and must be received by the Homestay Representative or Homestay Services five business days before the expected travel by fax (905-773-2406) or email: [homestay@yrdsb.ca](mailto:homestay@yrdsb.ca). IES must approve the request before travel takes place. Once approved an email be sent to the Host/Custodian, parent and student by IES.

## Socializing

You should ask permission from your homestay family to go out with friends or bring friends home, not inform them. Your host can limit the amount of socializing and the hours of socializing.

While academic study, growth, and development are the principal goals of the International Student Program, group interaction and socializing are also important elements of a successful stay. You should set aside a regular amount of time each week for leisure activities and relaxation. Much of this time should be spent with members of the homestay family, though activities with school friends are also important. It is important that you provide detailed information to your host family about where you are going, with whom you are going, how you can be reached (i.e. phone number of where you will be and your cell phone number if you have one) and when you will return home.

Communication with the homestay family is vital to prevent confusion and misunderstandings. You should not expect the host family to "know" where you are or remember plans you may have mentioned earlier. If you will be returning home later than planned, you must contact the host family immediately. Also, you should always ask for permission before going out, as opposed to informing your host family that you are going out. The Host family can enforce limits on the amount of socializing and the hours of socializing.

## Showers/Baths

It is important to you respect the needs of all family members. The length of your shower/bath (10 to 15 minutes) and the time of day of a shower/bath must be mutually agreed upon within the family. If

unfamiliar or uncomfortable, you should ask for explanations of how plumbing and washroom facilities work since they may be different from your home country. (e.g., the use of shower curtain or door to prevent water overflow, an explanation of how to use a toilet and what can or cannot be placed in the toilet, how to use water faucets, and what to do if water overflows (floor vents may be mistaken for drains)).

## Educational Decisions

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All educational decisions and subsequent consequences are the sole responsibility of your host/custodian, and parents, including the grade level in which you wish to enroll, the courses you wish to take, attendance at school, your academic success or failure, the accomplishment of academic goals or achievement (e.g. ESL upgrading, school credits and admission to a Canadian university or college). The International Student Liaison Officer, assigned to your school, may be contacted to discuss school/academic issues or concerns. No employees of the Board, International Student Program, YRDSB Homestay Services will be responsible for educational decisions which impact you.

## Introduction to School

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Share your education plans with your host family, guidance counsellor and Student Liaison Officer. This is important in order to receive correct advice and guidance related to selecting appropriate courses and pathways to graduation.

## School Rules & Expectations

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### **Student Behavior**

Students must comply with both the YRDSB and the school's Codes of Conduct at all times. Any behavior on or off Board property before, during, or after school hours contrary to the Board's or the school's Codes of Conduct will be subject to discipline/consequences and may result in withdrawal from the International Student Program.

### **School Attendance**

Regular school attendance is mandatory. Either a note from the host or from a doctor is required to document classes missed because of illness. Unexcused absences will be reported to your host and International Education Services (IES). Unauthorized or excessive absences may result in loss of credit or withdrawal from the Program.

### **Smoking (tobacco, cannabis, vaping)/Alcohol/Illicit Drugs**

Smoking, any substance, inside the homestay residence is not permitted, and discouraged overall. The minimum age for purchasing, smoking or growing cannabis and purchasing and smoking tobacco in Ontario is 19. The minimum age to drink alcohol in Ontario is also 19. Drinking under age, excessive drinking, purchasing, smoking, growing cannabis while under age, purchasing or smoking tobacco while under age, using illicit drugs and/or the use of false identification are strictly prohibited and may result in withdrawal from the Program (school and homestay).

## Student Progress and Reporting

Student report cards, progress reports and attendance records are to be shared with your Host. If requested, your host will attend parent-teacher meetings to discuss your performance. Any parent-teacher meetings attended by the host will be for information purposes. You, in consultation with your parents and Host will make all academic decisions. Please be advised that you must maintain an academic average of 65% to remain in the academic program.

## Parental Permission to Travel (PPT)

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- The Host/Custodian is solely responsible for making a decision regarding student travel or sleep away from the homestay location. Once a decision is made, please inform IES by submitting the completed PPT form five business days prior to the event.
- Any planned travel and related arrangements is the sole responsibility of the student's parents.
- Neither the York Region District School Board nor Homestay parents will assume any responsibility for the student, nor supervise any part of such travel. Unauthorized travel by the student is strictly prohibited.
- The Host/Custodian must consider school attendance, performance and behaviour when making a decision about such travel. Please avoid travel outside of the regular school schedule.
- IES staff will not approve travel/overnight sleepovers on a regular basis.
- When travelling outside of Canada, additional medical/travel insurance may be required; therefore, contact Ingle Insurance to purchase any additional insurance, which may be required.
- To ensure re-entry to Canada, please confirm the validity/expiry dates on the visa.
- Depending on the carrier, students under the age of 16 may need to be accompanied by an adult/chaperone. Check with the carrier before making reservations, and provide the required approvals.

## Conclusion

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Deciding to become a member of a host family in York Region is deciding to be a responsible and respectful member of the family and a fully engaged student. This may seem like a heavy responsibility, however, attending a YRDSB school and living with a family in York Region may be one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences an international student can have.

We expect you to be a responsible student in your school and in your homestay homes, and to understand and abide by the expectations for international students.

To ensure that your school and homestay experiences are enjoyable for both you and the families who host you, a companion guideline has been prepared to assist homestay families so that they can more fully understand their responsibilities and make your experiences at the YRDSB and in York Region as welcoming, safe and rewarding as they can be.

## Appendices

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**Parental Permission to Travel Request Form – Appendix A**

**Expectations of YRDSB Homestay/Custodianship Program – Appendix B**

**Student Summary Information – Appendix C**



**Parental Permission to Travel Request Form**

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- Neither the York Region District School Board nor Homestay parents will assume any responsibility for the student, nor supervise any part of such travel. Unauthorized travel by the student is strictly prohibited.
- The Host/Custodian must consider school attendance, performance and behaviour when making a decision about such travel. Please avoid travel outside of the regular school schedule.
- When travelling outside of Canada, additional medical/travel insurance may be required; therefore, contact Ingle Insurance to purchase any additional insurance, which may be required.
- To ensure re-entry to Canada, please confirm the validity/expiry dates on the visa.
- Depending on the carrier, students under the age of 16 may need to be accompanied by an adult/chaperone. Check with the carrier before making reservations, and provide the required approvals.

Name of Student	DOB (yyyy-mm-dd)	School Attending
Host Family Name	Host Family Address	
Destination	Means of Travel (car, train, bus, airplane)	
Duration (Start Date End Date) (yyyy-mm-dd)	Departure from YR (yyyy-mm-dd)	Return to YR (yyyy-mm-dd)
Details/Reason for Trip		
Contact Person at Destination	Telephone Number at Destination	
Address at Destination		
Traveling companions (if any), including contact information		

<b>Host/Custodian Recommendation</b>		
Permission to travel is recommended: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If NO, provide reason below:		
Name of Custodian	Signature of Custodian	Date (yyyy-mm-dd)
I/We understand and have made provision for travel requirements outlined above and give my child permission to travel as stated.		
Name of Natural Parent	Signature of Natural Parent	Date (yyyy-mm-dd)
Name of Natural Parent	Signature of Natural Parent	Date (yyyy-mm-dd)

**This form, fully completed and signed, must be received by the Homestay Representative or Homestay Services five (5) business days before the expected travel. Fax (905-773-2406) or email: [homestay@yrdsb.ca](mailto:homestay@yrdsb.ca) the form.**



## Appendix A

**This form, fully completed and signed, must be received by the Homestay Representative or Homestay Services five (5) business days before the expected travel. Fax (905-773-2406) or email: [homestay@yrdsb.ca](mailto:homestay@yrdsb.ca) the form.**

November 2018



## As a participant of the YRDSB Homestay/ Custodianship Program you can expect:

- To be taken to school on your first day of orientation and first day of school
- To visit the bank with your host/custodian to open a bank account.
- A visit to a retail store to set-up mobile phone service (pay-as-you-go)
- Fresh fruit and snacks available to you for breakfast and lunch. Your host/custodian will show you where to find these foods and teach you how to prepare these meals.
- Dinner to be a hot meal and is always prepared for you. It is expected you eat dinner with your host family.
- Your bedroom to be prepared for you and include a window, and should include storage such as a dresser and closet. It should not be in the basement.
- A proper study area, including desk and lamp is available to you.
- Access to in-home laundry facilities (washing machine, dryer, and washing detergent). Speak to your host/custodian about appropriate days for laundry which is normally done once per week.
- To keep your bedroom and bathroom clean, regularly remove garbage from your bedroom, keep your bathroom clean, and wash your dirty dishes.
- Access to a daily shower, lasting 15 to 20 minutes.

## COMMUNICATE!

Open communication is extremely important. Be sure to share your concerns about:

### FOOD

- Tell your host/custodian about the foods you like and don't like. Report any food allergies right away.
- Ask for information about food you don't know.

### APPLIANCES

- Ask how to use microwave oven, toaster oven, kettle
- Ask how to use washing machine and dryer (if you need to do your own laundry).

### PROBLEMS & CONCERNS

- Speak to your host/custodian immediately when an appliance is not working.
- Tell your host/custodian immediately when a toilet is blocked.
- Tell your host/custodian if the temperature in your room is not comfortable.
- Speak to your host/custodian right away if you feel that something is not right.



## BUILD CHARACTER!

### Be understanding:

- Canadian breakfast and lunch is usually very simple.
- Fresh food items such as meat, vegetables are not purchased every day.
- Prepared food is often frozen, then reheated.

### Be friendly:

- Greet your family members each morning.
- Say thank you after a meal.
- Say thank you after someone has done you favour.
- Say "Hi" when you return home.

### Be respectful:

- Take care of your home, including: furniture, windows, walls, carpet/floor etc.
- Keep your room clean and tidy.
- Do not eat food in your room.
- Do not play with your phone during a conversation or dinner.
- Do not open windows without permission

### Be considerate:

- Close doors gently.
- Keep your voice down when you are talking on the phone after 10 pm.
- Speak first with your host/custodian when you invite friends to your home.
- Walk softly
- Hang up your coat
- Put shoes/boots away when entering your home
- Clean up after yourself in the kitchen, bathroom, bedroom



## Appendix B

## Student Summary Information – YRDSB Homestay/Custodianship Services

Leaving your family and home country to live with a homestay family abroad can be challenging and equally rewarding. There will be an adjustment period for both you and your host family. Be patient and understanding while you settle into your new life and family in Canada. Remember to always contact YRDSB Homestay Services if you have concerns. There are a number of people available to support you while in Canada: our homestay team, teachers at your school, the Admissions Officer and the International Student Liaison Officer are all available to ensure your success at home, school and within your new community. Below is a summary of important information for your reference:

- Keep homestay contact information with you at all times.
- Cell phones are encouraged for all international students. If you have a cell phone, arrange to have it adapted for use in Canada. If you do not have a cell phone, please arrange to purchase one. Your homestay family cannot sign a cell phone contract on your behalf.
- Give your homestay family your cell phone number as well as a list of phone numbers and names of friends and local relatives you spend time with so you can be reached at all times (home phone numbers and cell phone numbers).
- Communicate with your host family and YRDSB Homestay Services/Representatives – always tell us how you feel and what you need – if you don't tell us, it will cause confusion and misunderstandings. Do not hesitate to contact your homestay representative by phone or email to discuss any concerns you may have.
- Orientation of your home – ask your host family for an explanation of how the plumbing (water faucets, toilets, bath/shower) and appliances work. Do not place anything other than toilet paper in the toilet.
- Rules and curfews are in place to protect and support you – respect them. Your host family has been chosen and accepted by you and your parents; they are acting on behalf of your parents to make sure you are safe, happy and healthy. Being away from your own parents and country does not mean you can do whatever you wish... your first priority is school, and in order to be successful you must respect your host family and the rules and guidelines provided by YRDSB and Homestay Services for you:
  - **Curfews** – your host family will tell you what time you should return home in the evenings. This will ensure you come home and go to sleep at a reasonable hour. Local police will be contacted if you do not return home within a reasonable time after curfew.
  - **Lights Out/Computer Off** – To also ensure that you go to sleep at a reasonable hours, your host family will have a time when your lights must be out, and your computer turned off.
  - **Damage to Host Property** – any damage you cause to your host's property must be reported to your Homestay Representative as soon as possible.
  - **Overuse of Internet** - As well, overuse of Internet service may cause an increase in the homestay family's Internet bill. Downloading of material from the Internet must be limited to avoid excessive Internet fees.
  - **School Attendance** – Regular school attendance is mandatory. Either a note from the homestay family or from a doctor is required to document classes missed because of illness. Unexcused absences will be reported to your homestay family and International Education Services (IES). Excessive absences may result in loss of credit or withdrawal from the Program.
  - **Smoking/Alcohol/Illicit Drugs** – smoking, any substance, inside the homestay residence is not permitted. The minimum age for purchasing, smoking or growing cannabis and purchasing and smoking tobacco products in Ontario is 19. The legal age to drink alcohol in Ontario is also 19. Drinking under age, excessive drinking, purchasing, smoking, growing cannabis under age and purchasing or smoking tobacco while underage, using illicit drugs and/or the use of false identification are strictly prohibited and may result in withdrawal from the Program (school and homestay).

- **Sleepovers** – are not permitted, unless an emergency within your homestay family requires you to sleep elsewhere. A Parental Permission to Travel form must be completed. Regular requests for sleep overs will not be approved.
  - **Socializing** – you should ask permission from your homestay family to go out, not inform them. Your homestay family can limit the amount of socializing and the hours of socializing.
  - **Household Chores** – helping with light chores gives you an opportunity to spend time with your family. Examples of light chores are keeping your own room clean, make your own lunch for school, help prepare other meals as well as help set or clear the dining table, help wash dishes or load/unload the dishwasher.
  - **Student Progress and Reporting** – Student report cards, progress reports and attendance records are to be shared with your host family.
  - **Spending Money** – do not carry or display large amounts of cash. Excessive amounts of money usually attract unwanted attention. Money should not be borrowed from or lent to other students or family members.
  - **Driving & Road Safety** – students are not permitted to own, lease or operate a motor vehicle, and must wear a safety helmet when riding a bicycle, skateboarding or rollerblading. For your personal safety, you should avoid dangerous activities after dark.
  - **Health Care** – keep your Ingle Insurance package in a safe place. Your Ingle insurance wallet card should be kept with you at all times and you should be prepared to pay for some services in case of emergency visit to hospital or doctor. To make a claim contact Ingle Insurance at 1.800.663.0399. Payment for any medical services not covered by insurance is your responsibility. You must report any claims within 24 hours.
  - **Request to Change Host Family/Problem Solving** – communication with your host family and YRDSB Homestay Services is necessary to avoid having to change family. Casual requests to change host family will not be considered – only requests supported by evidence of a problem will be considered. YRDSB Homestay Services, together with you and your host family, will determine a reasonable solution that will satisfy all parties in case of a problem. YRDSB Homestay Services will make final decisions.
- In some cases, the host/homestay situation may change which will force that you are moved to an alternate host/homestay location. YRDSB Homestay Services will ensure the move is within a reasonable distance from your school.
- **Travel Outside of York Region/GTA (include sleep-over requests)** - Travel outside of York Region and the GTA, not associated with YRDSB or your host family requires completion of Parental Permission to Travel form each time. The completed form must be signed by your parents and submitted to YRDSB Homestay Services. Your parents and the person you are visiting will be contacted by telephone to verify their approval of the travel. Regular requests for travelling/sleep overs will not be approved