

Life is an accumulation of experiences, let us be your leader

## Is a “homestay” program right for you?

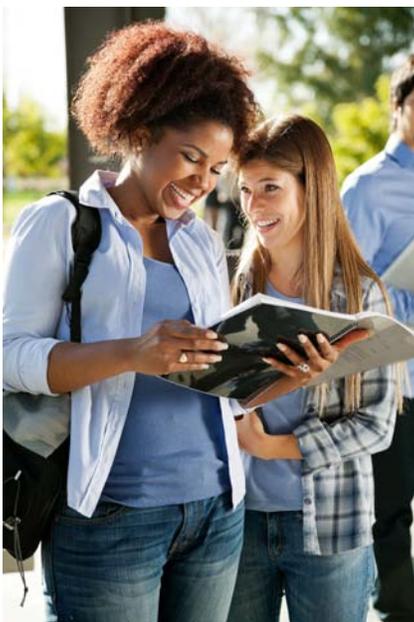
“To travel is to live.”~ Hans Christian Anderson

Say “yes” to new adventures!

Have you ever wanted to learn more about a culture while attending high school or university? Some of the students I have had the distinct pleasure of meeting are cared for by Canadian homestay families right here in the Lower Mainland.



Right now, many students are receiving university and college admission letters. Grade Twelve students will be making important decisions to go to college or university and for some, it means taking the leap to go overseas. Learning to live happily amongst a group of complete strangers is always going to present certain challenges and can be a little intimidating. The best way to tackle any potential problem is to face it. Rest assured, you won't have to face your fears on your own!



### A Typical Homestay Program

Usually there is a specific person dedicated to select the best Homestay Families for students and they maintain regular personal contact with the families and the students to ensure the relationship is compatible.

Schools understand the stress families endure as they send their children off to study abroad. Are they safe and taken care of? Are they being fed well and happy? Are they studying and working hard at school? These are often the hard questions that parents have, that a homestay coordinator can answer directly or through an interpreter in their family's native language.

This year, I had the privilege to host a workshop on establishing a pilot project for a local Homestay program. I shared aspects of homestay experiences with fifty students all keen in finding out more information, such as: traveling, packing your bags with appropriate items, caring for oneself, preparing meals, respect for the homestay, household expectations, and keeping rooms neat and tidy, to name a

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few topics. The workshop concluded with strong support for the establishment of a pilot project.

Student suggestions on the most appropriate ways to structure a pilot project program at their school were most helpful. For the next three months, these students in Grades 10-12 will be asking their families to fill in a checklist and return it each month. It will be interesting to witness whether a monthly check up will hold them accountable for keeping their rooms neat and tidy and address the additional homestay expectations as mentioned earlier.

Through games such as 'timed clean-up' and 'bingo'; to "Think, Pair, Share" critical thinking and problem solving, the students enjoyed this workshop that will continue to develop a psychologically safe and thriving program at their school!

