



HOMESTAY PROGRAM GUIDE FOR PARENTS

International Student Program
ST. JAMES ASSINIBOIA SCHOOL DIVISION

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HOMESTAY PROGRAM GUIDE FOR PARENTS

International Student Program

St. James-Assiniboia School Division

Thank you for becoming a vital part of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division's International Student Program. We are pleased to have you join the Program as a homestay parent and we hope that you enjoy your experience with us. It is our hope this will be an opportunity for you as a homestay family to develop a life-long friendship with the international student who will live in your home. We hope that you will learn new things about the international student's culture, that you will try new foods and that you will broaden your view of the world as a result of your experience.

The homestay experience should be enjoyable and rewarding for both students and family. There will often be a period of adjustment. In the beginning, the student needs a lot of information from the family. The student may speak and understand very little English and may need much repetition and clarification. The student may have a lot to absorb – new surroundings and new ways of coping. The family should expect some difficulties in communicating and the need to explain things more than once. This is normal. Most importantly, the family may need to help the student through periods of homesickness and loneliness.

This booklet has been written to help explain the St. James-Assiniboia School Division's International Student Program and to outline some of the guidelines and expectations the Program has for both the students and the homestay families. It is meant to serve as a guide that you can refer to and discuss with your student.

We encourage you to interact with other homestay families as it may be of assistance, both in giving you new ideas and in reassuring you about the pace of development of your relations with your student. Our office staff and school staff will always be available to discuss progress or problems.

Homestay Program Guide for Parents
International Student Program
St. James-Assiniboia School Division
www.sjsd.net



August 2016

Please note that the guidelines and expectations which follow do not cover all situations. They do, however, provide enough information for students and homestay families to make solid decisions in the spirit of the St. James-Assiniboia School Division's guidelines and policies. Please read the booklet carefully, and completely, to ensure you understand the basic rules and expectations of our Program.

Our contact information is: International Student Program
470 Hamilton Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2Y 0H4
Ph: 1-204-837-1331
Fax: 1-204-888-0945
Pager: 1-204-935-6071 **(for medical emergencies)**
Email: intered@sjsd.net

A Safe and Supportive Family Environment

Homestay families are chosen for their qualities in providing a safe and supportive environment for our international students. All families are screened and visited before a decision can be made to place a student in a home. All family members 18 years of age and over must undergo a Winnipeg Police Service "Personal Request for Criminal Record Search" and a Province of Manitoba "Child Abuse Registry Access Application" to ensure the safety of the student. **All family members are required to immediately notify the ISP of any change to their criminal record or child abuse status.** We look for families who are willing to make our students a part of their family—to provide a home that is interesting and friendly, and a family that is concerned for the student's academic, linguistic and personal development. We especially look for homes in which students will be comfortable and will be able to develop their English language skills.

Over-night adult supervision is required for international students. If homestay parents will be away (even for one night) without the students, please notify the International Student Program, so we are aware of the alternative arrangements that have been made to care for the student. Proper criminal record and child abuse registry checks must be completed for the supervising adult.



For the best interests of both the students and the families, we attempt to make the best family matches possible, taking into consideration:

- A) Proximity to school placement and bus routes;
- B) Siblings;
- C) Pets; and
- D) Special interests.

For this reason, it is imperative for a family to notify the ISP of any changes in family status, such as a family member returning home to live, another adult spending nights in the home, hosting of other international students, new pet, etc.

Being a homestay parent requires a great deal of patience and understanding. Many customs and cultural aspects about cleanliness, including showers and laundry, personal space, food, expectations regarding table manners, or how a household is managed, to name only a few, will be different for the international student. Families are encouraged to discuss these and other customs with their students as early as possible. However, the rewards are many and we believe you will enjoy your experience hosting a student from another country.

See Appendix “A” - Homestay Family Agreement

Cultural Sensitivity

It is important to remember that different countries have different cultural and political backgrounds from Canada. As a result, students may have a completely different set of values from you. Your perception of good manners may differ from your student's. For example, in some countries silence may be considered rude, in others it is a sign of respect. Your student may be extremely polite and readily use “please” and “thank you”; others may not be accustomed to this expectation. Family roles may be different and students may not realize how different the roles of men and women are in Canada compared to other countries. Table manners may be very different. In the bathrooms, in some countries, toilet paper is not flushed, but left in the garbage can.



Your student's level of modesty may also differ from your own. Canadians remove their shoes when entering a home, many other cultures do not. Some students may want to sleep with a light on because they are used to the bright lights of their home cities.

Homestay Fee

The fee paid to families who host our International Student Program students is \$700.00 per month (as per July 1, 2016). When students arrive prior to their first full month for their first school semester or short term program, families are paid a daily rate of \$23.00. The fees may be paid to the homestay family by the St. James-Assiniboia School Division or by the students themselves. It is recommended that when students are making the payments, they pay with a personal cheque instead of cash. When students pay the homestay fees, the homestay family must issue them a receipt.

The fee paid for hosting students under the age of 12 years old is \$800.00 per month. **Students under the age of 12 must not be left alone at home.** Before an older student should be left at home alone, homestay families must be sure that a student could deal with an emergency on their own, taking into account language barriers and knowledge (or lack of) of how to handle an emergency situation. The International Student Program wishes to advise that the monthly homestay fee covers the approximate monthly costs of room and board for an international student. **Families should not expect to profit financially from the arrangement. Extra fees should not be charged to students.**

In cases where students are away for part of the month during their scheduled time in the program, students will pay the full month's homestay fee (i.e., Christmas vacation or Spring Break). When students arrive late, or leave early, homestay fees will be adjusted accordingly.

Our Expectations of the Homestay Family

In return for the homestay fee, the student will be provided with:

- A) A comfortable private room, including a bed (with adequate linens, blankets and a pillow), dresser, lamp, closet and desk. The room shall have adequate heat, light and ventilation;



- B) Access to a bathroom and bathing facilities including the basics such as soap and inexpensive shampoo, towels, etc.
- C) Three healthy meals daily and other reasonable snacks;
- D) Access to laundry facilities; and
- E) A key to the home and phone numbers to reach you during working hours. Security codes if the home is equipped with a security alarm.

Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors must be accessible in all our homestay homes. The homestay family shall discuss fire drill procedures with the international student.

There must be a window in all bedrooms, with curtains or blinds. This is to provide a secondary means of egress from the room in the event of a fire. The window must be able to be opened without the use of special tools. This requirement is in compliance with the National Building Code of Canada. The City of Winnipeg can provide further details.

Please do not furnish your student's room with valuable items that you do not want to see damaged. Be aware, accidents happen.

Families shall meet reasonable transportation needs. This does not necessarily include daily transportation to and from school. Host families should discuss the bus routes with the international student, and if necessary, travel the routes with the student the first few times they use them. Please be clear with the students about how to find your home. Be sure they have your address and phone numbers in their wallet, in the event they get lost on the way home.

While the homestay fee does not cover extra-curricular school costs and extra costs for family outings, homestay families often pay for some of these costs, especially when going out together as a family. Families are expected to pay for the student's meal if the family is eating out together.

Before the international student arrives, homestay families will receive a file containing personal information about the student. Photos and letters from the student and his/her family may be included. There may be cultural and geographical information about the student's country. There will likely be telephone numbers and email addresses in the file. The student will have received a



brief profile on your family. We encourage contact with the international student and his/her family, prior to the student's arrival in Canada. We encourage you to email or phone your student. Some families use Facebook to make contact with their students. Describe your family, pets, lifestyle and your neighborhood. Include photos of your family and home, as well as pictures, maps, etc. of Winnipeg. This will reassure the student's parents that you are looking forward to hosting their son/daughter and that he/she will be in good hands. **We encourage you to continue contact with the student's natural parents. Even if the student's parents do not communicate with you in English, they will find someone to translate your communications. The natural parents will appreciate your communications, and it will ensure that everyone is "on the same page" regarding your home's guidelines.**

Upon arrival, students may need to establish bank accounts. Homestay families are asked to assist and to advise in this matter.

Please remember to speak English when the student is present and encourage the student to practice their English with your family. Invite the student to join in with your family's activities, and help your student to adjust to life in Canada. Don't forget to let your student know when you will not be home for a meal or for the evening. Above all, treat one another with respect and tolerance.

See Appendix "B" - Tips for Hosting International Students

Food

For many of the international students, food may be one of the major adjustments when they come to Winnipeg. Meals should be nutritious and well-balanced. Homestay families and students are expected to eat the majority of their meals together. It's common to see students gain or lose weight. Most international students adjust to Canadian food. We encourage them to try new foods, as it is an important part of the Homestay experience. It does take time for the student to adjust to the Homestay family's diet. You may have to explain leftovers are an easy way for students to have a hot lunch as microwaves are available at school cafeterias. Please be patient with your student.



You should check on the student's food preferences at the beginning of his/her stay. Many foods that are part of the daily routine in Canada, such as breakfast cereal and maple syrup, do not exist in the student's homeland. You may want to take the student to the grocery store and have them choose some of their favorite foods off the store shelves. Many grocery stores have international aisles with a selection of foods from around the world.

International students are here to experience Canadian culture and daily life, and you should not feel that you must recreate his/her traditional cuisine. Many students will welcome the chance to prepare some traditional foods for your family. Your student will most likely be eager to try Canadian foods and the wide variety of ethnic foods that are available in Canada. See the Yellow Pages "Groceries Retail" or check the Internet under "Winnipeg Food Stores" for specialty food stores.

Airport Arrival and Departure

Homestay families are asked to meet the international students at the airport upon arrival in Canada. Please be there at least 15 minutes before the student's arrival. Representatives of the International Student Program will be at the airport as well. Homestay families are to help finalize the return flight arrangements and to take their student to the airport at departure. **Homestay families – please wait for students to clear security before leaving the airport to be sure there are no problems.** The International Student Program staff will assist in these matters if necessary.

See Appendix "C" – Departure Information

If international students arrive from warm countries during the winter, they should be met at the airport by the homestay family with a warm coat, gloves and winter boots. The student should be able to use these items until the homestay family can take them shopping to purchase their own winter clothing. When you first arrive at home with the student, you will all probably be very excited. Some students will be eager to talk and take in as much as possible. Others may be jetlagged and



exhausted. Show the student around your home but remember that their first few hours are very overwhelming so the student probably won't remember everything you have told him. Give your student time to unpack and rest. **Keep in mind jet lag, stress caused by unfamiliar surroundings and an inability to communicate will take a huge toll on a student. The student will need time and emotional space to settle in.** For many students, this may take only a day or two, but for others it may take weeks. They say that it takes one day for each hour time difference to get over jet lag and adjust to a new location and daily patterns.

Our Expectations of the Student's Role within the Family

The homestay environment provides the greatest opportunities to learn and to use the English language. It is also the ideal setting to learn new skills and to experience ordinary Canadian life. The International Student Program asks that the student be treated as a regular family member as much as possible. Students should not be treated as guests, but included in family life and activities. All forms of household activities and chores provide opportunities for interaction and getting to know one another. They are good ways to learn how Canadian households are run and about daily life in Canada, including our movement toward energy conservation and recycling.

Many students come from homes where there is domestic help, or where their mothers or grandmothers take care of the family's daily tasks, and many have little experience in completing household chores. Nevertheless, students should be asked to take part in these activities. They should keep their room clean and help to keep the house tidy, including the bathroom. They should be prepared to help with meal preparation, cleaning up the dishes and doing laundry. The homestay family must discuss their responsibilities with the student shortly after their arrival and clearly outline expectations at that time.

Keeping busy is also a good way to ward off bouts of homesickness. Making a student feel really welcome is important. A student who is from the other side of the world can feel very out of place. Everything is different, from the way we speak, our food, and our entire culture. Time spent early on helping the student, will give the student confidence that they are adjusting to Canadian life.



Communication is the most important factor in a successful family. Building trust will help your student feel that they can come to you when they have difficulty with something or when they don't understand something. Keep in mind that students arrive with varying levels of English and it may be necessary to use fairly simple language at first. At the beginning, it is also important to check that the student has understood what was said, especially if giving directions about something fairly specific (i.e., using the laundry machines, the cooking facilities, or taking the bus).

We expect our students to respect the values of Canadian society while residing in Canada. If a student shows disregard for the values of Canadian society, or repeatedly breaks important traditions, it might be a sign that they don't understand them, or are unable to adapt to life in Canada. If this occurs, we ask the homestay family to contact the International Student Program for advice.

It is helpful for a student to have a written copy of your home's guidelines. Some students may not understand spoken English very well, and they may appreciate a copy to read in their own time. All students will be overwhelmed with information about Canada and Canadian culture, and will have a hard time remembering everything they are told. This will help avoid conflict and misunderstandings.

Remember, ordinary life in Canada can be very different from life in the student's home country. Participating in activities together like grocery shopping, watching "Hockey Night in Canada", visiting a relative's farm or going camping may be a normal activity for your family, but may be an entirely new experience for the student. Doing these things together may help you to see your home life in a new light as well!

See Appendix D – Student Orientation/Contract

School Attendance/Reports

Regular school attendance is required of all students participating in the International Student Program. Homestay parents are asked to call the school if a student misses, or is late for class.



Homestay parents will receive calls from the school if a student has missed a class, and a call has not been received from the parent. Excessive absences by a student may result in loss of credits.

Students are asked to show their report cards and progress reports to their homestay families. Homestay families should feel free to attend Parent-Teacher Meetings, to discuss the performance of the student with a teacher, or to call the principal of the school or the Director of the International Student Program, if they have questions about the student's academic progress.

Homestay parents should ask the student how school is going, if assignments are understood, and if they can provide help if there are language, or other, difficulties. Homestay parents may find themselves assisting their students with homework assignments and advising them on how the Canadian school system operates. Don't hesitate to take an interest in your student's school activities and new friends. Attend a basketball game, the fashion show or a school play if your student is involved so that they feel supported by you.

Encouraging the students to enroll in extra-curricular activities is a great way for them to meet new students. It also helps to make their stay here in Canada richer and more memorable.

Volunteering

Encourage the international student to participate in any community volunteering activities. In some cases, especially for those who are graduating, students will need to meet divisional graduation requirements; 10 hours for each grade completed in Canada.

Social Plans

While academics are of primary importance while the international students are living in Canada, we also encourage them to find friends and socialize in our Canadian setting. We encourage them to see as much of Winnipeg as is possible, and the International Student Program organizes activities to show Winnipeg to our students. These events are generally open to homestay family



members. The events provide opportunities for the homestay families to get to know one another better and for your family to be involved in some activities with your student and their friends. It is primarily through immersion in family life and in school that international students learn about Canada and various aspects of Canadian culture.

While students should spend time with members of their homestay families, we also recognize that time will be spent with school friends. Homestay families must be clear in conveying their family's guidelines to the student. Students are reminded to respect the individual rules of each house.

Curfews

The International Student Program does not set curfews since factors vary from one family to another. We do however encourage families to have an age-appropriate curfew time.

*Recommended Curfew
Should be Age Appropriate (and no later than)
Weekdays (Sunday – Thursday) 10:00 p.m.
Weekends (Friday – Saturday) 1:00 a.m.*

As students are expected to complete their assignments and to study, it is recommended that families monitor the amount of time students spend out on weekdays. Special arrangements can be made for special circumstances.

We expect students to discuss their social plans with homestay families and to ask permission before leaving home. Students are expected to provide detailed information to their families as to where they will be, how long they will be, whom they will be with and a phone number where they can be reached. Students are expected to call if they will be later than originally stated. Complete communication is important in order to prevent misunderstandings and confusion.



If a student is sleeping over at a friend's home, homestay families must know where the student is and must be satisfied the student is in a supervised and safe environment. The homestay family and the student will agree upon an expected time of return the next day. If sleepovers seem to be happening excessively, please consult with the homestay manager. The homestay family is allowed to place limits on the amount of socializing the student may do, and the hours they keep. A homestay's home is not to be treated as a boarding situation, where students are free to "Come and Go" as they please. Explain that in Canada, parents do pay attention to these details; this is for the student's own safety and well-being. **Regardless of the student's age, they are not to be left alone at night without adult supervision.**

Religion

Homestay families and international students must show mutual respect for each other's beliefs. International students have the right to practice their own religion and homestay families should make it easy for the international student to attend religious services. International students may also accompany their homestay families to religious services and activities, if they wish. However, homestay families do not have the right to insist that international students attend services or activities with them.

Smoking

Smoking is greatly discouraged by the International Student Program. The legal age to purchase cigarettes in Manitoba is 18 years. Smoking in homestay residences is strictly prohibited and violation of this may result in eviction from the home and expulsion from the International Student Program. As well, smoking is prohibited in most public buildings in Manitoba. Students will be made aware that regulations and expectations pertaining to smoking may be different than in their home country.



Alcohol and Illicit Drugs

The legal drinking age in Manitoba is 18 years of age. **Students may not, for any reason, enter a bar or drinking establishment even if they are over 18 years of age.** ALL international students sign a contract stating that they agree not to consume any alcohol. We expect all our students to live up to this agreement. Drinking underage, drinking alcohol, use of illicit drugs and/or the use of false identification is strictly prohibited and may result in expulsion from the International Student Program. It may also invalidate their health insurance coverage.

Having parties and allowing students to socialize in your home is your decision, but please remember that students are not allowed to consume alcohol.

Tattoos and Piercing

Tattoos and piercing (other than the earlobe), may not be done by the student without the written permission of the natural parents and the homestay family. In cases where the homestay family is not willing to assume the risk of a piercing or tattoo, the student must not have it done. The International Student Program will not assume responsibility for the medical problems which arise out of any piercing or tattoo.

Spending Money and Valuable Items

We discourage our students from carrying or displaying large amounts of cash or monies. Excess cash usually attracts attention, with the result that international students may be asked to pay for meals and extra-curricular activities for other students. The other possibility, of course, is that students can lose their wallets, or other valuables, or have them stolen. We advise students not to lend or borrow money under any circumstances, and we have asked the natural parents of international students to limit the amount of spending money they provide to their children.



Homestay families are asked to help students finalize their banking arrangements, if necessary, when they arrive in Canada. The use of automatic teller cards (bank cards) may provide convenience and security for a student's financial transactions.

Personal Spending

International students are responsible for buying their own clothing, cosmetics, and other personal effects. They are responsible for paying for their bus passes, leisure and sports activities, school articles, dental fees, and travel, and long-distance telephone calls.

The cost of living in Winnipeg is generally quite reasonable. International students at the senior and middle school level are responsible for monitoring their own budget, unless homestay families are requested to assist by the natural family in this matter. Homestay families will assist in monitoring budgets for elementary students. "Listing of Expenditures for International Students" forms to monitor the elementary student's budget are provided by the International Student Program. Upon the student's return home, the homestay family should make a copy of the expense form and return the original form and receipts to the natural family. **Homestay families must not sign contracts for international students for their cell phones, gym memberships, etc. The I.S.P. cannot be responsible for any expenses related to a contract which a family has signed.**

Clothing

It is the responsibility of the international student to bring and/or purchase appropriate clothing. It is recommended that international students who come from warm countries wait until they arrive in Winnipeg to purchase winter clothing. Clothing found in their home country, although considered to be "winter clothing" there, will often not be warm enough for our climate.

International students have the right to their own taste in clothing. They are, however, required to follow the same guidelines in "appropriate dress" at school as Canadian students.



Long Distance Telephone Charges/Internet Use

Payment for long distance calls, and associated charges, made by the student is the responsibility of the international student. Homestay families should provide the student with a copy of the phone bill with the student's calls marked or hi-lighted. Guidelines for telephone use, length of calls and telephone etiquette should be established with the student upon arrival. It is important for the student and the student's natural family to be aware of time differences and family routines, so that very late night or very early morning calls are not received which are disturbing to the household. Many students use telephone cards to manage their telephone charges, but there may be phone plans that provide beneficial rates to the students. Homestay families are asked to investigate what method is best for both the student and the homestay family. A separate telephone line for the student must be mutually agreed upon and paid for by the student.

The Internet is a fast and easy way for many students to communicate with their friends and families back home. Its use should be discussed, along with programs such as Skype. Homestay families may limit the amount of time a student spends on the computer.

At no time should a student alter, add, delete or create any programs on the host family's computer (i.e., changing the default language). At no time should a student visit any websites that involve pornographic materials or material of immoral or questionable content.

Driver's License and Driving/Dangerous Activities

Students are NOT permitted to:

- A) Operate or drive any vehicle whether wheeled, airborne, floating or over snow that requires a federal or provincial operator's license;
- B) Apply for, or acquire, a federal or provincial license to operate such vehicles in Canada;
- C) Undertake any practical (hands-on) training, public or private, for the operation of such vehicles.

The student may be permitted to operate other vehicles if the host parent is satisfied that the student is physically able, properly trained, sufficiently mature, and has the correct equipment to do so.



This rule is to be applied to all activities which may be considered dangerous to the student, including water sports, sky-diving, skiing, martial arts, archery, paintballing, shooting and the like. The homestay parent has the responsibility to make sure the student does not undertake risky activities or hobbies without proper preparation. Care must be taken not to permit activities that may be excluded in terms of the student's health insurance policy.

Health Insurance

All students are covered by health insurance while they are international students in St. James-Assiniboia.

All students committed to studying in Manitoba for six months, and who have a study permit valid for a period of at least six months, are eligible for Manitoba Health coverage. St. James-Assiniboia will assist in the application for Manitoba Health coverage. For information on Manitoba Health coverage please see <http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/mhsip>

All students with Manitoba Health coverage require supplemental health coverage. St. James-Assiniboia will assist in the application. For information see <http://www.inglestudents.com/sjsd>

Students who commit to studying in St. James-Assiniboia for a period of less than six months will be provided with health insurance. This is a mandatory requirement. For information see <http://www.inglestudents.com/sjsd>

It is the responsibility of natural parents to review and understand the health insurance coverage provided in conjunction with St. James-Assiniboia School Division.

It is important to note that health insurance coverage may be voided if students are engaged in illegal or self-abusive activities.

The student will receive a copy of the medical card and a booklet explaining the coverage shortly after enrollment. Homestay families and schools will receive a copy of the medical card. The Plan should be referred to as not all medical services are covered (i.e. dental care except as specified,



eye glasses, etc.) All costs for health related services are the responsibility of the student. At the time of a visit to a physician, the physician may bill the student directly. The student will be reimbursed for insured benefits after the original bill is sent to the insurer on the proper forms. The International Student Program will assist in making claims for refunds as necessary.

Travel world-wide insurance is provided, with the limitations of the policy.

Homestay parents do not need authorization to bring the student to visit a doctor or to a hospital for a check-up or for a minor medical problem. Please notify the International Student Program personnel immediately of hospitalization for illness or serious accidents.

In case of serious emergency or accident, the International Student Program personnel **must** be contacted before the natural parents. International Student Program personnel must be involved before any medical actions are undertaken. The international student and homestay family can count on the International Student Program for support during a medical emergency.

Travel

Students may wish to explore and to experience North American culture through travel during their stay in Winnipeg. However, this travel must not interfere with academic studies and should be limited to designated school holidays. The International Student Program generally will not grant permission for travel of this nature if it involves missing a significant amount of class time. All international students require written permission on the "Parental Permission to Travel" form from their natural parents before travel is planned. Also required to travel outside of Canada is a letter for customs and immigration officers. All students must furnish the International Student Program with a detailed itinerary of their travels including the names and addresses of those with whom they will be traveling and staying. "Permission to Travel" forms are supplied to each student when they arrive in Canada and additional forms are available and may be downloaded from www.sjsd.net/iep

See Appendix "E". (Parental/Legal Guardian Permission to Travel form-Policy IHBHE-E-1)

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Students must have all necessary immigration documents if they are leaving Canada. Failure to do so may result in the refusal to enter another country, or being refused re-entry back into Canada. This is important and it is the responsibility of the student to ensure all immigration requirements are met.

The International Student Program takes no responsibility for student actions while on travel. **Furthermore, unapproved travel is a serious infraction of the International Student Program rules and may result in expulsion from the Program.**

While traveling, students must abide by the country's laws. A student who breaks the law can be expelled from the Program. All international students must be accompanied by at least one other travel companion who is 21 years or older, or must have an adult who is at least 21 years old who will be responsible for them at their destination.

Many homestay families will want to include the student in their own travel plans and holidays. Students are encouraged to participate in such travels. Travel within Manitoba with the host family does not require natural parental permission, but the Homestay Manager should be informed. Travel outside of Manitoba with the homestay family does require parental permission. Travel outside of the province, as well as overnight trips within the province while on school trips, also requires parental permission. This permission must be provided to the International Student Program office.

Travel outside of Canada typically involves securing a visitor's visa to the destination country. Many students have travel visas in their passports, but homestay families should check individual passports before planning a trip outside of Canada. Students may be refused entry to a country (i.e., the U.S.A.) without the appropriate visa. Homestay families may wish to call U.S. Immigration Service at the Winnipeg International Airport before leaving for the U.S.A.

Students should leave their passports in a secure place at home, rather than carrying them on a routine basis.



Homestay Program Liability Policy

The St. James-Assiniboia School Division's International Student Program presents a wonderful opportunity for families in the community to share their home and lifestyle with students from around the world, and to learn about the language and culture of the student they are hosting. However, as with all Homestay Programs worldwide, there is some risk and liability that is assumed on the part of the homestay family. The International Student Program can help communicate with the student's parents regarding the recovery of costs associated with loss or damage caused by the international student they are hosting, but the St. James-Assiniboia School Division cannot be held liable or responsible for any such loss or damage. All Homestay families are required to sign and return to the International Student Program, the "Homestay Program Liability Policy" form.

See Appendix "F" – Homestay Program Liability Policy

Concerns with a Student's Behavior

Where homestay families have concerns with a student's behavior, academic progress or health, it is first recommended that the family discuss the concerns with the student. Many times it is miscommunication, a lack of communication, or a misunderstanding that is the source of the problem. It is important to realize that many of the students have experienced very different lives in their home countries and have to make many adjustments to our culture. Many of these students are very independent and adventurous, and most issues that homestay families experience can be worked through with an open-minded attitude, some understanding, and some give-and-take from both parties. If the concerns continue, notify the Homestay Manager of the difficulties and the Homestay Manager will work with you and the student to resolve the issues before they are unresolvable.

Support for Homestay Families

We ask that families commit to hosting a student for at least one complete semester. In addition to the Homestay Family Orientation Session and the regularly scheduled Homestay Family "Support"

*Homestay Program Guide for Parents
International Student Program
St. James-Assiniboia School Division
www.sjsd.net*



August 2016

meetings, the International Student Program provides on-going support and advice to homestay families. In cases, where there is a breakdown in relations, or where families and students have strong personality conflicts, the Homestay Manager will assess the situation. If it is not possible to resolve the issues, the Homestay Manager will arrange for a move.

The Homestay Manager has the right to move a student without the usual advance notice if a situation is unsatisfactory. The International Student Program reserves the right to terminate a family's participation in the Homestay Program if the family does not provide a safe and satisfactory environment for a student.

Saying Goodbye

It may be difficult to think about parting. Be aware that your student may have mixed emotions about going home. There will be sadness about leaving their Canadian family and their new friends. There will be some excitement about returning home to their families and sharing their experiences. Some students begin to “disconnect” emotionally from their homestay families in the month before they leave.

You can help your student by gathering photographs and newspaper articles, etc. for scrapbooks that they can take with them. Plan on how you can keep in touch. They may also need some help in purchasing some gifts to take back to friends and family.

Long-term communication after a student leaves can be one of the greatest rewards of hosting. As the months and years go by, there will likely be less contact, but don't be surprised to hear from a student after a lapse of a few years! Your response to these efforts to keep in touch does much to continue your life-long relationship.

You can also help your student(s) by preparing him or her for a “reverse culture shock.” This “re-entry” can be difficult for them after returning home from an international experience. Students experience tremendous personal growth, develop more independence and self-confidence, and have a broader view of the world. Their parents and friends may have a



difficult time accepting the changes. Helping your student to become aware of “reverse culture shock” will help them adjust when they get home.

If your student has made arrangements to extend their stay with you after their academic period is over, be aware that the International Student Program has no responsibility for the students after that time. Extended visits become a private arrangement between a homestay family and student. It is likely that flight arrangements will need to be changed and health insurance extended. Discuss payment (if expected) of homestay fees with the student.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we want to say thank you again, and we wish you a wonderful experience. Do not hesitate to call if you have questions or concerns regarding the International Student Program.





St. James-Assiniboia School Division International Student Program

470 Hamilton Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2Y 0H4
<http://www.sjsd.net>

Telephone: (204) 837-1331
Fax: (204) 888-0945

Appendix A

HOMESTAY FAMILY AGREEMENT

I agree to abide by the following Program guidelines:

1. I will act as a judicious, caring parent, and regard my international student as a family member. I will maintain involvement in their daily lives at school. I agree to interact with students on a daily basis, including in appropriate family activities and transport them to certain activities, as required from time to time.
2. I agree that the primary consideration for hosting a student is for the cross-cultural experience. I agree to respect the culture and values of the student.
3. I will keep all information about students confidential. Personal information about students will be shared only with the International Student Program (ISP) staff.
4. I will contact the ISP should significant problems with students occur (legal, medical, academic).
5. I will set clear, reasonable and age-appropriate rules for the student, and ensure they are clearly understood. I acknowledge that students may not use drugs or alcohol and I agree to contact the ISP directly and immediately, should this issue arise.
6. I will immediately advise the ISP of any medical emergency or accident.
7. I will provide an environment conducive to homework completion and studying and will provide supportive interest in the student's school progress. I will attend parent/teacher interviews as requested. If academic difficulties are encountered, I will contact the school or the ISP staff in order that appropriate and timely interventions can be undertaken.
8. I will provide each student with his/her own bedroom. The bedroom will include a bed, dresser, closet, desk, chair and lamp for studying. Sharing of a room for elementary children is permitted only if acceptable to all concerned.
9. I will provide the student with phone numbers to reach me during the day, as well as a house key, alarm security codes and instructions regarding the home safety.

10. I will provide the student with three meals daily and other reasonable snacks.
11. I will provide an "English-only" environment for international students.
12. I will inform the ISP if I host a student from another program.
13. I will abide by the Program guidelines regarding the amount of homestay honorarium, as set by the St. James-Assiniboia School Division.
14. I understand that the ISP may move a student if a move is in the best interest of the student. I also understand that I must reimburse the Program for the balance of the honorarium if an advance has been given.
15. I will not allow an international student to drive any vehicle that requires a federal or provincial operator's license.
16. I will not allow international students to participate in any activity that may be considered dangerous or inappropriate to the student. If I am not sure if an activity is appropriate, I will contact the ISP.
17. I am aware that I am responsible for arranging adequate liability insurance to cover an international student living in my home.
18. I understand that hosting a student does not automatically guarantee that I will host a student in the future.
19. I will obtain consent from the ISP for student travel. Adequate notice must be provided to the International Student Program if documents are required for travel. I will assist students purchase additional travel insurance if a student travels outside of Manitoba.
20. I will follow all policies as they pertain to the Homestay Program of St. James - Assiniboia School Division.

Homestay Family Signature and Date

ISP Signature and Date

Appendix A



St. James-Assiniboia School Division International Student Program

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Appendix B

TIPS FOR HOSTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Here are some helpful preparations you can make when an international student comes to your home:

- Treat the student like a family member, not a guest.
- Learn something about their country, culture and customs before their arrival. Seek to know them. You may get information from your local library, and from the cultural information provided by the International Student Program.
- Welcome them with warmth and friendship. Learn to pronounce their name. Practice pronouncing their name with them until you can say it reasonably well.
- Help the student feel at home. Be natural and informal. Find mutual interests or hobbies. Treat them as part of the family. Explain new things to them. Show them around your home. Share photographs.
- Show real interest in the student that you are hosting. Get them to talk about themselves. Ask about family, education, religious background, home life, culture, customs, food likes and dislikes, aspirations, activities and plans. Learn greetings in their language. Give them time to answer, and encourage them to ask questions about you as well.
- Ensure the student has your name, address and emergency contact number.
- Encourage the student to call or email home upon arrival.
- Jet lag may be a problem at the beginning. Many Asian students experience a 10-14 hour time difference when they arrive. Expect naps as well as irregular eating and sleeping patterns at first.
- Speak distinctly, but not loudly. It is more helpful to pause between sentences than to speak each word slowly. Try to avoid use of slang. Ask them to repeat anything you do not understand when they are speaking to you.
- Be aware of culture shock. Cultures that are not familiar with Western life may experience great depths of culture shock.
- Make sure that time, place, dress, transportation and duration of activity are clearly understood. Write things down if you need to. Provide transportation where needed.
- Different cultures have different views of time. Do not be surprised if they come home late occasionally.
- Have simple meals, but have plenty of food. Respect dietary restrictions.
- Expose the students to all types of social games (cards, board games), English Television with closed caption, video games, music, etc.
- You may not always understand or agree with your international student. However, you should be willing to accept him or her and their perspectives. Recognize that some perspectives will be different from yours.



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Appendix C

Departure Information Notice to Homestay Families

Please help students pack. The airlines are now very strict about weight restrictions. Check the airlines websites for baggage policies & restrictions. Student should expect to pay if the bags are overweight. Shoes, books and blue jeans are often heavy items. **Be sure students have their passports before leaving your home.**

Be at the airport with plenty of time to spare. Students must be there 2 hours early if traveling through the USA and a minimum of 1.5 hours if traveling via a Canadian airport. Give them time to repack bags (often required as bags are overweight). Prepare for long line-ups at the airport.

Be sure carry-on bags adhere to weight & allowable items. Items such as ice skates, bottles of perfumes and hand lotion (which were being carried as gifts) and nonfunctioning electronics have been left behind at Security because students had them in their back packs.

Thank you for hosting our students. We appreciate it!

Important: Please wait for students to clear security before leaving the airport to be sure there are no problems.



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END OF THE YEAR CHECKLIST

THINGS TO DO	DONE
Book your return flight. Be sure you are returning home AFTER your scheduled exams. Confirm the time of your flight a day or two before your departure date. Check with your airline for luggage weight restrictions, as well as carry-on restrictions. Get to the airport in plenty of time before your flight leaves!	
Contact International Student Program with our return flight/date/time.	
BANK ACCOUNT- If you opened a Canadian bank account, you should close it and leave your mailing address in your home country with the bank authorities.	
Pay any OUTSTANDING BILLS. (Homestay parents, telephone, school).	
Return your HOMESTAY HOUSE KEY.	
Return borrowed items to the place from where you borrowed them (library books, text books, graphing calculators, etc.).	
If you are planning to stay longer than June 30 th , check with your homestay family to ask if it is okay with them. You will need to extend your medical insurance, which can be done at our office.	
Call or visit your friends before you go home. Be sure to express your appreciation to your homestay family.	
Let the International Student Program and homestay family know your permanent home address.	
Notify your homestay family of your arrival once you get to your destination.	



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Appendix D

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM (ISP) ORIENTATION

The program orientation will provide you with sufficient information to help you make good decisions during your participation in St. James-Assiniboia's International Student Program.

Please check off the topics as we discuss the Homestay Guide with you. We encourage you to ask questions at any time during the orientation.

PART A

HOMESTAY FAMILIES - A SAFE AND FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

- Students will be placed in safe and supportive homestay families.
- Comfortable surroundings and a place to practice English.
- Private bedroom and 3 meals a day.
- Reasonable showering time about 10 minutes; respect the needs of all family members.
- All families are different-respect their differences.

YOUR ROLE -A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY

- We hope you become a regular family member.
- You should spend time with your family every day.
- Keep bedroom clean, prepare some meals, clean dishes and look after your laundry. Pick up your things.
- Other household chores are part of experiencing Canadian life, (cleaning bathroom, vacuuming).
- Speak English around your homestay family and Canadian friends.
- Treat everyone with courtesy and respect.
- Follow Homestay Rules.

CURFEWS

- Respect household rules including curfews. A reasonable curfew is 10-11 p.m. on weekdays and 12:00 -1:00 a.m. on weekends at the latest. Your curfew will set by your homestay family and it can be earlier.
- Phone Homestay Family if there is a problem.

MAKING SOCIAL PLANS

- Communication is very important. Always let your homestay family know your plans in advance.
- Phone to inform them if your plans have changed.
- Homestay Families can limit your hours of socializing.
- Ask your homestay family first before bringing friends home.

RELIGION

- Respect each other's beliefs about religion.

☐ **TELEPHONES AND COMPUTERS**

- Call "collect", Skype or use a phone card.
- Students are responsible for all costs involved with their long distance telephone calls. Your homestay family CAN NOT sign a cell phone contract for you.
- Only browse appropriate sites on the web; if unsure of the appropriateness of the site, don't go there!
- Respect Homestay Family rules for the phone and computer.
- Keep your calls and Internet use brief.
- Do not download anything without your family's permission.

☐ **CHANGING FAMILIES AND PROBLEMS**

- First ask yourself, "What can I do to adjust?" Think about how you can work things out. You should communicate with your family every day, regardless if you are sad or happy. They will provide support.
- Casual requests to change Homestay Families will not be considered.
- Only requests supported by evidence of a problem will be seriously considered.
- Any concerns regarding Homestay Policies, contact Program personnel directly.

PART B

☐ **SMOKING**

- Smoking is greatly discouraged by the International Student Program. It is illegal to buy cigarettes in Manitoba if you are younger than 18 years of age.
- Students cannot smoke in a homestay family's house. Most public buildings in Manitoba also do not allow smoking.

☐ **ALCOHOL AND ILLICIT DRUGS**

- As a participant in our Program you cannot drink alcohol or be associated with illicit drugs or harmful substances in any capacity.
- Using false ID is strictly prohibited; be aware of the seriousness of this crime — you may be returned home by the ISP at your parents' expense. You may be deported by the Government of Canada.
- Students may not FOR ANY REASON enter a bar, nightclub, karaoke bar, lounges and pool halls where alcohol might be served.
- Will not enter a facility that sells liquor or beer.
- Violations of these rules may mean your medical insurance is invalid, and there will be consequences from the ISP which may include dismissal from the program. You may be returned home by the ISP at your parents' expense. You may be deported by the Government of Canada.

☐ **LAWS**

- **ALL CANADIAN LAWS (national, provincial and local) MUST BE FOLLOWED.**
- Agree not to purchase, use, or have in my possession, which includes my host family premises, and school locker, any weapons including firearms, bullets, air guns, knives or martial arts implements.
- Agree not to engage in fighting, bullying (including cyber-bullying), racial taunting or similar activity. Agree not to take part in any unregulated sports (ultimate/street/organized fighting).
- I will always respect cultural differences and understand that Canada is a multicultural country. I understand that discrimination based on nationality, gender, political or religious affiliation is illegal in Canada.

□ **PART-TIME WORK**

- Study Permit states you cannot engage in employment without permission from the Government of Canada.
- Volunteering is encouraged. Graduation from St. James-Assiniboia with a divisional high school diploma requires volunteer hours.

□ **DRIVER'S LICENSES AND DRIVING**

- Students are not allowed to drive any motorized vehicles.
- You must wear a seatbelt while in a vehicle.
- Be aware as a pedestrian, driving occurs on the right hand side of the road. Streets are very slippery in the winter! Wait for a car to stop before you step into the street.

PART C

□ **TRAVEL**

- Travel should not interfere with academic studies and should be limited to school holidays. An adult 21 years of age or older must be responsible for you during your travel.
- A "Parental Permission to Travel" form signed by the biological parents must be provided to the International Student Program for each trip outside of Manitoba or outside of Winnipeg without your homestay family.
- Travel within Manitoba with the Homestay Family does not require the "Parental Permission to Travel" form.
- St. James-Assiniboia is not responsible for you when you travel.
- Store your passport in a safe place. No need to carry passport in Canada. Carry a photocopy instead.
- **If you leave Canada, you are responsible to have the proper immigration documents to return to Canada. This is your responsibility.**

□ **HEALTH CARE / MEDICAL CARD**

- Medical Insurance coverage is mandatory for all students.
- Students should review the insurance website to better understand their coverage.
- Any cost incurred is the immediate responsibility of the student
- Always have your Medical Insurance Card and a claim form with you when you visit the doctor.
- Notify Program personnel of any hospitalization, serious accident or illness.
- Tattoos and Piercing are prohibited without the written consent of your natural parent, as well as the agreement of your homestay parents. The International Student Program cannot accept responsibility for injuries and infections due to these activities.
- Students must not participate in any activity that may be excluded in terms of your health insurance.
- Do not participate in any risky behaviours which will endanger your well-being.
- Use sunscreen and mosquito repellent.

□ **SPENDING MONEY / BUS PASSES**

- We recommend you open a personal bank account at a local bank/credit union.
- Do not carry more than \$20 in your pocket/purse at school.
- You are responsible for monitoring your own budget.
- Where to purchase bus pass — "Go Card"
- Have money for a taxi if you are out at night.

□ **WEATHER / CLOTHING**

- Cold weather can be dangerous. Wear proper winter clothing during winter months.
- You are responsible to bring/buy appropriate clothing.

- Dress properly to avoid frostbite, sunburn, and insect bites.
- Listen to the advice of your Homestay Family.

ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

- Students are encouraged to participate in the Program's scheduled activities. Be sure to have your homestay parent sign your field trip form.

PART D

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND REPORTS

- Regular attendance is expected daily. Be on time, with all materials!
- Teachers and Program personnel should be notified by your homestay parent when you are absent.
- Share report cards and Parent-Teacher Meeting dates with Homestay Family.
- School Code of Behaviour applies to International Students.
- Do not submit plagiarized (copied) work or copy someone else's answers on tests; you will receive a failing grade.
- Ask teachers for help if you need it.
- If you plan to graduate, we **MUST** have your report cards from your home country. This is your responsibility.
- If you plan to graduate with SJSD, you must meet the graduation requirements. ■ You should be prepared to take part in volunteer activities as part of your academic program.
- During instruction time - there should be no talking. Students are expected to raise their hands if they have a question. Be respectful with your question. Be respectful to the teacher and the other students in the class.
- Use independent work time in class to complete work - there should be no talking and/or socializing.
- Complete all homework and assignments on time.
- If you need clarification or don't agree with a mark/feedback the teacher has given, then speak to the teacher after class individually or make arrangements to see them at noon or after school.
- **DO NOT LEAVE ANY MONEY OR VALUABLES UNATTENDED (Gym locker room, cafeteria, classroom, transit bus).**
- **You MUST complete your exams before returning home or you may lose your academic credits. No exceptions!**

Date of Orientation Meeting: _____ International Student Name: _____
Month / Day / Year (Please print)

International Student's Email Address: _____ Cell Number: _____

I agree that I am participating in an academic program. I understand that a successful experience depends on regular class attendance, completion of all homework assignments and participation in activities offered by the schools and the International Student Program. I acknowledge that the St. James-Assiniboia School Division reserves the right to dismiss me, and return me home, at my parent's expenses, and without tuition refund, for violating any of the rules set out by the Program.

International Student's Signature: _____



#70889v4

ST. JAMES ASSINIBOIA SCHOOL DIVISION IHBHE-E-I

Parental/Legal Guardian Permission to Travel (Must be submitted at least 48 hours prior to departure)

Select One: **Independent Travel** **Travel with Homestay family outside of Manitoba**

Students who wish to travel while they are participants in the St. James-Assiniboia School Division International Student Program, must, prior to departure, provide the written permission of their natural parents/legal guardians, for such travel to the Director of the Program or designate. Unauthorized travel by a student is not permitted and will result in the student being released from the Program and sent home. Neither the St. James - Assiniboia School Division nor the Homestay families can supervise the independent travel of an international student outside the City of Winnipeg, or assume any responsibility for the student during such travel.

All international students must be accompanied by at least one other travel companion who is 21 years or older, or must have a responsible adult who is at least 21 years old who will be responsible for them at the destination.

Name of Student: _____ Method of Travel: Air__ Train__ Car__ Bus__

Destination Address: _____

Dates of the trip: (Include Flight # and times) _____

Departure from Winnipeg: _____ Return to Winnipeg: _____

Winnipeg Contact: (In case of emergency)

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Contact in Home Country: (In case of emergency)

Name: _____ Telephone: _____
Country Code City Code Number

Address: _____

I give my child permission to travel as outlined above. I hereby acknowledge and understand that the St. James-Assiniboia School Division and my child's Homestay family cannot supervise and is not responsible for my child during independent travel outside the Province of Manitoba, or independent travel outside the City of Winnipeg but within the Province of Manitoba, as the case may be. I hereby acknowledge and understand that independent travel is the complete responsibility of the student's natural parents/legal guardians.

Responsible Adult(s) and Age(s) Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Address: _____

Note 1: Additional travel health insurance is required if you are travelling outside the Province of Manitoba. Please contact the International Student Program office for further information.

Note 2: If you are travelling outside of Canada, please ensure you have all necessary immigration documentation. Failure to do so may result in the refusal to enter another country, or being refused re-entry back into Canada. This is important and it is the responsibility of the student to ensure all immigration requirements are met.

Signature of Natural Parent/Legal Guardian: _____ Date: _____



#70889v4

ST. JAMES ASSINIBOIA SCHOOL DIVISION IHBHE-E-I

Reminder to all International Students

Travel outside of Winnipeg

This is a formal reminder that travel outside the Province of Manitoba is forbidden unless authorized by your parents/legal guardians. Students who travel without this permission will be sent home. There will be no warnings. This requirement applies to International student of all ages.

If you plan to travel either:

- (a) _____ outside the Province of Manitoba; or,
- (b) _____ unaccompanied outside the City of Winnipeg, but within the Province of Manitoba,

you must, in advance of such travel, provide a copy of the Parent Permission to Travel form signed by your parents/legal guardians(s) to the Director of International Student Program, St. James - Assiniboia School Division. The Parent Permission to Travel form is available from the Director of the International Student Program.

Local travel within the Province of Manitoba with your homestay family or with others, who have prior permission from your homestay family, is permitted without additional authorization from your parents/legal guardians. However, any travel with St. James-Assiniboia Schools must follow the policies and regulations in place within the Division.

Your purpose for being in the City of Winnipeg, Province of Manitoba is educational and therefore travel during those times when classes are in session is discouraged. For travel during vacation periods, please contact the Director of the International Education Program.

Approved May 25, 2010



St. James-Assiniboia School Division International Student Program

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Appendix F

ST. JAMES-ASSINBOIA SCHOOL DIVISION HOMESTAY PROGRAM LIABILITY POLICY

The St. James-Assiniboia School Division's International Student Program presents a wonderful opportunity for families in the community to share their home and lifestyle with students from around the world, and to learn about the language and culture of the student they are hosting. However, as with all Homestay Programs worldwide, there is some risk and liability that is assumed on the part of the homestay family. The International Student Program is committed to assisting the families in its Homestay Program with trying to recover any costs associated with loss or damage caused by the international student they are hosting, but the St. James-Assiniboia School Division cannot be held liable or responsible for any such loss or damage. All Homestay families are required to sign and return to the International Student Program, the "Homestay Program Liability Policy" form.

It is understood that families in the Homestay Program are responsible for their own insurance coverage with reference to hosting an international student. The St. James-Assiniboia School Division strongly advises that each homestay family contact their insurance company to confirm that:

- (1) they are properly insured for any accidental loss or damage caused by an international student, and
- (2) their insurance policy protects them in the event that the international student and/or the biological parents seek legal action against them related to the condition or maintenance of the home.

My/our signature(s) below indicate that I/we have read and understand the above stated policy.

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

