



INTRODUCTION	2
SPECIAL NOTICE	2
APPLYING TO BE A HOST FAMILY	2
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	2
HOME VISIT	3
LOCATION BOUNDARIES	3
CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS	3
ACCEPTING A STUDENT	3
OUR STUDENTS	3
CONTACTING YOUR STUDENT PRIOR TO ARRIVAL	4
TIME COMMITMENT	4
ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE TRANSFER	4
STUDENT ARRIVAL	4
ORIENTATION	5
BATHROOM ORIENTATION	5
BUS ROUTE	5
BANKING	6
LONG DISTANCE PHONE CALLS	6
INSURANCE (STUDENTS)	6
HOME REQUIREMENTS	6
BEDROOM	6
SECURE STORAGE	7
MEALS AND SNACKS	7
INTERNET ACCESS	8
LANGUAGE AT HOME	8
HOUSE KEY	8
RULES & EXPECTATIONS	8
LAUNDRY AND CLEANING	8
CHORES & BABYSITTING	9
CURFEWS	9
HOSTING OTHER STUDENTS	9
RELIGION, CULTURE & PRIVACY	9
QUIET STUDY TIME	9
SMOKING	9
SAFETY	10
SPECIAL RULES FOR MINORS	10
POLICIES & PAYMENTS	11
TRIAL PERIOD & NOTICE PERIOD	11
PAYMENTS to HOST FAMILIES	11
VACATIONS & OVERNIGHT TRIPS (HOST FAMILY)	11
VACATIONS (STUDENTS)	12
LEGAL ISSUES	12
INSURANCE (HOST FAMILY)	12
DISCIPLINE	12
PRIVACY POLICY	13
CONTACT THE HOMESTAY COORDINATOR when...	13

## INTRODUCTION

This guide provides information about the Stewart College of Languages Homestay program, and outlines your responsibilities as an approved Host Family. These Guidelines apply to most individual placements. From time to time program-specific guidelines may apply and will be communicated to you at the time of the student placement.

Pay particular attention to boxed information – these are specific rules which you agree to uphold when you complete our Host Family Application.

## SPECIAL NOTICE

**Any breach of the Guidelines may result in the removal of the student from your home and the possible withdrawal of your application from the Stewart College Homestay Program.**

Stewart College of Languages reserves the right to move the student for any reason. The host family must immediately refund the balance of any unused payment. Movement of a student does not mean the termination of the homestay agreement for future placements.

Termination of the homestay provider agreement may happen if the host family is in breach of our homestay agreement or in breach of these host family guidelines and/or responsibilities.

Stewart College does not guarantee or promise a placement to the host family.

## APPLYING TO BE A HOST FAMILY

### APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

To apply to be a Host Family for the Stewart College of Languages Homestay Program, you need to:

1. Read this **Information Guide for Families**
2. Ensure that your home is located within the approved area (see Location Boundaries).
3. Submit **all of the following items** to Stewart College:
  - ❑ Fully **completed Host Family Application Form**
  - ❑ **Valid Police checks** for all residents of your home who are 18 years or older, (see next page for details)
  - ❑ Hand-drawn or computer-generated **floor plan for each level of your home**. Plan must identify all rooms and their purpose in the home (i.e. student bedrooms, living room, storage etc.).
  - ❑ **Photographs** of:
    - i. Front exterior of home as viewed from front curb of street
    - ii. All family members (preferably together in one photograph).
    - iii. Common living areas of home (living room, kitchen, dining room, recreation room)
    - iv. Student bedroom(s)
    - v. Main bathroom(s) to be used by student
    - vi. *Electronic photo files may be emailed to [languages@stewartcollege.com](mailto:languages@stewartcollege.com) with the subject header "Photos for XXXXX Family Homestay application".*

Once you have submitted your Host Family application, you will receive an email to acknowledge receipt of your application, and a list of any outstanding items we must receive before it can be reviewed.

## HOME VISIT

During periods when new host families are required for our program, you may receive an email or phone call to arrange a home visit. This is the final step of the application process and involves the Homestay Coordinator visiting your family at home. The home visit usually takes 30-45 minutes and includes an interview / discussion with your family and a brief tour of your home (common areas, student room(s), garden etc.) Ideally all members of the family will be present for this visit. Visits are generally scheduled during business hours on weekdays.

## LOCATION BOUNDARIES

Generally speaking, to be considered as a host family for Stewart College, you must be located no more than 30 minutes by direct bus from the Bay Centre, in an area where bus service is frequent, especially in evenings and on weekends. In addition, the walk from your house to the bus stop must be well lit and not exceed 10 minutes. If you are unsure about whether your location is within our boundaries, please contact us.

## POLICE CHECKS

An original police check must be provided for each permanent member of your household over 18 years old. This document must be less than 12 months old when we receive your application. The document **must say that it was produced for the purposes of providing homestay to the vulnerable sector.**

To obtain your police check, you will need to visit your local police station. In some cases the police check will be processed within a few weeks; in other cases it can take up to 5 months. **We cannot proceed with your homestay application until we have received the required police check(s) so it is strongly recommended you do this as soon as possible.**

**It is essential that you provide “homestay for the vulnerable sector” as the reason** for getting the check done. This ensures that all the appropriate police databases are checked when preparing your document.

If you have had a police check done for another Victoria homestay organization and you have an original document dated within the past 12 months, stating that the purpose of having it done was for homestay, you may submit this document instead of having a new one done. However, police checks that were done for any other purpose (e.g. for the school board, volunteer work, working with seniors etc) are not acceptable as

Once you have obtained your Police check, mail or hand deliver the original document to:

Stewart College of Languages  
Attention: Homestay Coordinator  
850 Courtney Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 1C4

A copy will be made and the original will be returned to you by mail.

## ACCEPTING A STUDENT

### OUR STUDENTS

Stewart College students come from Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Switzerland, Germany, France, Mexico and from time-to-time, other countries too. Year round, most of our students are 19 – 35 years old and they come to study at our school for periods of a week to a year, most commonly for two or three months. We also receive older adults now and then.

From early Spring to the end of August, we run a special program for teens, which attracts 11-17 year old individual students and those in group programs.

Stewart College also acts as an agent placing teen international students in high schools. We usually use the school district homestay program for the placement of these students, but sometimes will do the placement ourselves.

## CONTACTING YOUR STUDENT PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

If you agree to host a student, you will be given information about your student including their name, age, nationality, sex and if available, likes/dislikes, personality, English level. In some cases you will receive an email address OR your student will contact you by email.

**Correspond with the student** by email if they contact you or if we provide you with their email address. Introduce your family and tell the student about your home, neighbourhood and Victoria.

**CULTURAL NOTE:** If you have children, including them in this activity and encouraging them to write or draw a picture will help with the transition of having a student living in your home. Your student will appreciate the gesture, and it will help ease his/her anxiety about living in a foreign country.

## TIME COMMITMENT

When you agree to host a student, you agree to be home for the duration of your student's stay. At least one parent, preferably both parents, is expected to be home in the evenings.

Including your student in as many family activities as possible and spending time with your student daily is an integral part of hosting.

## ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE TRANSFER

You agree to pick the student up or drop them off at Victoria International Airport or Victoria Bus Depot at the beginning or end of their stay, as requested by us. Transfer to/from the bus depot is included in your hosting fee, but you will be paid \$25 if we ask you transfer your student to/from the airport.

You may be asked to pick your student up and/or drop him/her off at the airport or bus depot at the end of his/her stay. As soon as the arrival information is received, the school will forward it to you, usually with a welcoming Name Card to help you connect with your student. On occasions when multiple students are arriving, the school may have a staff member there to assist. If the student does not request arrival/departure transfer, but intends to make their own way to your home, you will still be provided with flight details so you know when to expect them.

When your host family profile is sent to your student, the student will be given contact numbers for you and for the Homestay Coordinator, if they experience any delays in arrival. If you are concerned about a student's arrival at any time, please call the Homestay Coordinator directly. (There are times when flights are delayed and your student may not be able to contact you. In these cases, your patience and understanding are appreciated.)

## STUDENT ARRIVAL

As a host family you are expected to make your student feel welcome and part of your family.

Do not plan too much on the first day as your student may be exhausted for the first few days after their arrival. Others may have lots of energy, so plan to be flexible and play it by ear!

**Make an extra effort to welcome your student in the first week**, as first impressions are extremely important in developing successful relationships with your students. E.g. place a welcome sign on their door, prepare a special dinner for their arrival, plan some activities together.

Remember to be patient with poor language skills and tolerant of your student's customs and habits. Your student may wish to show you photos of family members, friends and his/her hometown. This is his/her way of trying to make a connection with you, so please be patient especially if you have hosted many students and/or your student's language ability is low.

## ORIENTATION

**Orient students to Victoria and your neighbourhood.** The host family is required to show the student how to use the bus and how to get to places of interest such as schools, parks, attractions, local shops.

**Assist students with their adjustment to Canada.** Involve students in family activities, outings and events, which will familiarize them with the area, with Canadian culture, and will help them to feel at ease with your family and your home.

**Help students learn the ropes in your home.** Set aside some time to do a short orientation. Some families like to provide a written statement of house rules, which may include expectations regarding use of common areas, contact in case of being late for dinner, helping after dinner (e.g. clearing the table). Please ensure that the school has a copy of any written house rules that are communicated to the student. It is a good idea to go over house rules with the student a day or so after arrival (so as not to overwhelm them). Sample house rules are available for your review on the Stewart College website at [www.stewartcollege.com](http://www.stewartcollege.com).

Every Monday at school, new students have the opportunity to join a short orientation to the school, our homestay program, and downtown Victoria.

## BATHROOM ORIENTATION

Please show your student how to use the shower and bath and how to leave the bathroom when he/she is finished. Show your student where the garbage can is for disposing of garbage and/or feminine hygiene products. If you set a limit on showers, please be reasonable - e.g. 10 minutes.

Some families like to provide colour-coded towels, hand-towels etc. so that each student / family member has their own colour and can easily tell which is theirs.

It is a good idea to discuss when different household members may use the bathroom, if it is shared.

## CULTURAL TIPS

- Let your student know that if too much toilet paper is flushed down the toilet, it will overflow. Also, tell your student that too many flushes in a row will cause your toilet to backup. **Stewart College has a notice in Japanese and Spanish that clearly explains what does and does not go in Canadian toilets – please ask for a copy if you would find it helpful.**
- Japanese students may be used to taking a shower outside the tub, then using the tub for a soak in clean water. It is a good idea to point out that Canadian bathrooms are not designed for water to be outside the tub or shower area.

## BUS ROUTE

**Hosts must personally escort the students on the bus to and from both downtown and Stewart College before their program begins.**

It is imperative that you actually take the bus with your student on the first day of school and show him/her where to get off the bus and where the school is located. Please do not delegate this responsibility to other students in your household, unless they too, are attending Stewart College. You must also take the bus back home with your student after school and ensure that he/she knows where to get on the bus downtown and where to get off the bus near your home.

Drawing a little map with key landmarks will help your student tremendously. On the back of the map, write your address, phone number and a sentence or two regarding where to get off the bus near your home. (This is in case your student is lost and he/she needs some help from the bus driver.)

Go over the bus guide with your student and mark which bus number he/she must catch to school and home from school. Please ensure that the bus day schedule is the same as the night schedule. If it is different, make sure that your student understands the changes (different bus numbers, different time schedules, different stops both downtown and/or near your home.)

## BANKING

**Please assist students with banking procedures during the first few days.**

**Please check to make sure that students do not have large sums of cash with them.** If required, please help them to set up a bank account, convert the cash to travellers' cheques or have them store it in a locked location in their room.

## LONG DISTANCE PHONE CALLS

**Students are required to use a phone card when calling long-distance from your home or from Stewart College.**

Phone cards with good rates to common student home countries are available for purchase at school. Please **assist students with using the phone card for the first time.**

Although you and your student may not have had a chance to purchase a phone card, **please ensure that students contact their family, collect if necessary, or using the internet to let them know that they have arrived safely.**

Stewart College does not assume any responsibility regarding long distance charges. Any unpaid telephone charges on your home phone account are the sole responsibility of the host family and the host family agrees to release Stewart College from any and all liability. We strongly recommend that you supervise your student(s) to ensure that long distance calls do not appear on your account.

## INSURANCE (STUDENTS)

**Check in the first few days to see if your students have purchased medical insurance** for their stay in Victoria. Please refer them to Stewart College if they have not yet arranged for medical insurance.

All students should have medical insurance. If your student has a health problem, please take them to either a clinic or a hospital depending on the severity of the illness. Your student will be required to pay for all medical expenses incurred and then submit his/her receipts to the insurance company to be reimbursed. Do NOT give any medication to your student, as you could be liable in the event of problems. If your student needs headache or cold medication etc, take him/her to a pharmacist.

**Ask your student to keep a copy of their medical insurance in a central location,** so that both you and they can find it in case of an emergency.

Students staying for six months or longer must apply for the BC Medical Services Plan. Forms are available at school.

Please ask your student if they have **travel** insurance to cover the loss or damage to their belongings while they are in Victoria and refer them to Stewart College for more information if they do not have insurance.

## HOME REQUIREMENTS

### BEDROOM

**Your student must have his/her own separate bedroom, furnished with a comfortable bed including linen, duvet cover, blanket and pillows, desk with desk light and comfortable chair, night table with lamp and an alarm clock/radio, mirror, area for hanging clothes and a chest of drawers.**

The bedroom should have natural light and be warm during the winter months. If possible, it is preferred that the student room is on the same floor as family bedrooms.

Only one student is allowed per room, unless there is a special request by Stewart College or the homestay applicant for shared accommodation. It is up to you to make sure that the student has a quiet environment in order to study and succeed in school, as well as time to sleep and rest.

## SECURE STORAGE

It is essential that each student in your home has access to secure storage of personal property.

This is for your protection as well as the student because if something goes missing, the host family is usually the first to be blamed. Secure storage can be (1) a lockable door to the bedroom or (2) a lockable closet, safe or other secure cabinet. There should be two keys, one retained by the host family and one by the student.

## MEALS AND SNACKS

Three well-balanced meals plus snacks are to be provided by the host-family 7 days a week.

**Homestay Families are required to prepare and cook a healthy, hot, sit-down dinner for students each night.** Family members and students should adjust their schedules to ensure that they are eating together as a family each night. Please ensure that your student feels welcome at the table at all times.

Have snacks available such as yogurt, fresh fruits, milk, juice, tea/coffee etc. and show your student where they are kept so that he/she can eat something between meals if hungry. As students may be shy to help themselves to food during the first few days, please make an extra effort to make them at ease in this area.

It is strongly suggested that you take your student with you when you go grocery shopping and ask what kinds of food he/she prefers.

It is a good idea to ask your student what they would like to have for lunch and give them some options. Students often get tired of eating sandwiches for lunch, so variety is important. There are microwaves at the school, so your student can reheat leftovers for lunch. Some families like students to prepare their own breakfasts and lunches from a selection of food provided by the family. In this case, please ensure that the selection includes food that the student is comfortable with and show them a typical breakfast or lunch a few times if they are unsure about preparing things for themselves. As some student programs involve the student being at school for 7 or 8 hours, please ensure that students have sufficient food and snacks in their lunch pack to last the entire day.

In the event that family members will not be home for dinner, a meal must be prepared for your student.

No alcohol is to be offered to students.

## CULTURAL TIPS

- Every now and then, it is a nice gesture to prepare a meal from your student's home country. Feel free to ask your student if he/she would like to help you with the meal preparation.
- Although you may genuinely enjoy cooking food from your student's home country, don't over-do it! Your student may appreciate the first or second time but after that wonder why they're not having 'typical Canadian food'.
- Students sometimes perceive leftovers as the "scraps" of the previous night's meal. If using leftovers for lunch, it is a good idea to put the lunch portions aside before offering the meal so that the student can see the meal has been prepared with lunch in mind.
- Having a rice cooker available for your students to use is a great idea; especially for Asian students who may be used to eating rice three times a day.
- Korean students appreciate a jar of Kimchee (chilli/cabbage condiment, available from most grocery stores) being available.
- Mexican students are used to eating a cooked breakfast on a daily basis at home, and will appreciate the option of having eggs, beans or other warm food in the morning as an alternative to cereal, if possible.

## INTERNET ACCESS

Internet access is a required element of homestay, and can not be charged to the student as an 'extra' service.

Internet access is a normal part of everyday life these days, in all developed countries. Unless the student requires a particular type of internet access for their laptop (e.g. for gaming, which is generally not encouraged in any case), it is expected that the host family will provide some kind of internet service without additional cost to the student. Internet access is seen as an essential part of homestay, in the same way that access to a land-line phone or basic TV/DVDs is expected for all homestay students.

It is NOT a requirement that the student be able to use the family computer. Being able to check email on the family computer is a gesture that students will appreciate if they do not come with a laptop. However, it is a privilege and is subject to house rules. There are computers at Stewart College for student use if the family computer is not available.

Please refer to the section "Special rules for Minors" regarding internet use by teens.

## LANGUAGE AT HOME

**Provide an English speaking environment at all times during the student's stay.**

The host family must speak English with, and while in the presence of, the student. The host family should also ensure that when two students in the home share another language, they understand that it is not polite to speak that language in front of the family.

## HOUSE KEY

It is your choice whether or not to give your student a house key. If a key is not given to your student, an adult family member must be home when the student returns from school. As a host family you must never leave the student waiting outside the home at any time. A spare key may help with this situation.

# RULES & EXPECTATIONS

## LAUNDRY AND CLEANING

**The host family is responsible for vacuuming the student's bedroom and providing clean bed sheets once a week.**

It is fine to show students how to change the sheets on their bed and then ask them to do it after clean bed linens have been provided. Please let your student know your family's cleaning schedule. Make cleaning supplies available for students to use to keep their bedrooms clean (duster, bags for garbage bin etc.).

**Provide laundry facilities or do your student's laundry for them.**

If you prefer to do your student's laundry, please show your student where to put his/her dirty clothes and let him/her know when you will do the laundry.

If your student is to do their own laundry, please show him/her how to use your washing machine and dryer. Supervising your student a second time to ensure correct usage of the appliances is recommended. The same goes for all appliances in your home including the iron, microwave, oven etc. It is a good idea to put instructions for the appliance on the wall nearby.

## CHORES & BABYSITTING

**Do not allow your student to supervise or babysit children.**

**Do not expect your student to do household chores.**

Under no circumstances are you to accept or request any favours such as house cleaning, shopping, moving or lifting heavy items, gardening, or baby sitting your own children.

## CURFEWS

It is not unreasonable to ask your adult students to be home by a defined hour for the comfort of the family, especially when there are young children in the home. However, please respect that they are adults and treat them as such. For adult students, 11 p.m. on a weekday and 12 am on a Friday or Saturday night would be considered reasonable in most cases; if you prefer an earlier time, please ensure the homestay coordinator knows in advance of the placement.

For Minors, curfews are very appropriate. Please see the Special Rules for Minors for more information.

## HOSTING OTHER STUDENTS

**You are required to inform us if you are hosting students from other organization(s) at the same time as Stewart College student.**

Should you decide to host a student with Stewart College, you may host another student as long as we are notified and the students are from different nationalities and of the same sex.

In some cases, we will ask that there not be any other international students in the home at the same time as a particular placement. Your acceptance of the placement is a commitment to this restriction.

We prefer that there are no more than **three international students** in a household at any time.

## RELIGION, CULTURE & PRIVACY

It is fine to invite students to attend religious services; however, the family should not apply any pressure to do so. The family should always be willing to direct the student to his or her own religious place of worship if required. A host family must always respect the religious beliefs of the student.

Respect the rights, privacy and culture of students, including religious and political beliefs. All household members are expected to conduct themselves appropriately with students at all times.

**To respect each student's privacy, please obtain permission from the student before entering their room.**

## QUIET STUDY TIME

Many students will require uninterrupted study time in the evenings and on weekends. If you have young children and/or pets, please ensure that they do not disturb your student's study time.

## SMOKING

If you agree to host a student 19 years or older who smokes, he/she must smoke outside the home only (even if you smoke inside.) Please show him/her the designated outside smoking area and where to put the ashtray when finished. If your student does not abide by this, please contact the school.

Students under 19 years old are not permitted to smoke at school or at home. Please see the Special Rules for Minors.

## SAFETY

The host family must explain to the student proper home evacuation procedures in case of an emergency. The home must have properly functioning fire and smoke detectors on every floor.

## SPECIAL RULES FOR MINORS

Students 17 years old and younger who are attending a program at Stewart College are defined as Minors for the purposes of our homestay program.

Minors who are taking classes at Stewart College for four weeks or less, will arrive in Victoria with a letter from their parents, which clearly gives permission for the student to be in Canada, and to be in the care of Stewart College during program hours and in the care of their host family after school hours. Minors who are registered in a Stewart College program for more than four weeks will be encouraged to have in place a formal custodianship arrangement, specifying a responsible adult in Canada as their formal guardian.

In either case, the following additional guidelines apply to homestay placements involving minors:

- ❑ Female minors should not be in the home overnight with any older teen or adult male unless an adult female is also present.
- ❑ Students 11 or 12 years old must be transported to and from school each day by the host family. 13 and 14 year olds may be driven to school or they can take the bus to/from school. In this case, the host family pays for the bus tickets as daily transfer to/from school is included in the hosting fee. Students 15 to 17 years old may take the bus to and from school as is generally expected of adult students and they are responsible for purchasing their own tickets.
- ❑ Canadian laws regarding cigarette and alcohol use by minors must be upheld by the host family at all times.
- ❑ Students 14 years old and younger must always be accompanied by an adult when not at school or at home. Students 15 – 17 years old may go out socially on weekends and in the evening without an adult supervisor, but must first receive express permission to do so from their host family and must provide their host family with contact details in case the student must be contacted while they are out. Unaccompanied 15-17 year olds **must** be home no later than 11 p.m. (or earlier if requested by the host family). If the host family is in any doubt about the student's plans and giving permission, they should immediately contact the school, the student's parents or the formal guardian for direction.
- ❑ No minor may leave Victoria (for example on a day or overnight trip to Vancouver or up-island) unless accompanied by their host family, school representative or formal guardian. The homestay coordinator should be advised in advance of any such trip taking place.
- ❑ Many teens easily become addicted to messaging and internet activities, particularly when they are homesick for their friends and native language. Late night internet use can result in students who are too tired to perform well at school, and who are not motivated to integrate into their English speaking surroundings. All families are free to set their own rules regarding internet use, but it has been our experience that teens benefit from strict curfews on internet access on weeknights (Sun- Thurs) and possibly on the weekend, too. If you choose to impose a curfew, it may be necessary to turn off or otherwise physically prevent internet access to ensure compliance. Asking the student to give you their laptop at a certain time each night **is** an option, but please advise us before doing so, so we can help to explain it to the student.

Any of the above guidelines and requirements may be relaxed with the express written permission of the student's parents or formal guardian.

## POLICIES & PAYMENTS

### TRIAL PERIOD & NOTICE PERIOD

The first two weeks of a placement are a trial period. This period allows you and your student to get to know each other. Should you or your student decide that it is not a suitable placement, another home-stay placement will be found. After the first 2 weeks, the student must pay a transfer fee to the school if they wish to change families. It is always a 'trial period' for the host family: if for some reason you would like to end the hosting arrangement, please contact the homestay coordinator immediately.

Your student must give you two weeks notice if he/she wishes to change or end the homestay arrangement.

### PAYMENTS to HOST FAMILIES

- Stewart College homestay payments include a service fee that is retained by Stewart College to cover the cost of payment processing and ongoing monitoring of placements.
- Homestay payments for are paid according to a weekly rate, pro-rated for partial weeks. The rate varies according to the age of the student and whether they are staying for more or less than 4 weeks.
- The first payment for a student's stay is paid on or around their first day of school; the student will bring a cheque home to you. Subsequent payments to host families are usually made every 4 weeks, by cheque.
- Sometimes students register for just one month of homestay, with the intention of extending later if they are satisfied with the placement. In this case, Stewart College advises you the placement period and that the student may extend. Students are expected to extend through Stewart College. In this case we will confirm the new end date in a formal extension letter, we will invoice the student, and we will pay you in the normal way.

The school does not notify Revenue Canada regarding student homestay placements. However, if Revenue Canada audits the school, our records will show student placements with your family. Please contact Revenue Canada or your accountant, if you have any questions regarding income earned through hosting.

### VACATIONS & OVERNIGHT TRIPS (HOST FAMILY)

If there is an emergency or planned vacation and you must be away one or more nights, the school must be notified.

**CULTURAL NOTE:** Even though the student seems to be OK staying at home overnight without the host family, your student may feel uncomfortable telling you his/her true feelings.

If the student is not joining the host family on the trip, he or she must not be left alone. The school may need to find another host family to take care of your student during your absence, or it might be acceptable for you to arrange for a suitable adult to look after the student in your house while you are away.

If you are hosting an adult female student, please note that you must contact the Homestay Coordinator if there will be a male adult household member but not an adult female household member in the home overnight.

We will check with the student to ascertain her level of comfort with this situation. If she is not comfortable with the situation, we will help her find alternative accommodation for those nights that the situation arises. We strongly recommend that if the host mother may be away, another responsible female adult stay in the house in her absence for the comfort of female students.

If a homestay student accompanies their host family on holidays, outings, or trips, the host family must pay for accommodation and food.

However it is reasonable to expect that the student pays for his or her own travel and personal expenses. The family is responsible for providing the student with an estimate of likely expenses and should be reasonable in calculating them. For example, the student should not be charged for gas for a vehicle that is shared by all the family, but the cost of an independent ticket for travel by bus would be reasonably borne by the student.

## VACATIONS (STUDENTS)

If a student wishes to go on vacation for 5 or more days, they may ask to keep their room by paying a reduced fee for this period (the usual rate less \$10 per night) provided that they give you no less than two weeks notice. The student should complete a Vacation Request form at school and you will then be notified by Stewart College regarding the student's plans.

Absences of fewer than five nights do not qualify for this reduced rate.

## LEGAL ISSUES

### INSURANCE (HOST FAMILY)

Homestay does not fall under the Residential Tenancy Act.

There are no damage deposits involved and we cannot guarantee that the student will give you advance notice of their leaving.

Contact your insurance company prior to hosting students to make sure that you have appropriate home insurance for having a paying boarder.

In the unfortunate event that students cause damage to your home or property and the student is still in Victoria when you advise us of the damage, Stewart College will attempt to recoup a portion of the amount of your insurance deductible from the student. In accepting a homestay student from Stewart College, you agree to release Stewart College of Languages of all liability in the event of damage to your home or property.

The host family is responsible for ensuring that any vehicle used to transport students is adequately insured. We recommend \$5 million liability coverage, particularly for families who are hosting young teens who require daily transfer to school.

The host family is not allowed to lend any type of vehicle to the student.

Stewart College of Languages does not assume any responsibilities for any injuries or death suffered by any student while in the host family's care.

### DISCIPLINE

Host families must never use any form of "hands on force" to discipline students. If any physical or verbal abuse occurs either on the part of the family or the student, the student will be removed from the home immediately. The incident will be reported to the police, and legal action will be taken.

If there is any sexual contact from a homestay parent or other adult within the home with a student of any age it is considered Sexual Exploitation, a criminal offence.

Any threats made to a homestay student will be treated seriously.

When can you search a student's room? If there is a safety hazard (a lit candle, smoking or drug usage for example) then your legitimate concern supports a search. If something has been stolen from your home and you suspect the student, be careful about a search without their permission. If you find the item, you can NOT prosecute as the evidence is inadmissible. If this situation arises - please call Stewart College for direction.

If the homestay coordinator believes there is any risk to a student in a homestay, the homestay student will be moved immediately to an emergency homestay. If a host family believes that the student is putting their family at risk, then they are to contact Stewart College immediately and the student will be removed.

If the host family has any concerns that they cannot discuss directly with the student, please contact Stewart College as soon as possible.

## PRIVACY POLICY

In the process of becoming a host family for Stewart College students, you will provide us with your personal information that you knowingly choose to disclose to us for the purpose of finding homestay placement or becoming a host family. This information will not be used for any other purpose than finding appropriate homestay placements and matching potential host families with potential homestay applicants. Your information will be only disclosed to potential students and their agents for potential homestay placement.

*Note: Stewart College may use photos provided in electronic form as part of the application process (via email or on disk in \*.jpeg, \*.jpg, \*.tiff, \*.gif or other common electronic format), on our website or in promotional literature to anonymously promote our homestay program. At no time will family information be linked to specific photos without permission in writing from the relevant family. If you do not wish your application photos to be used in this way for anonymous program promotion, please address your request in writing to Stewart College; all requests will be honoured.*

By applying for and/or accepting students in our homestay program, you consent to our collection and use of your personal information as described above. Host Family applications that are not followed up with a home visit and acceptance within two years will be shredded.

If you receive any information or material from us regarding homestay placement, the information and materials that will be provided to you must remain confidential.

## CONTACT THE HOMESTAY COORDINATOR WHEN...

The school **must** be notified of changes in your homestay family situation immediately. Notifying the school is important because if your student arrives at your home and changes have occurred, your student may request to move to another host family.

Contact the Homestay Coordinator if:

- problems or concerns arise at home
- your student seems unhappy or withdrawn for any reason
- you plan a family vacation with OR without your student while they are placed with you
- you gain/lose a household member or pet
- you have a change in your availability to offer homestay
- you are not sure about our school's homestay policies
- you are considering taking a second student while a Stewart College student is with you.