



2023-2024 HOST FAMILY HANDBOOK

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PROGRAM STAFF

The Comox Valley International Student Program consists of seven office staff members. Under the direction of Mr. Greg Kochanuk, District Principal, the CVISP staff is your support resource throughout the school year. Additionally, the secondary school will have an International Student Program Support Teacher (ISPST) whom your student will meet during orientation and see daily on regular school days.

CVISP LOCATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Mr. Greg Kochanuk	District Principal	greg.kochanuk@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Josie Jiang	Senior Manager	josie.jiang@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Melissa Jobe	Registrar & RCIC	melissa.jobe@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Amy Ho	Administrative Assistant & Activity Coordinator	amy.ho@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Tanya Persson	Administrative Assistant	tanya.persson@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Youn Hee Edmonds	Homestay Supervisor & Korean Marketing Representative	younhee.edmonds@sd71.bc.ca
Ms. Krista Oliphant	Homestay Coordinator	krista.oliphant@sd71.bc.ca
Comox Valley International Student Program Office Address 2085 Wallace Ave, Comox, BC, Canada V9M 1W4		
Office Phone Number	1.250.703.2904	
Office email address	isponline@sd71.bc.ca	
Emergency phone number (Younhee Edmonds)	1-250-218-9605 (must leave a message)	
Emergency phone number (Krista Oliphant)	1-250-218-9345 (must leave a message)	
Emergency phone number (if Homestay not available)	1-250-792-0160 or 1-250-650-5879	
Website	www.studyinbritishcolumbia.com	
Facebook	www.facebook.com/studycomoxvalley	
Instagram	comoxvalleyisp	

SECONDARY SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

The secondary school support team is responsible for supporting students in the following ways:

1. Ensuring students and host families are treated respectfully by each other and the staff
2. Revising students' course schedule
3. Ensuring students have the appropriate credits to graduate then enter college/university
4. Speaking to the teachers when students need help or do not understand

5. Organizing tutors
6. Helping students to register for International Program sponsored activities
7. Providing an international student 'lounge' at lunch time
8. Helping students connect with extracurricular sponsors

SCHOOL	NAME	POSITION	EMAIL
Vanier Secondary	Ms. Leah Baron	ESL/ISPST Teacher	leah.baron@sd71.bc.ca
	Mr. Lee McKillican	Vice Principal	lee.mckillican@sd71.bc.ca
	Ms. Lindy Oddlelfson	Sr. Admin Asst.	lindy.oddlelfson@sd71.bc.ca
Highland Secondary	Ms. Helen Oliphant	ESL/ISPST Teacher	helen.oliphant@sd71.bc.ca
	Mr. Wayne Kuhnert	Vice Principal	wayne.kuhnert@sd71.bc.ca
	Ms. Lucianne Aplocins	Sr. Admin Asst.	lucianne.aplocins@sd71.bc.ca
Isfeld Secondary	Ms. Victoria Mulrooney	ESL/ISPST Teacher	victoria.mulrooney@sd71.bc.ca
	Mr. Dave Miller	Vice Principal	dave.miller@sd71.bc.ca
	Ms. Lisa Nicholls	Sr. Admin. Assistant	lisa.nicholls@sd71.bc.ca
Lake Trail Middle	Ms. Alissa Pratt	Vice Principal	Alissa.Pratt@sd71.bc.ca
	Ms. Tabitha Dehr	Sr. Admin. Assistant	Tabitha.dehr@sd71.bc.ca

COMMON QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

Thank you very much for participating in our International Student Program as host parents. Some of the students' best memories will be of their experiences with a Canadian family. Our host families provide much of the backbone of our program.

Students have come to Comox Valley for many reasons, from many cultures and from many socio-economic backgrounds. Here is some information for you to be aware of.

- A. The District sets the host family honorarium payment amount each year. In the 2023-24 school year, the honorarium is **\$1000 CAD** per month. Any pro-rated situation will be determined by a Homestay Coordinator in consultation with the District Principal. Under no circumstances are private arrangements authorized unless the District Principal gives approval.

Because students often return home for holidays and/or leave early for summer vacation, we do not pay homestay families for the few days in August/January when students arrive early. Students may arrive a few days early for Summer Program or for School Program start, this is within reason of monthly Homestay payment and will not be paid for extra days unless approved by Homestay Coordinator's discretion.

- B. All host parents are paid by the School District accounting office on the first Thursday of each month. It could take 1-3 business days for payment to arrive in your account.
- C. When the Homestay Coordinators decides upon student placement, they carefully consider the needs of both the student and the host family. However, the needs of the student are paramount and we reserve the right to move a student if necessary, as we determine.
- D. The district undertakes the full custodianship for the students while they are studying in our District.
- E. The issue of staying up late arises every year. Some families limit the use of a telephone/Skype/being online to the hours before 10 p.m. Please consider that students stay up late in order to reach their families due to time differences.
- F. Another issue is the use of computers and Internet. Computer use is a fact of life. Its use needs to be monitored. If concerns arise, then contact the Homestay Family Coordinators who will then alert the District Principal if a reasonable solution can't be negotiated. The issue of students accessing internet pornography sites is not a myth. It happens. Be diligent and inform the District Principal immediately if this is a concern.
- G. Students may have questions or concerns about their course schedules. Please do not deal with course concerns (unless it is to alert us). Students are here for many reasons. Scheduling decisions are complicated and demand careful attention. The designated school counselor or program coordinator has the knowledge about the International Program Graduation Program to assist the student to make informed decisions. Please do. However, take an active interest in your student's progress in classes. If attitude, attendance or tardiness becomes a problem, then contact the designated school administrator. Inform the District Principal if the problem continues even after the school has acted on them.
- H. If a student needs to miss school because of illness, then please inform the school administration. It is also your responsibility to monitor your student re: tardiness and attendance. Contact the classroom teacher or school contact/counsellor directly if you are concerned.
- I. Safety is an important concern with parents, students and others. Students will be instructed about these issues, but it would be a good idea for you to review safety procedures with your students, for example, fire escape routes, and in the community, (without alarming them unduly).

- J. If you become concerned about any safety issues involving your student, then please Inform the Homestay Coordinator. This includes student breaking curfew and the use of alcohol or drugs, which of course, is strictly prohibited. If you become aware that your student has used alcohol or illegal drugs, it is your responsibility to inform the District Principal immediately. Curfew issues initially go to the Host Family Supervisor.

A more delicate matter has to do with relationships that inevitably form between some students. It is important to keep us informed if you suspect your student is becoming involved in a serious personal relationship so that the student can be counseled appropriately.

- K. If the situation with a student in your home becomes difficult, then it is important to Contact the Homestay Coordinator. Sometimes students will request to change their host family. While we do not like to make changes, we also have to respect the fact that some relationships just don't work. In some cases, there may be problems of personalities. There could be sibling rivalry, which is affecting the tone of the house.
- L. You have gone through a selection process as host families. However, this does not guarantee continued placement of students with your family each year. We try to place students appropriately, and that may change from year to year depending upon the applications we receive.
- M. Students will not generally show you their report card. It is your responsibility to ask to see it, and to attend Parent/Teacher interviews. If you have questions about your student's progress, contact the school counsellor and/or their teachers or check on MyEdBC.
- N. Travel to the USA & other countries for international student can be accommodated provided the release waivers and Out of District Travel form are completed and the criteria for supervision are satisfied. Contact the office **at least two months before** the proposed trip.
- O. We get many requests for students (and supported by you the host family) to stay and holiday after the program is over. **Students must depart before June 30th**. After the departure, the student is no longer the responsibility of School District.
- P. Please respect the religious beliefs and background of your student. For example, if you have a practicing Roman Catholic student it would be best to inquire if they wish to attend a youth group at a Catholic church, not the church of your faith if it is different from theirs. Some natural parents are adamant about the place of worship for their child.
- Q. You are not required to host the parents or other family members of your student should they come for a visit. If you find it awkward to discuss this with the parents, please advise us and we will assist you. However, if you do wish to host the parents/relatives, please understand the amount of extra work this may entail is at your own expense.
- R. Respite Request Form: If you will be away from your home and need care for your student, as they should not be left alone overnight and require a chaperone to stay with

that is 25+ years old. Please complete a Respite Request Form online:

<https://studyinbritishcolumbia.com/respite/>

This will inform the Homestay Coordinators of your absence and know who will be caring for your international student in your absence. If a Respite is needed, the Homestay Coordinators through the Respite Request Form will be able to find Respite to care for your student.

S. Travel: Please see our Student Travel outside the School District Area on page 26.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This information is intended to address the broad range of concerns of homestay parents.

1. Why do international students come to British Columbia?

Students come for a variety of reasons:

- as a member of an exchange program
- for a one-year intensive English program
- to become more fluent in English, which will lead to greater employment opportunities in their home countries
- to achieve BC Graduation for various reasons
- to experience Canadian culture and lifestyle
- the desire to experience life abroad

Suggestions: Talk to your student about her/his reasons for coming. Help to set academic goals and language goals based on those reasons. Help to make a plan, which will lead to success in achieving the goals.

2. What is a homestay parent expected to provide?

As a home-stay parent you are expected to provide essentially what you would normally provide for your own family:

- a private bedroom
- three wholesome meals a day and snacks as required
- a quiet, adequately lit and heated study space
- hot water and facilities for daily bathing
- laundry (you may expect a student to do their own laundry if you wish)
- emotional support if the student suffers from homesickness, difficulties at school, etc.
- academic support (help with homework if possible, communication with teachers, attendance at parent-teacher-student interview, etc.)
- inclusion of the student in family outings, trips to restaurants, special occasions, recreational activities
- access to the common living areas of the house

Before Students Arrive:

First Impressions are important. Therefore, please adapt your cleaning schedule to have everything done the day of your student's arrival.

Recommended Check List:

- a. Vacuum and tidied up common space.
- b. Windows, toilet, sink, shower stall, bathtub and floors
- c. Clearing space in the bathroom cupboard for student's personal space.
- d. Hand soap, toilet paper, a clean bathtub mat, bath towel
- e. Check for cobwebs
- f. Clean carpet-if it is dirty
- g. Check drawers and closets to ensure it is ready for the students
- h. Hangers in the closet
- i. Check light bulbs
- j. Check for bedding

Suggestions:

- *Early in the homestay, have a conversation with your student about expectations (yours and the student's).*
- *Reach a mutual agreement about the amount of computer use and telephone time the student can have.*
- *Discuss how much interaction the student and the family will have and the kinds of activities in which you will participate together.*
- *Discuss these issues regularly. Situations change as the student's understanding of our culture develops and as their English improves.*

3. What kinds of things should the student pay for?

- clothes
- school supplies and extra-curricular lessons or activities
- toiletries
- all long distance phone calls. Many students arrange to have their own phone, in which case they
 - also pay the installation fees and monthly bills. Others buy phone cards.
 - medicines and medications of all kinds
 - any dental work
- haircuts or other personal services
- personal entertainment and expenses (If your family is going out for dinner or to a movie you should pay for the student. If the student chooses to eat in a restaurant or go to a movie with friends, the student should pay.)
- costs associated with participation in school-sponsored activities such as graduation ceremonies,

- school dances, trips other than those specific to the international program, extra-curricular sports, costs related to individual certification, etc.
- stamps, books, magazines, CD's, posters, etc.
- costs related to renewal of student study permits and airplane tickets home
- grad fees, yearbook fees

Suggestions: Please discuss this list with your student.

4. What kinds of expenses does the program cover?

The fees that students pay cover the following:

- all tuition
- medical insurance fees
- some activities arranged by the International Program Staff. Students must either rent or buy their own instrument if they take band, pay for their yearbook, grad fees, and extra-curricular trips or any other school sponsored trips that are deemed as enrichment and are therefore optional.

Suggestions: Discuss this with your student so that expectations are clear.

5. What challenges can I expect at the start?

Students may suffer from several overlapping conditions for the first few weeks or in some cases, even months:

- **Culture Shock:** Culture shock is what people experience when they are suddenly immersed in a culture which is different from their own. "Culture" means the largely unwritten patterns of behavior that govern the lives of a particular group of people.
- Culture shock comes from the realization that basic assumptions about life and familiar ways of behaving are no longer appropriate or useful.
- Remember that your student is struggling with the following new (and in many cases, strange) things: language, climate, community, customs, food, home, family, behaving and ways of showing emotions. It is worth noting that if you as a host family have had little experience in another culture, then you may experience some culture shock yourselves.
- **Jet lag:** most students have traveled through several time zones to reach the Comox Valley. They may suffer from the effects of jet lag for up to two weeks, including sleeping problems, drowsiness at the wrong time of day, loss of appetite, general fatigue, and disorientation.

- Homesickness: many students have left their family, friends and pets for the first time, and they are far away. Natural feelings of homesickness may be further exacerbated by culture shock.
- Loneliness: students may feel very alone in this strange new situation. They may feel like outsiders in the community, in the school, even in your home. Limited English ability may contribute to their feelings of isolation.
- Teenage mood swings: even though they come from another country, they are still teenagers dealing with the physical and emotional changes that all teenagers go through.

All of the above may exhibit themselves in any of the following ways: quiet, unresponsive, withdrawn behaviour, crying spells, isolation from the family (long periods alone in the bedroom), lack of appetite, despondent behaviour, depression, anger, anxiety, moodiness, lethargy, stress related headaches or stomach upset.

Suggestions:

- *If you suspect that your student is suffering from any of the above conditions, be curious to listen to understand their feelings, talk about it, explaining that it is perfectly normal, and that you would like to help.*
- *Plan some outings or activities together.*
- *Encourage your student to phone and write parents. Ask about the family and life in the home country.*
- *Look at photographs together.*
- *Plan topics of evening conversations.*
- *Develop the habit of watching a weekly TV show together or taking walks together.*
- *Help the student build an active and busy life in this community.*
- *Help her/him develop friendships with people of a similar age.*
- *Talking through difficult times can lead to a closer and more caring relationship.*
- *Card games or Board games are a great way to engage your student in an activity where she must speak English*
- *Your student will receive a comprehensive Orientation Package which will outline information they will need about medical issues, manners, Canadian culture, how to survive in a host family. Ask to see the package and go over it with them to insure that they understand. There is a lot of information, so you may want to do slowly, over several weeks.*

6. What kinds of rules should I have for the student?

The student should be expected to follow whatever rules you have for other members of your household. The following are suggestions, **some of which you may choose to adjust for the age of your student.**

Students should:

- Be at home on school nights, unless participating in an organized activity e.g. swimming lessons, study groups, etc. ISP Program guideline for curfew Sunday-Thursday is 10pm.

- Obey an age-appropriate curfew for weekend nights - ISP Program guideline for curfew is as below. (If you haven't had experience parenting a teen and need some guidelines, contact the Host Family Coordinators.)

Grade 7 & 8	Sunday to Thursday - 8:00pm Friday & Saturday - 9:00pm
Grade 9 & 10	Sunday to Thursday - 9:00pm Friday & Saturday - 10:00pm
Grade 11 & 12	Sunday to Thursday - 10:00pm Friday & Saturday - 12:00am
- Let you know where they are at all times.
- Respect your rules regarding smoking.
- Refrain from using or buying drugs or alcohol.
- Attend school every day that school is in session unless they are ill.
- Ask ahead of time if they need rides to special events, or if they wish to have friends overnight, etc.
- Assist with some duties in the home. Many students are not used to doing chores. They may often come from families that hire household help. You will need to demonstrate the tasks that you would like them to do. For example, if you wish your student to do their own laundry, you will need to demonstrate how to use your machines.

Homestay parents should:

- Feel free to limit the number of overnight” sleep-overs,” or camping trip, which are so popular as a weekend activity. Never allow your student to attend these events without checking that there will be adequate supervision by adults, and age appropriate activities.
- **Do Not leave the student alone overnight;** appropriate adult supervision must be arranged if you are away. Please complete Respite Request form online: <https://studyinbritishcolumbia.com/respite/> Check with the Host Family Coordinators if you plan to be away.
- Inform the school if the student is ill.
- Never allow students to leave the community overnight without carefully checking to ensure where the student is going and what adult supervision will be. Insure that the ‘out of district’ travel form is completed 5 days prior to the event.

- Never allow students to drive the family car.
- Make additional rules as necessary: showers/bathing, table manners, other manners, use of household appliances, laundry, bringing friends home, etc.
- Immigration Canada does not permit secondary school age students to hold jobs while in Canada.
- Students may participate in work experience through their school program.

Suggestions:

- *Discuss your rules early and often, making sure that the student understands.*
- *Deal with a few rules at a time.*
- *Reach mutual agreement about as many rules as possible.*
- *Explain the reasons for your rules.*
- *Enforce your rules...do not let the student get away with breaking them.*
- *Be fair and firm.*
- *Establish reasonable consequences for breaking rules.*

7. What about food/manners?

Canadian food can be a problem for international students at first. Certainly the food you serve in your home will be different from the food they are used to. People worldwide derive great comfort from the familiar and favourite foods. Eating times, table manners, and methods of serving and presenting food will also be different for the student. Most students adjust quickly to a Canadian diet but some take longer than others. Also table manners can vary greatly in other cultures. If your student displays manners inappropriately to your expectations, you will need to explain and demonstrate the proper Canadian behaviour.

Suggestions:

- *Give your student a tour of the kitchen and the refrigerator, naming items and explaining what they are for.*
- *Ask the student what different items are found in the cupboard and refrigerator at home. Talk about favourite foods and what is eaten at mealtimes at home.*
- *Take the student food shopping with you, especially to a large food store where various ethnic foods are available.*

- *Ask the student what he would like to take to school for lunch. Encourage the student to prepare a favourite dish so that you can try it and learn to cook it.*
- *Have a good variety of fresh fruits and vegetables on hand. Rice is an important part of Asian diets. If your student wants rice every day, please provide it, even for breakfast.*
- *If your student is to make their own lunch, then you will have to demonstrate how to make a sandwich, pack the leftovers, and show them any other items that they may include in their lunch package.*

8. What if my student gets sick?

Please refer to the section on *Medical Insurance*.

Suggestions:

- *During the first few weeks take your student to meet the family doctor.*
- *Discuss the doctor's position regarding billing during the first three months and inform the doctor that the student is living with you.*
- *If the student has met the doctor before getting ill, the situation will be much more relaxed when there is a medical problem.*
- *Discuss illness with the student in one of your early conversations.*
- *Ask the student what kinds of medical problems have occurred in the past and what the usual treatments are.*
- *Explain your approach to treatment of common illnesses.*
- *Please note: students will often bring with them, non-prescription medication for common ailments, such as headaches, stomach upset, etc. If students want to use from their home country, it's o.k.*
- *If problems persist, they should consult a physician. If a student needs a translator for a medical issue, please contact the Home Stay Manager to arrange this service.*
- *If student is taken to ER, please notify our office or Homestay Coordinator.*

9. How can I best prepare my family and myself for the homestay experience?

It's a good idea to discuss the expectations of all family members before the student arrives. Children may think that the student will be like a new brother or sister or that they will become best friends. In fact this doesn't happen very often.

Sharing the same home does not guarantee that your own children and the student will have anything in common with each other. An honest discussion about the difficulties of forming a cross-cultural friendship, with the added barrier of language, can save

disappointment later on. The more you learn about the country and culture that your student comes from, the better able you will be to understand and support him. You should, at the very least, have an idea of where the country is and what kind of an environment your student likely comes from.

Suggestions:

- *Prepare a welcome for your student: a sign, a gift, flowers, or any small gesture of welcome.*
- *Visit the library and take out some books about the country your student comes from.*
- *If you have the books on hand when the student arrives they can be the basis of conversation about the country.*
- *Make a list of things to talk about and things to do during the first few days and weeks. Talk to an experienced homestay parent.*

10. What should I do during the first few days?

- Keep the student busy but also arrange for some time alone to compensate for jet lag fatigue.
- Encourage a phone call home soon after arrival.
- Speak to the parents yourself saying how pleased you are to have their son or daughter with you; even if they don't understand English, they will appreciate the gesture.
- Introduce your student to extended family members, neighbours and close friends.
- Write down names to help him remember them.
- Take the time to learn the correct pronunciation of your student's name.
- Discuss how you would like the student to address you and other family members.
- Teach your student the phone number, how to use the phone and phone book, how to use a pay phone and how to call home collect, and give him your emergency numbers.
- Help arrange for a personal phone, if one is wanted. PLEASE DO NOT sign a Cell Phone Plan as a guarantor for students.
- Take her to the post office and explain how to buy stamps and send packages.

- Take the student to the bank rather than carrying much money or leaving it at home. If your student has a cash withdrawal card help them learn how to use it and be sure to impress the importance of never telling anyone the PIN number.
- Show girls where they can buy personal supplies and discuss how you would like them to dispose of sanitary items in your home.
- Visit local points of interest and make sure the student knows the route from your home to school.
- Go over school information and discuss the plans and the times for getting to school.
- Ask the student what they would like to do.
- Provide the student with a transit schedule and go over it with them.
- Take the student on a bus ride yourself to show them the route in your neighborhood.
- Relax! Focus on making the student comfortable and your own feelings of nervousness and anxiety will disappear.
- Celebrate small milestones right away (the end of the first week, the first month, etc.).
- Establish a pattern of daily conversation. Have the student help to make a list of conversation topics to get through the first few weeks.

PROGRAM PROCEDURES

1. To facilitate communication and to ensure that the program operates smoothly, we ask you to follow these procedures:

- If you need to contact the District Principal, please call during office hours, at Lake Trail Secondary School, Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (Ph: 250-703-2904). At times, the District Principal will be away on School District business. The Administrative Assistant will then direct your concern to the appropriate staff person.
- If you have issues involving student accounts, host family payments, travel, medical insurance issues, or for general information, contact the Administrative Assistants, Melissa Jobe at melissa.jobe@sd71.bc.ca or Amy Ho at amy.ho@sd71.bc.ca . We prefer to use e-mail and their mail is checked frequently.

EXCEPTIONS: If there is an emergency, then obviously it is important to contact the Host Family Supervisor immediately. If she is unavailable, you will be notified by e-mail and given alternative contact information.

- If you need to contact the Host Family Supervisor, and the matter is not urgent, email Younhee Edmonds or Krista Oliphant. For more urgent issues, telephone their numbers (p.2), Monday–Friday between 9:00am and 1:00pm or between 6:00 and 8:00pm. Please do not contact Youn Hee or Lisa after 8:00 pm or on weekends unless there is an emergency that either involves or impacts your homestay student. Please leave a detailed message if Youn hee or Lisa is not immediately available, and they will return your call shortly.

These are emergencies:

- A health emergency (including an accident),
- A student is missing
- An emergency has arisen in your family or in the student’s family at home,

These are examples of situations which are not considered emergencies:

- A student is not obeying host family rules,
- A student is missing class,
- A student is late for curfew.

We ask you to use common sense in dealing with these issues.

2. If you and your student have issues, then please follow these directions:

- If a student is missing school, is late, or is not completing homework, then please contact the school or the teacher. If the problem persists, that is the time to call the District Principal.
- If a student is not obeying host family rules, contact the Host Family Supervisor during office hours.

3. Please be aware of the following considerations regarding our roles in dealing with host families and students:

- If the student becomes ill at school, then instruct your student to inform the vice-principal, counselor or secretary, who will inform you or take the student to the clinic if you are not available.
- If the student must stay home for illness, then please inform the school directly. The International Office does not need to be informed if a student must miss a day of school, unless there is an emergency.
- Please have your student direct any serious health or safety concerns to the District Principal or Home Stay Supervisor.
- The issue of health and safety for students is paramount. When in doubt, err on the side of caution. If you are not sure about a situation, please inquire.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

- Students must keep their medical cards or policy information with them at all times.
- Students must present their medical cards (MSP or Guard.Me) at the time of a doctor’s visit. Students on MSP pay no fees for a visit to the doctor. Students on Guard.Me, may have to pay the doctor’s office (\$75.00 - \$100.00) per visit. These students may then make a claim for reimbursement. The Host Family can help student make a claim. There are some Walk-in Clinics in the Comox Valley which will do direct billing for you.

Approved walk-in Medical Clinics:

Washington Park Medical Clinic

757 Ryan Road, Courtenay, BC V9N 3R6
Phone: 250.334.9241 Fax: 250.897.0225

Comox Valley Medical Clinic (Walmart)

3199 Cliffe Avenue, Courtenay, BC V9N 2L9
Phone: 250-898-8998 Fax: 250.334.1597

- Medical insurance plans do not pay for over the counter medicine. Students who need medicine will be given prescriptions which are purchased at a pharmacy. Students who are covered under the Guard.Me plan can make a claim for prescription costs and may receive reimbursement.

Accessing Urgent Care at North Island Hospital Comox Valley, located at 101 Lerwick Rd, Courtenay, BC. Phone: 250-331-5900

- If your Student require urgent care at the Emergency Room, let the hospital know that you are an International Student going to school here. It is important to have your MSP card and/or your Guard.me card with you if at all possible. If you have a Study Permit, please bring that to the hospital as well - students with a study permit are charged a lower rate (often around \$700 to \$900 less).
- If student DO NOT have MSP or Guard.me insurance card with you when you seek care at the Emergency Room, be sure to return to the hospital and show them the student's insurance card and their Study Permit (if you have one). This way the hospital can send the bill for care directly to the insurance company.
- If you need to be admitted to the hospital, arrangements can be made for the hospital to bill Guard.me directly for covered benefits as outlined in the policy.
- If you are sick, it is best to go to a walk-in clinic. However, if you require care outside of clinic hours, or your medical issue is potentially life-threatening, you **MUST** go to the hospital Emergency Room.

****Please note - Your medical coverage is only valid during your Program dates. In order for you to have medical coverage - please inform our office if you are going to be in Canada outside of these dates.******

If student is receiving an invoice from Island Health. Email PatientBilling@islandhealth.ca

Remember; always have your medical insurance cards with you. They fit into student's purse, wallet or backpack easily. Here are examples of a Guard.Me insurance card and an MSP card:



Visit <https://www.guard.me/> for more information on [Guard.Me's standard policy](#), claim forms, and general information.

Procedure to follow under Guard.Me:

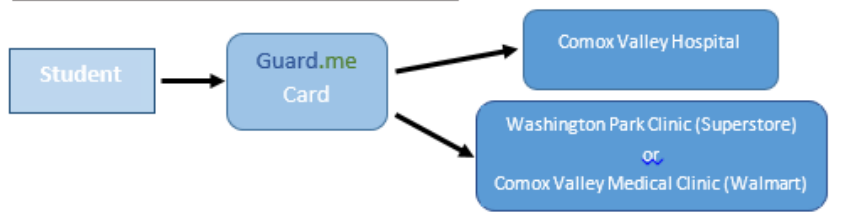
1. In the case of a medical emergency, take the student to a hospital.
2. If the student is ill and needs to visit the clinic, take the student to the clinic. The student must show their Guard.Me card. The medical costs will be processed directly with Guard.Me with the two clinics mentioned.
3. Should the student need to pay for Medical services or prescription. Please help the student to submit a claim online www.guard.me and then student will receive payment for the costs they paid out.

Frequently Asked Questions About Guard.Me Medical Insurance:

1. **What conditions are covered?**
This coverage applies to emergencies only and does NOT take the place of regular health care and does not cover pre-existing medical conditions. Guard.Me will cover emergent Dental care.
2. **What happens if my student becomes sick?**
Take the student to the appropriate treatment centre. Then, inform the Host Family Supervisor. If the illness is serious, inform the District Principal immediately.
3. **Other expenses?**
Any extraordinary expense, including out of area transportation, which is over and above that covered through insurance, is the responsibility of the student.

HOW MEDICAL WORKS FOR SHORT AND LONG TERM STUDENTS

SHORT TERM STUDENT (< 5 MONTHS)

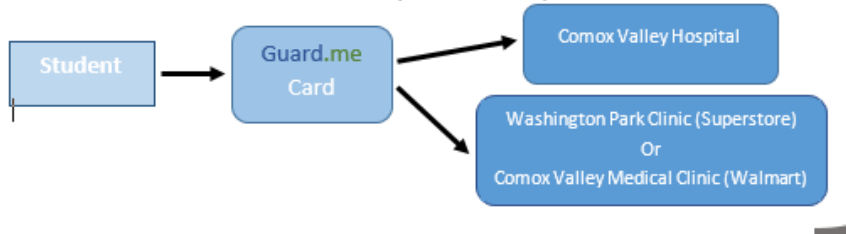


Prescriptions, Physiotherapy and other expenses to be paid for by student, and then reimbursed by:



LONG TERM STUDENT (5-10+ MONTHS)

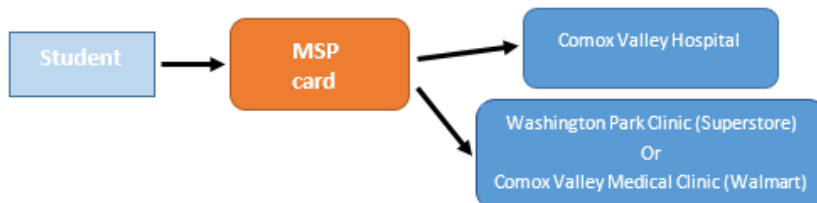
PRIOR TO BEING ELIGIBLE FOR MSP COVERAGE (3 MONTH WAIT PERIOD)



Prescriptions, Physiotherapy and other expenses to be paid for by student, and then reimbursed by:



ONCE REGISTERED WITH MSP AND TOP-UP GUARD.ME (NEW AND RETURNING STUDENTS)



ACTIVITIES

Caution:

- Extreme sports, such as bungee jumping, paragliding, etc. are not permitted. When participating in activities ON the water, such as boating, kayaking, river tubing, etc. students must wear life jackets. *Note: We have on file an approved activity waiver form for each student.*
- Students may not participate in trampoline activities. This advice comes from BC Ministry of Education, Risk Management branch. An accident could lead to litigation.
- Students may not participate in surfing unless they participate in a Surfing School program which has liability insurance, accompanies students in the water, and prepares for the activity with a safety lesson. Also, students must be able to swim.
- Students should only swim in locations where a certified life-guard is present.

- Please ensure that students wear helmets when cycling. It's the law in BC, but not in many other countries.

Activities in General:

- Some of the international students' best experiences have to do with participation in activities both in the school and in the community.
- Many new students need **encouragement** to participate in activities because of shyness, because of language difficulties or because the concept of participation is new to them.
- The schools offer many possibilities for extra-curricular activities such as sports or clubs. Please encourage your student to become involved.
- The community also provides a host of activities available to your people. Again, we encourage you to help your student become involved.
- Our host parents can help by volunteering to coordinate an activity that may involve a small or large group of students.
- The idea is not to have large group activities, but instead to offer a variety of small-scale events which would help to "break the ice" for everyone.
- There may be several '**official**' International Program activities arranged by program staff, in which all international students are expected to participate.

CONDUCT WITH RESPECT TO HOSTING STUDENTS

As Host Parents, you are the responsible adult, NOT the best friend of the student. You are expected to act "in a kind and judicious" manner with respect to your dealings with your student.

Some International students come from cultures where physical punishment is allowed and common in their homes and in their classrooms. Some students may expect this type of punishment if they disobey our rules in the host family or in their class. However, just as it is forbidden and unlawful to use any type of corporal punishment on a child by a teacher, we must caution you that the same rules apply to host parents of an international student in any situation. Physical discipline is not permitted under any circumstances.

A primary responsibility of the host parent is to care for the student and to keep the District Principal informed about the welfare of the student. That includes informing us of behaviour of other students which may impact on your student and in making us aware of potentially dangerous or inappropriate personal relationships.

Issues with respect to hosting students include:

Safety

1. As host parents, you must be aware that safety is key. Students must be properly supervised at all times. Students should not be left alone overnight for any reason. We will arrange for care of your student in situations where an emergency arises. If you plan to be away, make certain your student stays with an adult who has been

approved by this Program. Complete Respite request form online:
<https://studyinbritishcolumbia.com/respite/>

2. Do not allow your student to be ‘wandering at large’ at night, especially alone. The key is to make certain you know where your student is at all times.
3. If a student asks to participate in a ‘sleep over’, then make certain to check the particulars with the adult supervisors at the other home.

Relationship protocols

As you know, different cultures have different protocols about personal space. We ask you to “be smart”. For your own protection, take a very careful approach to hugging, touching or showing affection to your student. Actions are easily misinterpreted by young people and others around you.

Examples:

- Japanese students rarely have a warm, physically demonstrative relationship with their natural parents. Therefore, be cautious in demonstrating physical affection until you are sure of your relationship with the student.
- Latin students are very demonstrative, as a general rule. Again, you must take a cautious approach.
- Some European and Latin American students often greet each other with hugs and kisses on the cheek; this is normal. In fact, many of these students consider Canadians ‘cold’ because they do not

demonstrate this open affection. (Do not misinterpret overt signs of friendliness as being anything more than that.)

- If we receive any kind of information about ‘inappropriate conduct’ by anyone, adult or student, in relation to an International Program student, then we must investigate immediately. **This is a legal requirement.**

Please note these points:

- Adults should remember to dress appropriately while in the company of students.
- Adults should not use ‘sexually suggestive’ language or tell off-colour jokes in front of students.
- Overt or excessive displays of affection in public are completely inappropriate.
- Some older teen-aged students may want a warm family relationship with their host family.
- Some students may just want room and board and personal privacy. Asian students, in particular, often do not want anything other than a ‘formal’ relationship with their host family.

- There are always exceptions, and the attitude varies with each individual. Don't take it personally if your student prefers the more formal relationship. Each student is different.
- **Under no circumstances** serve alcoholic beverages to your International Program high school student in your home. Sometimes, we will serve our own older teens a drink on special occasions such as Christmas dinner. Your international student **cannot** be afforded this "adult" privilege. This rule is for your own protection. It's not legal to provide any kind of alcoholic beverage, to your student, even in your own homes

If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to seek answers or advice from the District Principal or the Host Family Coordinators.

HELPFUL IDEAS AND SUPPORT for students and families

Written Work

Let them work on their own unless they request help. In other words, help them only if they ask.

Do not correct too much of their written work. *The teachers need to see their mistakes because the lessons are often based on what they need to know.* If their work comes in with no mistakes, then the teachers have no knowledge of the student's real skill level in the subject area or written English.

If they ask you how to say a certain expression, by all means tell them, but don't go through and correct their whole paper/assignment.

If they ask how to spell a word you have two choices:

1. Give them the first 3 letters and have them look it up in a dictionary.
2. Tell them how to spell it.

(Use method #1 only some of the time. It can be very frustrating.)

Students should do their own work ... they should have done 99% of written work themselves.

Don't write on their work. If you want to demonstrate a word, do it on scrap paper.

Encourage them to write thank you notes to anyone who has done something special for them, perhaps someone who has taken them to see a movie or boating for a day.

English Language Development

Watch a television program together and discuss it. Watching the same program every week is a good idea. In this way, the students hear consistent language. Here Are Examples Of Questions To Ask For Discussion.

What did you think of Sam? Why?

What do you think Sam should have done?

When might someone in (Korea, Japan, etc.) do this?

When is it not good to do this?

What do you think he meant by that?

What did he mean?

How is this same ...?

What causes this?

What do you think will happen next?

What is going to happen next?

Why did she do that?

Watch the evening news together and discuss it. Ask questions which require more than yes or no for an answer. Examples of open-ended questions are:

What do you think about ...?

How does work?

What is the reason for ...?

Tell me about ? Why do you think ... acted that way?

What would you do if ?

Please explain that to me.

Other Ideas for Helping Your International Student

1. Try to talk to students as much as possible at the dinner table or after supper before homework time. Please speak slowly and clearly.
2. Engage in open-ended conversations.
3. Encourage students to have a study time each evening. (New students should have a minimum of one hour of homework per night.) If you find your student has no homework, please phone the teacher. Sometimes students don't understand the assignment, or it's too difficult for them.
4. Students who have little English language ability are enrolled in a program of studies that will include electives, such as art or drama, where there may be no homework. In this case, encourage the student to do some extra vocabulary development by encouraging them to read magazines, comic books, watch English-language television, etc.
5. Encourage them to talk to Canadian students/people as much as possible.
6. Be open and non-judgmental in discussions. This attitude encourages students to express their point of view.

Topics for Discussion

The student's native country	The student's family	Canada
Education		
One province of Canada	A TV Sitcom	A movie
Festivals in the student's country	Holidays and special celebrations in Canada	Teenagers
Sports	Music	Favorite Pastimes
Economics of student's country	Politics of student's country	Food, Beverages, Meals
Customs	Leisure activities in BC (hiking, kayaking, canoeing, camping, hockey, skating etc.	

Tutors, Academic Assistance & Translation Services

During the school year, your student may request or require the assistance of an academic tutor.

Do not employ a tutor who cannot provide a recent 'Criminal Record' check. The Comox Valley Teacher's Association, CVTA, will provide the program with an updated list of available tutors early in the school year. You should also contact the counselor/Vice Principal to assist you.

If you need to use an interpreter or native language tutor, check with the International Office for these services - you may require this support in emergency situations, or for a difficult host family issue.

HOST PARENTS' CHECK LIST

This list may help you deal with some of the issues you will face as you accept a student into your home.

Please make sure you complete this list and that you contact the office if you have concerns.

1. I have given my student an orientation to the neighbourhood and the community.
2. Bus routes and schedules have been explained.
3. A bank account is set up
4. Curfew rules discussed
5. Information about security in the home (students require a key)
6. Safety issues discussed
7. Emergency contacts provided
8. House 'rules' discussed and understood
9. Leisure activities have been outlined
10. Travel rules discussed
11. Health insurance discussed
12. Medical procedures discussed
13. Telephone and e-mail rules discussed
14. Food concerns discussed
15. School schedules and concerns addressed

TRAVELLING OUT-OF-DISTRICT

Safety is our major concern. As legal Custodian of each international student in our program, we take our responsibility for their care seriously.

When our students are in school or with their host families, we feel confident that they are safe. When students leave our district, travel to other cities or stay with people outside our program, it is our responsibility to insure their safety and know their whereabouts.

- Students who plan to travel out of district **with** their host family for **more** than three (3) nights must submit an Out of District Travel Request (ODT) for approval with CVISP.
- Students who plan to travel out of district **without** their host family, for any length of time, must submit an Out of District Travel Request Form for approval. **This includes any travel with their Natural Parents**

Any time a student leaves our district:

1. The Student Travel Request form must be completed online by the student and a host parent.
The "[Out of District Travel Request Form](http://www.studyinbritishcolumbia.com/homestay/travel-request-form/)" is a fillable form located on the CVISP website at <http://www.studyinbritishcolumbia.com/homestay/travel-request-form/> .

2. Host Parents must verify and contact the chaperon for the arrangements.
3. Completed forms are submitted online directly to the International Program Office at Lake Trail School and approved before travel takes place.
4. Forms not received **at least five (5) working days** prior to intended departure may not be approved. Travel out of district without the Program's approval will result in disciplinary action.

Program Departure Protocol

Full Year Students - students who are not here to graduate are not required to write Provincial exams and are advised to leave by June 24 or 25th.

Graduating Students should plan to leave 2 - 3 days after their last exam or by June 30th.

Any requests to remain in Canada past June 30th **must be approved by the District Principal by June 1st. Program Termination Waivers must be signed by Host Family & Natural Parents accepting full responsibility of student after June 21, 2024.**

The CVISP also offers [ESL Summer Camps](#) for all students wanting to stay in the Comox Valley and receive extra ESL instruction. Please contact the CVISP for more details at isponline@sd71.bc.ca or your educational agent.

Travel to the United States (USA) or to a Foreign Country (other than home country) Protocol

As much notice of travel to the USA or Out of Country must be given to the ISP Office to ensure proper waivers and received information is in place prior to travel plans.

Protocol is in place that permits CVISP students to travel to the USA. The "[Out of District Travel Request Form](#)" to be filled out online:

<http://www.studyinbritishcolumbia.com/homestay/travel-request-form/>

"[Travel to the USA Release Waiver for Host Parents](#)" form, and the "[Travel to Foreign Country Release Waiver for Parents](#)" form, this process must be completed 4 weeks prior to your departure. See attached for the following forms:

- Student Travel Request Form - Paper form (Student/Homestay)
- Termination from Program Release Waiver (Host Parent Form)
- Travel to the USA Release Waiver (Host Parent Form)
- Travel to Foreign Country: Release Waiver (Parent/Guardian Form)

NEW!! Respite Request for Homestay for their Internationals Student

If you are planning a trip or absence from your home and care for your International student, you must submit a Respite Request Form online:

<https://studyinbritishcolumbia.com/respite/>

This is to notify the Homestay Coordinators of your absence and that there will be care for the International student. If you are unable to find care, our Homestay Coordinators can help you to find Respite for your student during your Absence.



TERMINATION FROM PROGRAM RELEASE WAIVER (HOST PARENT FORM)

Student Name: _____

Last

First

Middle

I/we, the undersigned Host Family parent(s) of the above referenced student, hereby acknowledge(s) and fully understand(s) that upon our International student’s termination from the School District 71 Comox Valley International Student Program, the School District and its employees have no further responsibility for the safety or welfare of this student. I/we also understand and agree upon termination from the School District 71 program:

- that should this student continue to live with me in order to holiday (or to continue to live) in the Comox Valley, I/we assume full responsibility for her/his safety and welfare.
- that any remuneration for hosting said student is arranged between the student’s parents and ourselves and does not involve School District 71.
- that School District 71 will no longer sponsor this student as an international student participant and has an obligation to report his/her termination from the program to all appropriate government agencies, including but not limited to Immigration and other regulatory departments. Such reporting usually results in withdrawal of the student’s host country resident visa if s/he is holding one.
- that this student will automatically be cancelled from all program-sponsored health insurance coverage.
- to release School District 71 and its employees, agents, directors and attorneys/solicitors from any and all liability damages or injuries incurred by this student from the date of his/her termination.
- to indemnify and hold harmless School District 71, its employees, agents, directors, attorneys/solicitors and insurers from any and all claims, expenses and attorney fees arising in connection with any damage or injury to this student from and after the date of termination from the program.

Agreed and accepted this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

_____	_____
Host Parent 1 (full name)	Host Parent 1 (signature)

_____	_____
Host Parent 2 (full name)	Host Parent 2 (signature)

In the case of this student, the Date of termination from the School District 71 program will occur on

_____ day of _____, 20_____.



TRAVEL TO THE USA RELEASE WAIVER (HOST PARENT FORM)

Student Name _____
Last First Middle

I/we, the undersigned host parent(s) of the above referenced student take full supervision responsibility of said student to travel to the USA as outlined below. As a result, and knowing this is an extraordinary situation, we release the School District 71 Comox Valley International Student Program, the school district and its employees from any responsibility for the safety or welfare of this student. I/we also understand and agree that prior to and upon leaving Canada and the School District 71 program:

- we verify that the student was not pressured to participate in this trip;
- we will ensure that the natural parents and/or guardians of this student have sent their original copy of the notarized release waiver to the District Principal;
- we release School District 71 and its employees, agents, directors and attorneys/solicitors from any and all liability damages or injuries incurred by this student during the entire period of this travel; and
- we indemnify and hold harmless School District 71, its employees, agents, directors, attorneys/solicitors and insurers from any and all claims, expenses and attorney fees arising in connection with any damage or injury to our student during the entire period of this travel.

Agreed and accepted this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Host Parent 1 (full name)

Host Parent 1 (signature)

Host Parent 2 (full name)

Host Parent 2 (signature)

In the case of our family trip with this student, the planned itinerary to the USA from the School District 71 program is as follows:

Destination: _____ Adult(s) responsible for our child at the destination: _____

Date leaving: _____ Flight(s): _____

Date returning: _____ Flight(s): _____

Hotel: _____ Address: _____ Contact information: _____



Travel to Foreign Country: Release Waiver (PARENT/GUARDIAN FORM)

Student Name _____
Last First Middle

I/we, the undersigned legal guardian(s) or parent(s) of the above referenced student hereby give permission for our child to travel to the Country as outlined below. As a result, and knowing this is an extraordinary situation, we release the School District 71 Comox Valley International Student Program, the school district and its employees from any responsibility for the safety or welfare of our son/daughter. I/we also understand and agree that upon leaving Canada and the School District 71 program:

- We release School District 71 and its employees, agents, directors and attorneys/solicitors from any and all liability damages or injuries incurred by my son/daughter during the entire period of this travel; and
- We indemnify and hold harmless School District 71, its employees, agents, directors, attorneys/solicitors and insurers from any and all claims, expenses and attorney fees arising in connection with any damage or injury to my son/daughter during the entire period of this travel.

Agreed and accepted this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Parent or Legal Guardian 1 (full name)

Parent or Legal Guardian 1 (signature)

Parent or Legal Guardian 2 (full name)

Parent or Legal Guardian 2 (signature)

In the case of our son/daughter, please provide the planned itinerary to the listed Country(ies) your child will be travelling to and the other information we require:

Destination:

Adult(s) responsible for our
child at the destination:

Date leaving:

Flight(s):

Date returning:

Flight(s):

Hotel:

Address:

Contact information:

STUDENT & HOST FAMILY “HOMEWORK”

Student name _____ (Student, please tell your host family how to say your name correctly.)

Family name _____ (Family, please tell your student what they should call each person in your home.)

Student: Please ask these questions of your homestay family and write the answer in the space provided. After that, please keep it handy at your homestay.

1. What time should I get up?
Will you wake me or should I use an alarm clock?
2. Do I make my own breakfast or will you make it for me?
This is what I eat for breakfast in my home:
What may I have for breakfast in my homestay?
3. I need a bag lunch for school each day.
Do I make my own lunch or will you make it for me?
This is what I am used to eating at lunch during the school week:
What foods may I have for my school lunch?
4. Please tell me and show me how I will get to and from school
What time do you want me to come home from school?
5. What time do we eat dinner? I am used to eating at this time:
What can I do to help you to prepare dinner or to clean up after?
These are the foods that I like to eat:
These are the foods that I do not like to eat:
These are foods that I cannot eat:
May I come with you when you shop for groceries?
May I prepare a meal for your family sometime?
6. Who does the laundry? When? How?
Where can I hang wet clothes?
7. When may I shower or take a bath? Which bathroom do I use?
How long may I take for my shower or bath?
Please show me how to use the shower/bath and where to place bathroom garbage.
8. Please tell me about using the telephone. Which phone should I use for local calls?
When may I make calls? When may I receive calls?
How long may I stay on the line?
I know I need to use a prepaid phone card to make long distance calls. Where can I buy one?

9. What time does everyone go to bed?
10. What chores would you like me to do?
11. Are there any special rules for your home?
12. Could you please show me your home on a map?
Could you please show me where my friends live in homestay?
13. Where can I buy stamps?
...personal items?
...gifts to take home?
14. Where can I do my banking, cash traveler's cheques, etc.?
15. May I use your computer?
...to play games?
...to send and receive e-mail?
...to do homework?
16. May I invite my friends over?
May I visit them?
17. I would like you to know this about me:
18. Is there anything else that you would like to know about me?
19. Is there anything that you would like to tell me about you or your family?
20. I would like to know this about you or your family: