

Professional Development Conference for Homestay Managers

February 28-March 1, 2018

Sheraton Wall Centre Hotel, 1088 Burrard Street, Vancouver, British Columbia

Thursday

1 pm – 1:15 pm

Welcome and Introductions

1:15 pm – 2:45 pm

Cultural Journeys: Helping International Students to Accept and Adapt

Homestay staff and host families can play a vital role in helping students to adjust to living in North America. Moving to a different country can be difficult for the most seasoned of travelers. Now imagine doing this at the height of your most intense developmental stage - adolescence. In this presentation, we will explore the cultural journey an international student experiences during their time abroad. Life at school, in the homestay and with friends will be discussed. We'll suggest ways to help host families understand their role in the cultural acceptance and adaptation process.

Malvina Rapko is the director of Cultural Bridges Inc., an international education organization in Saskatoon. She is a former homestay coordinator and recruitment manager with the Saskatoon International High School Program.

2:45 pm – 3:15 pm

Networking and Coffee Break

3:15 pm – 4:45 pm

Best Practices in Applications, Move-Ins, Move-Outs and More

Homestay staff are busy. You can reduce your workload by ensuring that you gather all the information you need on host applications. As well, ensure move-ins and move-outs go smoothly by providing everyone with clear guidelines. This session will help you to put proper systems in place to boost efficiency and keep operations running smoothly.

Doug Ronson is a host parent, a former homestay coordinator and the author of the Essential Guide for Homestay Hosts.

5:30 pm – 7 pm

Networking Reception

Thanks to our sponsor!



Friday

- 8:30 am – 10 am **Reducing Legal Risks and Protecting Your Program**
Homestays pose a number of risks to hosts, students and your program. This session will outline how to minimize risks through effective host and student agreements. As well, we look at the issues of privacy and confidentiality.
John Boon is a lawyer in Vancouver and an expert in education law. He has worked with a wide range of educational institutions in the province.
- 10 am – 10:30 am **Coffee Break and Networking**
- 10:30 am – 11:45 am **Retaining Hosts and Rekindling Enthusiasm**
It's much easier to retain good hosts than to recruit new ones. However, how do programs ensure that hosts are welcoming and enthusiastic after many years of working with international students? This session will share some ideas that have been implemented successfully.
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- 11:45 pm – 12:45 pm **Buffet Lunch**
- 12:45 pm – 1:45 pm **Marijuana: Student Safety and Host Rights**
Several countries have warned their citizens to avoid cannabis in Canada. Homestay programs are unsure about how to implement policies about use by hosts and students. This session will discuss ways to balance the rights of hosts with the need to keep students safe. At the same time, we'll consider how to deal with questions and concerns from agents and overseas parents.
Doug Ronson has been writing and speaking about the issue of legalized marijuana and homestays for the past two years.
- 1:45 pm – 2 pm **Networking and Coffee Break**
- 2 pm – 3 pm **Case Studies of Challenging Homestay Scenarios at Tables
(separate tables for high schools, language schools and post-secondary programs)**
Prior to the conference, we'll be asking you to share challenging homestay scenarios that you are facing or have dealt with in the past. We'll select a variety of cases for discussion at tables. Each group will present their case study and proposed solution.
- 3 pm – 3:15 pm **Key Takeaways and Wrap up**