

# Vancouver Homestay Staff Professional Development Workshop

February 27-28, 2020  
Sheraton Wall Centre Hotel, Vancouver, BC

## AGENDA

### Thursday

- 1 pm – 1:15 pm      **Welcome and Introductions**
- 1:15 pm – 2:15 pm      **Food: Can we keep both students and hosts happy?**  
The most common complaint students have about their homestays is about food – there isn't enough and some just don't like North American cooking. On the other hand, hosts worry that students eat too much and that food costs are soaring. In this session, we'll discuss ways to prepare students for this adjustment and help hosts with meal planning. In addition, there will be tips so that hosts can manage grocery budgets.  
*Doug Ronson is the author of The Essential Guide for Homestay Hosts.*
- 2:15 pm – 3:45 pm      **Ensuring Student Mental Health**  
Mental health concerns are growing with the international student population. This session will consider how homestay staff and host families can be on the lookout for warning signs that a student may need professional help. In addition, the facilitator will discuss what to do in the interim to assist the student. She'll consider addictions such as substance abuse and online gaming, as well as other mental health issues.  
*Christina Furtado, MACP, is a mental health counsellor with guard.me, working to break down the barriers and stigma around mental health.*
- 3:45 pm – 4:15 pm      **Coffee and Networking Break**
- 4:15 pm – 5:15 pm      **Issues in Homestay: Group and Table Discussions**  
Prior to the workshop, we will be asking participants to identify their top three concerns that are not already included on the agenda. We'll devote 20 minutes of this session to each one.
- 5:30 pm - 7 pm      **Networking Reception**

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## FRIDAY

- 8:30 am – 9:30 am **Host Appreciation: How to Retain your Top Hosts**  
Hosts do a lot of work for minimal compensation. When you have an outstanding host, you want to show your appreciation and do your best to keep them hosting over the long term. Lynnette Berry will discuss some unique and wonderful ways to say “thank you” to your dedicated hosts.  
*Lynnette Berry is International Housing Manager at Whatcom Community College in Bellingham, WA.*
- 9:30 am - 10 am **Coffee Break and Networking**
- 10 am – 11:30 am **Contracts: Make Sure Your Program is Protected!**  
Contracts with your hosts should not only cover expectations, they should also protect you in the event that something goes awry in a homestay. This session will discuss everything that must be included in a contract.  
*John Boon is a practicing lawyer in Vancouver, specializing in the education sector.*
- 11:30 am – 12:30 pm **Buffet Lunch**
- 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm **Time Management: How to Get Everything Done!**  
Homestay staff have a wide range of responsibilities. They must recruit new hosts, monitor existing placements, deal with student complaints and much more. In this session, we’ll discuss how to manage competing priorities and avoid burn out.
- 1:30 pm-1:45 pm **Coffee Break**
- 1:45 pm – 2:45 pm **Case Studies of Challenging Homestay Scenarios at Tables**
- 2:45 pm – 3 pm **Key Takeaways and Wrap up**