

Homestay Staff Professional Development Conference

November 30 and December 1, 2023

SFU Downtown, Segal Building, Rix Room 2300
500 Granville Street, Vancouver, British Columbia

Thursday

12 noon	Welcome Lunch (included with your registration)
12:30 pm – 1 pm	Introductions and goals for the workshop
1 pm – 2 pm	Conflict resolution and mediation in homestays <i>Sasha Taylor, Manager Accommodations, Global Village</i> Conflict between students and their hosts is a common but often avoidable occurrence. This session will consider ways to proactively address and avoid typical homestay issues, as well as how to diplomatically and successfully resolve those that do arise.
2 pm – 3:30 pm	Dealing with a critical incident <i>Sean Hardman, Student VIP Insurance</i> Sadly, international students are seriously injured or die in Canada every year. Critical incidents are delicate situations that must be handled swiftly and with care and discretion. This session will discuss real-life cases involving students and outline the need for a unified approach between school officials, the insurance carrier, the homestay host and homestay staff. The session will discuss best practices, cultural nuances and ways to seek support for yourself after a critical incident.
3:30 pm – 3:45 pm	Networking and coffee break
3:45 pm – 4:45 pm	Reducing risks in homestays <i>Doug Ronson, ESQ Educational Services</i> There are a number of risks associated with homestays, including fires in the home, assault and harassment. You can minimize risks with thorough interviews, reference checks and solid contracts.
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm	Networking reception at Stock and Supply Restaurant at Delta Hotel at 550 West Hastings Street (included with your registration)

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Supporting the health & wellness
of international students
and their valued homestay parents.



Friday

8 am	Coffee and scones (included with your registration)
8:30 am – 10 am	Working with diverse students and hosts <i>Sasha Taylor, Accommodations Manager, Global Village</i> Within international education, there is a growing need to accommodate diversity among host families and students. This session will discuss how to operate a homestay department with equity, diversity and inclusion at the forefront. We will consider expectations of students, parents and other stakeholders, while discussing the practical implications of mediating these from a diversity and inclusion mindset.
10 am – 10:30 am	Coffee break and networking
10:30 am – 11:30	Keeping Students Safe <i>RCMP Diversity Representative</i> Ensuring that students are safe is a top priority for international education programs. This session with a representative of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police will discuss road safety, internet dangers and other concerns.
11:30 to 12:30 pm	Lunch (included with your registration)
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	Leveraging technology in host recruitment and retention <i>Doug Ronson, ESQ Educational Services</i> Many programs need more hosts but are lacking time for recruitment. This session will discuss ways to attract more hosts by leveraging technology and minimizing time spent on this vital task. Host retention is essential and can also be supported with a variety of tools.
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	Case studies of complex homestay scenarios Participants will be asked to share challenging case studies that they have faced. We will discuss these as a group to develop ideas for dealing with difficult situations.

About the presenters

Sasha Taylor, Accommodations Manager, Global Village

Sasha is the Manager of Accommodations at Global Village Victoria and Calgary and has overseen the homestay department for more than eight years. She has provided training to staff on direct sales, social media and marketing, and diversity and inclusion. She has a degree from the University of the Fraser Valley in Psychology and Sociology. Prior to joining Global Village, she served in a social work support role for community agencies and private youth care facilities.

Doug Ronson, President, ESQ Educational Services

Doug is the author of the Essential Guide for Homestay Hosts and the publisher of The Essential Guide for Homestay Students. He has been an international educator for more than 25 years and has served as a host parent, homestay coordinator and student recruiter. He just published a book, The World's Campus, which discusses the impact that international students are having on Canada.

Samantha Morneau, Director of International, StudentVIP Insurance

Samantha is responsible for developing inclusive and accessible health insurance plans and services, including mental health programs for international students. She draws on her professional experience and student case studies to educate and promote mental health and wellness services for youth.