

Homestay Staff Professional Development Conference

Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

Thursday, November 19, 2026

8:30 am to 4 pm

Niagara College, 135 Taylor Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake

8:30 am	Welcome Coffee and Muffins
9 am to 9:15 am	Introductions and goals for the workshop
9:15 am to 10:15 am	Recruiting and Retaining Hosts In many parts of Canada, recruiting dedicated hosts continues to be difficult. How are programs finding new hosts and, just as importantly, how are they keeping them hosting year after year?
10:15 am to 11:15 am	What do Hosts Really Want? Two Niagara-area hosts will engage in a Q and A with workshop participants about the joys and challenges of hosting. This session will help you fine tune recruiting efforts, host appreciation activities and your homestay program.
11:15 am to 11:30 am	Networking and coffee break
11:30 am to 12 pm	One thing I wish I knew when I started Workshop attendees will be asked to write down their responses to the question: What's one thing you know from working in a homestay program that you wish someone had told you when you started? We'll discuss the answers.
12 pm to 1 pm	Lunch (included with your registration) and informal sharing of ideas
1 pm to 2 pm	Food fight: Managing Expectations and Communicating are Key With the rising cost of groceries, many hosts are worried about their food budget. On the other hand, students want a family experience – not to be told that they are eating too much. As with all sources of conflict in homestays, keeping expectations realistic and communicating are essential.
2 pm to 3 pm	Staying Healthy: Preventing Homestay Staff Burnout Managing homestays can be a 24/7 job, putting out fires, resolving conflicts and dealing with ongoing recruitment issues. Stress takes its toll. This session will share ideas to avoid burnout and to stay healthy over the long term.
3 pm to 4 pm	Case Studies of Complex Homestay Scenarios Participants will be asked to share challenging case studies that they have faced. As a group, we'll consider ways to deal with difficult situations.