

## German International School Sydney

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## Homestay Family Guidelines

- ❖ The German International School Sydney (GISS) welcomes you as a homestay family to accommodate an international student into your home. Our overseas students usually attend year 10 or year 11&12.
- ❖ All international students under the age of 18, who are not residing in Australia with a parent, or legal custodian, must have a guardian. In most instances the homestay family will also be the guardian of the student (see Guardianship Consent Form). In other cases the overseas student counsellor acts as the guardian of the overseas student.
- ❖ An international or overseas student should be regarded as a welcome guest, who under the best circumstances will become a temporarily adopted member of the family. This means that homestay families assume certain responsibilities and, in turn, receive special blessing from the privilege of hosting a student from another country (mainly Germany, Austria or Switzerland). Please have a balance in your judgment between the need for an income and the welfare of the student.
- ❖ Our overseas students have chosen to live in an Australian family to become familiar with the Australian culture and language and get to know our city in a safe and healthy study environment. A homestay family will provide the students with following basic amenities: a private room, which meets safety, cleanliness, and privacy considerations, a bed, desk with study lamp, bedroom and bathroom linens, closet, dresser and mirror optional, and a key to the house. Private bathroom is preferred but not required. The room must be ready by the time your student arrives.
- ❖ The homestay family provides the student, in cooperation with GISS, with a Home Stay Agreement, which regulates board and lodging and will be ideally signed by all parties before the arrival of the student. Please word your rules politely and include privileges as well as rules, so your student is not offended or intimidated by a long list of do's and don'ts.
- ❖ The homestay family shall treat the student with respect, kindness, and tolerance, respecting their rights, privacy, and culture, including religious beliefs.
- ❖ Include the student in family activities and social events as often as possible. Families are welcome to invite the student to religious activities and meetings, but they must also honor a student's right to decline this invitation without fear of being treated less kindly as a result.
- ❖ Host should provide healthy and nourishing meals for the students.
- ❖ Allow the student full use of the household common rooms, including access to television, telephone and living areas. Families may need to help the student understand how to operate household appliances and what times are appropriate for their use.

- ❖ Provide laundry facilities (washer/dryer, detergent), cleaning supplies for the student to keep their private living spaces clean, including private bathroom, if applicable. Students have to buy their own soap, shampoo and toothpaste.
- ❖ In most cases the family is responsible for meeting students at international arrivals.
- ❖ Provide the student with an orientation on arrival at the host family's house, local area (e.g. bus stops, shops, pharmacy etc) and Sydney city.
- ❖ If necessary, escort the student on public transport to and from school on the first school day.
- ❖ Please ensure that in the event of illness the student receives medical attention. Students are covered by Overseas Health Student Cover.
- ❖ The host family should also ensure that the student is attending school on the required basis.
- ❖ Please ensure that the student is home at agreed times and their whereabouts known at all times.
- ❖ Students under the age of 18 must not travel without adult supervision. Overseas students may travel with their homestay family, their visiting parents or with a youth travel organization.
- ❖ The homestay family plays a vital role in the successful stay of a student and most complications occur due to a breakdown in communication and language-related problems. Therefore it is important to establish a trustful rapport as soon as possible with your student.
- ❖ Be prepared for their initial culture shock and help them to make the transition as easy as possible. Most students feel homesick and lonely upon their arrival. Never forget that your student is new to culture and language and many students are just overwhelmed by the unfamiliar environment. Be patient, most problems are the result of some misunderstanding, often language-related. Please politely discuss problems with your student and try to imagine how difficult it would be for you to live in your student's country without violating customs and without saying something that might be misunderstood.
- ❖ In order to keep channels of communications open, try to schedule a weekly meeting with your student. This can also provide an opportunity to encourage the student to learn more about Australian culture, lifestyle, activities and family life.
- ❖ Please inform the Overseas Student Counselor immediately of any problems between the student and family. If necessary, please request mediation by the counselor.
- ❖ A relocation of the student due to incompatibility with the student and the family is sometimes not avoidable. This will be done with consideration for all parties to the best of our abilities. Please realize that at times, changes to the student's placement may come on short notice.

- ❖ If you are hosting students from our school, we require you to fill out a Working with Children Check Form.

I have read and understood all information contained in the Homestay Family Guidelines.

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Signature Homestay Family

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Date