



StudentRoomStay



Homestay Handbook



Welcome to StudentRoomStay (SRS)!

We are excited to have you as one of our International Students living with one of our fantastic host families. We hope that your homestay experience will be a wonderful and rewarding experience for both you and for your host family.

Leaving home and studying in a new country involves a lot of changes and challenges. But we want you to know we are here to help you make the most of your time in America, meet new people and create memories that will stay with you forever. You just need to make a commitment to follow the rules and fully participate in the program.

This handbook is written to help provide direction and guidance for you throughout the year as you learn and adjust to living together with your American host family. Please read through each section so you have a full understanding of what the SRS Homestay Program offers, our policies and the expectations you need to follow while staying with your host family.

SRS is always available to help you with any questions you may have along the way and to support you through this adventure. More than anything, we want to provide you the best service in the industry. We know that International Students are some of the bravest and amazing students in the world - adjusting to a new life and culture is not easy and we are here to help you along the way.

All the best!



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The BEST Homestay Program in America

SRS offers a premium homestay program for international students. The program has been specially tailored for students who want to experience American culture firsthand, with the added support and feeling of home. We understand younger students require more attention and support, so we take extra care when selecting hosts and check in with younger students regularly.



You are in good hands with SRS

We are recognized CSJET-approved organizations, which reflects our commitment to providing a safe and accommodating homestay program for students and host families

Find your home away from home

- » Choose a host from a shortlist of one or two families you are most suited to
- » You'll be treated like a member of the family
- » Meals are provided and shared (based on the meal plan you choose)
- » Take part in family activities

Why choose SRS for homestay

World-class service

- » Comprehensive pre-departure orientation
- » 24/7 emergency line
- » Your homestay will include a private bedroom with study space, internet access and daily transportation to and from school (if purchased with your plan)

It is a unique cultural exchange

- » Improve your English and learn local slang through everyday conversation
- » Experience life in an American family
- » Share your culture with your host family and other locals
- » Learn about American customs and take part in celebrations

You'll be safe, happy and well cared for

- » SRS homestay hosts are carefully selected, interviewed and trained to ensure guests are placed in safe and welcoming homes
- » Your host will act as your guardian, monitor your school attendance and provide guidance on appropriate behavior

Settle in to life in America

- » Stay in a reliable and supportive home close to your school
- » Your hosts will help you to set up a bank account and help you to purchase a cell phone/SIM card
- » Find out where to shop

Your Host Family

SRS hosts are carefully selected to ensure students like you are placed in environments that are not only safe and comfortable, but also warm and welcoming. Hosts who register to care for high school or younger students must commit to extra responsibilities so we know they are focussed on your wellbeing. Hosts go through a certification process including comprehensive training, a national criminal background check for anyone aged 18+ in the household, an in-home interview and a house inspection. You can read more in the SRS Student Placement Policy.

What are American families like?

Many different kinds of people are homestay hosts. A homestay family could be made up of:

- Mother, father and children
- Grandparents
- A young couple
- Retired individuals
- A single man or woman
- A single mother or father and their children

We have people from all over the world hosting with us. They come from a variety of backgrounds and have their own hobbies and interests. Some have pets, some do not. Some live in houses with a backyard, while other live in a townhouse or apartment.

We will match you with two or three potential hosts, then you confirm which family you want to live with.

As part of the SRSPProgram, hosts will:

- Pick you up from the airport on arrival to the USA and drop you off at the airport when you leave (included in the SRS Guardianship Plus Annual Payment Program, extra fee applies for students participating in all other programs).
- Undertake a post arrival orientation with you.
- Provide transport to and from the airport if you travel home for the holidays (included in the SRS Guardianship Plus Annual Payment Program, extra fee applies for students participating in all other programs).
- Take the time to ensure you become familiar with their neighborhood and understand local customs.

Preparing For Your Arrival

Meeting your host family for the first time is an exciting experience that can impact you and them for a lifetime. As you can imagine, there is much excitement when you arrive. Just as you have been preparing for your move to your new host home, your host family has been preparing for your arrival. The arrival and adjustment can also be a bit overwhelming, so be prepared to take the time to adjust slowly to your new home, school, schedule, and surroundings.

Watch our Student Orientation video or read on for tips on how to be SAFE, HEALTHY and HAPPY to enjoy your experience in America and be successful in your studies.

- SRS Guest Orientation Pt 1 - What to Expect in Homestay
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uvkOg3ydU4A>
- SRS Guest Orientation Pt 2 - Bullying and Culture Shock
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYx2hMxWoeg>
- SRS Guest Orientation Pt 3 - Work, Safety and Travel Tips
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJP7SXWez4Y>

SRS Program Policies

The SRS has developed specific policies to ensure everyone involved in our programs has a safe and rewarding experience.

SRS's relevant policies and procedures have been included in this handbook for easy reference. As our policies are updated from time to time, you should refer to SRS Policies <https://knowledge.studentroomstay.com/homestay-policies> to review all of our policies and for the most current versions.

For high school and younger students, you and your parents will also be sent some important forms to review and sign: Student Agreement and Student Code of Conduct, Medical Authorization and Limited Power of Attorney. **The agreement and forms must be signed and returned to SRS at least two weeks prior to your arrival into homestay.**

Living in Your New Home in the USA

Every family functions a bit differently and so do different cultures. Sitting down with your host family to understand their family rules and expectations will help to prevent future misunderstandings. Your host family will hold a family meeting shortly after you arrive. You may be tired and jet lagged, so your host family may plan to repeat their family rules and expectations again at a later time. Upon arrival, students are tired and often overwhelmed, so be patient and understanding with your host family's excitement. If you are tired, please just explain to them that you first need to rest. Make a plan to meet with your host family to discuss at another designated time.

- The student should be given a tour of the homestay to show the location of their room and other rooms they have access to.
- The student should be shown any emergency procedures and systems like alarms or safety devices.
- The student should be shown how to operate kitchen and laundry appliances, bathroom shower and toilet, internet access and any other areas specific to the homestay that they may encounter.
- The student should be informed of the schedule in the homestay like meals, bedtime, curfew, shower, laundry and traveling to and from school.
- The student should be shown where food can be found and where it should be eaten.
- For students under age 18, the student should turn over all medication to the host family.

Student's room: The student will be provided a private room (or shared room depending on the package purchased) that includes a bed with linens, dresser, closet space, window and lamp, with an area to study that has access to the Internet. The room should be cleared of the host family's personal belongings so the student has adequate space for their own personal belongings. The student should be granted reasonable privacy but should make an effort to spend time with their host family. It is the student's responsibility to keep their room clean and free of trash. The host family will provide clear instruction to the student as to how to keep their room tidy and where trash should be disposed of.

- Students staying in their rooms alone – Students staying in their rooms alone with the door closed for endless hours can cause concern to American families. One of the purposes of living with a host family is for students and host families to learn about a different culture. Students should therefore make an effort to spend a little time each day with their host family. Students should not always isolate themselves in their room apart from the family. The dinner meal is usually a good opportunity for host families and students to spend time together talking and sharing a meal.

- Food in the student's room – No food or drinks other than water should be taken into the student's room. Students may want to start taking food into their rooms, but if you do not keep things tidy, this can result in damage or cause pests to appear. Rooms should be restricted to having water only.
- Bedding – Bedding in an American home is often confusing for students. If you are confused about the bedding, please ask your host family which layer you need to sleep on and which pillows are to be used for sleeping.
- Windows – Students might open windows for fresh air but should be made aware of what to do if the heat or air conditioning is on. In America, the cost of utilities for heating and cooling can be very expensive. Students should not adjust the thermostat without the host family's permission.
- Lights – Students should turn off lights when leaving a room or when not in use.

Bathroom: The student will need to have access to a shared bathroom. The host family will show the student how to operate faucets, drains and shower curtains.

- Showers should be kept under 15 minutes once per day. Students need to be aware that they may be living in an area with water restrictions. Water should be conserved by not taking excessively long showers or by running the water when not in use.
- Toilets may be different from the student's home country. Students should be shown where toilet paper and feminine products should be discarded and how to operate the toilet.
- Host families must supply basic toiletries such as soap, shampoo, and bathroom supplies.
- Products used only by the student like feminine products, deodorant and other supplies are the responsibility of the student.
- The student should be made aware that toilet paper goes in the toilet and feminine items should be wrapped and disposed of in the trash.
- Host families should instruct students where they should hang their towels and store their toiletries.
- Students and all members of the household should be respectful of one another by keeping the bathroom clean and dry. The host family will instruct the student on the best way to clean up afterwards.
- Students may not be accustomed to American bathrooms. This can lead to excessive water on the floor and sink. Often in Asia, the bathroom floor is designed to be wet, students need to be careful to keep the floor dry and to dry the sink counter after use. Hosts should instruct the student how to properly use a shower curtain.
- Students who have a private bath may be asked to lightly clean their own bathroom on a regular basis, but may need to be taught how to properly clean it.

Meals: Meals are an important part of the homestay experience. For many students, adjusting to an American diet and lifestyle is easy, but for others it is a bit difficult. Students and Host families should try to have open conversations about meals and foods. Though host families do not need to completely change their family's cooking and eating habits, sensitivity to what the student likes and dislikes can make a positive impact on a student's homestay experience. Here are a few basic SRS guidelines regarding student meals:

- The student will be provided with food for up to 3 meals a day depending on the meal package purchased.
- If purchased, breakfast and a sack lunch may need to be self-prepared once the student is shown how, but the groceries should be provided by the host family.
- On school days, the student will be responsible to pay for school lunches or bring a lunch from home using groceries purchased by the host.
- Dinner should be eaten as a family when possible. This is an ideal time for students to interact with the host family.
- Snacks do not need to be provided by the host family.
- Your host family may help you to take trips or may help direct you to the local ethnic market.
- Only help yourself to food if your homestay host says it is OK to do so.
- If a host family is unable to provide what a student prefers, the host family may help the student to make arrangements to purchase those items for himself/herself.
- If a student is expected to pay for their own meal while dining out together with the host, they should be told in advance and then pay separately for their meal.
- Host families should provide a place in the pantry and fridge for the student to store his/her own personal food items.
- Host parents must supervise cooking by students.
- If your hosts offer you more food and you say no, they may not offer a second time. If you are hungry, you should accept the first offer or ask, "May I please have some more_____?"

Eating tips

- Chew with your mouth closed
- Do not talk with food in your mouth
- Eat quietly without slurping
- Ask for items to be passed to you e.g. "Please pass the salad"
- It is not polite to burp or clear your throat at the table
- Offer to help clean up after meals

Examples of food your host might provide

Breakfast - Cereal, toast, fruit, yoghurt, juice, tea, coffee.

Lunch - Sandwiches, leftovers from dinner, fruit, salad.

Dinner - Pasta, meat and vegetables, stir fry, chicken skewers, rice.

Wifi and Internet: Host family homes should provide students with access to Wifi at a reasonable speed. Because students often need Wifi for their schoolwork and a quiet place to study, families should ensure that the Wifi signal is strong enough in the student's room. Wifi should be accessible during wake hours, but the host family is not required to provide wifi for gaming and other entertainment purposes. Students should not download movies or games in their native language which may exceed the host family's monthly data limits.

Laundry: Students should be given access to the host family washer and dryer. The host family may choose to wash the student's laundry with their family laundry, but many students and host families prefer for students to wash their own loads.

- Your host family will show you how to operate the household washer and dryer. Students should be permitted to wash their personal laundry at least once a week. Americans try to conserve energy, so single items should not be washed at one time.
- Many host families try to conserve water, so students should not wash laundry on a daily basis or more often than once a week. If the family prefers, a laundry schedule can be communicated to the student as to what day and time is best for the student to wash his/her clothing each week.
- If you choose to wash items by hand and will want to hang them to dry, please ask your host family to show you an appropriate place to hang these items.

Curfew: Students and host families need to be aware of the local curfew laws, but SRS's standard student curfew for high school and younger students is 10PM on weekdays and 11PM on weekends. No showers, cooking, or computers after lights out (1 hour after curfew). Adult students, do not have a curfew, but should be mindful not to disturb the host family and the host family's quiet hours.

Schedules: Students and host families should discuss the student's schedule regularly. Both the student and the host family need to be considerate of each other's time and obligations. If there is an event not part of the student's regular schedule, it should be discussed with the host family at least a week in advance.

Guests and Dating:

- Students should get permission before inviting guests to the homestay.
- No friends of the opposite sex are allowed in the student's bedroom. Host parents must be home during the visit.
- Students must not engage in any sexual contact or sexual activity that is culturally inappropriate in the U.S., including contact with minors or with any member of the Host Family household.

Pets: Students are not allowed to bring new pets into the home but are encouraged to interact safely with household pets. Host parents should monitor the student's interaction with pets to verify they get along before leaving them alone together. Some students are very comfortable and enjoy family pets, but others may not be accustomed to having a pet as a member of the family.

House Rules: SRS understands that every household operates a little differently. The host family's home is their home, and their house rules should be respected. Host families should make a clear explanation of their house rules for the student. The host family will have a list for the student and spend some time going through the list to clearly define the rules. These house rules will be completely new for the student as he/she adjusts. Host parents are encouraged to treat students as a family member. For high school and younger students, in order to help a student who is struggling with discipline, host parents are permitted to implement reasonable consequences in the home such as not allowing a student to attend a social event, or taking away the student's electronic devices for a defined period of time. With this in mind, host parents must first discuss the situation with SRS when/if a student is failing to follow house rules and if any consequences need to be implemented in the home. SRS will then communicate the situation with the student's native parents.

Chores and Responsibilities: Everyone should do their share of chores as a member of the household. The student should help with light chores, such as cleaning the table after a meal, helping with dishes, and cleaning their own rooms. Students should not be expected to do heavy chores such as yard work or babysitting.

School – For High School Students and Younger

Attendance: Regular school attendance is an important part of the SRS program. The student is expected to report to school daily and on time (15 minutes before first bell). In the event a student misses school or is late, the school needs to be contacted by the host family by phone, and SRS needs to be informed in writing by email. Tardies and/or absences though reported to the school will not be called in as excused if the student is not sick. Being “tired” is not permission for an excused absence from school. If a student has repeated absences for an undiagnosed sickness, students may be asked to have a medical doctor to diagnose their illness and provide a written report to excuse the student’s absences. Students are expected to awaken on their own and to be ready on time for their ride to school. If the student misses their arranged ride, and the host family cannot help, the student will need to find his/her own way to school. Students may need to call a taxi and pay for it themselves, but should not use a taxi as an excuse for a regular habit of being late.

Participation: All students in the SRS Guardianship and Guardianship Plus programs are enrolled full-time in a local school. Students must maintain a passing level and are expected to participate as full-time students in all school required events.

Academics: Host families are a wonderful resource for students, not only providing a safe and caring environment for students to live, but host families add much-needed support for students while they study here in the US. Some students may need additional help understanding the US system of education, monitoring their assignments and grades, and asking for academic assistance when needed. In some hosting situations, the host family may be given access to the student’s grades and assignments by the school. Most schools provide daily updates using online access. If a student is really struggling and needs an extensive amount of help, please contact your Local SRS Office. Host parents are not expected to be personal tutors for a student struggling academically. We will inform the student’s agent/parents and will make every effort to provide additional tutorial support for the student. Many students require additional tutor help during their first few semesters and later no longer need the additional academic support.

Extracurricular Activities: Students should find things that interest them and not solely focus on academics. Colleges are looking for well-rounded students, not just high test scores. Students should be encouraged to get involved with extracurricular activities at school, hobbies, host family activities, and community service. Schedules should be checked to ensure there are no conflicts.

Sports: Sports are a wonderful way for students to get involved with classmates and experience American high school life outside of the classroom. Students may participate in school sanctioned and sponsored extracurricular activities, including athletics, if such participation is authorized by (1) the local school district in which the student is enrolled; and (2) the state authority responsible for determination of athletic eligibility, if applicable. Athletic eligibility or participation is not guaranteed. If a student chooses to participate in a sport, the host family should be part of the decision process. Commitment to a sport often requires the host family to commit to driving to student practices, games and tournaments. Carpooling to sports commitments is highly encouraged.

Student Safety

Having fun in America is an important part of the student experience, but you need to be prepared to stay safe.

- Call 911 for police, fire and ambulance in the USA if there is an emergency.
- Try to go out with two or more people and be cautious if you are alone.
- Stay in well-lit areas if you are alone at night.
- Always seek permission from your host family if you plan on going out and let them know what time you are going to be home.
- Keep your cell phone on you at all times and do not leave it unattended.
- Wait for the bus or train in a well-lit area.
- Stay on the sidewalk if you are walking.
- If you are ever in a situation with friends or an adult that makes you feel uncomfortable for any reason, leave immediately and/or call your homestay host, your SRS Coordinator, or a trusted adult right away. Call 911 if you feel you are in immediate danger.

Beach Safety

- Always swim near a lifeguard and swim with a buddy.
- Swim when it is daylight.
- Only swim at patrolled beaches.
- Wear sunscreen and a hat.
- Obey posted signs and flags.
- Learn rip current safety.
- Wear a life jacket if you are not very good at swimming.

Wildlife

- If you see a snake, leave it alone. It will not hurt you unless it becomes frightened.
- Some spiders can bite – don't touch them.
- Mosquito and sand fly bites can be avoided by using insect repellent. Use it every day in summer.
- Use caution with all animals and insects you see. Don't disturb them and they won't disturb you.

Airport Transportation

The host family or an SRS Representative can be arranged to welcome the student upon arrival at the airport and provide transportation to the family home. Likewise, the host family can help transport the student to the airport for breaks during the school year (such as Winter Break). The host family or a SRS Representative can be arranged to help to transport the student to the airport for their departure at the end of the school year. Please speak to your local SRS Office about making arrangements.

Communication

Home Visits: Your local SRS Office will regularly schedule visits with the host family and student to check in. We do not want to disturb you, but we also want to be a support for both the host family and the student. We will try to schedule our home visits with you ahead and at a time that is convenient for everyone. If you need to cancel, please give your local SRS Office ample time to reschedule.

Regular Ongoing Communication: Clear and frequent communication with your host family is key to the success of your time here. Many students from other cultures find direct communication difficult, but in America direct communication is acceptable and expected. SRS is here to support your communication with your host family and to help you with any conflicts or misunderstandings that may arise. In the event that you have any questions in between your scheduled visits or need help communicating with your host family, contact your SRS at 877-385-8425.

Illness and Medical Emergencies

Medical Insurance and Medical Release Forms for High School and Younger Students

Each student in the SRS Guardianship and Guardianship Plus program will have medical insurance and a medical release form. Your host family will be given a copy of your medical insurance and a medical release form. Copies of these should be kept in a safe place and available for when/if the student needs medical care. Your host family will be able to help you locate a medical facility if you are sick or injured.

Medical Care for Illness or Injuries If a student needs medical care that is not an emergency, the host family will help you to locate an urgent care facility that accepts your insurance. Immunizations and school physicals are typically not covered by insurance, so the student should expect to pay cash. Host families should not sign to guarantee payment for any of the student's medical care or other financial obligations on behalf of the student. The student and his/her native parents are responsible for all medical costs not covered by the insurance policy.

Medical Emergencies In the case of an emergency, host families should take students for emergency care and then notify their local SRS Office. For any dangerous situations and when appropriate, first call 911 for emergency assistance! Please take photos of any incidences of injury no matter how minor they may seem.

Reporting An Emergency

An emergency should be reported in the following ways:

- Call 911 to report emergencies directly to the police, fire and emergency services. If calling 911 is required, try to keep the dispatcher on the line to expedite the emergency response.
- Contact the SRS Support Staff at (877)385-8425.
- After hours, please call SRS at (877)385-8425 to report a student related emergency. This number is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You may be asked to leave a message and we will return your call.

Medicine and Prescription Drugs

- Make sure your vaccinations are up to date before traveling to America.
- Students in the SRS High School Program may not use, consume, purchase, distribute, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol, drugs, tobacco or e-cigarettes.
- Go to a pharmacy if you require any medication.
- If you take prescription drugs or medications, you must bring a copy of the written prescription signed by a licensed medical doctor with you and present the prescription to your host family or SRS representative upon request.

Homestay Accidents or Damages

In the case of an accident or accidental damages, please contact your local SRS Office, who will assist you in filling out an “Accident Report”. If there were damages incurred by the student, a written estimate and pictures of damage will be submitted by the host family. The student will need to cover the cost of any damages to the host family home or property.

Student Personal Finances

Most students arrive with spending cash and SRS encourages students to arrive with a debit card or credit card to pay for necessary personal expenses. Students should keep in mind the following guidelines regarding the student’s finances:

- There can be no exchange of money between the host family and student or their family. Students cannot be charged extra for transportation, utilities, etc.
- Host families should not commit to any contracts on behalf of the student. This includes cell phones or gym memberships or bank accounts.
- Students have spending money for personal items and a discretionary fund for unexpected expenses. Students should not make purchases of large or expensive items without prior approval of SRS.
- It is difficult for a younger student to open a bank account in the United States. Students age 17 and over may be able to open a bank account to have access to a debit card at some US banks.
- SRS or their host families are not permitted to sign or cosign for students to open an account in the United States.
- Students may arrive with large sums of cash and be accustomed to carrying large sums of cash with them to school or shopping. Students should not take expensive items or large sums of money into public places. The host family should help the student to find a safe place to keep their money and encourage them not to bring large sums of money out with them.
- Students are encouraged to bring a debit or credit card from their home country.
- Students are advised not to make expensive purchases of luxury items or large items that would be difficult to move. Expensive items may make the student a target to people who may try to take advantage of them.

Student Personal Belongings

Students should not accumulate more than two (2) large suitcases of personal belongings. Students should not purchase furniture or other large or expensive items without the prior approval of SRS.

Home Transfers and Moving

Our goal is to make every homestay opportunity a successful one. We do not encourage transfers to another host home. Only in unresolvable situations will a transfer be allowed. Please contact your SRS representative so that we can help you to resolve conflicts with your host family.

- Students and host families both need to give time for adjustment, as both are adapting to living with a person from a different culture. When an issue arises at home, please try and address it with the person directly. Talk with them about small issues so that they do not become major issues. Adjustment is not always easy for the student or the family. However, it is part of the learning experience as we learn more about a culture different than our own.
- If an issue persists, please contact SRS who will meet with the student and the host family to better understand the situation. Most often, misunderstandings occur due to cultural differences, differing habits and expectations. After meeting with the student and the host family, a meeting may be arranged with the host family, student, and SRS in order to facilitate a better understanding.
- Students cannot change families and schools without mediation or due process.
- With the exception of emergencies, host family changes will not be considered during the first 30 days of arrival to the host family.
- In rare cases, even with mediation, there may be a conflict between the student and host family that cannot be resolved. If this occurs, SRS will seek a new host family for the student and a date for removal of the student will be communicated to the host family. Until such time, host families will honor their commitment to host the student and the student must respectfully live in the current host family home.
- Fourteen (14) Day Notice to Move: If determined necessary, SRS will move a student into a short-term homestay with at least fourteen (14) days advance notice.
- If and when SRS approves a transfer, a new \$350 Matching Fee is required.
- If the student requires SRS to provide an immediate emergency move, this may result in a \$1000 Emergency Move Fee charged to the student.

Time to Say Goodbye

As the placement draws to an end, students and host families will need to prepare for the student's departure. If the student is planning to extend their stay beyond their intended end date, please contact SRS. For students with an ongoing placement, Students need to give SRS and their host 14 days advance notice before ending their placement.

Students need to plan to pack their belongings and should not leave personal belongings under the host family's care. If the host family plans to host the same student next year, the family should have a discussion with the student about leaving or taking his/her belongings over summer break. It's not the host family's responsibility in any way to store the student's belongings over a break. If the host family chooses to extend a storage option to their student, the host family should be very specific with the student about how the room should be left for the summer. Students need to understand that the room may be used during their absence. Students should be asked to pack their things and store them in a box. If any items left in the host family's care get lost, broken, or misplaced, SRS will not take responsibility. Students should contact SRS to arrange to pay an invoice for storage. Students who prefer to leave their belongings in their room can purchase Room Holding while they are gone. Please contact SRS to arrange for Room Holding.

Students are asked to leave their room in a clean condition. Students will be given a checklist for expectations on how to clean/leave their rooms when they move out. Host families should also have a short discussion outlining their personal standards of cleanliness. As a company we strive to support our host families and we will make a conscious effort to make sure the students understand the importance of leaving the room tidy. Many students do not have a wealth of knowledge when it comes to cleaning up after themselves, so the host family might need to show them where the vacuum or other cleaning products are located and how to use them if they have not previously done so.

Different Cultures and Culture Shock

Cultural conflicts and misunderstandings often develop in the host home and are a normal part of the experience as the host family and international student learn more about each other's cultural backgrounds. The SRS staff is experienced in handling these types of issues with a positive outcome. In our experience, even small things such as turning off the lights, helping with the dinner dishes, communicating daily plans, or other courtesies which seem natural to the host family may become a cause of irritation when the student does not automatically adjust to these customs. Please share your questions and concerns with each other within the first few days to prevent the possibility of embarrassment or annoyance, and continue to dialogue as the year progresses. Your local SRS Office can help to facilitate discussion with your student when needed.

Homesickness and Culture-Shock

Understandably, almost all students will experience some level of "homesickness" and "culture-shock". In some students, it will manifest greater than others. Students may become angry, withdrawn, or react in other ways. If you struggle with feeling angry with your host family or your school, please understand that what you are feeling is a normal part of culture shock. With time, you will feel more at ease. Communicate with your SRS representative if you have questions about culture shock or are struggling to adjust to your new life with your host family.

Symptoms of culture shock can include:

- Headaches
- Nausea
- Depression
- Sleeping Problems
- Poor hygiene
- Panic attacks
- Withdrawal
- Extreme homesickness

How to deal with culture shock:

1. Learn about the city you are traveling to so you know what to expect before you arrive.
2. Contact your family and friends regularly.
3. Develop a routine so daily tasks are easy to manage.

4. Spend time with your host family. Get involved in family activities, eat meals with them and talk with your hosts.
5. Find people to socialize with, take part in student events and talk to other students about how you feel.
6. Start a new hobby or pastime.
7. Speak English as much as possible. Communicating with people in the local language will help you understand the culture and make friends.
8. Stay positive and be open-minded about the experience.
9. Speak to your host family or SRS if you are feeling vulnerable or not settling in.

Cultural Differences

Communication:

Direct Communication – Students may not be used to direct communication, but Americans are usually more direct. Americans can be very straightforward, while in many cultures (especially Asian ones), communication is often more roundabout. Do not be offended if your host family is very direct with you. American culture is very different and will take time to adjust to. Open and direct communication is best, but SRS is always available if assistance is needed.

Third-party communication– International students will often not speak directly with the person with whom they are having an issue. Instead, they may speak to their parents or agent and give their side of the story. Culturally, this is very understandable, but it is preferred that they speak directly with the host family or their SRS representative.

Language Barriers – Students may nod their heads “yes” in agreement when asked if they understand. If you do not agree or understand, try not to nod your head “yes” in agreement. Your host family will want to know that you do not understand. They also want to know your likes or dislikes. They will not be offended if you do not always agree. Continued communication is to be exercised to ensure that you and your host family understand each other.

Etiquette:

Politeness – Students may come from countries where soft language and politeness is not commonly used, at least not in a form that Americans might recognize. Americans tend to say “Thank You” and “ You’re Welcome” very often. Students may need to be reminded to verbalize their thankfulness. Though it is very common for Americans, it may not be a habit that is developed in your culture.

Speaking in native language – Understandably, students might stay in groups with others who speak their language and share their culture. But the goal of the SRS Program is to help international students succeed by increasing their English proficiency. Your host family might remind you to speak English when appropriate, especially when you are in the presence of family and friends who only speak English. Students may speak to others in their native language, but should be encouraged to try to use English when in the presence of English speakers.

Greetings– Students may not be accustomed to giving hugs, but for Americans, this is a very common custom.

Eye contact– You may not be accustomed to making direct eye contact with elders in your home country. In American culture, it is actually the opposite, and it’s best to look at someone when speaking or it may seem as though they are being dishonest or disrespectful.

Embarrassment – Asian students may smile or laugh if they feel embarrassed about a situation. This can create a big misunderstanding with your host family, so please try to express your feelings clearly to your host.

Honesty– Different cultures put different priorities on honesty. Honesty is a high priority in the US. You may just be uncomfortable and not accustomed to being completely honest and upfront, but your American host family will expect honesty.

Choices–Many students may become overwhelmed with the freedom of choices in the US. As host families, your host family will help you to navigate choices and help remind you that freedom does come with consequences if wrong choices are made.

Asking Permission – Students may not be accustomed to asking for permission. Students need to keep in mind to “ask” rather than to “tell” their host parents what they would like to do. It is better for students to make a polite request rather than a demand. This is a common courtesy towards your host family and shows respect. Your host family also will be concerned about your safety.

Repeating Instructions - Students also may be too timid to ask how to use something, especially if your host family has already explained it to you before. Students need to ask if they do not know how to use something, even if the host family has already shown them.

Humor - Americans have a broader and different sense of humor. Students are usually much more comfortable joking with their American host family after time.

Cultural Customs - Everyone should embrace the idea of sharing cultures and family values but should not be forced to do so. This can include the celebration of holidays, religious activities, food, and other customs or celebrations. Your host family will invite you to join in their customs. This is a wonderful opportunity to engage and learn something new. Students also are encouraged to share their customs with their host family.

Foul Language - Loud or foul language should not be used.

Coughing/Sneezing - In America, you are expected to cover your mouth or nose when you cough or sneeze. This is polite and will limit the spread of germs.

Daily Schedules:

School - In some countries, the main priority for students is to receive top marks on test examinations. In America, attendance and homework and participation are an important part of academic scores. Punctual attendance and completing and turning in homework assignments is very important in America.

Waking Up - Students may not be accustomed to waking themselves up on time in the mornings, but in America, students are expected to take responsibility in this area. Students should be responsible to wake themselves up on time to prepare for their ride to school. It is courteous to be on time for your ride to school. Please do not make your host family or your carpool wait or arrive late.

Planning - Students might tell the host family at the last minute that they are required or wanting to go somewhere. Host parents will need to know the student's plans ahead of time. Families should let students know how much notice they will need in order to assist with transportation. The student should inform the host family of all plans and needs to call/text if he/she is going to be late or has unexpected changes.

Asking Permission – Students may not be accustomed to asking for permission. Students need to “ask” rather than “tell” their host parents what they would like to do. It is better for students to make a polite request rather than a demand. This is a common courtesy towards your host family. They will also need to know your plans for your safety.

Chores – The student should help with light chores, such as cleaning the table after a meal, helping with dishes, and cleaning his/her own room. Some students may come from homes where everything was done for them. In American homes, teenagers are usually expected to participate in family chores. Everyone should do their share of chores as a member of the household. If you do not know how to help, please ask. Your host family will be happy to demonstrate and teach you. Students should not be expected to do heavy chores such as yard work or babysitting. We have an Expectations Worksheet on Page 26 that can be filled out by the host family. This worksheet should be discussed with the student shortly after his/her arrival and may need to be discussed periodically during the year.

Politics and Religious Beliefs:

SRS host families and students both have their own political and religious beliefs. Host families and students are expected to show respect towards each other and should not try to change a person’s beliefs. Of course, students and host families are welcome to exchange and talk openly to share their beliefs with one another. If a host family attends religious services regularly, students are welcome to attend with their family. The student may enjoy experiencing a church service with their host family. Some students will want to attend regularly with their host family, but some students may choose not to attend regularly. The student’s choices should be respected and students should not be forced to attend religious services. Some schools may require church or religious service attendance. If this is the case, the host family should help the student to attend a church or church activity which meets the school’s requirements and where the student feels comfortable.

SRS Abuse Guide

Bullying

While most people you meet will be welcoming and kind, bullying can be a problem in any country. Name-calling, physical aggression, harsh teasing and making fun are types of bullying. If you feel like someone is bullying you or acting aggressively toward you, talk to your host parents, an SRS representative or an educator at your school right away. Don't fight the battle alone. There are many people ready and willing to help you.

What is Bullying?

- Bullying is repeated anti-social behavior that has a negative affect on a person's wellbeing.
- Bullying can be physical, verbal and/or emotional.
- Bullying can be inflicted by an individual or a group of people.
- Bullying may occur at school/university, at home, at work, on public transport or online.

Examples of Bullying

- Harassing someone based on their gender, race, culture, religion, accent, sexuality or disability.
- Repeatedly hurting someone physically e.g. hitting, slapping, pushing or restraining them.
- Sending abusive, threatening, explicit or upsetting messages to someone via text or on social media.
- Writing nasty comments about someone online.
- Sharing embarrassing videos or photos of someone online or via text message without their consent.
- Spreading rumours about a person, calling them names or making rude gestures.
- Stalking.

You may feel...

- guilty, like it is your fault
- ashamed and embarrassed
- alone, like there is no-one to help you
- scared to talk about it
- like you don't fit in socially
- unsafe and afraid to attend school or work
- physically sick

What you can do

1. Ask for help. Talk to your homestay host, your parents, a teacher or friend. You can also contact SRS 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at SRS at [877-385-8425](tel:877-385-8425).
2. Speak to the bully. Try not to be aggressive, but confidently ask the person/s to stop saying or doing what it is that's hurting you.
3. Focus on your wellbeing. Stay healthy with exercise/sport, try mediating or listen to music.
4. Spend time doing things you enjoy. Hang out with your friends, go to the movies or take up a new hobby so you are not focusing on the bullying.
5. If you are being bullied online, try contacting the person to resolve the issue in a calm way first. If the bullying continues, take a screenshot of the messages or posts, block the person and report it.

Dating

Dating can be exciting and fun. You may have some new feelings to sort through and understand. Remember, the first priority for all relationships is safety. Talk to an adult that you trust about your feelings and be willing to listen if they have concerns. People in a relationship should treat each other with kindness and respect at all times. Relationships are supposed to be fun and enjoyable. If things are not going well in a relationship it may be time to end it. Your host parents, SRS representative, or a teacher at school can help you if you have questions about relationships.

Dating Violence In relationships there are some things students need to look out for. One of those things is dating violence, which is a type of intimate partner violence. This can occur between people in a close relationship and can be physical, emotional or sexual in nature. Students need to be aware of how to stay safe in relationships.

- Physical violence occurs when a partner is hit, pushed, slapped, pinched, shoved, kicked or otherwise treated roughly.
- Emotional or Psychological violence is verbal in nature and includes harassment and/or threatening comments. This could include bullying, shaming, name calling, degrading or keeping a partner away from friends and family.
- Sexual violence is forcing a partner to engage in a sex act when the partner does not consent. This can be physical, or it can also include threats to spread rumors if a partner does not agree to have sex.
- Stalking is another type of harassment, which refers to a pattern of threatening tactics that cause fear in the victim.

- Sometimes dating violence takes place in person, but it can also take place over the phone, by repeated texting, e-mail or other online sources.

Students need to make sure that their relationships are healthy and safe. Unhealthy relationships should be terminated immediately. Teens sometimes think teasing and name-calling are a normal part of a relationship, but these behaviors can develop into more serious types of abuse.

Preventing Abuse

Ultimately, the goal is to stop dating violence before it starts. Learning strategies that promote healthy relationships is crucial. Students need to learn skills to form positive relationships and avoid potentially dangerous relationships.

If a student feels uncomfortable in a relationship, they need to talk to an adult that they trust immediately. Students should always avoid situations that do not seem safe and let their host parents know who they are with and when they will be home.

Students should report any signs of abuse that they or a friend experience immediately. Many teens do not report abuse because they are afraid. It is always safer to get help from a trustworthy adult than to remain in a relationship that is unsafe.

SRS Staff are mandatory reporters who are required to report any signs of child abuse to authorities, including neglect, emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse or maltreatment includes situations in which the parent or other person commits or allows to be committed any of the following activities:

- Inappropriate touching of intimate parts; or forcing or encouraging the child to touch the parent or other legally responsible person in this way.
- Attempted engagement or engagement of the child in sexual intercourse or other sexual behaviors with children or adults.
- Exposing the child to sexual activity or exhibitionism.
- Permitting a child to engage in sexual activity that is not developmentally appropriate and could result in the child suffering emotional impairment.
- Using a child in a sexual display such as a movie, play, photograph or dance regardless of whether the material itself is obscene.
- In addition, it is a crime to give indecent material to a minor.

If you believe any of these have occurred, please contact your SRS representative immediately!

You are not Alone

Bullying or any type of abuse is treated very seriously in America. It is not a sign of weakness to ask for help. Even if you feel like people aren't listening or won't take action – DON'T GIVE UP. Please call SRS at **877-385-8425** any time if you need someone to talk to.

We are Always Here to Help

You can get in touch with your local SRS Office by:

- Phone or Text
- Email
- Sending us a message through your SRS Mailbox

You can also contact us if you:

- Want to ask questions about homestay
- Have any concerns about your homestay
- Want to move out of your homestay
- Are feeling unsettled or uncomfortable

Our normal office hours are 9am to 5pm PST, Monday to Friday. If you have an emergency outside of these hours, please leave a message and we will return your call.

SRS Student Codes of Conduct

<https://knowledge.studentroomstay.com/homestay/student-codes-of-conduct>

SRS Homestay Student Code of Conduct High School Students and Younger

Note: This policy is subject to change at any time. Please check all SRS Homestay Policies on a regular basis for updates.

Congratulations on choosing to participate in a Homestay organized by the StudentRoomStay (SRS Homestay). This Student Code of Conduct sets out the guidelines and expectations for behavior that apply to Students participating in an SRS Homestay Homestay, and it should be read together with the SRS Homestay Student Agreement as applicable. The Student Code of Conduct, has been developed by StudentRoomStay Homestay to ensure the safety and well-being of all Students participating in the StudentRoomStay Homestay Program ("Program"). All capitalized terms have the same meaning as defined in the agreements, and the terms of the agreements will apply to the extent of any inconsistency with this policy. The Student is required to fully abide by the rules, regulations and standards of conduct set forth herein.

Please read through this policy carefully and contact us at support@studentroomstay.com if you have any questions.

SRS Homestay's Role:

- SRS Homestay will take reasonable steps to assist Hosts and Students in the event of an emergency or other issue and will answer any questions you have about SRS Homestay's services. Students and Hosts have access to 24/7 support through SRS Homestay's after hours' emergency line – 877-385-8425 ext 5.
- In keeping with the provisions of the agreements, SRS Homestay is committed to creating positive outcomes for all Homestay participants and may act to remove a Student from a Homestay or take any other action it deems to be in the best interests of the Student, Host or SRS Homestay at any time. SRS Homestay will make every attempt to assist if emergency accommodation is required.
- For more information about SRS Homestay Services please see your Student Agreement (as applicable), visit our website or contact us.

MUTUAL OBLIGATIONS

Both Hosts and Students must:

- Treat each other and every other person in the home in a fair, respectful and polite manner. This means being considerate of other peoples' feelings and needs and includes things like not touching any person or their personal property without their permission, keeping your environment clean and tidy and saying thank you to someone who does something for you.
- Understand that your customs or beliefs may be different to those of your Host or Student. Have an open mind. One of the most important benefits of a Homestay is 'cultural exchange' – the chance to learn about someone else's experiences and values. All participants need to be treated with respect, including when carrying out reasonable cultural or religious practices in the Home. Discrimination of any kind is not acceptable.
- Work together to make the Homestay a success. It is very important that both Students and Hosts make an effort to communicate clearly and effectively about important matters and cooperate to resolve any misunderstandings or issues that might arise. It takes contribution from both sides to create a comfortable and enjoyable environment within the Home. Make sure that you provide your Student or Host with current contact details and any other important information about you they should know, and be careful not to share any information you receive with anyone else without the Student or Host's permission.

Student Obligations:

To ensure that all enrolled Students remain safe, in-status, and successful, SRS Homestay has established the following expectations for all enrolled Students.

Abide by United States, State, County and Local Laws



The following are some behaviors prohibited by the United States laws, which is provided by SRS Homestay for your information:

1. The Student will not consume alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other illegal drugs of any kind. For the sake of the Student's safety, the Student is not permitted to possess any firearms or weapons of any kind. The Student will not associate with any person involved with controlled substances or firearms.
2. The Student will not exhibit, threaten, or commit any violent or dangerous behavior, or act in an aggressive manner toward another person, property, or financial security.
3. The Student will not steal, damage, or embezzle another person's property.
4. The Student will not view, share, or download sexually explicit materials, via any print or electronic device, including photos of himself or herself.
5. The Student will not reproduce, copy, or use any unauthorized or copyrighted material (book, recording, television program, patented invention, trademarked product, etc.), in violation of the law. This includes illegal downloading of media.
6. It is against the law in many states for an individual over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with any person under the age of 18.

Respect Host Family Life

1. Cover certain costs. Students should ask the Host's permission before using their telephone or internet services and expect to pay the cost of your telephone calls. Students will be expected to cover your own school supplies, travel, entertainment, activities and medical expenses as well as any other personal costs that come up during your Homestay. If the Student causes any damage to the Home, the student will be expected to pay for repairs.
2. Comply with any reasonable 'house rules' the Host gives. These may include:
 - a. Keeping your room tidy;
 - b. Assisting with minor chores;
 - c. Following the state and/or federal guidelines for recycling and disposal of waste products
 - d. Using resources such as water and electricity responsibly;
 - e. Keeping noise to a minimum;
 - f. Attending meal times promptly and preparing your own breakfast and lunch (if required);
 - g. Being polite and considerate at all times; and
 - h. Keeping your Host advised of your schedule and activities.
3. The Student agrees to respect the Host Family's lifestyle and actively participate in family activities. The Student and natural parents are encouraged to communicate with SRS Homestay staff members with any concerns they may have.
4. The Student and Parent acknowledge that the Student is a guest in the Host Family's home. The Host Family is expected to reasonably respect the Student's privacy and boundaries, but are able to access the room in order to fulfill the responsibilities of hosting including keeping the Student safe. The Host Family may ask to see or restrict the Student's possessions in order to maintain a safe environment and positive behavior within their home. This includes the contents of packages shipped to the host family home. SRS Homestay should be contacted first if there is a concern about the Student's or Host's safety and there is a need to see or restrict the Student's possessions.
5. The Student is required to compensate the Host Family for damage to the host family home beyond a reasonable level of wear-and-tear. The reasonableness of wear-and-tear and amount of compensation will be determined on a case-by-case basis. SRS Homestay will coordinate compensation for hosts whose property has been damaged.
6. The Student will not become involved in a romantic or physical relationship with any member of the Host Family. If the Student experiences any inappropriate or uncomfortable behavior, then the Student will report it immediately to the SRS Homestay Support Staff or any other representative of SRS Homestay.
7. To avoid any unnecessary dispute about the Student's property, SRS Homestay strongly suggests the Students bring valuable belongings with him/her when he/she leaves the host family's home at the end of the academic year. If it is needed, SRS Homestay can help students arrange storage services from a third party with fees.
8. The Student's Parents have the responsibility of assisting SRS Homestay to help the Student follow program rules. Natural parents are encouraged to participate in calls with SRS Homestay and it's Partner Agent Representatives to support the success of their student.



9. The Student is not allowed to bring friends, their natural parents or anyone else to the host family home without the Host Family's prior consent.
10. Stay in contact. The Student must communicate daily with the Host about their activities and notify the Host if you will be away from the Home during a mealtime or overnight. The Student should immediately contact SRS Homestay if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe in the Homestay environment.

Internet, Cell Phone & Electronic Usage and Safety

1. All students are required to have a working US phone while in the SRS Homestay Program. An SRS Homestay representative can help the student to obtain a cell phone or a SIM card.
2. SRS Homestay encourages the Student to create healthy habits. This includes limiting the use of electronic devices for leisure time, and to maintain healthy sleep, exercise, outdoor activity, and studying habits. The Student agrees to maintain a working United States cell phone number to communicate with SRS Homestay, their Host Family and friends. The Student must remain in communication with the Host Family so the Host Family knows where the Student is at all times.
3. The Student will maintain healthy online behavior. This includes not bullying other people online by sending mean, insulting, or threatening messages or images. The Student agrees not to post or give out sensitive or private information about themselves or another person. The Student will report any such behavior to the Host Parent, and/or SRS Homestay Support Staff, and/or a School Counselor, if they see others engaging in it.

Personal Life

1. For sake of student's safety, Students under age 18 will not obtain a driver's license or permit, purchase a vehicle, or operate a motor vehicle during Program Enrollment Period. The Student will wear a seatbelt to prevent serious injury in case of an accident while traveling in any motorized vehicle.
2. Student may not borrow money from or use the Host Family's credit card(s). Student may not open any joint account with the Host Family for the benefit of the Student, or otherwise lend their name to any bank account for the benefit of the Student. The Student is required to maintain access to an international debit or credit card account that allows them to withdraw cash in the US. Prior to arrival, the Student must provided with their own international debit or credit card in case no bank account can be opened due to the Student's age or other eligibility restrictions.
3. The Student will not partake in any activity considered by SRS Homestay to be "high-risk," including, but not limited to parachuting, scuba diving, rock climbing, bungee jumping, hunting or operating any type of motor vehicle. Partaking in any of the above mentioned activities will require prior approval from the Student's Parents and SRS Homestay.
4. The Student shall follow a travel policy for any traveling. Please refer to the SRS Homestay Travel Policy explained below.

Activities

1. The Student must carry a medical insurance card and the SRS Homestay emergency contact numbers at all times in case of emergency.
2. An overnight stay at a friend's home within the SRS Homestay host family community does not require travel forms but does always require the host parents' permission. Host families are expected to exchange emergency contact numbers and address information.

Compliance: By signing this Agreement, the Student's Parents represent and warrant:

1. Student's Parents have reviewed the Students Code of Conduct, and agree the Student Code of Conduct are reasonable and appropriate to ensure the proper care and safety of Student during Student's participation in the SRS Homestay Program;
2. Except as previously disclosed in writing by Student's Parents to SRS Homestay, Student in sufficient physical, mental and emotional health to fully participate in all aspects of the SRS Homestay Program and to meet all program requirements, including full compliance with the Student Code of Conduct. By signing this Agreement, the signing agent/parent agrees to provide SRS Homestay with the following documents signed by the Student and Native Parents prior to the Enrollment Period start:
3. Student Code of Conduct
4. Medical Authorization
5. Limited Power of Attorney

Failure to provide these signed documents will result in a delay of services provided.

SRS Homestay Student Code of Conduct

Age 18 and Older / College Students

Note: This policy is subject to change at any time. Please check all SRS Homestay Policies on a regular basis for updates.

Congratulations on choosing to participate in a Homestay organized by the StudentRoomStay International Corporation (SRS Homestay). This Student Code of Conduct sets out the guidelines and expectations for behavior that apply to Students participating in an SRS Homestay Homestay, and it should be read together with the SRS Homestay Student Agreement as applicable. The Student Code of Conduct has been developed by StudentRoomStay International Corporation to ensure the safety and well-being of all students participating in the StudentRoomStay International Corporation Program ("Program"). All capitalized terms have the same meaning as defined in the agreements, and the terms of the agreements will apply to the extent of any inconsistency with this policy. The Student is required to fully abide by the rules, regulations and standards of conduct set forth herein.

Please read through this policy carefully and contact us at support@studentroomstay.com if you have any questions.

SRS Homestay's Role:

1. SRS Homestay will take reasonable steps to assist Hosts and Students in the event of an emergency or other issue and will answer any questions you have about SRS Homestay's services. Guests and Hosts have access to 24/7 support through SRS Homestay's after hours' emergency line – 877-385-8425 ext 5.
2. In keeping with the provisions of the agreements, SRS Homestay is committed to creating positive outcomes for all Homestay participants and may act to remove a Student from a Homestay or take any other action it deems to be in the best interests of the Student, Host or SRS Homestay at any time. SRS Homestay will make every attempt to assist if emergency accommodation is required.
3. For more information about SRS Homestay Services please see your Student Agreement (as applicable), visit our website or contact us.

MUTUAL OBLIGATIONS

Both Hosts and Students must:

1. Treat each other and every other person in the Home in a fair, respectful and polite manner. This means being considerate of other peoples' feelings and needs and includes things like not touching any person or their personal property without their permission, keeping your environment clean and tidy and saying thank you to someone who does something for you.
2. Understand that your customs or beliefs may be different to those of your Host or Student. Have an open mind. One of the most important benefits of a Homestay is 'cultural exchange' – the chance to learn about someone else's experiences and values. All participants need to be treated with respect, including when carrying out reasonable cultural or religious practices in the Home. Discrimination of any kind is not acceptable.
3. Work together to make the Homestay a success. It is very important that both Students and Hosts make an effort to communicate clearly and effectively about important matters and cooperate to resolve any misunderstandings or issues that might arise. It takes contribution from both sides to create a comfortable and enjoyable environment within the Home. Make sure that you provide your Student or Host with current contact details and any other important information about you they should know, and be careful not to share any information you receive with anyone else without the Student or Hosts' permission.

Student Obligations:

To ensure that all enrolled Students remain safe, in-status, and successful, SRS Homestay has established the following expectations for all enrolled students.

Abide by United States, State, County, and Local Laws

The following are some behaviors prohibited by the United States laws, which is provided by SRS Homestay for your information:

1. The Students under age 21 will not consume alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other illegal drugs of any kind in accordance with federal, state, county and city laws. Students over age 21 will not consume illegal drugs of any kind in accordance with federal, state, county and city laws. For the sake of the Student's safety, the Student is not permitted to possess any firearms or weapons of any kind. The Student will not associate with any person involved with controlled substances or firearms.



2. The Student will not exhibit, threaten, or commit any violent or dangerous behavior, or act in an aggressive manner toward another person, property, or financial security.
3. The Student will not steal, damage, or embezzle another person's property.
4. The Student will not view, share, or download sexually explicit materials, via any print or electronic device, including photos of himself or herself.
5. The Student will not reproduce, copy, or use any unauthorized or copyrighted material (book, recording, television program, patented invention, trademarked product, etc.), in violation of the law. This includes illegal downloading of media.
6. It is against the law in many states for individuals over the age of 18 to have a sexual relationship with any person under the age of 18.

Respect Host Family Life

1. Cover certain costs. Student should ask the Hosts' permission before using their telephone or internet services and expect to pay the cost of telephone calls. Student will be expected to cover your own travel, entertainment and medical expenses as well as any other personal costs that come up during the Homestay. If the Student causes any damage to the Home, the student will be expected to pay for repairs.
2. Comply with any reasonable 'house rules' the Host gives. These may include:
 - a. Keeping your room tidy,
 - b. Assisting with minor chores,
 - c. Following the state and/or federal guidelines for recycling and disposal of waste products,
 - d. Using resources such as water and electricity responsibly,
 - e. Keeping noise to a minimum,
 - f. Attending mealtimes promptly and preparing your own breakfast and lunch (if required),
 - g. Being polite and considerate at all times; and
 - h. Keeping your Host advised of your schedule and activities.
3. The Student agrees to respect the Host Family's lifestyles. The Student is encouraged to communicate with program staff members with any concerns they may have.
4. The Student acknowledges that the Student is a guest in the Host Family's home. The Host Family is expected to reasonably respect the Student's privacy and boundaries but are able to access the room in order to fulfill the responsibilities of hosting including keeping the Student safe. The Host Family may ask to see or restrict the Student's possessions in order to maintain a safe environment and positive behavior within their home. This includes the contents of packages shipped to the host family home. SRS Homestay should be contacted first if there is a concern about the Student's or Host's safety and there is a need to see or restrict the Student's possessions.
5. The Student is required to compensate the Host Family for damage to the host family home beyond a reasonable level of wear-and-tear. The reasonableness of wear-and-tear and amount of compensation will be determined on a case-by-case basis. SRS Homestay will coordinate compensation for hosts whose property has been damaged.
6. The Student will not become involved in a romantic or physical relationship with any member of the Host Family. If the Student experiences any inappropriate or uncomfortable behavior, then the Student will report it immediately to the SRS Homestay Support Staff or any other representative of SRS Homestay.
7. To avoid any unnecessary dispute about the Student's property, SRS Homestay strongly suggests the Student bring valuable belongings with him/her when he/she leaves the host family's home Student may hold the room for a fee. Please see the SRS Homestay Room Holding Policy.
8. The Student is not allowed to bring friends, their natural parents or anyone else to the host family home without the Host Family's prior consent.
9. Stay in contact. The student must communicate regularly with the Host about their activities and notify the Host if you will be away from the Home during a mealtime or overnight. The Student should immediately contact SRS Homestay if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe in the Homestay environment.



Internet, Cell Phone & Electronic Usage and Safety

1. All Student are required to have a working US phone while in the SRS Homestay Program. An SRS Homestay representative can help the Student to obtain a cell phone or a SIM card.
2. The Student will maintain healthy online behavior. This includes not bullying other people online by sending mean, insulting, or threatening messages or images. The Student agrees not to post or give out sensitive or private information about themselves or another person. The Student will report any such behavior to the Host Parent, and/or SRS Homestay Support Staff, and/or a School Counselor, if they see others engaging in it.

Personal Life

Student may not borrow money from or use the Host Family's credit card(s). Student may not open any joint account with the Host Family for the benefit of the Student, or otherwise lend their name to any bank account for the benefit of the Student. Student is required to maintain access to an international debit or credit card account that allows them to withdraw cash in the US.

Financial Responsibility

Neither SRS Homestay, nor the Host Family, will assume any financial responsibility for any personal losses resulting from the acts or inactions of Student whether willful or negligent. This includes without limitation, damage to property and lost or stolen money. Student is advised not to carry more than \$500 U.S. Dollars on their person at any one time

Medical and Health:

1. It is strongly suggested the Student carry a medical insurance card and the SRS Homestay emergency contact numbers at all times in case of emergency.
2. Student understands and agrees to disclose to SRS Homestay all Student health information relevant to Student participation in the SRS Homestay Program, including all known or suspected physical and/or mental health issues. SRS Homestay strives to keep all Student in the SRS Homestay Program but in rare situations, upon medical recommendation, SRS Homestay may request Student to leave Program, require a program transfer, or require medical or mental-health treatment as a condition of continued participation in the SRS Homestay Program.

Compliance:

By signing this Agreement, the Student represents and warrant: (i) Student has reviewed the Student Code of Conduct, and agree the Student Code of Conduct is reasonable and appropriate to ensure the proper care and safety of Student during Student's participation in the SRS Homestay Program; (ii) except as previously disclosed in writing by Student to SRS Homestay, Student is in sufficient physical, mental and emotional health to fully participate in all aspects of the SRS Homestay Program and to meet all program requirements, including full compliance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Travel Policy

<https://knowledge.studentroomstay.com/homestay/travel-policy>

For Students in High School or Younger

Note: This policy is subject to change at any time. Please check all SRS Policies on a regular basis for updates.

StudentRoomStay Homestay (SRS Homestay) has the following policy to provide a safe travel experience for Students. Travel violations are considered serious offenses as they impact Student safety.

Travel requests must be submitted by Students to their SRS Homestay Support Staff.

Approvable Methods of Transportation:

1. Please note that ride sharing services or apps are not permitted for unaccompanied Students under the age of 18. Unaccompanied Students 18 years of age or older may use ridesharing services provided they are otherwise in compliance with the below policy.
2. Unaccompanied Students can use licensed taxi services provided the travel is otherwise in compliance with the below policy and the policies of the taxi service provider. This refers to taxi services where the drivers must have an operator's license, which is nearly all of them. If you are unsure, ask the provider.
3. Students can travel with host siblings or peers who have a valid driver's license, provided they have their host family's approval and the travel is otherwise in compliance with the below.
4. Public transportation around the local area (within 60 miles) is approved provided the host family and SRS Homestay Support Staff are comfortable with the Student's ability to ride responsibly. Host families should educate Students about safe use beforehand and ideally accompany the Student to practice before the Student rides alone.

School Managed Travel:

1. No documentation is necessary unless the Student will be traveling overnight or taking a flight.
2. For overnight travel or travel involving a flight, Students must submit and receive approval for either: An SRS Homestay Travel Form, or the school's permission document.

Documentation Required:

Documentation and travel approval from SRS Homestay via an approved Travel Request is required IF:

1. The Student is missing class-time, or
2. The Student plans to travel independently, or
3. The Student plans to travel with their natural parents or any adult other than their host parents more than 60 miles away from their host family home, or
4. The Student plans to take a flight, or
5. The Student plans to travel internationally, or
6. The Student will be unsupervised overnight during travel other than on their return trip home at the end of the school year.
7. Travel requests are required for Students to travel home other than for their return trip home at the end of the school year. For their return trip home at the end of the school year, Students must submit their travel plans before the end of the school year.

Student Traveling WITH the Host Family:

If the host family is taking the student to travel, no school will be missed, and no flights will be taken, the host may simply inform SRS Homestay of the travel dates and travel plans (address, contact information, etc.), and no travel documentation is required.



POLICY AND APPROVAL PROCESS

1. Students must notify their host family and SRS Homestay of any plans to travel, as well as any changes to previously approved travel.
2. Winter Break: Travel documents for Winter Break should be submitted by December 1st to allow for review and approval. For travel involving flight, the Student must notify the host family of the flight details (date/time/flight number) and receive travel approval from SRS Homestay PRIOR to purchasing tickets.
3. Fully completed Travel Request Forms must be submitted at least 14 calendar days prior to travel to allow for processing.
4. SRS Homestay will approve or deny Student travel requests based on a reasonable understanding of the safety and well-being of the Student, education partner rules, wishes of the Student's natural parents and host parents, government travel advisories, and applicable law.
5. Travel Request Forms must be signed by the natural parent, by the Student's Host Parent, the SRS Homestay Support Staff, and SRS Homestay Operations Manager or Director of Operations.
6. If the travel form is not completed and submitted to your SRS Homestay Support Staff before the 14 day advance deadline, permission to go on the trip may be denied. No Student should be allowed to travel until SRS Homestay has approved it in writing, but submission of the Travel Request form does not guarantee permission to travel. Permission to travel will be at the discretion of the host parent and SRS Homestay.

OTHER TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS

Travel with Approved Adults:

Students who are not approved to travel independently must be accompanied by an Approved Adult. Students are not permitted to stay overnight outside of the local area by themselves or with just their peers. Approved Adults may be the Student's host parents, natural parents, or another adult approved through the process below:

1. Students must turn in and receive approval for SRS Homestay Travel Request Form and a 3rd Party Travel Form. 3rd Party Travel Forms must be collected by SRS Homestay directly from the 3rd Party, and must include:
 2. All contact information for the adult (address, email and phone number)
 3. Copy of picture ID
 4. Signature
5. If a Student is not able to find an Approved Adult to travel with, they may contact SRS Homestay to see if a chaperone can be arranged.
6. Approved Adults must be 25 years of age
7. A background check will be performed on the any adult accompanying the student during their travel unless the trip is a school-sanctioned trip. The accompanying adult will be considered a temporary host parent responsible for the student.
8. Approved Adults within 60 miles of the host family's home must pick up the student from the host directly

Independent Travel:

Independent Travel refers to student travel not chaperoned by the student's host parents, natural parents, SRS Homestay or another Approved Adult. Independent Travel may only be approved IF:

1. The Student is 18+, and
2. The travel is for a positive, reasonable purpose that enriches the Student's study abroad experience
3. The Travel Request is approved by the host parents, the natural parents, and the SRS Homestay Support Staff and Director.
4. Students who are 18 years or older who have an approved travel request may stay in hotels or Airbnb accommodations. Their travel request must include this information and be approved.



VIOLATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Violations of this policy are considered serious as they impact the safety and wellbeing of students. Violation of the policy will result in consequences including suspension of travel privileges and possible dismissal from the school and the SRS Homestay program. The period of travel privilege suspension will depend on the severity of the violation. Typical periods of suspension are one month for minor offenses and one semester (or up to one year) for severe offenses.

In addition, SRS Homestay and the Student's host family will determine the appropriate follow-up education and consequences depending on the severity of the violation. Students who violate the policy will be provided with and required to sign a written version of the policy and a contract recommitting to program rules. Students who refuse to recommit to program rules following a violation of travel policy may be dismissed from the school and the program.

Factors that affect the severity of the violation are:

1. Whether the Student notified SRS Homestay staff and their host families that they were traveling without approval
2. Whether the student-maintained communication with their hosts and program team members during their unapproved travel
3. The distance and length of time of the unapproved travel
4. The nature of activities during the unapproved travel
5. The number of occurrences of unapproved travel
6. The reasons the travel was not approved
7. Other parties involved in the unapproved travel

Violations of this policy must be documented by SRS Homestay team members as soon as possible. SRS Homestay team members should contact their supervisor immediately when violations of this policy occur.

Home Tour Checklist

Your host family will show you how to use the kitchen, bath and laundry facilities before the first use! Please complete the following chart with your host family shortly after your arrival.

Room	Shown (Y/N)	Written Instructions/Usage Restrictions
Bathroom		
Toilet		
Towels - where/how to hang wet towels		
Shower - include shower doors/curtain and drain		
Sink - how to keep dry,		
Where to store personal belongings		
Kitchen		
Microwave		
Oven/Stove		
Area in fridge/pantry for the student's own foods		
Internet		
Emergency Procedures Home address How to call 911		
Laundry Washer, Dryer, Where to hang hand-washed clothing, where to hang dry clothing		
House Keys/Alarm Code Provide front door key and show how to enter and lock up safely. Show how to use alarm if you have one		

House Rules and Expectations Worksheet

The student and host family should go through this worksheet together shortly after the student's arrival. It should be reviewed occasionally and revised if necessary. This can help prevent any misunderstandings that can result from a lack of communication or miscommunication. The student and host family should each keep a copy of the completed form.

Host Family Schedule

Host families please discuss your typical weekday and weekend schedule with your student. (Examples: Wake up, Leave for school, dinner, etc.)

Task	Time	Weekday or Weekend	Frequency (Daily Weekly, Monthly)

Meals

Meal	Time	Eaten Together/ Individually	Prepared By Host/ Student	Comments
Breakfast				
Lunch				
Dinner				
Snacks				
Weekend Breakfast				
Weekend Lunch				
Weekend Dinner				

School Lunch:

- Will the student pack or buy school lunch? (Note: If the student chooses to buy school lunch, it is the student's responsibility to pay for his/her own lunch).
- If packing a lunch for school, who makes the lunch?
- Where can food be eaten? (Note: SRS does not permit students to eat in their room)

Kitchen Chores:

- Who sets the table?
- Who clears the table?
- Who does the dishes?
- Who cooks the meals?
- Who cleans up after snacks or self prepared meals?

Laundry:

- Who will wash the student's laundry (sorting, washing, drying, folding, ironing, hand washing)?
- Where should dirty laundry be put?
- Are there set days when laundry should be done?
- Is there a special place for hand-wash items to be washed/dried?

Bathroom:

- Is there a morning bathroom schedule?
- What is considered a "long time" to spend in the bathroom?
- Is it okay to have water on the floor? On the counter?
- What should be used to clean up water?
- Is there a bathroom cleaning schedule?
- What cleaning supplies are needed? Where are they stored?

Bedroom:

- Where should trash be placed? Where should trash be taken when the can is full?
- Who is responsible for cleaning the student's room? How often?
- Where are cleaning supplies located and how to use them - vacuum cleaner, dust cloth, etc.?

Additional House Rules and Expectations:

- What time does the student need to be ready to leave for school?
- What time will the family pick the student up? Where should the student wait to be picked up?
- Does the student have different school related sports or activities that they will need to schedule transportation?
- Other:

- Other:

- Other:

Understanding Expectations

One helpful exercise a host family and student can do together is to talk through the following topics together.

	Student	Host Family
How does a student show respect to their parents in your country?		
What does politeness look like in your culture?		
If you were being thoughtful, what is an example of something you would do?		
In your country, what would it look like to be considerate?		
Inconsiderate - what does inconsiderate look like?		
What would be an example of disrespect in your country?		
Have you ever done "volunteering"? What would volunteering look like in your country?		
In your country, what is the main role or expectation of a son/daughter?		