

Atlanta Homestays



170 Johnson Ferry Road, NW Atlanta, GA 30328 Tel. 678 886-4488 FAX 404 460-1435
Email: info@atlantahomestays.com

Guidelines

for hosting

International Students

Hosting an international student is one of the most stimulating experiences a family can have. It helps bring the world together - one friendship at a time. Sharing your home and living together as a family develops a special bond between people of many nations.

Lory Wilson

Making the commitment to host International students is a big step. *Atlanta Homestays* will try to accommodate you with students that will fit in with your life-style and be a pleasant experience.

REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for hosting International students have been established as follows:

- **Private room with a bed, dresser, night stand, desk.**
- **Light American breakfast and dinner.**
- **English must be spoken in the home.**
- ***Atlanta Homestays* must visit the home.**
- **Use of laundry facilities.**
- **Bed and Bath linens.**

It is very important for hosts to notify *Atlanta Homestays* of any changes in the home, such as marital status, children, pets, smoking habits, etc.

All placements, continuation and changes of homestay must be approved by *Atlanta Homestays*. If a student leaves, or changes schools, and wishes to continue living with the host, arrangements must be made with *Atlanta Homestays*. Non-compliance with this policy may result in a host being dropped from the homestay program.

STUDENT ARRIVAL

The length of each homestay is indicated on the students' homestay application.

As soon as arrival information is received, *Atlanta Homestays* will notify the host. Students will have been given your name, address and phone number, and they will arrange transportation to your home. If you hear from them before arrival, please notify *Atlanta Homestays*.

Within the first three days after student's arrival, *Atlanta Homestays* will meet with the student and the host. Payment and homestay guidelines will be discussed.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus schedules and train information should be readily available for your students. Explain the route to school, bus number, amount of fare and the necessity of having the exact change, token or Marta card. Taking a "dry run" from home to the school before the first day of class would be helpful.

PAYMENT

Payment for the first week of homestay is \$175.00 (Full Homestay), \$130.00 (Bed&Breakfast) and is paid by the student upon arrival. Subsequent payments will be made by the student weekly, unless other arrangements are made.

HOLIDAYS

The student will advise you of school holidays and closings.

WELCOME TO A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

When students arrive, welcome them warmly - make them feel at home. They often feel lost, disoriented and are very tired. With the stress of making travel plans, leaving their family, preparing forms, jet lag, going through customs, the strain of speaking English - it's easy to understand why students need time to rest and unwind.

Initially, just show the students to their room, show them how to use the shower and tell them when meals are served. You can help them develop a sense of security by waiting until they are rested. Then, introduce house rules and routines.

RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The students' way of life in their native countries is probably quite different from ours. You need to discuss your house rules as soon as they are rested and comfortable. Show them how to use the kitchen appliances, TV, VCR, etc., and make them aware of any restrictions you may have. Discuss any subject you feel necessary - telephone usage, access to refrigerator, food or beverages not accessible to them, smoking policy, laundry procedures, etc.

Explain to the students the importance of letting you know if they will be late or miss any meals. Dinner should be a time for sharing the day's events. This is a time when they can practice their English. Meals should be nourishing and the menus should be varied. Ask your students if they have a food preference and if they would like to prepare a meal from their country for you. Invite them to accompany you to the grocery store.

There should be no curfew. However, it would be appropriate for you to ask students approximately what time they will return home, so you won't worry. You want the students to feel at home, so a relaxed atmosphere is important.

Never discuss your personal or financial problems with the students!

SHARE YOUR LIFE-STYLE

Students should be treated as part of your family, not as guests. Talk about the things you enjoy: movies, music, gardening, sports, etc. Ask your students about their families, countries and interests. Include them in your social and recreational activities whenever possible.

Encourage students to use a Foreign Language/English dictionary -- most have one. You may find students smiling and agreeing with whatever you say, only to discover later that very little was understood. If they have not done something you asked them to do, make certain that they understood you. It may be necessary to rephrase what you said. Try to speak slowly and clearly, with few adverbs and adjectives. It is tiring, at first, for students to hear and speak English continuously. However, encourage students to talk no matter how poor their English.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

You cannot assume that the American norm for good manners, proper behavior, and family rules is the same for each student. They may do something that annoys you, yet it may be perfectly acceptable in their country. Discuss these differences without being critical and let them know when certain behavior is unacceptable in your home. Some students are not in the habit of saying "thank you" or "please." This is not meant as disrespect, but may be a cultural difference. Appreciation is shown in different ways. The more you communicate - the more you will learn from each other.

Some personal habits will differ from country to country, such as bathing, shaving, and laundry. Discuss these if necessary, and explain our customs. We sometimes assume too much, and we should take nothing for granted.

There are many cultures where physical contact in the form of hugs and kisses is not practiced. Don't be surprised. Explain that this is one way we show concern and caring, but be perceptive to the students' reaction and do not push for a reciprocal expression.

CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is a normal reaction of people who have to function in a society different from their own. Individuals differ greatly in the degree culture shock affects them.

Some of the symptoms can be depression, withdrawal, appearing irritated and angry, criticizing, gaining weight, or sleeping too much. These are common reactions. Be alert to signs and talk to your students about it. They may not understand culture shock. A little understanding and support from you are very important. Sometimes they just need time alone - try to understand.

**If you or your students have any questions, please call Lory Wilson at
*Atlanta Homestays. (678 886-4488)***