

# Sea to Sky School District #48



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

2017/2018

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## WELCOME FROM THE INTERNATIONAL MANAGER

Welcome to all our International students to the beautiful district of Sea to Sky, encompassing three extraordinary communities: Squamish, home of the Chief; Whistler, where you can ski, hike and ride Whistler-Blackcomb; and spectacular Pemberton, gateway to Joffre Lakes Provincial Park and some of the best mountain biking trails you will find.

The International Student Program is a very special program for our District. It brings together students from all over the world to connect in friendship and in appreciation of different cultures and languages. We care about our international students and want to ensure that every student has a rewarding, enriching experience while making many fond memories.

In SeatoSky, you will discover the “real” Canadian experience. Take advantage of your time here, not only be successful in your studies, but also to participate in our community. Sharing your culture and values with the local community members is just as important as learning about Canadian culture and values.

Congratulations on taking the step to pursue your studies here in our District.

Yours sincerely,

Amy Shoup  
Manager, International  
School District 48, Sea to Sky

## KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM

The office is located in the Sea to Sky School Board building: 37866 2nd Avenue, Squamish  
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#### **Homestay Coordinator, Squamish**

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#### **Clerical Assistant**

Ms. Janet Smillie  
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#### **Activities Coordinator**

Mr. Brent Goodman  
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[bgoodman@iepsd48.gmail.com](mailto:bgoodman@iepsd48.gmail.com)

## WEBSITES

#### **International Program Website:**

[www.high-school-canada.com](http://www.high-school-canada.com)

#### **Facebook**

School District 48: Sea to Sky International Education Program

#### **Don Ross Middle School**

[www.sd48donross.org](http://www.sd48donross.org)

#### **Whistler Secondary**

[www.sd48whistlersecondary.org](http://www.sd48whistlersecondary.org)

#### **Pemberton Secondary**

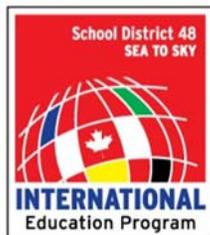
[www.sd48pemberton.org](http://www.sd48pemberton.org)

#### **Learning Connections**

[www.seatoskylearningconnections.com](http://www.seatoskylearningconnections.com)

#### **School District 48**

[www.sd48seatosky.org](http://www.sd48seatosky.org)



## STUDENTS AND HOMESTAY

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### FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The Sea to Sky International Student Homestay program tries to ensure students and families are well matched. Your new family is excited you are becoming part of their family and they want to ensure you enjoy your stay in Canada. Living in Canada with a Canadian family will be different at times from your own family and culture. To make the most of your Canadian living experience, come to Canada with an open mind. Be prepared to participate fully in family life and share in the responsibilities of being a family member.

Try everything at least once! Participate with your family in our many outdoor activities. You may simply spend time together watching movies or television, helping to prepare a meal or playing a game with the children in the family. It is important not to spend too much time in your room.

Your family will ask you to join them in family social events and recreational outings. Some special activities might have extra costs associated with them and you are expected to assist in bearing the costs. If you choose not to participate in the activity, then you and the homestay parents should make alternate arrangements that are acceptable to everyone.

If there are young children in the family, treat the children respectfully and kindly. At the same time, don't be afraid to tell younger children to leave your room saying, "I have to study now" or "I need some rest."

As an international student, you are expected to contribute to the routine operation of the household. If there's a problem, you should talk with your homestay parents first and try to resolve the problem as you would at home with your own parents. If you feel you are not being understood, you should contact the Homestay Coordinator. Most issues can be resolved with open and honest communication.

Always ask your homestay parents' permission before making plans. Be sure to tell them:

- Where you would like to go
- How you will get there
- Who you will be with
- When you will be home

It is important to return on time or advise your homestay family by telephone if you will be late or if you are changing plans. Your homestay family may refuse your request for permission to participate in certain activities. Reasons for their refusal could include concern for your safety or a conflict with their plans.

The first few weeks living in a new family might, at times, be challenging. You may feel homesick and frustrated with your new environment and the language. This is natural. Give yourself time to adjust to your new surroundings!

### CHORES

Most Canadian children participate in the running of the household, which means they will have assigned chores. You might also be required to help out with these daily chores. Families appreciate it when you volunteer to keep your room clean and do general chores, such as setting the table, loading the dishwasher, or helping to prepare dinner. Depending on the family you are living with you might be asked to do your own laundry. Your homestay family will help you with this and show you how the washer and dryer works.

## **MEALS**

Canadian families eat three meals a day and some snacks. Depending on how busy your family is, they might want you to prepare your own breakfast and lunch. If you plan to be away at a meal time then food will be made available for you to prepare or to heat in the microwave. If your homestay mom or dad is away at meal time, ask them what you should prepare for dinner.

During the school week, breakfast is often a light meal. Cereal, toast, fruit and yoghurt are common choices. More elaborate breakfasts, usually prepared on weekends, can involve eggs, bacon or pancakes. Drinks for breakfast can be coffee, tea, juice, or milk.

Most students take their lunch to school. Often this is a sandwich, or perhaps some leftovers in a container, fruit, raw vegetables, or cookies. Most schools have a microwave, which is accessible for students to use to warm meals. Always fill and take your water bottle!

The evening meal in Canada is the most important meal of the day. Families like to have dinner together and connect with each other and discuss their day. The evening meal is the biggest meal and may include meat, fish, cooked vegetables, rice, potatoes, salad, and sometimes dessert. It is the student's responsibility to be home for dinner on time. Evening meals in Canada are usually between 6 and 7 pm.

Your homestay family will ask you what foods you like and dislike, so that they can try to meet your needs. Often your homestay family will ask you to accompany them to the grocery store so you can see the types of foods available in Canada. It is not considered impolite in Canada to refuse a food you do not like. At meals you will be served a reasonable portion on your dinner plate. If you feel the portions are too small, speak to your homestay family. If you are asked if you want more food and are still hungry, say yes. It is not considered impolite for a young person in Canada to ask for additional food if still hungry. You might offer to share your culture by preparing a special dish from your home country for your Canadian family.

## **ALLERGIES AND MEDICATIONS**

Make a list of any allergies you have to give to your homestay family on arrival. It also helps to give them a list of any medicine including any supplements or homeopathic medicines you take regularly.

## **CELL PHONES AND THE FAMILY PHONE**

You should have a cellular phone at all times with minutes and/or data on it so that your host family may reach you at all times and vice versa. You are encouraged to have your own laptop, too, in order to be able to communicate. This is all to maintain communication with your homestay family, natural family and the International Program. Please limit your time with technology to allow time for study and opportunities to interact with your homestay family.

If you use the household phone try to confine your calls to between 9 am and 9 pm, but not during dinner. Be sure to keep calls to no more than 15 to 20 minutes so that others can use the telephone. Learn how to answer the phone correctly and take messages.

## **DRIVING, BUSES AND WALKING**

Canadian families teach their children to be independent at an early age. Please do not rely on your host family to drive you everywhere. School District busses will take students to and from school if they live beyond the "walk limit". Your homestay family will show you the bus schedule and explain where to get on and off the bus. Your homestay parent should be available to drive you to activities at the school or in the community if you make polite and reasonable requests in advance. Discuss your plans and your upcoming activities and work with your homestay family to share rides with other students to and from activities. You should not ever walk alone in the dark. Always wear bright clothing and stay off the road at night.

## CANADIAN BATHROOMS

You will be sharing a bathroom with a busy family. Find out what your family's expectations are concerning the use of the bathroom. Here are some general guidelines:

- Your family will provide necessary bathroom items such as toilet paper, soap, and towels. You will need to supply your own personal items such as toothpaste, shampoo, and lotion.
- Bathroom floors in Canada don't have drains; so keep water in the basin and the bathtub. Place the shower curtain inside the bathtub when showering.
- Generally, a shower should last no more than 8 minutes and showers should not be taken late at night when everyone is asleep.
- Remove all loose hair from the bottom of the sink or the tub before leaving the bathroom so as not to clog the drain. Put it in a wastebasket. Try to leave the bathroom clean and dry after you use it.
- Feminine hygiene products should always be wrapped in tissue and placed in the wastebasket, but never flushed down the toilet.

## DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

Each experience is unique. You may or may not face some predictable challenges at one point or another during your time with your homestay family. Some students might suffer from several overlapping conditions during the first few days:

- **Jet lag:** You will have likely travelled through multiple time zones to reach the Sea to Sky area. You may suffer from the effects of jet lag including sleeping problems, drowsiness at the wrong time of day, loss of appetite, general fatigue, and disorientation.
- **Culture Shock:** There are various predictable phases to this experience. Please refer to the chapter "Coming to Terms with Culture Shock" at the end of this document so that you are better able to understand your experience with this common problem.
- **Difficulties with communication:** Problems with communication occur with every country and every level of English proficiency. Remember, you will have some difficulty adjusting to our language, including its rhythm, intonations and slang terms.
- **Homesickness:** Many students become 'homesick', at some point during their stay. Symptoms may include crying, wanting to be alone, wishing to go home, not liking school, and not communicating with your homestay family. Please understand that homesickness is not a rejection of your new family and country but is a natural human longing for the familiar.
- **Loneliness:** Some students may feel very alone in this strange new situation. You may feel like an outsider in the community, in the school, or even in your new home. Limited English ability contributes to feelings of isolation.
- **Mood swings:** Even though you come from another country, you are still a teenager and are dealing with the physical and mental changes that all of us go through during this stage of life!

Some students, attempting to cope with the change in their lives, will spend hours on the computer, email or Skype with family and friends in their home country in an attempt to stay connected to familiar surroundings. If you are suffering from distressing feelings, talk with your homestay family and the Homestay Coordinator. They will coach you through this period and help you become involved in activities to alleviate these feelings of loneliness.

Please make every effort to make your homestay experience a success. In the unlikely event that you feel the match is incompatible, and every effort to improve the situation has failed, then another homestay will be arranged for you.

## **IMPORTANT PROGRAM RULES: *You will receive a Code of Conduct at Orientation time.***

- You must not use alcohol or illegal drugs.
- You are not permitted to drive or rent cars or motorized vehicles.
- You are not allowed to stay overnight anywhere without preapproved adult supervision.
- You are not permitted to get tattoos or piercings during your stay in our program.
- If you commit an offence under Canadian law, you will be dealt with by the RCMP and/or Immigration Canada, as necessary.

You are not allowed to have another student of the opposite sex in your bedroom without the permission of your homestay parents and you must always leave the bedroom door open during this time. Mixed gender sleepovers are not permitted.

- Immigration Canada does not permit high school students holding a visitor's visa or study permit to hold paying jobs in Canada.
- It is against the law for students under the age of 19 to buy cigarettes.

## **DISMISSAL POLICIES**

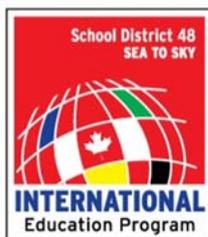
An international student may be dismissed from the program for a number of reasons. These include:

- A failure to abide by program rules, including following SD 48 International and School District Codes of Conduct (you will receive the Code of Conduct at Orientation)
- A failure to obey a Canadian law
- Exhibiting behaviour that puts at risk the personal safety of the student or of others

**School:** If after warnings a student continues to act in ways that do not align with the School District and School Codes of Conduct, there will be consequences.

**Homestay:** If after warnings a student continues to disobey the homestay guidelines, there will be consequences.

**Damage to Property:** If a student neglectfully or willfully damages property at home, in the school, or in the community, the student's natural parents will be notified and billed for the amount.



## MEDICAL INSURANCE AND ILLNESS

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All international students will have adequate medical insurance coverage for the full period of their stay in Canada. The program arranges this insurance as part of the application process.

### MEDICAL INSURANCE

A private global insurance company called *Guard Me* provides full medical coverage for you. During orientation or at school during the first two weeks, you will receive your insurance card with a brochure explaining your coverage. Medical coverage for all students begins the day you arrive in Canada. Students who enroll throughout the school year will begin coverage upon arrival in Canada.

### STUDENT ILLNESS

You should tell your homestay parent immediately if you are feeling ill. Any student who is sick should stay at home and rest. If any condition persists more than a few days, see a doctor. Homestay parents should assist their student in seeking the appropriate medical attention if necessary. Homestay parents must also advise the Program Manager, Homestay Coordinator and the school of any incident of illness.

The application process requires you to list all medicines and medications you are taking and for what condition. You may find Canadian medical practices and medicines different from your home country. If you arrive in Canada with homeopathic and/or naturopathic remedies, please ensure you tell your homestay parents what they are for, how often you are taking them and what the active ingredient is. Some of these remedies could have an adverse reaction if taken with prescription medications you might receive in an emergency.

### PROCEDURES FOR MEDICAL CARE

If you require medical care, ask your family to take you to the closest appropriate treatment center. This will often be a walk in clinic or the hospital emergency room if the clinic is closed. The walk in clinics in our communities are familiar with our insurance company and should bill *Guard Me* directly so you should not be required to pay up front. Private doctors will require you to pay in advance for service. Please remember to carry your *Guard Me* medical card at all times.

Your homestay parent should always contact the Program Manager or Homestay Coordinator and describe the nature of your illness and doctor or hospital visit so an official report can be made to the agency in your home country and to your natural parents.

### PROCEDURES FOR A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

In the event of a medical emergency or accident, homestay parents must take the student to the hospital immediately. Contact the Program Manager or Homestay Coordinator and advise them of the incident. Call the number for Emergency Assistance on the back of the student's insurance card to alert *Guard Me* of the emergency and to activate the claim. **Never delay seeking medical attention in an emergency.**

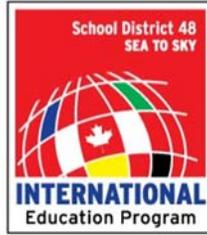
## HOW TO MAKE A CLAIM

Some private doctors or health care services outside the community might require you to pay for these services up front. Always contact the emergency Assistance number on the card and let them know you are seeking medical care. You will need to submit the receipt for the services along with a claim form available on the *Guard Me* website. **Original receipts must be included.** Claims must be submitted within 90 days of the service received. Monies reimbursed will be in Canadian dollars only. See the brochure for more details on how to claim or contact the Administrative Assistant in the International Department.

## TRAVELING OUTSIDE OF CANADA

If you travel outside of Canada (except to your home country) while enrolled in the Sea to Sky International program you will have coverage for all eligible medical expenses. If you are travelling to the US you will have coverage for up to 30 days only. The total out of country coverage including the 30 days to the US must not exceed more than 50% of the length of the policy.

For more information on Insurance please visit the *Guard Me* [www.guard.me/index.php](http://www.guard.me/index.php)



## STUDY PERMIT EXTENSION AND CHANGING STATUS

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### APPLYING FOR A STUDY PERMIT WHILE IN CANADA

If you are in Canada on a Visitor's Visa and wish to apply for a Study Permit you may be able to do this from within Canada. Certain foreign nationals may apply and receive a study permit from within Canada. These include minor children at the primary and secondary level and students who have completed a short term of study. You will be asked to supply the Designated Learning Institutions or DLI . Please note that all primary and secondary schools in Canada are automatically designated. They do not appear on the list. Applicants for primary and secondary schools will not need a DLI number on the application form.

### EXTENDING YOUR STAY/CHANGING THE CONDITIONS OF YOUR STAY

If you wish to extend your stay in Canada as a student, you must complete the Application to Change Conditions or Extend Your Stay in Canada.

First you should check the expiry date on your study permit, and make sure to apply before that date. You should apply for renewal at least 30 days before the current permit expires.

### APPLY ONLINE

To apply online you must have access to a scanner or camera to create electronic copies of the documents for uploading. Have a valid credit card for payment.

To apply online you should download the package and guide at:

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/study-extend.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/study-extend.asp)

### APPLY ON PAPER

The package includes the application guide and all the forms you will need to fill out. You may download the paper application:

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/study-extend.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/study-extend.asp)

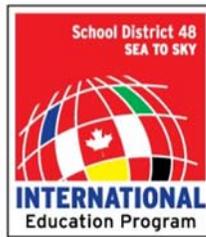
### STUDY PERMITS

If you apply for a renewal of your study permit, and the permit expires before you receive an answer, you may continue to study in Canada under the same conditions until you receive a decision.

You should apply to renew your study permit if you intend to travel outside Canada and your permit will expire while you are travelling.

You may not extend your study permit beyond the expiry date on your passport.





## STUDYING IN CANADA

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### SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF CANADIAN EDUCATION

You may find some differences between the educational system in your home country and that in Canada. Here are some of the general characteristics of the Canadian educational system:

- Students in Canada are encouraged to ask questions for clarification, to challenge information, or to extend thinking. The philosophy of education in Canada includes the idea that students should be involved in an interactive learning process; that is, they should not sit passively and accept or memorize what the teacher says.
- Teacher-student relationships tend to be relatively informal compared to those in many countries.
- Group work is an important part of the school learning; it values cooperation, tolerance, and compromise.
- Discussion is often used as a means of teaching. Students are expected to be able to discuss in order to develop their ideas and opinions and to present them for reactions. One of the main objectives of a discussion is to arrive at a mutually satisfactory understanding or a solution to a problem.
- Students learn not just information, but how to arrive at conclusions, to solve problems, and to analyze. As part of this process, students are often asked how they got an answer, rather than just what the answer is.
- Plagiarism which is submitting the work of another person as your own or copying the work of another person and presenting it as your own is a serious offence.

### TIPS FOR STUDYING IN CANADA

- Don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand. Teachers expect to be questioned. Make sure you understand assignments that are given. If you're quiet, that will be taken as a sign of understanding. Teachers are usually available before and after school for questions and extra help.
- Be on time for class. If you can't attend or be on time, notify the school in advance and explain the reason. If you miss classes, see the teacher the next day to find out what was missed.
- You will probably find the classes more informal in Canada. You will also have to organize your own time since you won't be given a schedule to cover non-class time. Plan your time carefully, balancing schoolwork, English practice, exercise and fun.
- Hand in all assignments on the day they are due. If you are not able to finish your assignment on time, talk to your teacher before it is due. If you miss any assignments or exams, see the teacher and ask if there is any way to make up.
- Organize your notes in a binder.

## **MAKE FRIENDS AND IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH**

Canadian students socialize at school. The best way to make friends and to improve your English is to get involved. Join school clubs such as choir, drama, band and sports teams. Join school trips and get involved in community activities outside of school at the local community centers.

Consider getting involved in activities through a variety of ways. Join the community sports teams, take part in volunteer activities and take extracurricular courses in art and music.

## **SCHOOL STAFF**

School Staff are more than willing to help you adjust to the new learning environment in a friendly and supportive way.

**Principal:** The Principal is in charge of programs at the school and works closely with staff, students, and parents.

**Vice-Principal:** The vice principal assists the principal of the school in maintaining the orderly operation of the school and discipline.

**Teachers:** You will have different teachers for different subjects. You may call the teacher Mr. Ms. or Mrs. as appropriate and the person's last name (e.g., Mr. Smith), rather than "teacher."

**ELL Teachers:** They help students learn English.

**Teacher-Librarians:** They will help you access resources in Internet and learn about books, tapes, videos, and magazines.

**Counsellors:** They will assist in planning your educational program and applying to University. Counsellors also can tell you about other services and programs provided by the school district and in your community.

There may be school specialists who work with teachers and help students learn. These people include:

**Office secretaries:** They will assist in registering students, do the school's office work, and answer phone calls.

**Teaching Assistants:** They help teachers in the classroom.

**Resource Teachers:** They help students who require additional assistance.

**Custodians:** They keep schools clean and make sure buildings are operating safely and properly.

## THE GRADUATION PROGRAM

To graduate, students will require 80 credits total, with a minimum of 16 at the grade 12 level, and 28 elective course credits. 52 credits are required from the following:

<b>REQUIRED COURSES</b>	
<b>SUBJECT AREA</b>	<b>MINIMUM CREDITS</b>
Language Arts 10, 11 and 12	12
Social Studies 10	4
Social Studies 11 or 12	4
Science 10	4
Science 11 or 12	4
Mathematics 10 (Principals, Applied, or Essentials)	4
Mathematics 11 or 12 (Principals, Applied, or Essentials)	4
Physical Education 10	4
Two career Education courses	8
Arts Education 10, 11 or 12 and/or Applied Design Skills, and Technologies 10, 11 or 12	4
	52
<b>ELECTIVE COURSES</b> Students must earn at least 28 elective credits for Grade 10-12 courses, with a minimum of 16 credits at the Grade 12 level.	28
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>80 credits</b>

The content and learning outcomes for Grad Transitions and Planning 10 have been distributed into new required Career Education courses and other required curriculum.

### PROVINCIAL EXAMS AND ASSESSMENT

The new Grade 10-12 curriculum is available in draft for use and feedback in the 2016/2017 and the 2017/2018 school years. Current Grade 10 and 11 Provincial exams do not align with the new curriculum that teachers may be using. However, current Grade 10/11 Provincial exams will continue to be available until June 2017 for students who have completed associated course work by June 30, 2016.

Students do not take the new exams if they took the “old” course (or completed the courses before the 2016-17 school year).

The expectation is that students complete EITHER a Math 10 provincial exam OR the new numeracy exam and EITHER a Language Arts 12 provincial exam OR the literacy exam, based on when they took the courses

Science 10, Social Studies 11 and Language Arts 10 \*(and their equivalent) provincial exams will not be replaced with another form of provincial assessment. These courses will now be assessed in the classroom, as happened for other courses. The Ministry is working to provide support materials for curriculum and classroom assessment.

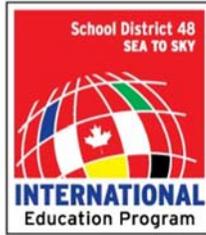
Math 10 exams will be replaced with the new numeracy. The Language Arts 12 group of exams (EN 12, EFP12, Com 12) will not be replaced until after the new curriculum is implemented in 2018/19 and the new provincial Literacy exam is implemented. The Language Arts 12 group of provincial exams will remain in place as is, and will continue to be 40% of the final course mark for LA11. This is also the case for French Immersion and Programme francophone

The new numeracy exam will be implemented 2017/2018 school year

The new Literacy exam will be implemented in 2018/19 school year, along with the new 10-12 curriculum

If you’re planning to continue your education beyond secondary school graduation, make sure you have all the courses and prerequisites you need. Careful planning in Grade 10, 11, and 12 will ensure you have all the courses and credits you need. Don’t forget that post-secondary institutions often require you to complete specific courses to get into certain programs.





## LIVING IN CANADA

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### BANKING AND MONEY

There are 100 cents in one dollar. Coins used in Canada are \$0.05 ("nickel"), \$0.10 ("dime"), \$0.25 ("quarter"), \$1.00 ("dollar," "buck," "loonie"), and \$2.00 ("toonie"). Common bills (paper money) are \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100. The most convenient and widely used bills are \$20 and under.

### BANKING

You will arrive with your banking arrangements completed in your home country and with a credit card and debit card. If you need assistance with banking, please ask your homestay family to help you.

### CELL PHONES AND SIM CARDS

Please ask your homestay to assist you with acquiring a cell phone or cell phone plan while participating in the program.

### TRANSPORTATION

**School Buses:** In most cases, school buses will pick you up at a designated spot to take you to school. This is a free service. The school bus schedule is on the School District website at [www.sd48.bc.ca](http://www.sd48.bc.ca). The school bus will come to the school in the afternoon to take you home.

**City Buses:** Buses pick up people at bus stops only. People get on the bus at the front door and get off at the back door. If you want the bus driver to let you off at the next bus stop, pull the cord above your seat. In Vancouver, you need exact change, a pre-paid ticket or a monthly pass. There is no extra cost to transfer (within 90 minutes) from one bus to another. You must ask for a transfer from the driver when you pay your fare.

**Skytrain:** The Vancouver area has SkyTrain (rail) and SeaBus (boat) as well as buses. You can transfer from buses to SkyTrain or SeaBus, or from these services to buses, without paying again (within 90 minutes). In order to do this, you must keep the paper transfer. Some long trips cost more.

**Taxi:** Taxis are convenient, but they can be expensive. There are taxi services in Squamish and Whistler. You may order a taxi by telephone. Look on line or in the phone book under "Taxicabs." The meter shows how much to pay. People usually tip the driver (give the driver more money (usually \$2-3) than the fare).

## **ELECTRICITY**

Electricity in Canada is supplied at an altering current of 110 volts. The frequency of the electric current is 60 Hz as opposed to 50Hz in some countries. You may buy transformers or adapters to use the electrical appliances that you take along with you to Canada. Some electric appliances have a built-in adapter. The plugs that are used most often have two parallel, flat pins.

## **TELEPHONE**

Households pay a fixed monthly fee for local calls. Long distance charges are billed separately. Always ask before you make a long distance call from a home phone.

## **POSTAL SERVICES**

You may send mail from a regular post office or a small post office in a store. You can put letters (with stamps) in any red mailbox on the street. It is advisable to check with your local post office before posting mail. Postage stamps may be purchased at post offices, pharmacies, or grocery stores.

## **LIBRARY**

Most communities have public libraries. You may borrow books, magazines, and DVDs from these libraries. Public libraries are free. You need a library card to borrow books or other items. You may apply for a card at any library. Bring some identification (ID) with your name and address on it. There is a charge for overdue books.

## **GREETING & MEETING PEOPLE**

A common greeting practice for Canadians is 'hand shaking.' People shake hands when meeting an adult for the first time. If people already know each other, they will generally just say "Hi" or "Hello" the next time they meet. A person leaving others in routine situations will say "Bye" or "See you later." Sometimes, they will say something like, "Talk to you soon" or "I'll talk to you later." An adult may invite you to use their first name after you meet them. This is common. Otherwise, use Mr., Ms. or Mrs. as appropriate and the person's last name. Generally, people stand two to three feet apart from each other when conversing. They use many physical gestures. Canadians maintain eye contact when conversing.

## **ETIQUETTE IN PUBLIC**

- Canadians are generally uncomfortable with physical contact in public places. If you bump into somebody, say "Sorry" or "Excuse me."
- Hold swinging or heavy doors for people who are following you in and out of rooms.
- You may have to adjust your voice level to ensure it's not too loud. Take your cue from the tones of other people.
- Keep to the right when walking or going up escalators.
- If you're the first person on an elevator it's common to hold the door for others, either physically or by pressing the appropriate button on the control panel.
- In most places you wait in line for your turn to be served or take a number if one's available.
- It is impolite to spit in public.

## **MANNERS AT THE TABLE**

- Table manners are Continental in style but are fairly informal.
- The fork is held in the left hand and the knife in the right while eating.
- It is polite to wait until everyone is seated before starting.
- Elbows should not be on the table. It is acceptable to refuse certain foods you do not like or refuse a second helping without insult.
- Food is generally passed around the table. Don't reach over somebody to get to dishes. Ask someone to pass it to you.
- In some cultures people show appreciation for food by making a lot of noises. In Canada, however, making loud noises while eating is considered impolite

## HOLIDAYS AND IMPORTANT DATES IN CANADA

**Individual School Calendars are found on School Websites.**

	2017	2018	Description
New Year's Day	Jan.1	Jan.1	The start of the new year is generally celebrated the evening before, with parties.
Family Day	Feb. 13	Feb. 1	BC Family Day
Good Friday	April 14	March 30	This religious holiday commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus Christ
Easter Monday	April 17	April 2	This religious holiday commemorates Jesus Christ's rise from the dead.
Victoria Day (Monday preceding May 25)	May 22	May 21	Originally the birthday of Queen Victoria, the Queen of Great Britain from 1837-1901, it is now a more general celebration of the monarch's birthday.
Canada Day	July 1	July 1	The day Canada became a nation. Parades, large gatherings, and fireworks are common.
BC Day	Aug. 7	Aug. 6	A holiday for workers in BC – always the first Monday in August
Labour Day (first Monday of September)	Sept. 4	Sep. 3	This is a creation of the labour movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of Canadian workers.
Thanksgiving (second Monday of October)	Oct. 9	Oct. 8	Celebration of and gratitude for the harvest. Families gather and have a festive meal, usually with turkey and pumpkin pie.
Halloween	Oct. 31	Oct. 31	Children dress up in costumes and go door to door, collecting candies.
Remembrance Day	Nov. 11	Nov. 11	In Honour of the end of World War I. The war ended on the 11 <sup>th</sup> hour of the 11 <sup>th</sup> day of the 11 <sup>th</sup> month. Canadians wear poppies in memory of fallen soldiers. There is always a service at school.
Christmas	Dec. 25	Dec. 25	Celebrating the birth of Christ. It is an important family holiday celebrated with gift-giving. People generally take several days away from work, if they can.
Boxing Day	Dec. 26	Dec. 26	The day after Christmas, malls are filled with people either exchanging gifts or buying reduced priced gifts. Families "box up the paper & boxes resulting from the gift opening.

## PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS

Squamish, Whistler and Pemberton are safe communities to live in. Violent crime is not common and not very likely to occur to a resident or student. However, thefts, pick-pocketing, and small crimes sometimes do happen. The most common type of crime is theft. **DO NOT:** leave your purse, backpack, or other property unattended in public places, including school (library, classroom, multi-purpose room, etc.) Do not bring expensive electronics to school. **Never leave expensive bicycles or sports equipment in public places for any length of time, even locked.**

## POLICE / 911

- Call 911- the Police, Fire, and Ambulance emergency number, if you are in trouble or see a crime in progress. You do not need coins if calling 911 from a pay phone.
- Try to relax and speak clearly. Help will arrive sooner if the 911 emergency services know where you are and what is happening. You may tell the operator your language. Interpreters will be available.
- If you are a victim of a crime, no matter how small you should report it to the police.
- Community Police offices are located in the schools and are able to help students with Non-emergency Police related issues.
- Police in Canada are very helpful and can help you to find other services, which help students.

## WALKING

- Be Alert. Try not to be distracted. Walk with confidence and your head up.
- Plan your route. Know where you are going and how to get there. Ask advice for the best routes to events, restaurants, or shopping.
- Be aware of who is and what is around you. **Trust your instincts.** If something doesn't feel right or you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, you are probably right. Avoid the situation. Do not try to override your fear with common sense. It is better to feel foolish and be safe than to be vulnerable.
- Change direction if you feel you are being followed. Go to the nearest store, restaurant, or pay phone.
- At night, walk on well-lit, busy streets. Carry a flashlight with you. Walk with *at least one other person*. Walk in the middle of the sidewalk. Avoid isolated areas such as parks, vacant lots, or poorly lit areas where there are no other people around. Carry a whistle or other personal safety device. Scream or yell loudly if attacked.
- Tell your homestay family where you are going and when you will be back.
- Do not carry large amounts of money. Do not show money in public. Use bank debit cards. Never share your PIN number or let others see it.
- If you carry a wallet or a money clip, keep it in an inside jacket pocket rather than your pants pocket or backpack where it is more vulnerable to pickpockets.
- *Keep your passport in a safe place at home.* Carry a photocopy/photograph of your passport and other ID.
- Don't go out alone or accept rides with strangers. **DO NOT HITCHHIKE.**
- Don't argue or fight if robbed. Yell loudly. (Fight back to protect yourself if you are attacked. Try to stop or distract the attacker so that you can escape) Report to 911 Police immediately.

## JOGGING

- Always wear brightly coloured, reflective clothing. Jog with a partner particularly in secluded areas.
- Don't use headphones when jogging. Listening to the music, you will be less aware of your surroundings and less aware of someone approaching from the side or behind and less able to react to protect yourself.

## BICYCLING

Helmets are mandatory.

- Traffic rules for bikes are the same as for cars. Observe signs and traffic signals.
- Don't ride on the sidewalk or in crosswalks. Use the Bike Trail systems wherever possible.
- Always wear brightly colored, reflective clothing.
- Front and rear lights are required at night.
- Lock your bike at all times. Lock frame and wheel to the bike rack. U-Lock is recommended.

## RELATIONSHIPS

- If you want to stop a friendship, be very clear that you don't want to see the person anymore. If they continue to bother you, tell the Homestay Coordinator about the situation.
- If someone is bothering you, tell him or her to stop. If they continue to bother you then tell somebody nearby.
- Assault is illegal in Canada. A husband may not hit his wife, and a boyfriend may not hit a girlfriend. No one may hit you.

## INAPPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIPS

Sexual Assault or rape is when someone forces or pressures you to have sex or touch you in a sexual way when you do not want to be touched. When we think about sexual assault, many of us think about a stranger attacking in a dark alley. **But most sexual assaults occur with someone we know** (A date, a friend, a housemate etc.). You may feel embarrassed or ashamed, but rape is never your fault. Get medical treatment immediately and report it to Police. Remember **NO means NO**. You have the right to say NO, no matter what has happened. Be direct and assertive. Let the person know your limits clearly and firmly.

## BULLYING

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour among students that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Cyber bullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology . It can be by phone or social media

Examples of cyber bullying include mean text messages or emails, rumours sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles

If you, or someone you know, are being bullied report this immediately to your homestay family, or Homestay Coordinator or teacher. Cyber bullying is illegal in Canada and the police may become involved.

## DEALING WITH ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

If you find yourself in a difficult situation such as a party where Canadian students are drinking or you suspect drug use call your homestay family immediately and ask them to pick you up. Remember that you have signed an agreement not to drink and use drugs in Canada. The legal drinking age in British Columbia is 19 years. Even students who are 19 years of age are prohibited from drinking or buying alcohol while participating in our program. Drinking in public places such as parks, beaches, cars, or on the street is also illegal in Canada.

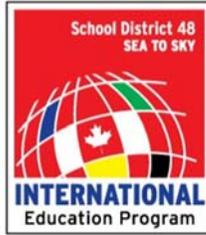
**Never** put yourself at risk by accepting a ride from a driver you suspect has been consuming alcohol, marijuana or drugs.

## SCAMS/FRAUD/PROTECTING YOURSELF, YOUR CREDIT CARDS, YOUR MONEY

Never give or lend money to a person who approaches you on the street, or even at school. People will take advantage of your trust. Some examples are: "I need money for a hotel/bus" or "I lost my wallet; I need money for gas for my car – I'll pay you back tomorrow". Never give cash for a cheque from someone- "I don't have a bank account in the city, can you cash my \$1000 cheque in your ATM?"

When you buy something make sure that you get a receipt and are charged the right amount. Make sure that your card is returned promptly. Never give your credit card information or copies of your card unless you are ready to buy something.





## BEAR AWARE AND PERSONAL SAFETY: Part of Life in Sea to Sky

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- Do not travel alone in known bear habitat or nearby areas.
- Make noise by talking, singing or wearing a bell so a bear can act on their natural instinct to avoid people.
- Be especially alert near berry patches and avoid areas with evidence of bears such as bear tracks, droppings, digging, freshly opened tree stumps and partly consumed animal carcasses.
- Black bears are fairly shy animals. **They will try to avoid confrontation when given the chance. Always give them an escape route.**
- Black bears are on an endless search for food. They follow their noses to seek out easy pickings. **Humans have a responsibility to eliminate unnatural foods.** Bears are opportunistic foragers and will continue to return to a location where food remains available. When the food is removed, the bears will eventually move on.
- Black bears do hibernate for a few months during the winter. In the late fall they extend their hours of foraging up to 20 hours a day in preparation for hibernation. This is in an effort to put on enough fat to get them through the winter.
- Black bears on average weigh around 200 pounds but some adult males can get as big as 500 pounds.
- If you see one in the wild, consider yourself lucky! If you see one on the school ground, you will be in good company; it happens!

### BLACK BEAR ENCOUNTERS

- Never feed bears. It's illegal and the fine is \$1,000 or 6 months in jail.
- Always give bears time and space to avoid you.
- DO NOT RUN – Never run away from a bear as this may trigger an instinct to chase.
- Remain calm. Do not turn your back to a bear.
- Stand tall and slowly back away.
- Bears will sometimes "bluff charge" or "huff & blow" in attempt to drive you away.
- Do not make direct eye-contact with the bear.
- Black bears climb trees when frightened, and will not climb down if humans or dogs are present.
- Loud noises made by radios, whistles, pots and pans banged together can scare away bears.
- Never get between a female bear and her cubs. If you see cubs, the mother will be nearby – leave the area quietly from the same direction you were travelling from.
- Although it is **VERY RARE**, if attacked by a bear, fight back.