

SEA TO SKY SCHOOL DISTRICT #48

Squamish

Whistler

Pemberton

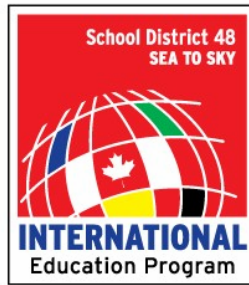
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

School Year 2008/9

The majority of the information in this handbook has been taken from or adapted from the Langley School District Orientation Handbook. Our thanks for their allowing us to reproduce the material.

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WELCOME TO SEA TO SKY INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM

- **WELCOME FROM THE INTERNATIONAL MANAGER**

Welcome to all our International students to the beautiful district of Sea to Sky, encompassing Squamish, the outdoor recreation capital of the world, Whistler, host of the 2010 Winter Olympics, and friendly Pemberton.

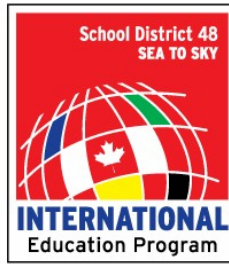
The International Student Program is a very special program for our District. It brings together students from all over the world to connect in friendship and in appreciation of different cultures and languages. We care about our international students and want to ensure all students have a rewarding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

In Sea-to-Sky country, you will find the “real” Canadian experience. Take advantage of your time here to 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
Sea to Sky School District #48



KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

- **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM**

The office is located in the Sea to Sky School Board building.

- Address: 37866 2nd Avenue, Squamish
- Mailing Address: P.O. Box 250, Squamish, B.C. V8B 0A2
- Website: www.high-school-canada.com
- Email: international@sd48.bc.ca
- Phone: (604) 892 5228
- Fax: (604) 892 1038

- **MANAGER**

Ms Amy Shoup
Tel: 604 892 5228 x 134
Cell: 604 815 8758
ashoup@sd48.bc.ca

- **DISTRICT PRINCIPAL**

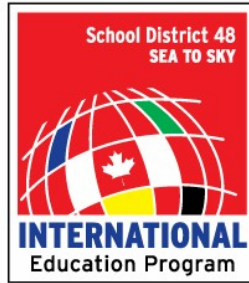
Mr. Mike Weeks
Tel: 604 892 5228
mweeks@sd48.bc.ca

- **CLERICAL ASSSISTANT**

Mrs Deb Kent
Tel: 604 892 5228 x 131
dkent@sd48.bc.ca

- **HOMESTAY SERVICES PROVIDER**

Dynamic Student Support Services Ltd.
Mr. Jeff Larcombe
Cell: 604 815 3885
jarcombe@shaw.ca



MEDICAL INSURANCE

All international students **MUST** have adequate medical insurance coverage for the full period of their stay in Canada. The fee for 10 months of coverage is \$750. As part of the application process, the Clerical Assistant will apply for both private medical insurance and the British Columbia Medical Service Plan (BCMSP) on behalf of the student.

- **PHASE ONE: PRIVATE MEDICAL INSURANCE – FIRST THREE MONTHS**

For students who are staying more than six months, there is a three-month waiting period before BCMSP coverage begins. The Citadel General Assurance Company, through Strategic Financial Services Ltd, provides temporary insurance to cover these three months. Students will sign medical insurance forms either during orientation or at their school within the first 2 weeks of classes. At that time they will be given a brochure explaining what is covered. Private coverage for all students will begin the day the student arrives in the School District. For students who enrol throughout the school year coverage will begin upon arrival in the District. Students who are staying less than six months will continue their coverage with Citadel for the duration of their stay in the District.

CLAIM

When a student goes to the doctor or hospital in Squamish or Whistler, usually the doctor will bill Citadel Insurance directly and the student will not have to pay anything. However, when a student goes to the doctor, a clinic or to the hospital outside of these communities, he/she will be expected to pay and then submit the receipt along with a claim form to the Citadel Assurance Group c/o Strategic Financial Services. **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 or Manager in the International Department.

- **PHASE TWO: BCMSP – AFTER THE FIRST THREE MONTHS**

For students staying longer than six months: after the initial three-month period, students are enrolled in the BC Medical Services Plan. MSP covers the cost of basic medical care within BC, including most physician and hospital services. This medical plan pays the health care service directly. There are no receipts issued or claims required.

CARE CARD

The MSP membership card is called a "Care Card" and the MSP number is called a "Personal Health Number." Each Care Card has the person's name, date of birth, and a personal health number and expiry date.

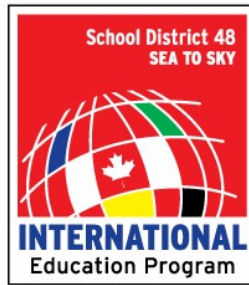
- Personal Health Number – Lifetime –regardless of status
- Only 1 person to use card
- New cards will not be issued until the old care card has expired
- Replacement of Care Card - \$20 fee (if lost, stolen, or damaged). If a Care Card is damaged through normal usage, and you return the damaged card to MSP, a free replacement card may be sent to you. Please see the International Department Clerical Assistant if you lose your card.

The student will receive his/her Care Card from the Clerical Assistant via the school counsellor. You must always take it with you when you visit a doctor or hospital.

TRAVELING OUTSIDE OF CANADA

Hospital, medical, and emergency treatments or expenses incurred outside of Canada are not fully insured. It is strongly recommended that students leaving the province purchase traveler's insurance.

Please visit BC Medical Services Website, www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/msp/infoben/benefits, for more comprehensive information on the coverage.



STUDY PERMIT

● **STUDY PERMIT RENEWAL**

Each year between March and May, or when the study permit expires (at least two months prior to expiry), the International Department helps all our international students needing to extend/renew their study permit if they will be returning for the next school year.

The following are the general steps to renew a Study Permit:

FIRST The International Department Clerical Assistant will meet with the students and have them sign the application. The signature must be same as in the passport. All forms have to be filled by **Black Ink Pen** (not pencil or blue ink pen). Students will be given an original receipt form.

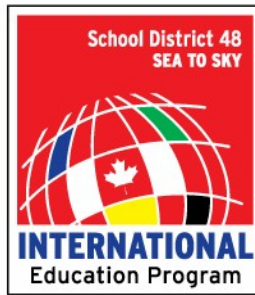
SECOND Students are then required to go to their bank, pay the renewal fee (\$125), and get a bank statement showing sufficient funds. Both documents are to be returned to the International Office.

THIRD The Clerical Assistant sends the application packages to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) Vegreville for processing.

FOURTH The International Department office receives students' new study permits from CIC Vegreville and contacts homestay families or the student to come in to pick up the study permit.

Note:

- The validity of student's study permit cannot exceed the validity of their passport. Students, therefore, need to check **the expiry date of their passport** to ensure their passport will be valid for at least the same amount of time as their requested extension.



HOMESTAY

Note: Some of the information presented in this section was adapted from Schachter, H. (1998). The Essential Guide for Homestay Students. Kingston, ON : ICI Communications Canada Inc.

The homestay program allows students to live with a Canadian family while receiving guidance, care, and social interaction outside of school. Living with a Canadian homestay family provides international students with the opportunity to improve their spoken English skills by using English on a daily basis. It also gives students a chance to learn about Canadian culture, customs, and lifestyle, as well as the responsibility of being a family member in a Canadian context. The intent of our Homestay Program is to find the ideal match for our Students and Homestay Family.

- **HOMESTAY PAYMENT**
 - ✓ The rent period is from the first to the last calendar day of each month.
 - ✓ The homestay fee for 2008/9 is \$800/month for Squamish and Pemberton, and \$900/month for Whistler.
 - ✓ Students will pay the full amount from September – June.
 - ✓ Students **MUST** pay their homestay fee directly to their homestay family on the 1st day of each month.
 - ✓ A very few students have paid all homestay fees upfront to the School Board Office (SBO). In that case the SBO will pay the homestay fee directly to the homestay family on the 1st day of each month.
 - ✓ Early arrivals or departures are pro-rated on a daily rate. Students should pay that directly to the homestay family.
 - ✓ During the summer break, students should pack up their room neatly.

MOVING

- ✓ If the match is not compatible the District reserves the right to move the student without notice. Please refer to the Participation Guidelines on our website at www.high-school-canada.com.
- ✓ The homestay family should reimburse the student on a pro-rated daily rate if the family has requested the student move before the end of the month.
- ✓ All homestay changes must be approved by the Homestay Services Provider.

▪ BEFORE HOMESTAY PLACEMENT

Advise the Homestay Services Provider in advance if:

- ✓ you are a vegetarian or have religious restrictions on what you eat
- ✓ you are allergic to animals
- ✓ you are not comfortable being in a family with young children
- ✓ you have specific preferences

● **EXPECTATIONS: STUDENTS & HOMESTAY FAMILIES**

HOMESTAY FAMILIES

- Homestay hosts will provide nutritional, well-balanced meals on a regular basis.
- Homestay hosts will provide your own room which will be furnished with a bed, dresser, closet, mattress, pillow, and bed linens. Your room will have an adequate study area with a suitable lamp, chair, and desk.
- Homestay parents are willing to provide assistance where possible with homework and assignments.
- Homestay parents are willing to contact the school regarding the students' academic progress and attend parent-teacher meetings as required.
- Homestay hosts will respect students' rights, privacy, and culture including religious, political, and personal beliefs and practices.
- Household members are willing and able to involve the student in various family activities (if the student is willing).
- Host families welcome students to their home and help them adjust and settle into the community.
- Host families attend a minimum of one homestay meeting held at the School Board Office by the Homestay Services Provider throughout the school year. New host families should attend the first one of the year, usually held in late September or early October.

STUDENTS

GENERAL

- Students need to understand that homestay parents are not just landlords. Students are expected to conform to the rules of family life and to contribute to the routine operation of the household. If there's a problem, talk with the host parent or the Homestay Services Provider.
- Do NOT wait a long time before discussing a problem. It's easier to fix when you talk about it early.
- Do not break a house rule in secret.
- Always ask your host 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

Be sure to be back on time. Advise your homestay family by telephone if you will be late or if you want to change your plans.

- Your homestay family may refuse your request for permission to participate in some activities.
 - Reasons for their refusal could include:
 - ✓ Concern for your safety
 - ✓ Conflict with family plans
 - Please respect their concerns.

CHORES

Your host family will welcome you into their home as a member of the family. This means that you will be treated more informally than a "guest" would be. Families appreciate it when you offer to help in the home by keeping your room clean and doing general chores, such as setting the table, loading the dish washer, or helping to prepare dinner. As a family member you may be asked to make your own breakfast or do your own laundry because this is what most family members do. Helping with these chores can also give you the opportunity to talk to a family member, to practice your English, and to be part of the family.

MEALS

- Homestay hosts will provide three meals per day. Most homestay hosts provide breakfast and dinner. Often, you can make a lunch to take to school. If parents happen to be away then food would be made available for you to prepare or to heat in the microwave.
- During the school/work week, breakfast is a quick and light meal. Cereal or toast is common for breakfast. More elaborate breakfasts -usually prepared on weekends- can involve eggs, oatmeal, or pancakes. Drinks for breakfast can be coffee, tea, juice, or milk. Families may prepare breakfast together.

- Most students take a bag lunch – a sandwich, or perhaps some leftovers in a plastic container, along with a drink, fruit, raw vegetables, or cookies. Most schools have a microwave which is accessible for students to use.
- Dinners may include rice, meat, cooked vegetables, salad, and dessert. It is your responsibility to be home for dinner on time. If you are going to be late for dinner, notify the family in advance.
- You are entitled to eat reasonable amounts of food. If you feel the portions are too small, speak to your host family. At the same time, don't hold back unnecessarily. If you are asked if you want more food and are still hungry, say yes. It is not considered impolite to ask for more if you are hungry.
- Your host family will ask you what foods you like and dislike, so that they can try to meet your needs. You can politely inform your host family if you do not like a particular food.
- You might offer to share your culture by preparing a dish for your host family.

INTERACTION WITH THE FAMILY

The way to make the most of your Canadian living experience is to come with an open mind. Come prepared to participate in family life and share in the responsibilities of being a family member.

- Participate in some activity with the family. Do not always go to your room and close the door. Sit in the living room and read a magazine, watch TV/video, help prepare a meal etc. Students are encouraged to participate in family social events and recreational outings with their homestay.
- If you choose to participate in family holidays and/or travel where costs are incurred, you are expected to assist in bearing the costs. If you choose not to participate in the activity, then you and the homestay parents must 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 the children to leave your room saying, "I have to study" or "I need some rest."
- The first few weeks living in a new family will, at times, be difficult. 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.

MEDICAL & INSURANCE

- Make a list of any allergies (food or other allergies) to hand the homestay family on arrival. It also helps to give them a list of any medicine you take regularly.
- If you become ill or injured and require professional care then the homestay parents are authorized to give permission for treatment. Medical insurance policies and emergency medical treatment indemnity agreements will be in place for each student.
- Review your homestay family's insurance policy with respect to your personal belongings while residing in the homestay house (e.g., coverage for expensive equipment, such as computer, stereo, cameras etc.).

TELEPHONE

Telephone can be a major source of conflict in homestay situations. Here are some general guidelines:

- Try to confine your calls to between 9 am and 9 pm, but not during dinner.
- Shortly after your arrival, ask your homestay host for their phone rules. International students should use their own telephone calling card or their own cell. Students are discouraged from using the phone after 10:00 pm except for emergency reasons. If using homestay phone,
 - ✓ get a calling card for long-distance calls so they aren't charged to the family phone.
 - ✓ try to keep calls to no more than 15 to 20 minutes so that others can use the telephone.
 - ✓ respect 'call waiting' signals.

TRANSPORTATION

- Do not rely on your host family to drive you everywhere.
- School District buses will take most students to and from school. Homestay families will show students where to get on and off the bus, and inform them of the bus schedule.
- The homestay parent may be available to drive you to activities at the school or in the community if you make polite and reasonable requests in advance.
- The host family or school will provide transportation to the hospital or to the doctor if you are sick or injured.

BATHROOM USE

Find out what your family's expectations are concerning the use of the bathroom. Here are some general guidelines:

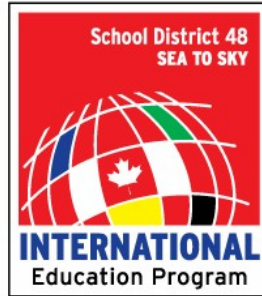
- Your family will provide necessary bathroom items such as toilet paper, soap, and towels but you will need to supply your own personal items such as toothpaste, shampoo, and lotion.
- Bathroom floors don't have drains, so keep the water in the basin and the bathtub. Place the shower curtain inside the bathtub when showering.
- Generally a shower should last no more than 10 minutes. It should not be taken when everybody else is asleep as the noise can awaken them.
- 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.

DEALING WITH PROBLEMS

- If you are having difficulty adjusting to your homestay family, try to communicate your problem and concerns with them. It is not disgraceful to have a conflict. We all have conflicts in our regular families. It is important, however, to be open about the conflict if it is serious and persists. Often problems and misunderstandings can be resolved through communication. If they cannot, your school counselor is always available to help you resolve your problems. Please feel free to talk to the Homestay Services Provider if there are any concerns or problems with your homestay.
- Families and students are expected to make every effort to make the homestay a success. In the unlikely event that families and students are incompatible, and every effort has failed to improve the situation, then another homestay will be arranged.

NOT ALLOWED

- As an international student in Canada on a Study Permit you must not use alcohol or illegal drugs.
 - Immigration Canada does not permit you to take a paying job in Canada.
 - There is a Municipal bus system and the Host parents will provide occasional rides for the student. A vehicle is not required. Students are not permitted to drive homestay parents' cars or rent cars.
 - It is not allowed for international students to stay overnight anywhere without an approved adult's supervision.
 - It is not allowed for students to leave Canada during the school year except to return to their home country during school vacation breaks.
 - It is against the law for students under the age of 19 to buy cigarettes and to smoke. Smoking is not allowed inside the homestay home or on school property.
 - If you commit an offence under Canadian law, then you will be dealt with by the RCMP and Immigration Canada, as necessary, and will be sent home. Homestay parents are not held accountable for offences committed by students.
 - Suspension policy:
 - ✓ *School:* If after repeated warnings you continue to disobey the rules of the school, you will be expelled from the International Student Program and sent home at your parents' expenses without a tuition refund.
 - ✓ *Homestay:* If after repeated warnings you continue to disobey the homestay guidelines, you will be expelled from the International Student Program and sent home at your parents' expenses without a tuition refund.
 - ✓ *Damage to Property:* If you neglectfully or willfully damage property at home, in the school, or in the community, your parents will be notified and billed for the amount.
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STUDYING IN CANADA

• SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF CANADIAN EDUCATION

You may find some differences between the educational/value system in your home country and that in Canada. It is essential for you to understand the appropriate and accepted roles for students in the Canadian educational system. Here are some of the general characteristics of the Canadian educational system:

- Students 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 Asian 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 (submit the work of another person as your own/copy the work of another person and present 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 school work, English practice, and relaxation.
- 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 assignment/quiz/exam, see the teacher and ask if there is any way to make up.
- Organize your notes. Keep all handouts from your teachers.

- **PRACTICING ENGLISH**

International Students have found these useful ways to meet English-speaking people and practice English:

- Practice English as part of the normal household routine:
 - ✓ talk with your homestay family during dinner and relaxation time
 - ✓ join family events and outings
 - ✓ play with children etc.
- Join school clubs (e.g., choir, drama, band) and/or sports teams
- Go on school trips
- Get involved in community activities outside of school at:
 - ✓ local community center
 - ✓ churches
 - ✓ summer camps etc.
- Consider getting involved in activities through a variety of ways:
 - ✓ act as a volunteer
 - ✓ take part in sports
 - ✓ take courses in art, crafts, music etc.

- **SCHOOL STAFF**

School Staff are more than willing to help the international student 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:** Students have different teachers for different subjects. You can call the teacher Mr. Ms. or Mrs. as appropriate and the person’s last name (e.g., Mr. Smith), rather than “teacher.”
 - ✓ **ESL Teachers** help students learn English.
- There may be school specialists who work with teachers and help students learn. These people include:
 - ✓ **Teacher-Librarians**, who help students access resources in Internet and learn about books, tapes, videos, and magazines.
 - ✓ **Counselors**, who assist in planning students’ educational program and applying to University. Counselors also can tell you about other services and programs provided by the school district and in your community.
 - ✓ **Office secretaries**, who assist in registering students, do the school’s office work, and answer phone calls.
 - ✓ **Teaching Assistants**, who help teachers in the classroom.
 - ✓ **Resource Teachers**, who help students who require additional assistance.
 - ✓ **Custodians**, who keep schools clean and make sure buildings are operating safely and properly.

● **GRADUATION PROGRAM**

CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

For students who are entering Grade 10 in September 2004 or later, eighty credits in Grade 10-12 (equivalent to 20 four-credit courses) are required for graduation. The table below gives an overview of what you’ll need to graduate:

REQUIRED COURSES	
SUBJECT AREA	MINIMUM CREDITS
English 10	4
English 11 <u>OR</u> Comm 11	4
English 12 <u>OR</u> Comm 12	4
Social Studies 10	4
Social Studies 11, BC First Nations Studies 12, or Canadian Civics 11 (when available)	4
Science 10	4
Science 11 (Biology/Chemistry/Physics/Earth Sciences (ScTc))	4
Mathematics 10 (Principals, Applied, or Essentials)	4
Mathematics 11 (Principals, Applied, or Essentials)	4

Physical Education 10	4
Planning 10	4
Fine Arts <u>OR</u> Applied Skills 10, 11, <u>OR</u> 12	4
Graduation Transitions	4
ELECTIVE COURSES 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
OVERALL TOTAL	80 credits

Government exams are required for English 10, Science 10, Math 10, Social Studies 11, Civics 11, & English 12 OR Comm 12 OR Technical and Professional Writing 12. A minimum of 16 credits must be at the Grade 12 level, including English 12 OR Comm 12.

For students in Grade 11/12, the Graduation Transition Programs consists of:

- 30 hours of work experience (paid or unpaid – international students cannot be paid)
- a specified number of hours of physical activity
- completion of a Healthy Living Plan
- completion of a graduation transitions plan which will help students to set goals and plan a post-secondary career
- presentation/interview (must be completed by the end of Semester One in Grade 12)

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.

- **WEBSITES**

For more information on **PROVINCIAL EXAMS:**

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/>

Howe Sound Secondary COURSE HANDBOOK 2008/9 and COURSE SELECTION FORMS:

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/>

COURSES offered at Whistler Secondary School:

<http://wss.sd48.bc.ca/service/courses.htm>

School websites:

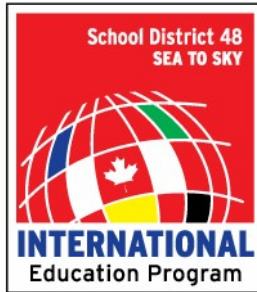
Howe Sound Secondary <http://hss.sd48.bc.ca>

Don Ross Secondary <http://drs.sd48.bc.ca>

Whistler Secondary <http://wss.sd48.bc.ca>

Pemberton Secondary <http://pss.sd48.bc.ca>

School District 48 www.sd48.bc.ca

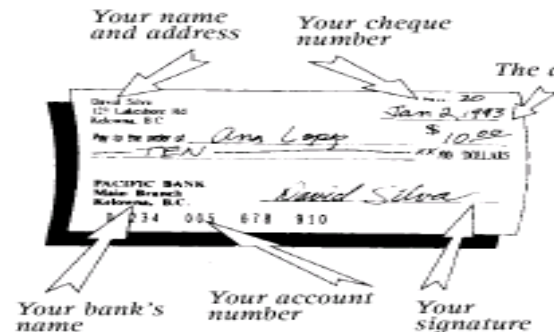


LIVING IN CANADA

• DAY TO DAY LIVING

BANKING AND MONEY

- Cash is money—coins and bills. There are 100 cents in one dollar. Coins used in Canada are \$0.01 (“penny”), \$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.
- Cheques are often used instead of cash. When you write a cheque, you are telling your bank to pay the money. To pay by cheque, you may need to show the cashier some identification (ID). It is a good idea to pay your homestay fee by cheque.
- Credit cards allow you to charge purchases and pay the bill at the end of a month.
- Debit card gives you access to money at a computerized automatic teller machine (generally known as an ATM). It can be used in many stores and take the cost of the transaction out of your account immediately.



TRANSPORTATION

School Buses

School buses will pick you 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

and published in The Chief newspaper. 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. If you are caught using the Skytrain or Seabus without paying the fare (it is an honour system), you will be given a ticket by the police and have to pay a fine, usually over \$150.

Taxi

Taxis are convenient, but they can be expensive. Most large cities and some small towns have taxi companies. There are taxi services in Squamish and Whistler. You can order a taxi by telephone. Look in the Yellow Pages of 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 can 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.
- Credit card phone calls can be made from many public telephones. Coin-operated pay phones cost 25 cents per local call. You can talk as long as you wish.
- If you cannot find a number in the telephone book, you can dial Directory Assistance (dial 411 for local numbers, 1-800-555-1212 for long distance numbers). There is a charge for this service if you call from home, which will be added to the phone bill.

- In most places, the emergency phone number for FIRE, POLICE, and AMBULANCE is **911**.
- Telephone numbers beginning with 1-800, 1-888, 1-866, or 1-877 are "toll free" numbers, which means that you do not have to pay for the call.

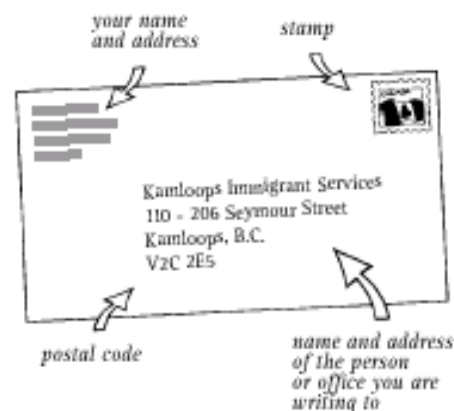
POSTAL SERVICES

- You can 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.
- All mail destined in Canada must include a postal code. If you do not know the postal code for a letter you are sending, you can look up the code in a book at any post office, or on the Canada Post website <http://www.canadapost.ca>.
- Keep in mind that rates vary from different classes of mail and destinations. 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. Currently, postage on standard letters is:

- \$0.54 + tax (\$0.57) in Canada
- \$0.98 + tax (\$1.03) to the United States
- \$1.65 + tax (\$1.73) to other countries
- Bigger envelopes and heavier letters cost more.

Please check at your postal service outlet for up to date information on cost of postage as these change frequently

The next scheduled price increase is in January 2010



LIBRARY

Most communities have public libraries. You can borrow books, magazines, CDs, and tapes from these libraries. Public libraries are free. You need a library card to borrow books or other items. You can 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. The Squamish Public Library is located on Second Avenue, kitty corner from the School Board Office. For other libraries: <http://www.bcpl.gov.bc.ca/VRD/libraries/>

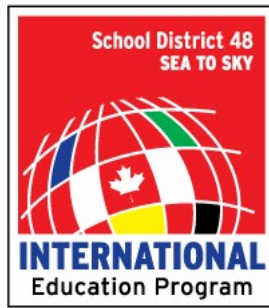
SMOKING

Smoking in non-designated public areas, office buildings, airplanes, buses and trains is prohibited. Restaurants and hotels are also all non-smoking.

HOLIDAYS & IMPORTANT DATES

The followings are some major Canadian holidays and important dates:

	2009	2010	Description
New Year's Day	Jan.1	Jan.1	The start of the new year is generally celebrated the evening before, with parties.
Good Friday	April 10	April 2	This religious holiday commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus Christ
Easter Monday	April 13	April 5	This religious holiday commemorates Jesus Christ's rise from the dead.
Victoria Day (Monday preceding May 25)	May 18	May 24	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 and a chance for a spring holiday that gardeners call "planting weekend."
Canada Day	July 1	July 1	The day Canada became a nation. Parades, large gatherings, and fireworks are common.
BC Day (first Monday of August)	Aug. 3	Aug. 2	A holiday for workers in BC
Labour Day (first Monday of September)	Sept. 7	Sept. 6	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. 12	Oct. 11	Celebration of 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	The day of poppies. The poppy has long been the flower of Remembrance. It originally was a reminder of the blood-red flower which grew in the fields where many Canadians died in a place called Flanders. It remains the flower of Remembrance.
Christmas	Dec. 25	Dec. 25	The birth of Christ and is a time for family gatherings and 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.



● GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICAL SITUATIONS

GREETING & MEETING PEOPLE

- A common greeting practice for Canadians is ‘hand shaking.’ People shake hands when meeting an adult for the first time. They don’t bow.
- 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, which 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 PLACES

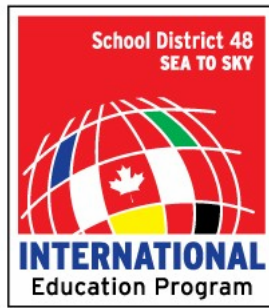
- People are generally uncomfortable with touching in public places. If you bump into somebody, say “Sorry” or “Excuse me.”
- Hold swinging or heavy doors for people who are following you in and out of rooms.
- You may have to adjust your voice level to ensure it’s not too loud. Take your cue from the 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. If there is no line or numbering system, the principle of “first come, first served” applies. The person behind the counter will probably ask: “Who’s next?”

VISITING A CANADIAN HOME

- Accepting or declining an invitation:
 - ✓ 'Yes' means Yes (therefore you must attend). It is alright to say 'No' if you cannot attend; your host will not get mad. If you say 'No,' usually the host will not ask again. If you are unsure of your schedule, ask your host if you can confirm at a later date.
- Asking the appropriate questions:
 - ✓ "What should I wear?"
Keep in mind that it is better to over dress than to under dress. This will prevent any embarrassment and show respect to your host.
 - ✓ "Do you need any help?"
Offering to help is always a nice gesture and a good way to make new friends.
 - ✓ "What Can I bring?"
It is customary to bring a gift of flowers or chocolate for your host (even if they say: "It is not necessary"). Bringing dessert is also appreciated, but ask first.

Table etiquette:

- ✓ Food is generally passed around the table. Don't reach over somebody to grab food, or the salt, pepper or mustard. Ask the others 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 rude (so is burping or farting).
 - ✓ Use serving spoon to dish out food
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PERSONAL SAFETY

The information in this section is retrieved from the Vancouver Police Department Website, www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/police/StudentSafety/index.htm.

● 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. When you go to Vancouver, be especially aware of the following advice.

The most common type of crime is theft. **DO NOT:**

- leave your purse,
- backpack, or
- other property unattended in public places, including your school (library, classroom, multi-purpose room, etc.)

● POLICE / 911

- Call 911- Police, Fire, and Ambulance 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 911 knows 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.

- **PERSONAL SAFETY ON THE STREET**

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. 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 host family where you are going and when you will be back.
- Do not carry large amounts of money (cash). 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 of your passport and other ID.
- Don't go out alone or accept rides with strangers. **DO NOT HITCHHIKE.**
- Don't carry weapons. They are illegal and can be used against you.
- 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. If possible try to jog with a partner particularly in ravines or secluded areas.
- Don't use headphones when jogging. The player itself can be a target for theft. 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

- Traffic rules for bikes are the same as for cars. Observe signs and traffic signals.
- Don't ride on the sidewalk or in crosswalks.
- Always wear brightly coloured, reflective clothing and a helmet.
- Front and rear light 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 a teacher or friend about the situation.
- If someone is bothering you, tell him or her to stop. For example, "GO AWAY" or "STOP BOTHERING ME!" Do not worry about hurting their feelings or being nice. If you are not clear, they might not stop. If they continue to bother you then tell somebody nearby.
- Assault is illegal in Canada. A husband cannot hit his wife, a boyfriend cannot hit a girlfriend, and a roommate cannot hit you.

INTERNAL 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 or a rape counsellor.

- Remember ---**NO means NO**
 - Learn how to stop an unwanted sexual advance or any behaviour that makes you uncomfortable. You have the right to say NO, no matter what has happened. Be direct and assertive. Let your date know your limits clearly and firmly.
 - If you do not know your date well, stay in public places with other people nearby. Tell your host family or friend where you are going. Be prepared to find your own way home. Carry money for taxi or transit, or call someone for a ride.
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- **OUT AT NIGHT**

- Taxis are a good way to get home at night. Know the taxi company name and the number of the taxi in case you have any problems.
- The legal drinking age in BC is 19 yrs.
- Drinking in public places such as parks, beaches, cars, or on the street is illegal.
- Don't let someone you do not know well "give you a lift home."
- Do not accept drinks from strangers or leave your drink unattended. Date Rape drugs are sometimes put into drinks when women are not paying attention.
- Drugs such as cocaine, heroin, marijuana and nightclub drugs such as Ecstasy, love drugs and GHB are illegal. Do not use or possess drugs at any time. Foreign students caught possessing marijuana would probably be deported (People have recently died from Rave party drugs).

- **SCAMS / FRAUD**

- Never give or loan money to a person who approaches you on the street, or even your colleagues 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 - "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.
- Use only tutors authorized from your school. Use caution when contacting tutors through advertisement and at the library. Watch for persons who claim to be tutors or conversation partners but are not qualified.