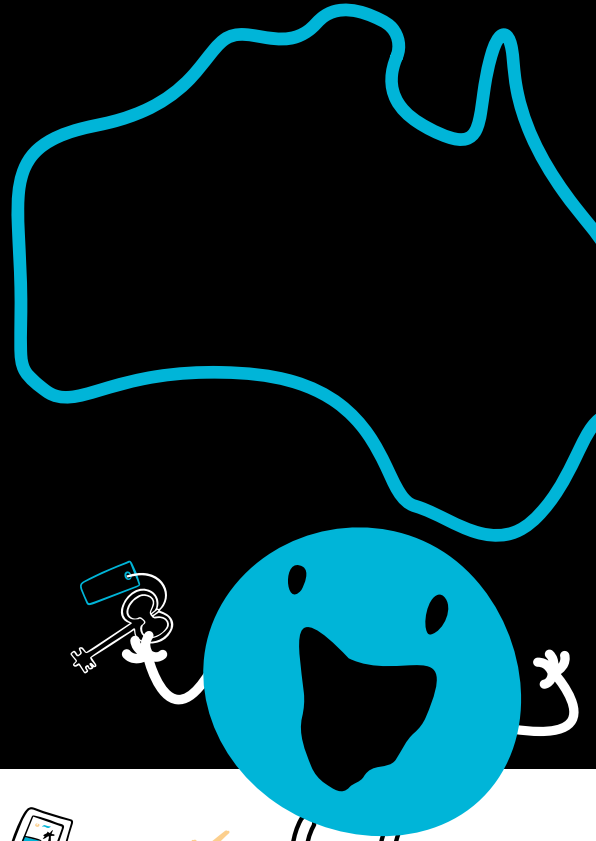


# Explore. Study. Live.

## Homestay Host Guide





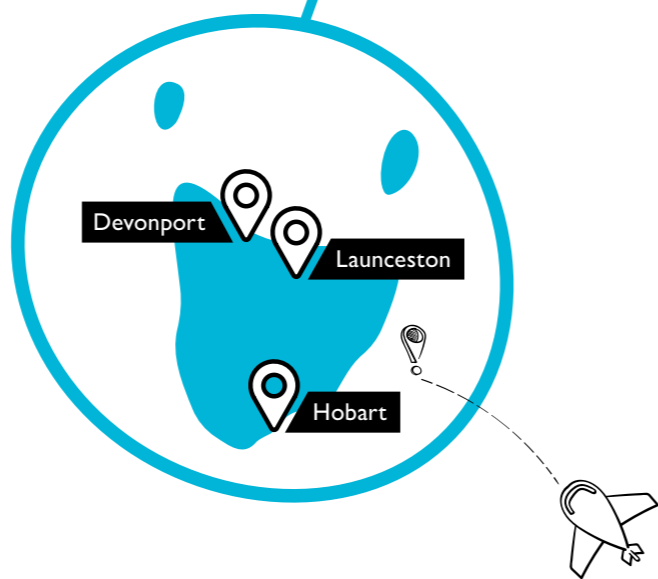
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## Expectations of international students.



*Thank you*

Dear Host,

Thank you for opening your home to an international student. Hosting can be a highly rewarding experience.

We are here to support you in this new journey. While students look forward to their time in Australia, most have never been away from their families, nor in a foreign country before. Sending a letter or an email to your student helps them feel welcome before they arrive.

Building relationships takes time, it doesn't happen the moment your student arrives and the first two weeks of your relationship are critical, as students can feel anxious being outside their comfort zone.

Being supportive and patient is important while they adjust to life and customs in Australia.

When people live together, unexpected situations can arise.

In new situations with your student, consider:

“How would I approach this with my own child?”

“What else might be going on for this student?”

Please take the time to read through this host guide.

Thank you for hosting with GETI!

Happy hosting,  
from the GETI team

## Support for hosts



Homestay coordinators are located in Hobart and Launceston, and provide assistance and guidance to hosts and students between 9am-5pm weekdays.

[homestay@geti.tas.gov.au](mailto:homestay@geti.tas.gov.au)

**+61 3 6165 5727** (Hobart)

**+61 3 6777 2695** (Launceston)

For after-hours emergencies hosts and students, please contact **+61 3 6108 0679**





## Physical space

### Students should have :

- ✓ A private room
- ✓ A desk and a chair
- ✓ Cupboard/wardrobe space
- ✓ Access to laundry
- ✓ 3 meals per day
- ✓ A key
- ✓ Internet



## Responsibilities of the homestay host

### Interactions

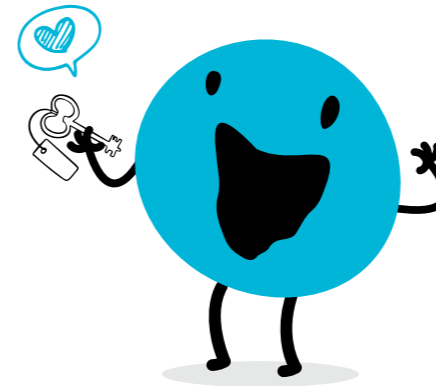
International students are encouraged to become a member of the family in a supportive environment. Daily conversations and mealtimes help students feel like part of the family and improve language skills. Homestay hosts are responsible for a student's wellbeing, just as a parent would be.

### Arrival

Homestay hosts collect their student(s) from the airport upon arrival.

Please contact your student's school to make an appointment for their enrolment before their first day at school.

Hosts are encouraged to introduce Australian cultural expectations and etiquette to assist your student as they settle into their new environment. It is important to explain household rules and any specific expectations (especially around communication, and time set aside as a family) and if required, establish definitions around appropriate behaviour and boundaries within the first few weeks.



### Transport

Students will be required to pay for their own transport, but please help your student learn the transport schedule in your area. Using the Metro Tas App, please help them to navigate between home and school.

Please assist your student(s) in obtaining and activating their Metro Greencard.

### Laundry

Whether you choose to do a student's laundry or not is up to you. However, please explain how to safely use laundry facilities and the times the laundry is accessible.

Some students may be embarrassed if other people see their underwear being washed or drying. They may prefer to hand wash their underwear and hang to dry in their room.



## Payment of homestay fees

Payments are made by direct deposit to the homestay host's nominated bank account. A remittance advice is emailed to homestay hosts with each payment.

Before the first payment is made, homestay hosts must complete and return two forms to GETI:

- **Bank account details**
- **Statement by a Supplier**

Please contact GETI if you have any questions about payments.

### Insurance

Before your student arrives, you need to get insurance that covers their belongings as well as your own. Neither GETI or the school is responsible for any legal liabilities that arise from the student staying with you.

You need a home and contents policy – or if you're renting, just a contents policy – that includes legal liability for no less than \$20 million. This sounds a lot, but it is the generic standard and is what insurance companies do. It's important you have the right insurance.



## Over 18's in the house

All people over the age of 18 living in the home must hold a valid Registration to Work With Vulnerable People card (RWVP).

A copy of the registrations must be sent to GETI via [homestay@geti.tas.gov.au](mailto:homestay@geti.tas.gov.au)

## Change of circumstances

**When to notify GETI if your situation changes:**

- ✔ Address change (temporary or permanent)
- ✔ Visitors or new residents to your home
- ✔ Travel plans (you or your student)
- ✔ Student spending a night away from your house

## Sleepovers

International students are permitted to have sleepovers. Students are not permitted to stay alone overnight, regardless of age.

To approve a sleepover:

- ✔ Sleepover 'host' must have a RWVP
- ✔ Contact details (address, name, phone number) are provided to GETI
- ✔ Parental approval is required

GETI host families have a RWVP, so a sleepover with another approved host only requires an email to GETI. Generally, payment adjustments are not made for sleepovers.



## Student travel



GETI will permit students to travel interstate or overseas (both with and without the homestay host providing the following conditions are met:)

- ✔ Written approval has been given from their natural parents.
- ✔ Students will be staying with a blood relative or an approved carer with a Registration to Work with Vulnerable People.
- ✔ GETI is provided with the name, address and contact details for the person taking care of the student.
- ✔ An **International Student Travel Request** form is submitted to GETI – signed by student, homestay host and school.
- ✔ Flight itineraries are submitted to GETI.

These conditions do not apply when the student is participating in a school excursion.

The form is found here →



## Driving



International students under the age of 18 studying in Tasmanian Government Schools are **not permitted to drive a car or motorbike.**

Students over the age of 18, **must apply** to GETI in writing for approval.



## Communication with your student

Please keep in mind your student is a teenager who is still learning. From time to time, they may need prompting and a friendly reminder about your household rules and expectations for example, picking up a wet towel or assisting with household chores.

It is important to note that expectations from the student's home country may be very different.

**Tip: Write down house rules and expectations (meal times, chores, curfew etc.).**

**This way the student can translate it in their own time.**



## Student healthcare

Students in Australia on a student visa have Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). OSHC is similar to Medicare for locals. GETI ensures that all students have OSHC before they arrive in Australia. Your student may need help to activate their OSHC online.

In some cases, students may need to pay for services upfront and then apply for reimbursement to their insurance provider. When going to the doctor or hospital, they should bring their membership number in case it can be billed directly.

If your student is too sick to attend school, please contact the school. If they are absent for more than one day they must (for visa compliance reasons) obtain a medical certificate

In some countries the idea of a 'General Practice' does not exist, so students may ask to go to Hospital when they mean to see a doctor.

## Mental wellbeing

If your student starts to sleep a lot or seems down or flat, there are qualified counsellors at each school. In addition, Headspace is a free mental health service in Tasmania. You can refer a young person if you are concerned about them by phone, email or in person.

Please contact the GETI Homestay team if you need support.

## Your role in a critical incident

In the unlikely event of serious incident, serious illness or other emergency that involved your student, or something happened to you or your family and home, then you would call 000, give first aid, etc.

Then you would contact GETI. Schools have their own procedure on what they call "critical incidents", so if something went wrong while your student was at school, the school would already know what to do.

**To report a critical incident, contact GETI.**

## Mandatory reporting

There are some specific laws around Child Safety that you need to know, and GETI will help you with this.

The main thing to know is that if you became aware of any allegations of child abuse, from any source and in any context, the law says that you must report these immediately to the Advice and Referral line on 1800 000 123.

Sometimes people are not sure if they should say something, just in case it's not true. However, the law says that you MUST report.

As a homestay host, you are required to complete Mandatory Reporting Training annually, so you will know what to do. This is a 20 minute online module.



## Contacts and resources

### Headspace Tasmania

- **Launceston**  
+61 3 6335 3100  
headspace@csys.com.au
- **Devonport**  
+61 3 6424 2144  
headspacedevonport@csys.com.au
- **Hobart**  
+61 3 6231 2927  
headspace@thelink.org.au
- **Burnie**  
+61 3 6408 0251  
headspaceburnie@csys.com.au

**Kids Helpline** 1800 55 1800

**Mandatory Reporting Advice and Referral Line** 1800 000 123

**GETI** +61 3 6165 5727 Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm  
**GETI after-hours emergency contact**  
+61 3 6108 0679



## Who pays?

### Host

- ✓ Food (3 meals plus snacks)
- ✓ Internet
- ✓ Heating/ electricity

### Student

- ✓ Healthcare
- ✓ Special activities/ outings
- ✓ Mobile phone
- ✓ Toiletries
- ✓ Transport

**Payment for eating out is at the host's discretion. If the student will be paying for their meal, make sure they know the cost in advance and have an option not to attend.**

## Internet

Hosts are asked to provide internet access to students, as part of the homestay offering.

Appropriate internet use includes homework, study, research and communication. Extensive gaming and downloading of entertainment content is not considered appropriate. If this is an issue, make sure you explain to your student what is appropriate.

## Mobile Phone

Please do not sign your student up for a mobile phone plan, we expect they will use a pre-paid service during their stay.

**Tip:** Prepaid SIM cards can be purchased at a Post Office or Supermarket. \$20-30 per month should give the students unlimited calls/texts and data.

## Aussie slang

Australians are infamous for using slang. Expressions such as 'hop in the car', 'grab a jumper' will unintentionally confuse international visitors.

Consider the words, phrases and questions you use with your student to help them understand the meaning.

## Cultural variations

Every culture is different. When interacting with someone from a different culture, suspend judgment and avoid labelling a person's behaviour. A behaviour that might be acceptable



to us, could just as easily be considered odd or disrespectful to someone else. Talk to your student about your expectations, and try to be patient as they learn Australian customs.

- Eye contact and personal space vary across cultures.
- Some cultures bow their head to show respect and regret, instead of verbalising an apology.
- Pets aren't common in many countries, students may not know how to interact with them.
- Not all languages use words like please or thank you to show respect. In some cultures, thanking family members is not appropriate.
- Most overseas households have a lock on bathroom and toilet doors. Many international students feel uncomfortable without it. You may need to reassure your student that people will knock before entering a bedroom or bathroom.
- Students from humid climates are often used to having multiple showers each day and in addition, drains overseas are often built to handle large amounts of water. Tip: explain water saving and use of bath mats
- In many Asian families, affection is replaced with a small bow. Tip: Host families should consider ways to show kindness without physical affection, as it could be misinterpreted.
- Many students may not feel comfortable expressing their opinion or being direct with what they need (i.e. warm enough, had enough to eat). Please continue to ask them, especially in the beginning.

## First week with a new student

### Around the house

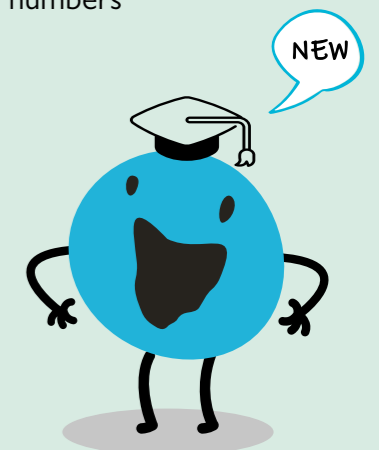
- ✓ Kitchen appliances (what to use, how it works)
- ✓ Food that is available to them
- ✓ Laundry machine and where to put laundry
- ✓ Clean towels and bedding
- ✓ Extra blankets
- ✓ How often to change bedding
- ✓ How to use (and what can go in) the toilet
- ✓ Heating and cooling for their room
- ✓ Garbage and recycling
- ✓ How to lock/unlock the doors

### In your area

- ✓ Bus routes
- ✓ School
- ✓ Nearby attractions/services

### Other items

- ✓ Curfew
- ✓ Mealtimes
- ✓ Chores
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Host family contact details
- ✓ Review emergency numbers



# Expectations of international students

**Students living in homestay are aware that they are expected to:**

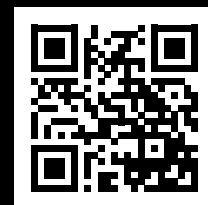
- Try to develop positive relationships with families, based on mutual trust and communication.
- Meet personal expenses for travel, entertainment, phone, medical expenses and incidental costs.
- Advise GETI of any concerns for their health or welfare.
- Follow Australian laws, school student conduct and homestay rules.
- Contribute to household chores (within reason) and clean up after themselves.
- Discuss with their homestay host if they will be absent or late for meals.
- Respect the homestay's reasonable house rules, behave courteously and communicate honestly.



Tasmanian  
Government

## Contact us

Email: [info@geti.tas.gov.au](mailto:info@geti.tas.gov.au)  
Tel: +61 3 6165 5727



[study.tas.gov.au](http://study.tas.gov.au)  
(or scan QR Code)

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