



Therese Janzen, a Homestay mother with Yuzhe Ouyang and Yuta Hirai, her international students.

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The Homestay Experience

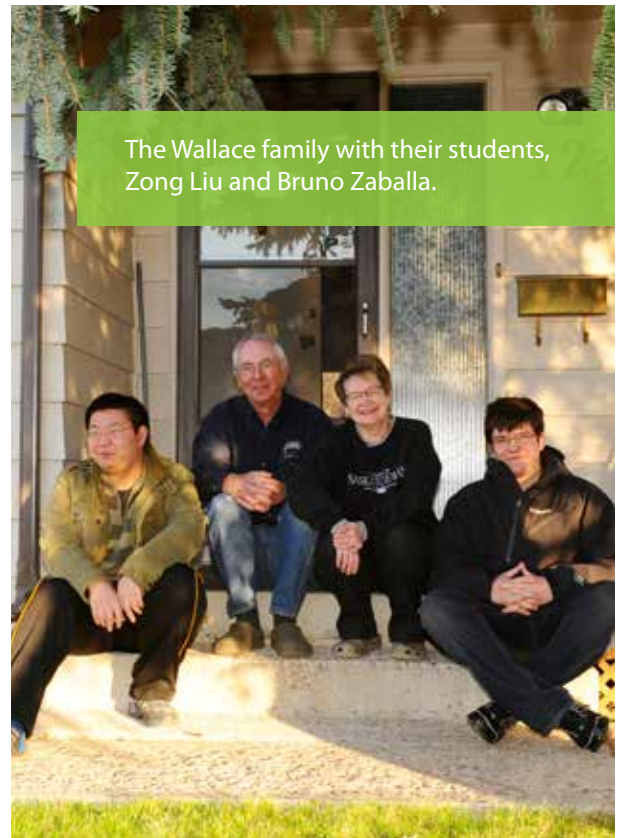
It's your home away from home.

- Homestay is for people from different cultures to live and learn together.
- All students who are new to the University of Saskatchewan Language Centre are strongly encouraged to be in Homestay for their first term of study.

Advantages in living with a Canadian family:

- Practice your English on a daily basis
- Experience Canadian culture and family life
- Share your country's culture and life with your Canadian family
- Feel safe and secure
- Have your own private room
- Have meals included
- Be picked up from the airport by your Homestay family
- Have your Homestay family show you the local bus routes so you can get to classes at the university
- Be welcomed in Canadian life and be encouraged to be more independent

Tip: Attend the Cultural Adaptation Program at the Language Centre. This will help you become more comfortable in social situations.



The Wallace family with their students, Zong Liu and Bruno Zaballa.

Living in a Canadian home can be fun and rewarding. Share your country's culture as you experience life and culture here in Canada.



Homestay Considerations

Before you are placed in a home, we have asked your Homestay family these questions:

1. Will you be at home for the duration of the student's stay?

Yes

For short-term special programs, Homestay families must be in town for the entire duration of the program.

For long-term placements, exceptions can be made, but only through consultation with University of Saskatchewan Language Centre Homestay staff.

2. Is your family flexible enough to accept a foreign student with language and cultural differences?

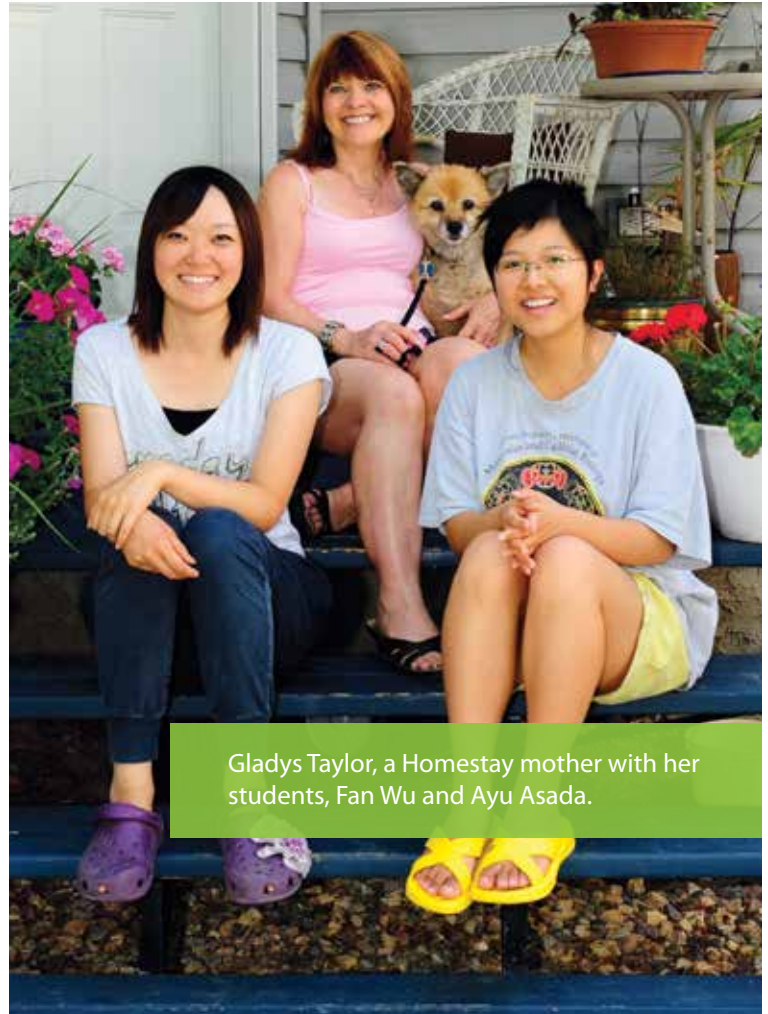
Yes

Language and culture are not right or wrong—they're just different.

3. How many students can concurrently live in your home?

1 or 2

It is Homestay policy to place a maximum of two students per family. If the family has the time, space and experience, they can host up to three students. However, three student placements in one host family is very rare. Very few families successfully meet the additional requirements.



Gladys Taylor, a Homestay mother with her students, Fan Wu and Ayu Asada.



Homestay families provide

ACCOMMODATIONS

- You will have your own private, clean, and comfortable room.
- Your room will have a bed, desk, lamp, dresser, closet, good lighting and adequate heat in the winter months.

Tip: if you're not sure, ask your Canadian family how bedding is arranged.

TRANSPORTATION

- You will take the city bus to get to and from your classes.
- Your Homestay family will show you the schedules, routes and where your stops are. They will take the bus with you at least once and point out landmarks along the way. They will also show you where to purchase your bus pass.

Note: All students pay for their own bus passes. Homestay families do not host students with cars. If you own a car, please ask the Homestay staff about University Residence accommodations.

Tip: If your family has an extra bicycle, ask them if they would lend it to you. It is important to have a good lock, to know how that lock works and to make sure that the bicycle is always secure.

LANGUAGE IN THE HOME

You will be placed in a home where English is spoken at all times when you are in the home.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES & OUTINGS

Your Homestay family will invite you to join them in activities and outings. If there is a cost involved, your family will explain this to you. You can decide whether you can afford it or not. Please make a decision quickly and thank your family for the invitation, even if you choose not to join them.

SPENDING TIME TOGETHER

Spend as much time as possible with your family. This helps establish a good relationship and allows you to speak English.





Family & Student Responsibilities



MEALS & MEAL TIMES

- You should eat meals with your Homestay family as much as possible.
- Your family will provide you with three meals a day: breakfast, lunch and supper.
- Lunches commonly consist of sandwiches, fruit, vegetable or left-overs.
- Homestay families make sure that students have enough food and are not left hungry. They may have snacks on hand for you.
- Make sure that you know when family meal times occur.
- If you plan to be out, please let your family know, in advance, that you will not be home to eat with them.

Tip: It is customary for Canadian families to offer a second helping. This means that if you are still hungry, they want to give you an opportunity to have more to eat.

It is better to take a second helping than to take a lot of food. Canadians feel that you like their food if you take a second helping.

Tip: When eating, observe and mimic how your Canadian family eats. This means that you must first watch, then do the same. This will help you learn more about customs around meals. Watch for things like:

- 1. How close do they eat to their plate or bowl?**
- 2. How much noise do they make when they are eating?**
- 3. Which utensils do they use to eat different kinds of food?**

4. How do they hold their utensils when they are eating?

5. How much food do they take at each serving?

6. Do they wait for everyone to be served before starting to eat?

7. Do they eat with their mouth open?

8. Who cleans up? Does everyone help?

LINENS & TOILETRIES

- Your Homestay family will provide clean linens (bedding and towels).
- You are expected to provide your own toiletries (shampoo, toothpaste, cosmetics, etc). Your family will also supply soap and toilet paper.

AIRPORT PICKUP & DROP OFF

- Provide our Housing Office with your flight arrival information so that your Homestay family can pick you up at the airport.
- Your flight information must be complete: it must include your arrival date, arrival time and flight number.
- Our Housing Office then provides you with information about your Homestay family.
- At the end of your stay in Canada, you will need to make your own arrangements to get to the airport.
- Airport drop off is not part of our service and your Homestay family is not required to take you to the airport for your flight home.
- Taxis are available. However, many Homestay families offer to drive their students to the airport as a courtesy.



Household Routines

Be sure to ask your Homestay family about household routines and rules.

All Canadian households have routines and some degree of rules.

HOUSE KEYS & SECURITY

- Your Homestay family will give you a house key and show you which door to use.
- They will explain how to lock the door, and have you try it once or twice.
- If they have a home security system, they will show you how it works.

Tip: Make sure that you try locking the door in front of your host parents so that you are successful.

Be sure to close all windows and lock all doors when you leave the house.

Tip: It is always a good idea to keep your valuables out of sight—even at home. Valuables are things like a computer laptop, a digital camera, cash, jewelry, etc.

CURFEWS & TELEPHONE USAGE

- Always let your family know if you think you will be late or if you will not be coming home.
- Your family should be able to contact you in case of emergency. Make sure they have a telephone number where you can be reached.
- Homestay families will be extremely concerned about your safety, because they know that you are not familiar with Canadian laws nor the city of Saskatoon.

- They also know that in a stressful situation, you might have difficulty communicating in English.

- Most Homestay families will have telephone rules in their home (i.e., no calls before 7:30 a.m. or after 10:00 p.m.).

Here are some things to consider:

- Do you know what the time differences are between Saskatchewan and your home country? Will you let your family or friends know when they can call?
- Do you know how to take phone messages? Do you know where to leave messages if you are home alone?

Tip: Generally, when the telephone rings between 10:00 p.m. and 7:30 a.m., this often means that it is a very serious call or an emergency. Out of respect for your Homestay family, please explain this situation to your family and friends.

BATH & SHOWER TIMES

- You will have access to a bathroom.
- Discuss with your host parents what time of day is best for you to bathe or shower.
- Many Canadian homes will have some restrictions on the length of time in the bath or shower. Be sure that you understand and respect this rule. (10 minutes is common)

Tip: Canadian homes are equipped with hot water tanks, so the supply of hot water runs out quickly.



Household Routines



KEEPING A CLEAN BATHROOM

You are expected to keep the bathroom that you use clean and tidy.

Here are some questions for you to think about:

- Do you know how to tidy up your bathroom?
- Do you know where to find the cleanser, sponge, etc., and how to use them?
- Do you know where to keep your toiletries and where to hang your towels?
- Do you know how to dispose of feminine hygiene items?
- If you do not know, ask your Homestay parents.

Tip: Ask your Homestay parents to watch you clean the bathroom the first time so that you can be sure that you understand how to clean things.

LAUNDRY

Please consider these questions:

- Will you be doing your own laundry?
- Do you know how to use the machines?
- Do you know where to keep your dirty laundry until it is washed?

Tip: Ask your Homestay parents to write out the directions on how to do your laundry so that you can refer to them at a later date.

ENERGY CONSERVATION & RECYCLING

Many Canadian homes have household energy conservation rules like turning lights out, or keeping the thermostat turned down, and recycling programs.

Tip: Ask your Homestay parents how their energy conservation or recycling programs work.

Tip: Canadians may keep their homes cooler than what you are used to. If you are cold at night, ask your family for extra blankets or a space heater.

Tip: If you have a space heater in your room, for safety reasons, always turn it off when you are not there.

KITCHEN APPLIANCES

- You will need to know where to find kitchen items and how to use all the appliances.
- You will also need to know which appliances you can use and when you can use them.

Tip: In Canada, it is considered very respectful and polite if you offer to help with household chores. You may notice that everyone in the family has small jobs. Think about something that you know you could do and offer to do this for your family. This will make you feel part of your new family.



Additional Student Information



EMERGENCIES

- Many Homestay families work outside the home. Please ask them how and when you can contact them at work or away from home.
- Ask your Homestay parents to show you where to find emergency phone numbers.
- When and if you are sick, ask your Homestay parents to phone the Language Centre at 966.4351 before 9:00 a.m. to let your teacher know you will be absent because you are sick.
- If you need to see a doctor, ask your Homestay parents to help you find one.
- Please give your Homestay parents the information they need to contact your parents or another emergency contact person. Include full names, address, telephone numbers and international calling codes for contacts from your home country. You can also include names, addresses or phone numbers of any Canadian relatives you may have.



SCHOOL LUNCHES

- You will bring your own lunch to school during the week.
- Your Homestay family will show you how to make your lunch, and what you can put in it.
- The Language Centre has a student lounge where you can eat and microwave your food.

ACTIVITIES

- Our Activities Program plans and coordinates many field trips and activities that are fun and allow you to practice your English and learn about Canadian culture at the same time.
- Activities include camping, horseback riding, picnics, attending football or hockey games and more.
- If you have questions about the program, contact us or visit our website.



Communication & Activity Tips

Interacting with your Homestay Family

RELAX AND ENJOY GETTING TO KNOW THEM.

Be patient and open to the fact that there may be some difficulties in communication. Sometimes there may be some misunderstandings.

Some Ideas to Help Make You Feel More At Home

- Bring a small gift or souvenir from your home country as a nice gesture. This is a good way to open up a conversation about your culture. It would also show that you are grateful that your Homestay family has welcomed you into their home.
- Offer to prepare a traditional meal from your country.
- Ask to be included in as many simple daily activities as possible, such as:
 - dinner and breakfast conversation
 - watching TV, or
 - setting the table, helping to prepare meals, gardening, etc.
- Join them when they run errands. A trip to the local store can be an interesting cultural event. You will also be able to let your Homestay family know what your food preferences are.
- Join them in their regular exercise (run, walk, visit the community centre)
- Ask to meet their neighbours and friends.
- Set up situations that will include other members of the household such as:
 - sharing family photos,
 - playing cards,
 - working on a jigsaw puzzle,
 - asking for help to plan your trips in the city,
 - suggesting interesting events in the city to attend, or
 - asking if you can teach them how to cook an ethnic dish.
- Speak clearly and a little more slowly than usual.
 - avoid exaggerations
 - avoid speaking broken English
- Smiles, laughter and genuine warmth and caring are the same in all cultures.

Have a wonderful time!



Fees & Student Placement

HOMESTAY FEES

Homestay Fees and Contracts are available on our website at: learnenglish.usask.ca

Note: These contracts change every term to correctly reflect term dates. Please download your copy directly from the website.

REMOVING STUDENTS

- To ensure a rewarding experience for families and students, all participants are screened in advance.
- To ensure your personal safety, all Homestay families go through a criminal record check.
- On very rare occasions, a student may be removed from a home if:
 - someone is being harassed (verbally, emotionally or sexually),
 - theft occurs,
 - the student is not able to live within family rules
 - severe personality conflicts, different lifestyles or cultural conflicts exist, or
 - the student ceases to study ESL on a full-time basis.

IF PROBLEMS ARISE

If you have any problems or questions, contact our Homestay office. Our staff acts as resource for students and their host families. We are here to help you. We want to ensure that your experience is fulfilling and rewarding.

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN LANGUAGE CENTRE HOMESTAY STAFF—ROOM 232 WILLIAMS BUILDING

Please call us if you have questions or concerns:

Debra Marshall , Coordinator	966-5915
Julissa Castillo , Accommodation Assistant/Financial Services	966-7054
General Office	966-4351