

Host Family FAQ

What are our responsibilities as a volunteer host family? It is most important to treat your student like a member of your family. Loving acceptance and guidance are the keys to being good host parents. It will be necessary to provide three meals a day, a private bedroom or shared bedroom with a bed for your student. Otherwise, just follow your regular routine and invite your student to join in on the family fun. Spending time together is the most important gift that you can share. Relax and HAVE FUN!

Will our student speak English? The level of English that your student speaks will vary. It depends on the student's age, experience and willingness to try. It is most important to give him or her a couple of days to "settle in". Usually, English improves with rest and feeling comfortable and accepted. When all else fails, google translator or a bilingual dictionary will help smooth over the rough spots!

Why do the students choose homestay? The Compass-USA student is coming to your home to learn about living in a different country. The impressions of our country that your international student will take home will be primarily formed through his or her relationship with your family and community.

What are the students like? Our students come from many different cultures and family circumstances. Just as all Americans are different, so are all of our students. Many of our students are teens with specific likes, dislikes, interests, habits and customs that are likely to be charming however different from your own.

How much does it cost to host a student? Normally, it is relatively inexpensive to host a Compass-USA student. Occasionally, some of our teenage boys are big eaters and they may raise your food bill a little bit. The students bring their own spending money so they can pay their admission to extra activities and special events. Some families find that they spend a little more because they do more activities during the homestay so they incur additional expenses for their own family members.

Does Compass USA pay host families? We value families that value our program and see hosting as an opportunity to learn and grow and make friends. Thus, we want families that genuinely appreciate the hosting experience and volunteer because the experience itself is rewarding. We do not want people to host because they are paid, but rather because they value international friendship and gaining intercultural understanding.

Host families receive a small weekly stipend to help defray expenses, but this is not regarded as pay. So, our host families are 100% VOLUNTEER and we are extremely grateful and proud of their contributions to our homestay program and our international students.

The homestay program is a unique opportunity for host families to actively experience true intercultural exchange within their own homes. Participants learn about the language and

lifestyle of the United States firsthand from their host families. Each family member and each participant, acting as both ambassador and friend, learn from each other. Compass-USA host families believe that hosting a student is an important way to provide a rewarding and mutually beneficial experience for themselves and the participants.

What about insurance? A comprehensive plan for medical coverage is available for all participants. They are insured for illness, injury, and loss of life. The coverage begins and ends on their flights to and from their home country.

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What information do the students receive? Prior to their arrival, the students and host families receive a handbook and a list of our homestay guidelines. Some of the key points include:

Host families are VOLUNTEERS.

They live in all types of American homes.

The student may share a room with a host family child but will have his or her own bed.

American host families vary greatly. Some families are headed by two parents while others are single parent families.

Many of our host families have children; although some do not. Should the student be placed in a home without children or without children whose ages approximate the student's, the student will be introduced to other American teens.

The student will not be treated as a guest, but as a member of his or her host family.

The student will be included in the daily activities of the host family, but since many host parents work, family members may not be available to entertain him or her at all times.

The student is expected to interact and talk with the host family as much as possible.

The student is expected to obey host family rules and follow the family schedule.