

Highroad Academy's Home Stay Program

The information in this handbook reflects and incorporates the BC Government Ministry of Education's International Student Homestay Guidelines (http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/internationaleducation/home_stay_guidelines.pdf).

This handbook has been designed for use as a tool to help host families prepare for hosting an international student during their stay in Canada. The information contained in this handbook is based on many years of working with students from other countries. Our hope is that you will have a rewarding experience as a host family and that with your help we can facilitate a unique educational and Canadian cultural experience for our international students.

History

Highroad Academy was established in 1978. We are an independent Christian school, fully certified by the British Columbia Ministry of Education. International students have been a part of our student body since 1998.

Staff

At Highroad Academy the entire staff of administrators and teachers, work together to provide an exceptional experience for international students. Information about programs, whether long-term or short-term, summer camps or winter camps and home stay opportunities or questions can be directed to the International Student Department.

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Programs

International students come to Highroad Academy for many varied programs. The most common are:

Long-term Student – students enroll for one or more years and participate in a fully integrated educational experience, enjoying learning alongside their Canadian classmates. Additional ELL classes are also offered to them. Families who can commit to a long-term home stay are rewarded with an opportunity to build a lasting relationship by adding an extra child to their family.

Short-term Student – students enroll for six months or less. These students are considered visitors to Canada, but they receive the same great classroom instruction and ELL classes as our long-term students.

Winter Camp – in January we host up to 25 students for two or three weeks. This is during the student's scheduled holiday time in their home country and can be a combination of classroom integration, ELL classes and out of school activities and field trips. Some groups request single-placement home stay and others prefer double-placement homestay. This is a fun way to get to know students from other countries and familiarize yourself with the world of home stay.

Summer Camp – in July and August Highroad Academy hosts international students in one of several camps that are offered. Weekday mornings are generally spent in the classroom with a dedicated ELL teacher and in the afternoon students go on a variety of outings and cultural activities. Some of these activities are visiting a dairy farm, museums, hiking, going to a senior's residential facility and trips to Vancouver and Hell's Gate. These are just a few of the fun things we do. There is a special trip every day of the week. If there is room on the bus, we invite host families to come along. The more the merrier!

At other times throughout the school year Highroad Academy may host extra groups of students from one to two weeks, or one to two months. So, as you can see, there are many opportunities to become involved and be a host family.

Placement Policy

An international student may be placed in a home once Highroad Academy staff have received a Host Family Application form, criminal record checks for all members of the household who are 18 years old or older (if you have not requested a criminal record check through a volunteer organization, such as your home church, you will have to pay to pay \$55 to have it done for home stay) and have had a successful home visit.

Students who are staying for long-term programs will need a private bedroom, preferably with a lockable door. The room must also have a comfortable bed, a dresser and a desk, as well as a window and adequate lighting.

We are blessed to have a group of very good host families. In order to bless as many host families as possible we prefer to place one student per home. It is also our belief that by placing one student per home we are giving the student the best possible experience.

Giving Notice

For long-term placements we have a 30 day notice rule. Either the student or the home stay family may request a change, which would take effect at the beginning of the month following the 30 day notice.

If the school is made aware of a situation that is deemed by school officials to be of a serious nature, the student may be removed from a home and placed in a new home without invoking the 30 day notice rule. Some situations may include, a student being placed in an unsuitable room, inadequate food and nutrition provided to a student, or any form of abuse to the student. This is not a comprehensive list and there may be other situations that the school deems to be of a serious enough nature to have to remove a student.



Helping You Have A Successful Home Stay Experience

Successful host families acknowledge that the student is coming to Canada to learn about living in a different country and improving their English language skills. They want to experience the way that Canadians live, how we respond to the world around us and understand reasons behind our way of life. The impression that a student takes home of Canada will to a large extent be formed by his or her relationship with you and your family. On the other hand, we are given the opportunity to learn about the student's home country and culture.

Canada is a fabulous country and a great place to live; but we must remember that international students do not need to be convinced that Canada is better than their home country. One of our goals is to develop mutual respect and understanding of their country and culture. People naturally tend to think that their own culture, customs, beliefs and moral values are the best ones. We need to accept that different does not mean better or worse. Try to withhold value judgments and create an atmosphere of mutual respect to encourage greater understanding.

Try to avoid stereotypes of different cultures; there are usually more exceptions to stereotypes or generalizations than examples supporting it. For example, we should not assume that all Japanese students are shy. Avoiding cultural pre-judgments will increase the chances of having a good home stay experience. It may be helpful to prepare for your student's arrival by researching his or her homeland. This can also be a great way to start simple conversations – by asking a question about their country.

Your New Family Member

As a member of your family your international student should share equally in the pleasures and duties of your home. Normal family responsibilities should become part of the student's daily routine. The student should be encouraged to make their own bed, keep their room clean, help clean up after meals, take out the garbage; the same as your own children are expected to do.

When you meet your student for the first time, he or she may be feeling a little insecure. Who knows, you may be feeling the same way. Even though this is stressful try to enjoy the experience. Your student may be unusually silent due to fatigue, struggling with a new language or jet lag.

Your House

Show your student the entire house and where things are; the bathrooms, closets, dresser and household appliances such as laundry. Do not assume that showing the bathroom is enough. Plumbing and appliances can be very different in their home country. For example, many Asian bathrooms are wet rooms with no shower stalls or shower curtains; show them how to use the shower curtain. Don't be afraid to get in the tub and pull the curtain...this is how you make sure that water stays where it should be and not all over the floor.

If students are allowed to help themselves to food in the refrigerator, show them what they may eat. If you have a sideboard or table in the dining room we encourage you to leave a fruit bowl, snacks and beverages for your student to snack on.

Your House Rules

Your student may not be familiar with many customs that we may take for granted. Some differences may be subtle, such as the roles of men, women, parents and children; others may be more obvious, such as smoking and drinking. International students are expected to follow the same code of conduct as our Canadian students. You will find a copy of the Code of Conduct in Appendix A.

Your student may be accustomed to more or less independence than you give your own children. If a student comes from a protected environment, he or she will need the security of being told what to do. However, the student who is accustomed to coming and going without supervision may need to be given certain instruction for their own protection. Follow whatever policy you would for your family and community. The student must tell you about plans they have made or where they are going. Be sure to let them know this is for their own protection and safety, it is not because you don't trust them.

Family Schedule: Think about how your student will fit into your family schedule. Give your student a typical daily schedule (Appendix B), which will help the student know when to go to bed, when to get up, when to shower, eat meals, etc. Give them a different schedule for weekends, to account for such things as sleeping in on Saturday, the time that breakfast or brunch will be served and what time to get up for church on Sunday morning.

Chores: Your student may not be accustomed to doing chores that are naturally done in your household, such as washing the dishes or making the bed. However, if your children are expected to help with these chores, your student will be expected to help as well. If your children don't help with the chores, then your student shouldn't be expected to help either.

Laundry: Will the student do his or her own laundry or will you do it? These are details that need to be reviewed and if the student is going to do laundry you will have to give very specific instructions on how to operate the laundry equipment. Most students will not have done their own laundry at home and most will not be familiar with our style of clothes dryer.

Personal Hygiene: Let your student know how often and when they should bath or shower. Bathing customs may be different in their home country. Talk to your student freely about the cultural differences and explain how it is done in your home. Be sure to let them know how full to fill the bathtub or how long they may shower.

Terms of Endearment: Your student may feel awkward about how to address you. If you're comfortable with being called by your first name please suggest this to them. A simple statement such as, "Please call me Sally", can help to put them at ease and alleviate this small stress. If you are not comfortable with them calling you by your name, you might ask them to call you Mom or Auntie, or Dad or Uncle.

Act naturally. Do not go overboard to please your student, this is not necessary. You do not need to plan activities and spend money you would not ordinarily do with your own family. Instead, have your student be a part of your normal family life, your meals, outings, sports activities, etc.

In most situations it is not appropriate to hug, kiss, tickle or be overly physical with your student. This is an area that can lead to misunderstandings, allegations of improper behavior and in the worst-case scenario to criminal charges. For your own protection be very careful.

Sharing Opinions: You may be surprised by some of the normal things your student likes or dislikes. Encourage him or her to speak freely about their feelings. A comfortable setting such as living room or dining room could be a safe place to have such conversations. Try to have these types of conversations one-on-one to avoid unnecessary embarrassment. Your student may not know how to tactfully mention something that is of bother. This is normal and a part of dealing with cultural differences and new English language learners. By following your example your student will soon learn an appropriate manner of expressing his opinions.

Host Family Stipends: The payment that you receive is meant to cover the cost of having a student in your home. Generally this is paid on the first of the month or at the beginning of a short-term program.

Monthly Homestay Remuneration - \$850.00

Short-term Programs - \$35/night

Religion: Please be respectful of your student's religious beliefs. However, having said this when an international student agrees to Highroad Academy's code of conduct they are agreeing to attend church/youth group on a weekly basis. This does not mean that we are forcing them to become Christians. Living with a committed Christian family is a huge part of showing them what a Christian is, how we treat each other and how we demonstrate Christ's love on a daily basis. Don't be afraid to include them in your daily family devotions, ask them questions and give them a chance to ask questions.



Adjustments

Culture Shock: Most international travellers experience some form of culture shock while visiting foreign countries with decidedly different cultural patterns. Culture shock results when a persons surroundings, language, food and social norms are no longer familiar. Symptoms of culture shock may be strong feelings of frustration and unusual anxiety.

Language difficulties are one of the most common contributors to culture shock. Your student may seem quiet or disinterested when they are really too tired to concentrate or talk in a foreign language. If you've never been in this situation it can be difficult to understand the amount of concentration and effort required for a person to attempt speaking in a new language and to grasp complicated conversations.

Fatigue can be compounded by frustration. Communicating on an elementary level can be very difficult and expressing complex ideas or feelings in English can be frustrating.

Your student may feel overwhelmed among native English speakers and may not understand certain words or phrases. Please try to make yourself understood by rephrasing the thought or idea. Once the concept is understood you may go back to your original phrase and make sure that it is understood. Refrain from speaking louder or speaking in partial sentences. Your student will benefit by your becoming involved in their learning efforts.

To help combat culture shock we suggest the following:

- identify the form of culture shock and assist the student with adjustment
- schedule times for different family members to converse with your student
- students suffering from culture shock tend to retreat; encourage them to come out of their bedroom and spend some time with the family
- encourage your student to make friends with people of other nationalities, not just their own nationality
- involve your student in activities that do not require constant communication such as sports, cooking, music and art
- remember the situation is temporary, culture shock does pass and the student will soon be happily enjoying family activities

Language Difficulties: Most students experience some difficulty speaking English. The English language that you will use is different from the English that they have learned in their home country.

When speaking with your student remember to slow down and speak clearly. Repeat a word they do not understand. Try to help with pronunciation. Such interaction is one of the best ways for them to improve their English language skills. If students are open and earnestly try hard, you will be surprised at how quickly they can learn new phrases. Don't be discouraged when students get tired or frustrated. Relax. Remember, patience is a virtue.

Rules and Guidelines

These rules and guidelines are for your safety and the safety of the student while they are in Canada.

Money: It is the student's responsibility to pay for personal hygiene items and incidentals. The host family provides the basics such as a room and all meals and healthy snacks. If the student makes plans to go to a restaurant with a friend it is the student's responsibility to pay for the meal. If you go to a restaurant as a family or to make your life easier, it is your responsibility as the host family to pay for the meal.

Students are expected to pay for:

- lunch if they want something other than what you packed for them (you may purchase hot lunch at the school to make packing lunches easier)
- entertainment expenses
- personal articles such as toothpaste, shampoo, make-up, etc.
- long distance telephone calls

Long Distance Telephone Calls: Students rarely make phone calls anymore. However, if the student wishes to do so they must ask permission from the host parent before doing so. They should use a calling card or call collect if they make any long distance telephone calls.

Cell Phones: Many students will want to purchase a cell phone (or SIM card) and cell phone plan. Please take them to the mall and help them make these arrangements. Please do not have a cell phone put into your name or have the student added to your account. You may be left holding the bag when the student leaves. If the student is too young to qualify for a cell plan, then they will have to do without.

Computer and Wifi: Home stay parents are not required to provide a computer or wifi for students. Most students will come with their own computer. If you have wifi at home, you may allow them to use it. We recommend that you set some restrictions, such as hours of use and types of websites that they may visit. Movie streaming and gaming can take up quite a wide portion of your wifi band and slow down your system or even crash it. For educational purposes it is helpful to have access to the internet for research. It is also one of the main ways that students keep in touch with family and friends.

Alcohol: The consumption of alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine, is not permitted for Highroad Academy students. This is an offence that may cause the

student to be removed from school and sent home (as per Highroad Academy's Discipline Policy – Appendix C).

Illegal Drugs: The use of any non-prescription drug is illegal. Students may only use medication which has been prescribed by a doctor. Use of illegal drugs is an offence that may cause the student to be removed from school and sent home (as per Highroad Academy's Discipline Policy – Appendix C).

Smoking: Tobacco is considered a harmful substance. Students who smoke may be removed from school and sent home (as per Highroad Academy's Discipline Policy – Appendix C). Students should be made aware that only a small percentage of the Canadian public smoke, as it is considered to be a severe health hazard and unattractive in Canada. In British Columbia there is a no smoking policy in all public buildings, restaurants and washrooms.

Driving Motor Vehicles: For insurance and safety reasons students are not permitted to drive any kind of motorized vehicle, including automobiles, mopeds, motorcycles, lawn mowers, tractors, motorized boats or jet skis. This includes anything with an electric motor such as go-carts. If students have an accident while operating any motor vehicle their medical insurance becomes void.

Transportation: Host families are expected to make arrangements to transport their student to and from school. Families are responsible to drive their student to and from school. Any other transportation requests, such as to go visit a friend or go shopping are at the discretion of the host family. If it is an inconvenience to the family to take your student somewhere, suggest an alternate time to go or teach them how to use the city bus (at their own expense).

Physical Appearance: Students may not make drastic changes to their persons while they are in Canada. This includes piercings, tattoos and hair colouring.

Household Rules: Students are to obey all host family rules, including curfews and household duties for which they are responsible. Students may not have guests in the family's home without prior permission from the family.

School Activities: Students are expected to participate in all planned school activities and classes. Host families are expected to drive their student to and from these activities if they should happen outside of regular school hours. This is normally about five times per year for long-term students.

Overnight Travel: Students may not travel outside of the host community without the host family and the school's knowledge and permission. Students may be granted permission to miss a few days of a program to attend a weekend camp or travel with their host family.

Canadian Laws: While in Canada, students are always under the jurisdiction of the federal, provincial and municipal laws. It is important that they obey all laws.

Breaking the laws could lead to arrest and serious consequences if they wish to return to Canada in the future.

Parent Visits

Parents of international students may come to Canada to visit their children. We hope that parents will contact the school before any such visit, but from time to time we do have to deal with surprise visits. We don't mind if parents want to come and see the home that their child is staying in and meet the host parents, but after having had to deal with a number of unpleasant situations we will ask that parents of students not be allowed to stay at the home stay with their children and that they do make plans with the school office before visiting the home stay. If parents contact you as the home stay to request accommodations or a visit please refer them to the school office. (See Appendix F for a list of recommended places for parents to stay).

Medical Insurance

The insurance carrier of choice for Highroad Academy international students is Guard Me Canada student insurance. The insurance covers illness, injury and loss of life. Coverage starts upon boarding the airplane for the departure flight to Canada and terminates upon the arrival of the return flight to their home country.

If your student is ill or injured, you may take them to your family doctor or to one of the several walk-in clinics in the area. The clinic will require payment at the time of the visit – this payment is the responsibility of the student. Under no circumstances will a host family be held responsible for payment of a student's medical bills. Please make sure that you get a detailed receipt from the Dr. or clinic and submit the documents to the International Student Office so that we can make a claim to the insurance company.

If a doctor or medical facility requires more information concerning insurance coverage and procedures they should contact the International Student Coordinator at Highroad Academy.

You may contact the school office at any time if you have a question as to whether or not to take your student to a doctor or clinic.

We would like to express our most sincere thanks to you and your family for opening your hearts and home to an international student. During the program you will experience a special communication with a student who will never forget you and your family. And we hope that your family will never forget the student. Often lifelong relationships start by hosting a student. Patience, understanding and a sense of humour will help make this a success. As a team of educators, we are here for you; never hesitate to contact our office if you have a need or question.

Welcome to the Highroad Academy home stay family!

Proverbs 11:25

A generous person will prosper;
whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

Appendix A - Student's Commitment

This section must be read and understood by all students. Students applying for entrance into grade four through twelve must sign below, indicating that they have read and commit to abide by these standards. Please check the following:

As a student of this Christian school:

- I will act in an orderly and respectful manner.
- I will maintain Christian standards in courtesy, kindness, morality and honesty.
- I will strive to be of unquestionable character in dress, conduct and all other areas of life.
- I agree to abide by the above standards of conduct and other regulations of Highroad Academy. I will uphold the school's standards against cheating, swearing, smoking, pre-marital sex, drinking alcoholic beverages, gambling, using or talking favourably about narcotics and using indecent language.
- I will not give the impression to students, parents, faculty or the community that I am not in harmony with the goals, aims and standards of this Christian school.
- I understand the scriptural importance of being committed to a local church.
- I am committed to weekly attendance at my local church.
- I am committed to weekly attendance at my local church's youth group.
- I want to attend this school.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix B – Daily Schedule

D. HOST FAMILY/STUDENT FIRST DAY HOMEWORK SHEET

The following questions are information about your Canadian homestay. Talk with your host family and answer all the questions. This questionnaire will help you the student and your host family communicate together. Enjoy your time together. Bring the completed sheet to your first class at school.

1. What time do I wake up? _____



2. What time do I get up? _____



3. How much time do I have in the bathroom in the morning? _____



4. How much time do I have to get dressed? _____



5. What time do we eat breakfast? _____



6. What do I put in my bag lunch? _____



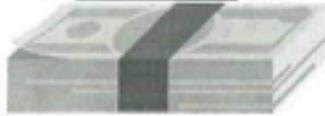
7. What time do we leave for school? _____



8. What time does class begin? _____



9. Do I bring money today? _____ How much? _____



10. What type of snack may I have after school? _____



12. May I help you around the house? _____



13. What can I do in my spare time? _____



14. What time is dinner? _____



15. May I help you prepare dinner? _____



16. May I help you clean up after dinner? _____



17. When may I have a shower? _____



18. May I call my parents? _____

19. May I call my friends?  _____ How long may I talk? _____

20. May I have a friend visit?   _____

21. May I visit my friend?  _____

22. What do I do with my laundry? 

23. What are we doing tonight?  _____

24. What are we going to do this weekend?   _____

25. What time do I go to bed?   

26. What time are lights out?   _____



Appendix C – Discipline Policy

Offenses are classified as:

1. MINOR
2. MAJOR
3. SEVERE

1. MINOR offenses are those that are annoying but not likely harmful to the student committing them or others around them. The staff member involved handles minor offenses on the spot. MINOR offenses include, but are not limited to:

Minor classroom rules, running in the building, hats on in the building, messes in common areas, throwing objects (food etc.), put-downs, unkind remarks

Late for class, late assignments, chewing gum, lack of courtesy, inappropriate noises

Untidy equipment, supplies, uniform and appearance standards

2. MAJOR offenses are behaviours which are disruptive, disrespectful to people or property, insubordinate, or potentially harmful. MAJOR offenses are referred to the principal for immediate implementation of the "Discipline Cycle". MAJOR offenses include, but are not limited to:

Defacing property, skipping class, class disruption, out of bounds, stealing, cheating, lying, threatening

Filthy talk, causing division, promoting heresy

Repeated violation of MINOR offenses, racial slurs, disobedience, bullying

Truancy, leaving campus without permission, continual unproductiveness, leading an unruly life, disrespect for authority or peers

3. SEVERE offenses are those that require the immediate removal of the student from the school temporarily or permanently. SEVERE offenses include, but are not limited to:

Promotion or use of alcohol, illegal drugs, or other harmful substances, actions that purposely bring harm to others or property, immoral behavior, use or possession of a weapon

Discipline Cycle - Grade 7 - Grade 12

The discipline cycle operates on a "three strikes" principle. It applies only to MAJOR offenses and repeated MINOR offenses. The purpose of the discipline cycle is to assist parents in the corrective process of their children by:

- Making clear the consequences of inappropriate behaviour
- Making clear that opportunities exist to develop responsibility for one's behaviour
- Requiring students to evaluate their own behaviour
- Giving students positive alternatives for inappropriate behaviour
- Providing immediate, consistent, and logical consequences for inappropriate behaviour. At each step of the discipline cycle, the following steps will be taken:
 - The teacher will refer the student to the principal
 - Parents will be notified that the discipline cycle has been implemented
 - The student will be required to make appropriate restitution
 - The violation will become a part of the student's permanent record

1. First MAJOR offense (or repeated MINOR offenses): The student will complete a project evaluating the violation, stating the natural consequences of the behaviour, and offering positive alternatives. The student may be required to serve a one-day suspension.

2. Second MAJOR offense: An at-home suspension for two or more school days will be served. A meeting with the school board or discipline committee will be held to discuss the student's record of behaviour and possible further action including the possibility of expulsion.

3. Third MAJOR offense: The student will be dismissed from the school for the remainder of the school year or permanently. ***Appeals process*** If a parent or student has any concerns about disciplinary action, an appeals policy is in effect at Highroad Academy. Please contact the office for further information on this process.

Appendix D – Things You Can Do With Your Student

Create Conversation Opportunities: Have a conversation with your student every chance you get. This is one of the best ways for them to develop fluency in speaking English.

Inexpensive Activities:

- picnics
- roller-skating
- ice skating
- bicycle riding
- bowling
- horseback riding
- sports
- make a scrapbook
- go berry picking
- bake a pie or cookies
- bake bread

Share:

- your picture albums
- baby books
- your hobbies
- home movies/pictures on computer
- wedding albums

Visit:

- flea markets
- museums
- U of the FV
- Chilliwack Fair
- parks
- garage sales

Go:

- Shopping
- wave pool
- Canadians baseball game
- Hell's Gate
- Crescent Beach
- Cultus Lake
- Celebration of Lights
- Othello Tunnels
- Castle Fun Park
- Harrison Hot Springs

It's Fun To:

- go to the movies
- go camping
- play board games
- walk on the beach/park/trails
- have student make dinner
- play cards

Have the Student Accompany You To:

- the grocery store
- visiting friends
- your children's activities
- your weekend activities
- events at church

Keep your student involved. There is no need to overspend. It is important to keep a normal family routine. If you wish to take your student out to dinner or a paid attraction, tell them the cost and ask them if they would like to go. Have fun!

Appendix E – Letter From the Host Family to the Student

If you receive information about your student before they arrive in Canada it's a nice gesture to send them a letter by email or post.

You might like to include the following information:

- describe your family
 - adults
 - ◆ the names by which you wish to be called
 - ◆ your occupations and interests
 - children
 - ◆ ages, gender and their interests
- include photos of your family, your pets and your home
- describe your community and its attractions. If mailing a letter you may want to include a brochure from the local Chamber of Commerce which describes the community. If sending an email, include the website of your city's tourist page
- add any information that would be useful for the student during his/her stay with your family
- it would be a sign of respect to address the letter to the student's parents as well as the student
- the letter is to be written in English, as it can easily be translated
- your children may want to add a line or two or draw a picture
- include your home mailing address as well as your email address

Appendix F – List of Recommended Hotels in Chilliwack

For parents of Highroad Academy International Students:

Please note that these are recommendations based on the International Department's knowledge of Chilliwack. It is not a complete list, but does list some of the better, clean hotels and suites that we are aware of.

They are in alphabetical order, not preferred order.

We have chosen hotels and suites that are close to the school for easier access.

Coast Hotel

45920 First Avenue

604-792-5552

www.coasthotels.com/hotels/bc/chilliwack/coast-chilliwack-hotel/

*central to downtown Chilliwack, clean, highly recommended

Cozy B&B

9630 Young Road

604-702-1845

www.cozybnb.com

* bedroom only – friendly hostess, close to downtown Chilliwack

Magnolia Manor – bed and breakfast

46013 Gore Avenue

604-702-5696

www.magnoliamanorbcc.com

*close to downtown Chilliwack – weekly rates available

Red Tulip Inn - suite

45356 Hodgins Avenue

604-792-9645

cell: 604-316-2704

*this one bedroom suite has a kitchen, bedroom, bathroom and living room. It is owned by Kit Kristjanson, Highroad's International Student Coordinator. You can visit B&B Canada to view the suite.

www.bbcanada.com/redtulipinn

*close to downtown Chilliwack – weekly rates available

An internet search of Chilliwack hotels, and bed and breakfasts will give you many more options in the surrounding area.