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For immediate release

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### **Homestay families needed to host international students**

**COMOX, VALLEY B.C.** – The Comox Valley International Student Program has an urgent need for families to host students for the coming school year, particularly students coming here from Europe. Hosting an international student is a great way to welcome the world and have a unique cultural experience without ever leaving the Comox Valley.

The International Student Program is dedicated to offering personalized education to international students from around the world.

Steve and Tina Fagan are Comox Valley parents who hosted a Spanish girl named Olatz in their home last year and made such a positive connection with her that she decided to stay another year in Canada. “Olatz just fit in so well with us right away – she gets along with my son so well and has really become part of our family,” said Steve Fagan. “We love her as one of our own and we truly feel like the lucky ones having her as part of our lives.”

Host families in the Comox Valley reflect the diverse types of families we have here, including single parents, same sex couples, all types of families and people who are now empty nesters.

International students coming here study for a variety of periods of time. Some are here for three months, five months or a year or more.

“Being a homestay parent isn’t about being a tour guide for these students,” said homestay host Melissa Jobe. “In my experience, students tell me their best experiences are here at home – baking cakes, sharing meals, watching movies together and playing cards or board games. They’re kids that are just looking for that connection and being part of a family.”

International students are eligible for homestay from Grade 6 to Grade 12. As a homestay parent you are expected to essentially provide what you would normally provide for your own family. An honorarium is provided for families to host each student and ongoing support is provided by the staff of the Program.

Typically, the Comox Valley International Student program welcomes about 250 international students each year from over 25 countries.

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### **Learn more:**

For more information to host:

<https://studyinbritishcolumbia.com/homestay/>

FAQs:

<https://studyinbritishcolumbia.com/homestay/#homestay-faq>

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**Picture courtesy of Comox Valley Schools**



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