

NISEP Student Handbook

2026-2027



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Welcome to the Newfoundland International Student Education Program

A Message from the NISEP Executive Director

On behalf of everyone at the Newfoundland International Student Education Program, I would like to welcome all international students attending one of our public schools.

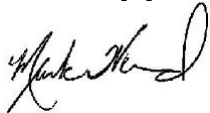
This will be an exciting time for you, and we are here to help you. Making new friends, going to a new school and meeting new classmates, and learning a new language while discovering our customs can seem like a huge task but shortly, you'll have it mastered! Everyone in our program is committed to your success. Our homestay families are some of the warmest people you will ever meet, something of a trademark of our province. We're known as the friendliest people, and I hope you come to realize that in very short order.

Most importantly, we want to ensure that you have the best year possible. This will require an effort on your part, but your host family and homestay coordinator will help guide you. Ask questions when you don't understand, embrace cultural differences, extend a hand in friendship, and be open to new experiences.

Newfoundlanders will warmly welcome you into their hearts and their homes; it's as simple as that. Here, you can achieve your educational goals while feeling safe and secure and settled away in your new "home away from home."

We've prepared this handbook for your review. We call it a living document because there are always things to change and others to add; that's where we require your help. If you notice something that should be changed, please let us know. We're always willing to listen to helpful suggestions!

Sincerely yours,



Mark Ward
Executive Director
Newfoundland International Student Education Program

NISEP Contact Information

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NISEP Activities for International Students 2026-27

Students will be invited to participate in NISEP activities each month. Activities are optional and vary in price. There will be some activities that are free of charge. Activities may also vary by region.

A list of activities with tentative dates will be provided to students in September. **Prior to each event, students are notified by email that there is an upcoming activity and given the opportunity to register, within a specified timeframe.** Therefore, it is important that we always have your current e-mail address.

Some activities may have a limited number of spaces; therefore, they will become first-come, first-served. **NISEP activities are for NISEP students only. International students from other programs will not be permitted.**

Holidays and Important Dates

Day	Date	Description
Labour Day	Sep 7, 2026	This marks the creation of the labour movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of Canadian Workers.
Start of School	Sep 9, 2026	First day of classes is school dependent. Please check with your coordinator
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	Sep 30, 2026	
Thanksgiving (school holiday)	Oct 12, 2026	Celebration of the harvest. Families gather and have a festive meal, usually with turkey.
Halloween	Oct 31, 2026	Children dress up in costumes and go door-to-door, collecting candy.
Remembrance Day	Nov 11, 2026	A day of remembrance for the men and women who have served, and continue to serve, our country during times of war, conflict and peace. This is a national holiday in Canada so there will be no school on November 11 th .
Christmas Vacation	December 23-January 1, 2027	Last school day before Christmas Vacation (Classes resume on January 4, 2027)
Christmas Day	Dec 25, 2026	Families gather and exchange gifts. People may take several days away from work.
Boxing Day	Dec 26, 2026	The day after Christmas. The malls are filled with people exchanging gifts or buying reduced-priced gifts.
School Resumes	Jan 4, 2027	Classes resume
Start of Winter Semester	February 1, 2027	First day of winter semester classes. Waiting on confirmation
St. Patrick's Day	Mar 17, 2027	The day commemorates Saint Patrick and celebrates the heritage and culture of the Irish in general.
Easter Vacation	Mar 26-Apr 2, 2027	No school classes are held during this period.
Good Friday	Mar 26, 2027	Christians celebrate this religious holiday commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.
Easter Monday	Apr 5, 2027	Christians celebrate this religious holiday commemorating Jesus Christ's rise from the dead.
School Resumes	Apr 5, 2027	Classes resume.
Victoria Day	May 24, 2027	Originally the birthday of Queen Victoria of Great Britain. It is now a more general celebration of the monarch's birthday and a time for a Spring holiday.
Exam Period	June 14 – 22, 2027	Final exams. Students should determine their exam schedule before booking flights home.
Last Day of Class	June 24, 2027	Final Report cards are distributed to students.

Living with a Canadian Family – The Homestay Program offers people of different cultures and languages the opportunity to live and learn together. Our NISEP host families offer international students the opportunity to discover our cities and towns, our culture and rich history through the eyes of the family. Homestay families will help you feel welcome and safe. You will have the opportunity to establish lifelong friendships with people who can help ease the adjustment to the new environment.

There are many benefits to living with a family in Canada. Homestay homes are fully furnished, including a private bedroom with proper bedroom furnishings (bed with linens, dresser, closet, desk, pillows and blankets). Students usually share the bathroom facilities with the host family. All of our families have internet access.

Most importantly, homestay homes are safe! All homestay homes and household members are visited by a NISEP Homestay Coordinator to ensure suitability in our program. Our host families complete an application and are visited in their homes prior to receiving their first student.

The student should be cooperative and make efforts to become part of their assigned family. The goal of our homestay program is to find the ideal match for our students. NISEP prides itself on this process. What our hosts have in common is that they want to provide a safe, caring environment for you. We choose hosts who will provide the same comfortable, healthy and supportive home life they would ask a host family to provide for their own children.

Your homestay experience will largely depend on your own attitude and approach. How can you make the most of your time in Newfoundland? Come with an open mind and be ready to embrace the ways in which Newfoundland and the people you will meet here are different and unique. Your host family will help you adapt to their family and to the province. The more you get involved in your new life, the happier you will be. The first few weeks living in a new country, with a new family can be difficult. You may feel homesick and frustrated with your new environment and the language. This is natural. Give yourself time to adjust to your new surroundings.

Please remember that you're not alone...we're always here to help.

A Tour of Your New Home - Please ask for a tour of your house when you first arrive. Your host should show you where everything is, with special care to point out your bedroom and bathroom; the kitchen and dining area; the laundry room; the linen closet (or wherever clean linen and towels are kept); and so on. Please make sure you understand how to use:

- The bathroom, including the bath/shower, toilet and sink
- Appliances and entertainment items, like the TV, microwave
- The fire extinguisher, as well as what to do in the event of a fire (for example, suitable exits and emergency phone numbers)

You can treat this house as your own, but you must respect everyone's right to privacy and quiet. Always knock and announce yourself, while waiting to be invited in before entering someone else's room. Be considerate when using common areas. Make sure you meet all members of your host family. Repeat their names so you can remember them.

A Tour of Your New Neighbourhood - Ask your host for a tour of your new neighbourhood, including directions to and from your school and any local attractions or meeting places.

If you are in an area with public transportation, ask your host for help using buses. Learn how and where to buy passes/tickets and get to know the local routes. Ask your host to help you write a list of important contact numbers, which you can keep with you at all times.

If you are too far from your school to walk, there is a free yellow school bus that may be available. Before your first day of school, your host family will show you where to catch the bus, or how to walk to your school.

Homestay Guidelines Resulting in A Successful Placement:

- Household members and the international students completely understand and are willing to respect program policies and procedures.
- Host families will provide a variety of nutritious, well-balanced meals, three times a day (two meals and usually a bagged lunch on school days). Reasonable snacks will also be available.
- Host families should not expect students to maintain their house or yard, babysit their children or cook the family meals; however, the students are expected to keep their own bedroom neat and in good order. Students should clean up their own things after using the family washroom. Most host families have chores, and you should expect to participate in this effort.
- Household members, including the student, should respect each other's religious/non-religious beliefs and practices.

- Household members and the students agree to respect each other's culture and values.
- Household members are willing and able to involve the student in various family activities or outings if the student is willing.
- If a student's attitude or attendance at school becomes a problem, the host parent will be contacted by the school and will then contact the homestay coordinator.
- NISEP does not encourage overnight visitors or visits. If you wish to have a guest, then you must ask for permission from your host.
- You are not permitted to bring guests into the home if the homestay family is not present. The opposite gender shall not visit private areas or bedrooms.
- If a host parent becomes concerned about any safety issues involving a student, they will contact the homestay coordinator.
- Students are expected to treat the host family's home and possessions with respect. Damage to the family's home or possessions will be at the expense of the student. In the event of willful damage, this will result in the student's removal from the NISEP program without refund.

If a difficult situation arises in your home, it is important that your homestay coordinator is informed, so that NISEP can help resolve the problem.

Chores – Ultimately the matter of chores is between the family and the student. The following are guidelines for chores:

- A general "rule-of-thumb" is that the student could be responsible for doing his/her own laundry, keeping his/her room clean, making his/her own bag lunch, and other light tasks that arise from the student's presence in the home.
- The chore should depend on the student's age and capability.

Helping with chores may provide an opportunity to practice English-speaking skills.

What will be provided by a homestay family - A homestay family will generally provide what they would for their own family:

- Private bedroom
- Three wholesome meals a day and snacks as required
- A quiet, adequately lit and heated study space in the student's bedroom
- Hot water and facilities for bathing including towel and facecloth
- Laundry (some families expect a student to do his/her own laundry)
- Emotional support if the student suffers from homesickness, difficulties at school, etc.
- Academic support with homework, if possible, communication with

teachers, attendance at parent-teacher-student interviews, etc.

- Inclusion of the student in family outings, trips to restaurants, special occasions, recreational activities
- Access to the common living areas of the house

Suggestions: Early in the homestay, have a conversation with your host family about their expectations (and yours). Reach a mutual agreement about the amount of interaction between the student and the family and the kinds of activities in which you will participate together. Discuss this regularly as situations change.

What is the student responsible to pay for?

- Clothes
- School supplies or course materials (i.e. art material)
- Toiletries
- All long-distance phone calls. Some students arrange to have their own cell phone, in which case they also pay the fees and monthly bills
- Medicines and medications of all kinds
- Any dental work that is not covered under our insurance (GUARD ME)
- Haircuts or other personal services
- Personal entertainment and expenses (If your family is going out for a restaurant dinner, they will usually pay for your meal, within reason. If the student chooses to eat in a restaurant or go to a movie with friends, and the family is staying home, or meals are provided at home, the student will pay for his/her own).
- Costs associated with participation in school sponsored activities such as graduation ceremonies, school dances, trips other than those specific to the international program, extra-curricular sports, etc.
- Stamps, stationery, books, magazines, CD's, posters, etc.
- Costs related to renewal of student visas and airplane ticket home

Student Expenses – Host families are not expected to pay for the student's personal shopping, entertainment, or phones.

Payment of extras like theatre tickets, hockey games etc. will be at the student's expense. If a student chooses to participate in family holidays and/or travel where costs are incurred, the student is expected to assist in bearing the costs for his/her portion. Where the student chooses not to participate in the activity, the host parents will make alternate arrangements for the student and are expected to inform the homestay coordinator to ensure the arrangements are acceptable or to request assistance in finding a solution.

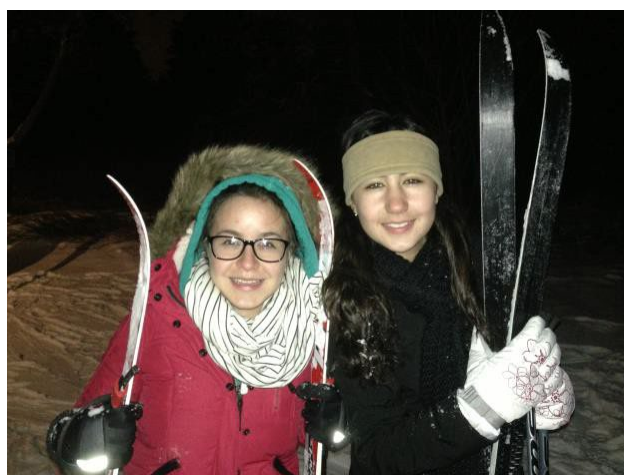
It would be wise for the student and host parent to discuss if the student will be doing much downloading to his / her computer (e.g., movies, games, songs). There may be an extra cost if the extra on-line downloading is more than what is included in the normal internet package as supplied by the internet service provider.

Money

- The long-term student is expected to keep his or her own bank account and use a debit card to get cash.
- It is recommended that students not loan money to host family members and it is recommended that host family members not loan money to the students.
- Students may choose to look after their own spending money, however the host parents may monitor it, if it seems excessive.
- Many banks offer accounts for students without monthly fees. Please speak with your host family or homestay coordinator for more information. Some of the more popular banks in Canada include:
 - <http://www.rbcroyalbank.com>
 - <http://www.cibc.com>
 - <http://www.scotiabank.com>
 - <https://www.simplii.com/>
 - <http://www.bmo.com/home>

Suggestions: Please discuss this list with your home-stay parent(s).

Leisure Activities – Some of the international students' best experiences have to do with participation in activities in the school and community. Many students need encouragement to participate in activities because of shyness or because of language difficulties. Schools offer many extra-curricular activities such as sports or clubs. Students are encouraged by NISEP to become involved. You may want to ask your host parents to help you investigate registration for fall and winter community leagues in soccer, volleyball, basketball and/or hockey or another activity. Many communities provide a variety of activities available to young people. These leisure activities include guitar, music and voice lessons, sports, swimming, gym, dance, etc.



NISEP will plan student activities while you are in our province, but family and neighbourhood activities are also great fun. Activities such as making your first snowman, snow angel or snow fort, snow-ball fights, tobogganing, snow shoeing, ice fishing, and ice skating are all activities that students will enjoy if dressed warmly.

Student activities outside the host family home - If a student would like to be involved in an extracurricular sport or other activity, this needs to be discussed as a family to ensure family scheduling success. Students are expected to respect the host parents' concerns if the parent refuses to give permission for the plan. Reasons for refusal might include:

- a. Concerns for safety.
- b. Conflict with the family's plans or transportation issues.

The student should receive the host parents' permission **before** making plans to be away from the family home or when having friends over. This includes telling the parent:

- a. Where he/she would like to go.
- b. How they will be getting there and back.
- c. Who they will be with.
- d. When they will be home.

Students who want to invite guests home for dinner are expected to do so with plenty of notice to the host parent(s) and their approval. Depending on the request, this should be at least the day before and maybe as long as a week before the event.

The student must always inform the host family if he/she will not be home for a meal.

Curfew – It is expected that students will observe a reasonable (and age appropriate) bedtime so that they will be at their best during class. This may be significantly challenging in the beginning due to jet lag and time zone readjustments. It is important that this subject is discussed with your host family to ensure there is a clear understanding.

Breaking your curfew continually may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from the NISEP program.

Staying away from the host family home overnight – A student who wants to stay away overnight from the host family home and/or to travel out of town with someone other than host family members, is expected to get approval from the host parents, the student's own parents and the homestay coordinator, in advance of the event. **This is very important and there will not be any exceptions.**

What expenses does the program cover - Included with the student's program enrolment fees are the following:

- all school subject specific course fees
- home-stay fees
- medical insurance fees

What difficulties can I expect at the beginning of my program

As a newcomer to Canada, you will go through a predictable sequence of stages in adjusting to your new circumstances and environment. The adjustment phase usually takes 3 to 4 months.

Arrival and first impressions – You will be excited to be in a new environment and everything will seem new and wonderful.

Jet lag - Most students have traveled through several time zones to reach the province.

You may suffer from the effects of jet lag for up to two weeks, including sleeping problems, drowsiness during daytime hours, loss of appetite, general fatigue and disorientation.

Homesickness – Many students have left their family, friends and pets for the first time, and they are far away. Natural feeling of homesickness may be further compounded by culture shock.

Culture shock – You may become less optimistic as you find it difficult to make friends and learn English. You will miss your friends, family and everything that was familiar. You may become depressed and long for home. This is what people experience when they are suddenly immersed in a culture that is different from their own. Culture shock comes from the realization that basic assumptions about life and familiar ways of behaving are no longer appropriate or useful. Remember that you may be struggling with the following new things: language, climate, community, and in many cases strange customs, food, home and family behaviours. It is worth noting that the host family may have had little or no experience in another culture, so they may experience some culture shock themselves.

Loneliness – Students may feel very alone in this strange new situation. They may feel like outsiders in the community, in the school, even in the host home. Limited English ability may contribute to the feelings of isolation.

Recovery and Optimism – You feel better because you are experiencing success at school and making friends. You feel more confident about fitting in at school.

Teenage mood swings – All teenagers deal with the physical and mental changes that happen with adolescence. Sometimes teens experience mood swings, including loneliness, sadness, anger and happiness. At times, you may find yourself on an emotional roller coaster and your host parents may not understand how to help you. It is of great advantage when you can recognize your own feelings so that it does not negatively affect the relationship between yourself and the host family. All of the above may be exhibited in any of the following ways: quiet, unresponsive, withdrawn behaviour, crying spells, isolation from the family, long periods alone in the bedroom, lack of appetite, despondent behaviour, depression, anger, anxiety, moodiness and tiredness.

Suggestions: If you feel like you are suffering from any of the above conditions, talk about it with your host parent or your home-stay coordinator. Often, the parent and your homestay coordinator will explain to you that it is perfectly normal, and that it will get better in time. Plan some activities despite these feelings. Get together with the family members or some friends. Sometimes, reading a humorous book or watching an upbeat movie can help lift your spirits. Your host parents or homestay coordinator might suggest and assist with ways to help you make friends at the school or in the neighbourhood. Many of these little problems will soon pass; it is usually just a matter of dealing with the day-to-day issues and feeling better until all is well.

Please remember that your homestay coordinator is here for you, to help you through your problems, to help keep you on track and to do all that he/she can to maximize your educational experience.

What if a student gets sick? – It is possible that at some point during your stay during the school year, you will get ill. Very often, the sickness might just be feeling poor when you have a cold or simple flu. These might include a headache, sore throat, chills or feeling cold, a minor fever or aches and pains. These symptoms or ailments usually disappear in a few days and all that is needed to help is to drink plenty of fluids and to take some "over the counter" cold medicine, such as Advil Cold and Flu, Dristan Medicine for Colds and Sore Throats, or one of many others available at a pharmacy. Your host parent can help you with this and might already have something in their home until you can arrange to buy your own. If these problems do not get better after a couple of days or you start to feel worse, please discuss this with your host parents as medical attention may be required.

The NISEP international program has arranged for all of our students to have medical insurance. Any time a student visits a doctor or hospital, he/she should have their Medical Insurance information with them. You may find Canadian medical practices and medicines strange, so feel free to ask many questions during this period / episode. (For further information on medical concerns, and to keep NISEP informed of students' illness, please contact your NISEP homestay coordinator).

Suggestions: Discuss your illness with your host parents when you feel unwell. You could inform them about the types of medical problems you have had in the past and what the usual treatments are.

Medical Service Locations*

Clinic Name	Street	Telephone	Clinic days & Times
Dr. Andrew Rossiter	Centennial Square, Mt. Pearl	709-368-0033	Mon-Fri 9:00-12:30 2:00-5:00
Mundy Pond Community Walk-In Clinic	50 Mundy Pond Road	709-777-1706 Book apt. via text: 877-709-2005	Mon-Fri 8:00 – 8:00 Sat 8:00 – 4:00
Janeway Children's Hospital	300 Prince Phillip Drive	709-777-6300	24/7
Centre of Health Excellence	8-10 Rowan Street, Churchill Square	709-726-4880	https://theche.ca/about/ (\$40 fee to see physician)
NL Health Line	N/A	811	24/7

***Please note that cash payment must be made at the time of your visit. Submit your claims form for reimbursement to Guard.Me insurance.**

*Metro area students only.



Medical Insurance Contact Information - NISEP has arranged for emergency medical and dental insurance through Guard.Me insurance. It is important to read your insurance package carefully to determine which expenses you can claim.

GuardMe will email all NISEP students a Welcome Letter in September. In this email, GuardMe also encourages students to contact their GuardMe Customer Care Department directly via email, chat, or phone call if students have issues in creating their account, to request their policy information, and for guidance on how to access their “guard.me My Account” to get this information. Please contact the Customer Care at customercare@guard.me, in addition to the contact number that is also available **24/7** to speak with a Customer Care representative on **1-905-752-6200 or 1-877-873-8447** to assist the students regarding any questions or concerns about their account, coverage, claims or healthcare access card.

If you visit a doctor’s office, you will be expected to pay for the visit services immediately. Most doctors’ offices only accept cash payments so please ensure you have enough money with you at the time of your visit. After the visit, you will submit a claim form for reimbursement. Additional claim forms can be downloaded from their website at <https://www.guard.me/login.php>. From this same link, you can complete an online form which will result in faster processing of your claim.

You can also speak with a Canadian Doctor anytime, anywhere through mobile doctor by Guard.Me Insurance. You have access to online doctor consultations on Maple, with your visit billed directly to Guard.Me insurance. Don’t spend hours in the waiting room at clinics or hospital Emergency Rooms.

Maple lets you speak to a Canadian-licensed doctor right away through your smartphone or computer to get medical advice, a diagnosis, or prescription. Doctors can treat many conditions online including allergies, asthma, cold and flu, infections, just to name a few.

Visit www.guard.me/mobiledoctor to sign up.

Communications Throughout the Student's Stay – Within the first couple of weeks after the student arrives, the homestay coordinator will call the host family and ask them to report on how well the student is settling into their home. The homestay coordinator will also get the student's opinion on how things are progressing in the home.

It is important for students to join the host family with an open mind to try something different, to participate in family activities and to share in the responsibilities of being "one of the family". Likewise, the student's host family will invite him or her into the family home, to accept and learn from the differences in cultures and to try to make the student feel welcome and respected.

Students and host families are encouraged to try and communicate with each other regularly. This includes any concerns or problems as they arise. The homestay coordinator is encouraged to ask periodically if the families or students have any concerns, and to ensure that problems are dealt with before they become bigger issues. The goal is to address issues quickly and resolve them to everyone's satisfaction.

Canadian Food – Canadian food can be a problem for international students at first. The food often served in our host homes may be different from the food students are accustomed to eating. Eating times, table manners, and methods of serving and presenting food may also be different for the student. Most students adjust quickly to a Canadian diet, but some take longer than others. Your host parent might ask you about which Canadian foods that you tried and liked or disliked. Sometimes, a sandwich, chicken nuggets and fries or a microwavable dinner will do when you would rather not eat the prepared family meal. Some host families might ask students to show them how to prepare a dish from the student's home country. Of course, online cookbooks can help with this, so please share this information with your host family.

Suggestions: Ask the host parent for a tour of the kitchen and the refrigerator, naming items and explaining what they are for. Talk about favourite foods and what is eaten at mealtimes at home. Some host parents might take the student food shopping, asking the student to identify the foods that they like or might like to try. This might be a good time to tell the host parent what you would like for lunch during school days. Perhaps the student might like to offer to prepare a favourite dish so that the host family can try it and learn how to prepare it.

Meals – Everybody likes different foods. Part of the fun of homestay is learning what Canadian families like to eat and teaching your host family what you like to eat. Now is your chance to prepare a traditional meal from your home country for your host family. This will be a treat for you and them!

Your host family will always provide your meals, but this doesn't mean that your meals will be served to you. Sometimes your hosts will not be at home for every meal and sometimes they will have different customs from you for certain meals.

Typical Canadian meals consist of the following:

Breakfast - Each host family has its own unique morning schedule, so it is important to decide on a routine that will work best for everyone. Weekdays, breakfast is a quick, light meal. On weekends, families may prepare breakfast together. Some families eat a hot breakfast; others prefer to have something cold, such as cereal or toast, and juice. Your family might leave it up to you to decide what to eat in the morning. Please ask them to show you where the food is kept and how to prepare your own breakfast if this is the case.

Lunch. Eaten midday, usually consists of a light main course (soup, a salad or a sandwich), a drink (water, milk or juice) and a desert of fruit or cookies. You will be able to bring a bagged lunch to school from your home. If you have a sandwich that you do not like, please let your host know. You'll find that they can be very accommodating.

Dinner. Your host family will try to have a sit-down dinner – which is usually the largest meal of the day and may consist of a main course, with or without a salad – as often as their weekly schedule allows. It is very important that you communicate with your family when you will be home for dinner (usually between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.). To be considerate, **if you will not be home for dinner, you MUST phone your family and tell them before dinnertime.** This way, they will not expect you, they will not worry, and they will leave some supper for you.

Please try to be at home for the family dinner hour as often as possible as this is the best time for families to talk about their day and for you to bond with your host parents and host brothers and sisters.

It is important that you are happy with the food prepared for you. If you have special dietary needs – if you have extreme likes or dislikes, or any allergies – please discuss them with your host as soon as you arrive.

- Three meals per day plus snacks and drinks will be supplied to the student. (Two meals and a bagged lunch on school days).
- The student may be expected to prepare breakfast and lunch for him/herself as long as they have been shown how and if the ingredients are on hand.
- Breakfast is generally a quick, light meal (toast, juice, milk, cereal, eggs, jam, etc.)
- Lunch will generally be a bagged lunch and could include sandwiches, raw vegetables, cookies, milk/juice and fruit, etc. When students are away on school or program field trips it is expected that a bagged lunch will usually be provided unless otherwise notified.
- Dinners are usually prepared by the host parents and may include rice, meat, cooked vegetables, leftovers, salad and maybe a dessert.
- Discuss with your host parents which foods you like so that the foods can be incorporated into the food plan.
- Host parents may take the student grocery shopping, so the student can point out foods he/she likes.
- Host families should explain how items are added to the family shopping list.
- Having the student help with the preparation of meals could provide a good opportunity to share cultural insights.

- If students have specific foods that they want to eat that are more expensive than foods eaten by the host family, or if the student only eats the extra food, it is expected that the student pay for that food him/herself.
- If a host family goes out to a restaurant, payment of the food should be discussed beforehand so there are no surprises when the bill comes.

Clothing Suggested for Your School Year

*Please note: This is a general guideline as to what to pack

Fall (October/ November)

- Rain jacket, umbrella, warm coat
- Long sleeves shirts
- Hoodies, sweaters
- Jeans, sweatpants
- Gloves
- Warm pajamas, slippers



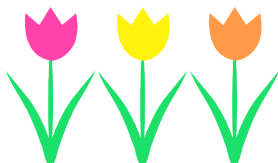
Winter (December/January/February)

- Winter coat, umbrella, boots
- Jeans, pants, tops, hoodies
- Warm hat
- Gloves you would wear in early spring or fall
- Warm pajamas, slippers



Spring (March/April/May)

- Sweaters (fleece, wool, cotton, etc.)
- Hoodies, jeans
- Long and short sleeved shirts
- Pajamas
- Umbrella
- Sunglasses



Summer (June/ July/ August/ September)

- Shorts, cropped pants, skirts
- T-shirts, light jeans
- Good walking shoes
- Bathing suit, sun hat, sunglasses
- Sandals
- Light sweater
- Light hoodies



Academics – You must begin with a full course load, currently 7 subjects in our linear schools and 4 subjects in our semesterized schools. Your school's academic requirements in your home country may differ with your academic requirements in Newfoundland. It is important that you take the correct subjects, so you can continue your studies upon returning home. The following subjects should be studied while you are in Newfoundland:

- Mathematics – at grade level
- English – including ESL or writing, etc.
- Science – Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Earth Systems, etc.
- World Studies – Social Studies or Newfoundland Studies, etc.
- 3 elective subjects

Your host parents are not responsible for the student's academic progress. However, monitoring the completion of homework may be required for the student's overall success in the program. Your host family is required to provide a quiet, private place for the student to study, which is usually the student's bedroom.

People in your school - If you require assistance in school, you can speak with the following people, depending on the situation:

Principal: The principal oversees programs at the school and works closely with staff, students and parents. The principal is the highest authority in the school.

Vice-Principal: The vice-principal assists the principal in running the school and looks after discipline.

Teachers: Students have different teachers for different subjects. You can call the teacher Mr. Ms. or Mrs. as appropriate. Some teachers have a specialty in different subject areas, such as Science, Mathematics, English, Social Sciences, etc.

Teacher-Librarian: These people help students access resources on the Internet and learn about books, tapes, videos and magazines

Guidance Counselors: They assist in planning students' timetables and applying to university. They can tell you about other programs in the schools and in the community.

Office Secretaries: They assist in registering students, do the school's office work and answer telephone calls.

Absence from school and late arrivals – The student is expected to attend all classes at school. This is your first obligation.

You must bring a written note signed by your host family each time you are absent. Absences and late attendances are reported to the host family automatically by the school's notification system.

If you are absent without authorization or meaningful explanation, there may be serious consequences: you may be suspended from your school, you may be expelled from your homestay and in the most serious of cases, and you may be expelled from the NISEP program. Each case is assessed individually, and exceptional circumstances may be considered.

Practicing English – In addition to the online Vital English that is provided to all NISEP International Students, students have found the below items as useful ways to meet English-speaking people and practice English:

- Practice English as part of the normal household routine
- Talk with your host family during dinner and relaxation time
- Join family events and outings
- Play with neighbourhood friends, etc.
- Join school clubs (e.g., choir, drama, band) and/or sports teams
- Go on school sponsored trips
- Get involved in community activities outside of school at local community centers and churches

Consider getting involved in activities through a variety of ways:

- Act as a volunteer
- Take part in sports
- Take courses in art, crafts, music, etc.
- Make friends with Canadians.

Vital English - As part of our program, NISEP offers the use of Vital English. This program is designed to help students improve their level of English during their stay in Newfoundland. Students should have completed a Vital English assessment prior to their arrival.

Students will access a series of interactive lessons that cover important areas like reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Each lesson is designed to be engaging and easy to follow, with activities that allow you to practice what you learn. The program is self-paced, allowing students to work through the lessons at their own speed.

The Vital English website can be found here: <https://newfoundland.my.intuto.com>

Students will be asked for a Username, which is the email address they provided to NISEP. In addition, they will also have to create their own password.

Travel

- The student may not travel outside Newfoundland unless it is a school trip, or they are accompanied and supervised by an adult who is at least twenty-five (25) years of age. Pre-approval of all travel must be received from the host parents and homestay coordinator. The Executive Director may grant exceptions to this requirement on an individual case basis.
- The student **must not** travel outside of the province without getting formal program approval. Please contact your Homestay coordinator. **There will be no exceptions.**
- Hospital, medical and emergency treatments or expenses incurred outside of Canada are not fully insured. Students must purchase, at their own expense, extra traveler's insurance.
- While students are encouraged to explore and experience Canadian culture through travel during their stay here, it is expected that travel will not interfere with your academic studies and should be limited to designated school holidays.

ID Wallet Card – The host parent should provide the student with an ID wallet card to include the host family name, address, home phone, and work numbers for the host parents and an emergency contact person such as a neighbour or relative.

Working – Citizenship and Immigration Canada does not permit Junior High or High school students to take a paying job in Canada. Disobeying the conditions of your study permit may have serious consequences including removal from Canada.

Driving – A student will not be allowed to drive a motor vehicle while they are under the custodianship of NISEP.

Telephone Use

- Students should ask before using the host's telephone.
- Acceptable use guidelines for local calls might include:
 - Phone calls should be limited to 15 or 20 minutes each
 - Limit use of the phone, which may include frequency of incoming and outgoing phone calls.
 - Purchase and use a calling card for long distance calls. NISEP or your host family will not be responsible for the student's long-distance calls.
 - A cut-off evening time for in-coming and out-going calls should be established. (e.g., 9:00 P.M.)

Cell Phones - Home-stay families should not sign for a student's cell phone. The host family or NISEP will not be responsible for expenses incurred by students in this manner. It might be a good idea to bring a cell phone with you from your own country. Typically, students opt for 'pay as you go' packages because other packages require that the student have reached the age of majority (19).

Suggestion: Talk with your home-stay parent about acceptable use of their home phone. Some families do not have "house" phones and use cell phones instead. In this case, you may not obtain permission to use the host parents cell phone as this phone has limited number of call minutes available.

Computer Use – NISEP encourages the use of computer for schoolwork. If you will be speaking with family and friends in your home country using Skype or social media.

Sites such as Facebook, we ask that you spend no more than 1 hour per day at these activities. As well, we strongly encourage that computer use cease at 9:00 p.m. from Sunday through Thursday.

Students do not have a right to use the host family computer – it is a privilege given by the host parents. Clear instructions for computer usage should be requested.

The host family's acceptable student computer use guidelines might include:

- a) How much time the student can use the computer.
- b) When the student can use the computer.
- c) Work should be saved on a removable device.
- d) The student will avoid downloading information from the internet to protect against viruses.
- e) The student will not make any changes to the computer settings without explicit permission.
- f) Should the student download programs that cause the family computer to become damaged and in need of repair, the student may be asked to pay for the cost of the repair.
- g) Internet access should be terminated each evening to ensure student goes to sleep at an appropriate time.

"Strange" Canadian Customs – Most of our international students will observe many different customs in our culture that might seem "strange." It may take some time to get used to these changes and some of the differences might seem very odd or funny when they are first seen. Some of these "strange" customs include:

- Canadians leave for work and school very early each morning and are usually home by 5:00 P.M.
- Dinner is usually around 5:30 to 6:00 p.m.
- Canadian meals:
 - May not take long to prepare
 - Usually have potatoes instead of rice
 - May use canned or frozen food
 - Eat raw vegetables, such as broccoli and cauliflower
 - Do not always peel their fruit
- It is considered polite to say "Good morning" when greeting family members in the morning. Most families do this.
- It is considered polite to say "Good night" when preparing to go to bed.
- It is considered polite to say "Hi" or "Hello" when greeting people, you know on the street. The regular telephone greeting is "Hello!"
- Some men and women, when they greet each other, might hug each other if they know each other well. It is not unusual for a family member to hug their children often and they might also hug a student. If these hugs make you feel uncomfortable, politely tell the family member.
- Business acquaintances or a person who is not known very well is generally greeted more formally with a handshake.
- Host parents may be called by their first names since they will become more familiar.
- Other adults – especially teachers – should be addressed as Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Miss.
- Typical ways of saying goodbye are:
 - Talk to you soon.
 - I'll talk to you later.
 - Goodbye or bye.
 - See you soon, see you or see you later.
 - These are just manners of speech and students should not feel slighted if they aren't called in the next few hours or days by the person.

- It is unusual to ask a person their age unless you know them very well.
- It is not polite to ask about financial status or what someone has paid for things.
- All persons entering a home remove their outdoor shoes and wear slippers or socks while in the home.
- If you accidentally bump into someone, it is polite to say “sorry” or “excuse me”.
- Some people say “sorry” when they feel they have made a mistake.
- It is considered polite to hold heavy or swinging doors open for other people. Men or women can do this action. It is polite for a young person to offer their seat to an older person or someone with an obvious medical condition. This is often done on the bus, in a waiting room, etc.
- If a door is closed, do not enter without knocking– especially if it is a bedroom or bathroom in a home or someone else’s classroom at your school. In this case, if the door is closed, wait until the person opens the door or until they say, “enter” or “come in”. If it is the student’s classroom door that is closed, the student should politely knock and then enter.
- When preparing a drink, lunch or snack, it is polite to ask if other family members would like something made for them. In many families, cooking meals is a shared activity, and it is polite to offer to help prepare the meal or help out when asked.
- It is not polite to wear a hat while eating at the table.
- When speaking to other people, it is customary to:
 - Maintain eye contact with the person you are talking to.
 - Stand one half to one meter apart.
- If you understand what the person is saying to you, it is customary to nod your head to show that you understand.
- If you don’t understand what they are saying, move your head from side to side and say, “I’m sorry, I do not understand”.
- Since you will be standing close to the person when you speak, it is important that you brush your teeth at least 2 times a day or that you use breath mints so that your breath does not smell unpleasant.
- It is also important that you bathe every day or two and put on deodorant and clean clothes.
- It may be necessary to adjust your speaking tone to be loud enough for the other person to hear you clearly. If they don’t understand what you are saying, don’t begin to shout because a louder voice will not help the other person who does not understand the English words you have used.

Student Moves – The homestay coordinator makes every attempt to find a suitable match between the student and the homestay family and will monitor the satisfaction of both parties through regular contact.

Although most homestay placements are successful, predicting which factors promote success is not easy. Unfortunately, some matches do not work out and the student must be moved to another home. This decision is never made lightly and is usually made only after several discussions with both the family and the student have failed to produce satisfactory results. If issues or problems are the result of incompatibility between the student and the homestay family, NISEP will locate a new homestay.

The transition can be eased if the reasons for the move are discussed openly, and blame avoided. After a move has been made, families and students often feel sad, guilty, and rejected for a period because they feel that they have failed in their homestay experience. However, both sides are encouraged to evaluate the experience and to try to understand what was learned as well as what mistakes, if any, were made.

If the issue or problem has resulted from more serious problematic behaviour on the part of the student, a course of action will be determined on a case-by-case basis. If it is deemed that the student should remain in the Newfoundland International Student Education Program, the homestay coordinator will locate a new homestay. This will be termed a “Probationary Move”. A student will be allowed only one Probationary Move.

If a further difficulty arises due to serious problematic behaviour on the part of the student, the student will be withdrawn from the Newfoundland International Student Education Program, Citizenship and Immigration Canada will be notified, and the student may be required to return to his/her home country at his/her own expense.

Transportation – Although the host parents may occasionally drive their student from place to place, the host parent should not be a chauffeur and the student is encouraged to take public transportation or a taxi on most occasions.

Students are responsible for paying for their own bus fares or passes, taxis, other than school buses, which are provided as part of the school program.

Please remember in some areas of Newfoundland, even in the metro area, there is less access to public transportation than in other areas. There is no expectation from your host family to be available at all times for your transportation needs. Have a discussion with your host family before planning your involvement in local or school activities.

Students are encouraged to become involved with outside school activities (e.g., dancing, music, sports, gym) but should first discuss transportation to these activities with their home-stay parents. In some cases, the families may not have a car or might have just one car. Some home-stay parents work irregular hours and will not be available to provide transportation. Students should become familiar with the bus system for their particular area and look for activities that are accessible by the bus systems or within walking distance.

If public transportation is available in your area, the student is encouraged to purchase a bus pass that can be used for bus transportation during the student’s stay. The bus drivers prefer the bus pass or the correct change for bus fare.

Public transportation is widely used by students in the St. John’s area. Junior and senior high school students as well as those attending post-secondary institutions use public transportation. This allows them to visit malls, movie cinemas, museums, and friends, attend activities, etc. While not a 24-hour service, our public transportation does service a large majority of the greater St. John’s area, including its twin city, Mount Pearl.

For more information, please visit Metrobus website at

Winter in Newfoundland - Winter weather in Newfoundland is not as cold or snowy as in many places in Canada, but it is still cold and much different than the winter season in many of our students' home countries.

Winter temperatures are normally around 0 degrees Celsius; however, it can often drop lower than 0 degrees. Some days the wind adds to cold temperatures so that it can feel like minus 10-20 degrees. The normal annual snowfall is about 300 cm but often it will snow about 15 - 30 cm and then much of the snow may melt before it snows again. It is important to dress according to the colder winter climate. It begins to get colder in November and by Christmas time (late December), the weather can be quite cold with an occasional snowstorm. You will need the following clothing:

- Winter coat
- Warm winter footwear
- Gloves or mittens
- Scarf
- Hat

Your host family or homestay coordinator can help you select and purchase these items if necessary.

Because you may not be accustomed to winter weather, it is important to understand that dressing appropriately while in your host family's home is vital to your comfort. Being a northern country means that in the winter season, we would dress very differently than we would in the summer. We wear long pants, socks, slippers and t- shirt and possibly, on very cold days, maybe even a sweater. Heat thermostats should not be left turned above 20 degrees Celsius when you are not in your room. **Please have a conversation with your host family to discuss an appropriate comfort level in your bedroom or how you can become more comfortable making a slight change to your wardrobe.** Consider putting on a sweater, or ask for an extra blanket for your bed.

Homeward Bound (Prior to Departure) - Preparation and communication are keys to ending a homestay experience on a positive note.

Things the student should do:

- Pay all fees, close bank accounts, collect any deposits owed to them and pay phone bills to the host family if owed.
- Decide to ship home goods that are too difficult or heavy to carry on a plane (per airline weight restrictions).
- Return library books, schoolbooks, and other things they have borrowed.
- Cancel phone and/or internet services keeping in mind appropriate notice requirements.
- Be prepared for a swirl of emotions.
- Ensure that the student has a passport, study permit and airline tickets.
- Sell (or give away) items not returning with them to their native country or arrange for storage of items left behind if returning.
- Plan goodbyes, and do not just let them happen. This might include giving gifts to special friends or attending/holding a farewell party. Be prepared for reverse culture shock, including:
 - Euphoria about returning home.
 - Depression, confusion, and disappointment when he/she has to fit back into everyday home life.
- You must provide your complete travel itinerary showing your return home not less than 30 days before your program end date. Students must depart by June 30th. Please provide this to your homestay coordinator.



Expect to have some mixed feelings about leaving your friends and host family. You will be looking forward to returning to your home country, but you will miss your new Canadian friends and your host family. They will also miss you and there might be some sad faces and tears as you depart at the airport.

Student Expectations/Discipline

During their time in Newfoundland, NISEP students are expected to adhere to all rules of both the Homestay Family and the program.

The student's Homestay Family set rules regarding chores, curfews, household activities, etc. Should a student continually disobey the rules of the home, the Homestay Coordinator may need to become involved.

Once the Homestay Coordinator becomes involved in an ongoing issue, NISEP utilizes a three-strikes policy:

- First offence – Written warning
- Second offence – Probation
- Third offence – Termination from the program

Written Warning – Should behavioural issues persist following discussions with the Homestay Family, the student will be issued a written warning by their Homestay Coordinator. This warning will outline the ongoing issue, and the requests/solutions put forth by the Homestay Family and student. (putting dishes away, respecting curfew, etc.)

Finally, the written warning informs the student of the consequences of their failure to comply moving forward. Should a written warning not be enough to resolve the issue, the student will then be placed on probation.

Probation – Once a student has been placed on probation, failure to adhere to any and all rules and expectations of both the Host Family and NISEP will result in the student's immediate termination from the program.

There are also instances where NISEP will forgo probation and terminate the student immediately. Some of these instances include, but are not limited to:

- The commission of a crime
- The consumption/selling of illegal narcotics
- Significant mental health and safety concerns
- Smoking cigarettes/vaping

NOTE: Termination from the program is done solely at the discretion of NISEP. If a student is terminated from the program, they are not entitled to a refund of fees.

Alcohol/Drugs/Vaping – In Newfoundland, the legal drinking age to consume alcohol or purchase cigarettes is 19. While some students may be of legal age by the time of their departure, **no NISEP students are permitted to consume alcohol, smoke cigarettes, or consume any recreational drugs during their stay. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in the student's immediate termination from the program, at their own cost, without a refund of fees.**

Use of Personal Technology – To help ensure a respectful, safe, and supportive environment for all, students must adhere to the following guidelines for personal technology use while participating in the NISEP program:

- **Respect the privacy, safety, and dignity of others** at all times, including host family members, peers, and school staff.
- **Follow all school and district rules** regarding appropriate use of technology in classrooms and on school property.
- **Do not take, record, or share photos, videos, or audio recordings.** Secret recordings or live streaming from within homes or schools is strictly prohibited and may lead to disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the program.
- **Cyberbullying is strictly prohibited.** This includes any use of technology to harass, threaten, intimidate, embarrass, or target another person. Cyberbullying is considered a serious offense and may result in consequences under Canadian law and/or immediate dismissal from NISEP.

Students are expected to use personal devices responsibly and in a way that supports their success and safety while participating in the program.