



## CCS International Program – Host Family Guide

Dear International Family and Host Family,

Welcome to Cornerstone Christian School's International Program (CCSIP)! We are delighted that you have chosen to partner with us in our international home stay program! We have designed this program specifically for international students who are interested in attending Cornerstone Christian School and are not connected with another home stay program.

Our commitment is to guide our international students along the path to success, while they are attending Cornerstone Christian School. CCSIP provides a coordinator who will place students in homes, and will be working closely with our international students and host families, ensuring they receive the benefits that we know will enrich their academic plan of success. Our focus will be student safety, academic success, student/host family compatibility and providing a Christ-centered environment. All host families are carefully screened prior to placement.

As this program grows, we reserve the right to make changes (as needed) throughout the year. Program policies, international student rules, and host family rules are all subject to change. Families will be notified in the event of a change.

We believe that you will have a positive cultural and educational experience here at Cornerstone Christian School!

In His Service,

*Marie Killinger*

Marie Killinger  
International Student Director/PDSO  
Cornerstone Christian School

\_\_\_\_\_ Host Family Initial

International Student Initial \_\_\_\_\_

## CCS Facts

### *Mission Statement:*

"Through academics provide students with a Biblical worldview and the ability to impact their community."

### *Vision Statement:*

"Building a legacy of faith, virtue, and influence." 2 Peter 1: 5-8

### *Core Values:*

- The Holy Bible is the revealed word of God and taught as truth.
- Faith in God is the foundation upon which we build our lives.
- We value living a life of Christian character and virtue in order to bring honor to our identity in Christ.
- We value the following virtues: Courage, devotion, dignity, honesty, honor, integrity, love, loyalty, morality, and valor.
- We have a moral responsibility to influence the community in which we live.
- Continual improvement of the CCS program is essential.
- High academic standards are fundamental. Internal and external assessments are routine.

## About Us

**Small School Environment:** Cornerstone Christian School offers the benefit of a small school size, which enhances teacher-student relationships, and thus, the learning experience. Imagine a school where every student knows every teacher, and the teachers know all the students! Students get the attention they require in a rich caring environment, and teachers are familiar with each individual student's progress. This environment facilitates a sense of safety and security for the students.

**Code of Conduct:** There are Ten Virtues within the Crusaders Code of Conduct.

- **Courage:** Choosing the right course of action.
- **Devotion:** Commitment of the whole heart and will.
- **Dignity:** Nobility based in heir-ship to the King of Kings.
- **Honesty:** Truthful in all matters, therefore trustworthy.
- **Honor:** Adherence to the correct principles.
- **Integrity:** Excellence of character or reputation.
- **Love:** Self-sacrifice at all times, "Christ-likeness."
- **Loyalty:** Allegiance to all other Crusaders.
- **Morality:** A biblical standard of right and wrong.
- **Valor:** A bold determination in the face of adversity.

Students are taught that these virtues are part of being a Cornerstone Crusader in and outside the classroom, and on and off the field. More importantly, students are taught that these virtues are essential to their Christian character.

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## **Philosophy and Objectives**

### ***Philosophy:***

Cornerstone Christian School views the international program as highly valuable and mutually beneficial both to the visiting student as well as the American student. Young people need experiences in their lives that enhance classroom learning and that help them to develop an awareness of their role as not only world citizens but citizens in the Kingdom of God. The direct exchange of experience between international and native students allows students to become acquainted with another country, its heritage, and its values.

### ***Objectives:***

1. To promote international understanding in order to help people discard stereotypes and to discover the present realities of another culture.
2. To increase opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. To experience the uniqueness and richness of a foreign culture.
4. To provide a program that allows international students to improve English language skills.
5. To provide an experience that allows the student to experience the true American lifestyle.

## **Statement of Faith**

As a ministry of Cornerstone Community Church, our school has adopted the Statement of Faith set forth by the church which reads as follows:

We recognize that there are both some CORE issues and some PERIPHERAL issues of Christianity. An example of a CORE issue is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The only opinion taught is that there was a physical resurrection of Jesus. An example of a PERIPHERAL issue is how often you should take communion. This is an issue about which there is more than one opinion. Whether to sing hymns or choruses is a PERIPHERAL issue while the fact that we can only come to God through Jesus is a CORE issue.

In core issues we have unity. (*Ephesians 4:4*)

In peripheral issues we have liberty. (*Romans 14:1,4,12,22*)

In all our beliefs we show love. (*1 Corinthians 13:2*)

Cornerstone is confident enough in the truth of the Gospel that we do not get nervous if someone does not believe ... even on a core issue. Although we will never allow alternative teaching on core issues, we do believe in giving people time to realize the truth.

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## **Standard of Conduct**

The following rules apply to all international students enrolled in the CCS International Program - NO EXCEPTIONS.

1. Students are not allowed to possess, purchase, or use any illegal substances which include all illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco products.
2. Students are NOT allowed to use their native language while in school or at home, they must abide by the "English Only" rule. This rule is to help our students learn English as quickly as possible.
3. Students are not allowed to leave school grounds during school hours. The only exception would be if student is participating in an athletic event or school approved function, in which case a parent permission slip must be signed and turned into the school office.
4. Students must follow all government laws, state and local laws, school rules and host family rules.
5. Cornerstone Christian School International Program is a Christian affiliated program, therefore, students must participate in all academic courses related to Christianity - no exceptions.
6. Students are not allowed to purchase or possess any weapons of any kind. This includes, but is not limited to, fire arms, knives or gun powder.
7. Purchasing or possessing pornography is prohibited.
8. Students are not allowed to travel outside of the state or go on overnight excursions out of town, unless given written permission from the student's parents.
9. Cheating of any kind/in any form will be grounds for immediate expulsion from school.

## **Placement Process**

CCSIP will provide the following services to our students:

- We place the enrolled international student in a caring, and trustworthy home.
- We offer our enrolled student academic guidance, and oversee their progress.
- We contact our student and host family on a monthly basis to discuss issues, and help with any problems that may arise.

\_\_\_\_\_Host Family Initial

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## International Student's Parent Responsibilities

Most of us feel uncomfortable discussing emergency plans; however, it must be done. Therefore, keep in mind, the goal of CCSIP is to keep your child safe at ALL times. However, parents of our international students are fully responsible for their child. In the event that your child should have a medical emergency, you are responsible to pay all medical or dental bills. If your child should be injured, involved in an accident, or become seriously ill; you are responsible for all medical bills that may incur. If your child should damage any property such as school property, host family property, or friend's property; you are responsible to pay for all expenses. Lastly, in the extreme unfortunate event of death of your child, while in the care of the host family, the **host family and Cornerstone Christian School are not responsible for any expenses incurred.** In the event of an emergency, parents will be notified immediately.

### **Financial Responsibility**

The international student program that Cornerstone Christian School provides has an annual fee of \$500. This fee must be paid along with all other fees that are due, such as: Tuition fee, enrollment fee and host family fee. **ALL SCHOOL FEES MUST BE PAID IN FULL BEFORE STUDENT ARRIVES.**

In agreeing to the annual cost of tuition, parents understand that the school's annual budget is determined based upon the number of students enrolled at the school for that year; including but not limited to obligations such as teacher and staff salaries, education tools and equipment, and school-related enrichment activities. For parents who withdraw their child(ren) from the program prior to the end of the school year for any reason (including disciplinary measures taken by the school), the parents will still be responsible for all program fees.

By signing below you are agreeing to all the terms above. Please understand this is a legal and binding contract.

_____	_____	_____
Father's Name (Please Print)	Father's Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Mother's Name (Please Print)	Mother's Signature	Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Host Family Initial

International Student Initial \_\_\_\_\_



## Host Family's Responsibilities

Host families are responsible to contact the CCS International School Advisor every month to ensure the success of your student. If any problems arise, it is the host family's responsibility to notify the appropriate individual to help resolve the issue.

The host family must turn in all required school paperwork such as permission slips, emergency forms, etc... in a timely manner to the school office. There will be times when students will owe the school additional money for sports, field trips, etc... Host parents may need to follow-up with their student to make sure this has been handled. And, of course, host parents will need to help their student by monitoring grades and homework.

The host family is responsible to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for the student. They should have their own bed, clean sheets, and adequate living space to store their belongings. Students can share a room with another family member who is of the same sex and of the appropriate age group (i.e. toddlers should not be in the same room with a teenager).

The host family is responsible for providing three meals a day. Food needed to pack a school lunch should be available for students, if they choose to take a lunch. If the student wants to buy a lunch, that is the student's responsibility. If the host family decides to eat out, students are responsible to pay for their portion of the meal, unless the family decides to pay. However, the student should always be given the choice to stay home and eat the food available for them.

As a host family, first and foremost, you are an example of Christ and He will be seen in all that you do. Please remember, you are not just providing a roof over a child's head but you provide a family environment and a cultural experience. It is important that you understand you will be involved in making decisions for your student based on what is best for your family. If your student receives an award or should want to participate in a sports event, please take part in that experience, as you would for your own child. Keep an open mind and an open heart.

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Host Father's Name (Please Print)

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Host Father's Signature

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Date

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Host Mother's Name (Please Print)

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Host Mother's Signature

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Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Host Family Initial

International Student Initial \_\_\_\_\_

# Things International Families Should Know

## Insurance

Federal regulation requires that all international students have medical coverage throughout their stay in the United States. Many health insurance companies have plans available to international students. It is important that you do not select your plan based on cost alone. This is the parent's responsibility and ALL international students MUST have proof of medical coverage. CCSIP works with a reliable health insurance company and can insure students for \$1000.00 from mid-August through mid-June.

## Travel

When international students are traveling to the United States they should:

- Keep all your travel documents current.
- Make sure passport is valid for the entire time you will be here.
- Bring your current I-20 with you.
- Anticipate delays and waits at all points of travel, both domestic and international. Have your identification readily available for inspection.
- Pay attention to reliable media reports.
- Do not wait until the last minute to prepare for a trip.
- Be prepared to pay charges if you packed heavy.

International students are not allowed to travel outside the United States. If the host family is planning on taking the student out of town for more than two (2) days, they must first have permission from their parents. Parents must give written permission to host family and CCSIP.

Students should keep their passports on them when they travel. Their passport should be good for at least twelve (12) months into the future.

Cornerstone Christian School provides an opportunity for our international students to take a school trip each year. The purpose is to enhance cultural learning. The school usually travels to Virginia, Washington D.C. and New York with American and international students.

Traveling without permission from CCSIP and your host family is prohibited. This includes taking rides home from school or activities without permission from your host family. Please understand that it is not acceptable in American culture.

\_\_\_\_\_ Host Family Initial

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## Financial Matters

In the past, students have come to the United States with credit cards from their home country and these cards are not always accepted. Many students have experienced a great deal of frustration with these types of credit cards. It is best that students open their own bank account as soon as they are able to. We do not recommend that students carry around large amounts of cash or keep large amounts of cash in their host family's home. Remember, your host family and CCSIP are not responsible for lost or stolen money.

The host family should not loan student money or ask to borrow money from a student. If a student should run out of funds, they should contact their parents immediately and make arrangements for funds to be deposited into their account.

## Adjustment

During an international student's stay in the United States there will be many adjustments. Students and host families will both have separate stages of adjustment so please be patient with one another.

Student and host family should sit down and have a discussion. Create a list of things you need to go over with your student and other family members. This list may include things such as; chores, house rules, how to use appliances, laundry schedule, mealtime clean-up, television and game rules, computer rules, bedtime, phone rules and what is expected of each family member.

Student and parents should discuss how the student will address his host family parents. Will they refer to their host parents as "mom" and "dad," or by first name? This will be up to each individual host family and student to decide together.

Your student may have difficulties communicating when they first arrive. Please keep in mind, each culture has their own set of rules and students may need to be reminded of your family rules. The students are expected to follow the same set of family rules your natural children are to follow. You are the host parent so rules are to be established regarding: bedtime, computer usage, completion of homework, cleaning up dishes, chores, etc.

## Weather

California has a warm climate. Fall starts out warm and weather gets colder in late September. Our winters are not harsh. We rarely get snow; however, we do get rain. A lightweight winter jacket is appropriate. Sweaters and sweatshirts are appropriate for winter weather. Please keep in mind Cornerstone Christian School's dress code when deciding on outerwear (Crusader wear can be purchased through the school). Typically our winter temperature is an average of 70 F°.

\_\_\_\_\_ Host Family Initial

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## Transportation

Pick-up and drop-off schedule should be determined and discussed prior to student's first day of school. Host parents will often be asked to be drive a student to different locations; taking a student to visit school friends, the mall, or excursions is up to the discretion of the host parents. If a student is excessively asking to be driven places, host parents may ask the student to help pay for fuel. However, students are not responsible to compensate host parents for the cost of transportation to and from school, to and from CCS events, practices and performances.

## Holidays

**New Year's Eve**, December 31st, is traditionally more important to American families than New Year's Day. Many families gather with friends and family to "*ring out the old year and ring in the New Year,*" an expression which reflects the old custom of ringing church bells to greet the New Year.

**New Year's Day** is celebrated on January 1. You will find banks, schools and many businesses closed. There is an annual Rose Parade in Pasadena, CA on New Year's Day.

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday** is celebrated on Monday in mid-January and is an official holiday that closes schools, banks and government buildings. King organized and led the civil rights movement in America during the 1960's and has a significant role in American history.

**Groundhog Day** is February 2. This is not an official holiday but celebrates a legend of Pennsylvania groundhog, Puxatawny Phil, who comes out of his burrow. If he sees his shadow (on a sunny day), he will be frightened and return to his home in the ground; indicating six more weeks of winter. If he does not see his shadow, then spring is very near.

**Abraham Lincoln's Birthday** is February 12. Lincoln was president during the American Civil War and is especially known for the Emancipation Proclamation which abolished slavery. His birthday is celebrated along with George Washington's Birthday on President's Day.

**Valentine's Day** is February 14 and is the day set aside for you to tell someone you care about them. Elementary school children generally exchange cards at school with their teachers and classmates. It is also called the lover's holiday which is celebrated by sending cards or giving candy, jewelry and flowers. It is not an official holiday.

**George Washington's Birthday** is February 22. Washington was the first president of the United States and commander of the army during the American Revolution. This is an official holiday celebrated together with Lincoln's birthday (President's Day), usually on the third Monday in February.

\_\_\_\_\_ Host Family Initial

International Student Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**Saint Patrick's Day** is March 17 and is an Irish holiday dedicated to the patron saint of Ireland. Even the non-Irish sometimes exchange cards and decorate with green shamrocks or wear green to school and work. This is not an official holiday.

**April Fools Day** is April 1<sup>st</sup>. This day is marked by custom of playing practical jokes on friends and colleagues. It is not an official holiday.

**Good Friday** is celebrated amongst Christians. It is the day that we remember the death of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Christian families usually attend church services.

**Easter** is celebrated in spring and the date usually varies from year to year. This is the day, we as believers celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Easter is also marked as a time to celebrate revival of spring. Colored eggs, rabbits and baby chickens are symbols of this season. Christians go to church, have special meals and often color eggs. This is always on a Sunday.

**Mother's Day** is usually the second Sunday in May. This day honors mothers and grandmothers. Children usually make something at school for their mothers, buy a small present or just do something nice for her.

**Flag Day** is June 14<sup>th</sup> and the American flag is flown on homes and office buildings to mark the adoption of the American flag.

**Father's Day** is the third Sunday in June and honors fathers and grandfathers in the same manner as Mother's Day.

**Labor Day** is the first Monday in September and recognizes people who work by giving them a day of rest. It signals the end of the summer and often features outdoor activities. Many families go away for the weekend because it is a three day weekend for some people.

**Columbus Day** is celebrated on the second Monday in October. This day commemorates the landing of Italian explorer Christopher Columbus on the shores of America. This is not an official holiday.

**Halloween** is October 31<sup>st</sup>. Halloween was originally called All Saints Day. Children often dress up and go trick-or-treating. Cornerstone Christian School does not allow students to dress-up at school.

**Thanksgiving** is celebrated on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month of November. This holiday is a time for us to give thanks. We have a large meal shared with family and friends. Turkey is the typical main dish for Thanksgiving dinner.

**Christmas** is celebrated December 25<sup>th</sup> in the United States. This day commemorates the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We celebrate by going to church, sing Christmas carols, exchanging gifts, decorating a pine tree and our homes, baking sweets and cooking a large family meal.

\_\_\_\_\_ Host Family Initial

International Student Initial \_\_\_\_\_

# Helpful Sources

## Important Phone numbers

Cornerstone Christian School	951-674-9381
Emergency	911
Local Fire Department	_____
Friends Phone Numbers	_____

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## Social Life in the United States

Tipping: Gratuities are not usually included in restaurant bills and it is customary to leave a tip (gratuity) for the server. As a guideline, you should tip up to 20% in an expensive restaurant and 15% in other restaurants. Tips are also given to luggage carriers in hotels, airports and train stations. Taxi drivers, baristas, manicurists and hairdressers are tipped as well.

Time conscious: Americans place considerable value on punctuality. They tend to organize their activities by means of schedules. As a result, they may seem hurried and not able to relax and enjoy themselves. Foreign observers sometimes see this practice as being “ruled by the clock.” Other times they see it as a helpful way of assuring that things get done.

Social Situations and Use of First Names: When meeting someone for the first time, it is customary to shake the person’s hand. If you are uncertain as to how to address the individual, ask for the name to be repeated.

Informality: Americans are taught that “all people are created equal.” Americans tend to treat other people in an informal and direct manner. You may have difficulty with this quality at first, but eventually you will become used to it. Americans are informal with one another in their readiness early in a relationship to call each other by first name. There are a few general rules which are easy to follow. People of the same status, such as student or colleagues in a department, usually call each other by first names. In formal situations, or when with a person you wish to show respect, then an address is usually with the last name. For example, one would say Mr. or Mrs. Many Americans will shake hands with strangers, hug good friends as a greeting and kiss family members when saying “goodbye”.

Social Invitations: “Come and see me soon” and “drop by any time” are idioms which are often used in social settings, but are rarely meant to be taken literally. It is always wise to call a day or more ahead before visiting someone at their home. If you receive a letter or invitation to an event at someone’s home and it says RSVP, you should respond by either writing a note or by calling the person who sent you the invitations as to whether or not you plan to attend.

## Other Tips for Social Gathering

- Americans will invite people they have never met before into their homes.
- Visitors to an American home might be allowed or even encouraged to see any room of the house. It is not unusual for people who visit a home in the winter, to have their coats piled on a bed in the main bedroom. This is customary.
- Some entertaining might take place in the kitchen. Men are often seen helping in the kitchen, cooking and/or cleaning up. Men are often the cooks in the American family.
- Children may get more attention than they would in other countries. Children are often included in social activity and take an active role in the conversation.
- Host families may have pets. Cats or dogs may live in the home and may be permitted to enter any part of the house or use any item of furniture as a resting place. Americans give their animals names and refer to them using pronouns such as him, her, but rarely it.
- Social interactions usually include males and females. Women may form their own conversation group as will men, but there is no rigid sexual segregation.

## Academic Honesty

Students at Cornerstone Christian School are expected to do their own academic work without getting excessive assistance from other people. This does not mean that you cannot ask other students for help in understanding what is happening in the class. However, it is not considered proper to have someone else do an assignment for you, or to copy answers or information from a publication in a way that makes it appear that the answers are ones you devised and composed yourself. That is considered cheating. *Cheating* means getting help from someone other than yourself or the instructor that you are not supposed to receive on an assignment, quiz, or examination. *Plagiarism* refers specifically to the practice of copying from a book or other publications and not giving credit, citing, or saying that the words belong to someone else and not to you. Cheating in any form may result in expulsion from CCS. You must obey all rules in the student handbook. International students are required to familiarize themselves with our student handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ Host Family Initial

International Student Initial \_\_\_\_\_

# Host Family Agreement

We the host family of \_\_\_\_\_, agree to the following rules and regulations:

We agree and understand that it is our responsibility to transport foreign exchange student to and from school. \_\_\_\_\_

We agree to enforce the "English speaking only" rule in our home. \_\_\_\_\_

We agree to provide three meals per day for our student: lunch, dinner and breakfast. If exchange student chooses to buy a lunch at school, they are responsible to use their own money to do so. \_\_\_\_\_

We understand it is important to include our student in family activities, traditions and holiday plans. \_\_\_\_\_

We understand there will be many cultural differences between exchange student and our family and are open and willing to share the American culture with our student.

\_\_\_\_\_

We agree that in the event that we desire to discontinue our participation in the CCSIP, we will first speak with program director and/or CCS international advisor before making a final decision. \_\_\_\_\_

In the event that the decision to discontinuing participation in CCSIPP is made, we agree to continue to support exchange student until a new host family is found. \_\_\_\_\_

We agree to provide a twin size bed (or larger) for our exchange student. Student can not share a bed but may share a bedroom with another family member who is of the same sex and in the same age group, as host family finds suitable. \_\_\_\_\_

_____	_____	_____
Father's Name (Please Print)	Father's Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Mother's Name (Please Print)	Mother's Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
CCS Representative (Please Print)	Signature	Date

\_\_\_\_\_ Host Family Initial

International Student Initial \_\_\_\_\_