

Guide Book For Friendship Partners



introduction to the

FRIENDSHIP PARTNER PROGRAM

sponsored by



International Student Ministries Canada

This booklet has been prepared by the staff of International Student Ministries Canada solely for the assistance of volunteers who function as Friendship Partners for international students at colleges and universities in Canada.

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PREFACE

The Friendship Partner Program brings together international students studying in Canada and Canadian families. The program is based on a mutual desire to get to know one another and experience a meaningful cross-cultural relationship.

The purpose of the FPP is in keeping with God's instruction that we treat "the stranger in the land" with kindness and respect, in the same way we are to care for family, friends and neighbors. Furthermore, the love of God compels us.

There are many important reasons for this program. First, many of these students are lonely when they arrive in Canada, and unsure of Canadian customs. Having a Canadian friend can make a huge difference in the first weeks of adjustment. Also, they are the potential leadership of their home countries, and are being impacted by changes that may affect their own cultures and governments. Some of them come to Canada from geographic "nooks & crannies" where there is no indigenous model of Christianity; and some represent areas of the world where Christianity is not welcome.

This booklet has been prepared as a guide for Canadians who are part of the Friendship Partner Program sponsored by ISMC. Its purpose is to aid

you in establishing and maintaining the relationship with your student, drawing on the experience of others.

Administratively Speaking

An ISMC staff member in your city has the over-all responsibility for the ISMC Friendship Partner Program. Working with the staff member is a Coordinator from each participating local church, or a district cell group leader. The Coordinator keeps in touch with that church's Friendship Partners on a regular basis. For FPP group events, you are, in turn, responsible to invite your student.

How Students are Matched with Friendship Partners

In order to become a Friendship Partner you will need to attend an orientation session led by the ISMC staff member. After your Friendship Partner application has been received, your Coordinator, cell group leader, or the staff member will assist you in meeting your student. This is called "matching" because it is based on the information on your application and on the form completed by the student who wants to have a Canadian friend. Another consideration is the distance from the student's residence to the Friendship Partner's home. Usually students who are new to Canada are matched first.

Sometimes a Student/Friendship Partner match is made less formally. The Canadian might be asked to meet a student at the airport. In many cities, some time during the first 2 or 3 weeks of university classes, the ISMC staff sponsor a "Welcome Reception" for new international students. Canadians who are ready to be Friendship Partners are invited to attend, to meet students and to begin their friendship "on the spot".

Your Coordinator or cell group leader will be in touch with you about how you will be matched with your student. When a match is made, more detailed information will be sent to both you and your student.

What A Friendship Partner Can Do

Some Friendship Partners will choose initially to make personal contact with the student. Others will prefer to be accompanied by an experienced Friendship Partner, and familiar with the university. Together they would meet the student, and, if possible, take him to the home of the new Friendship Partner.

If you have trouble contacting your student, please telephone the Coordinator at your church, or the ISMC staff member directing the Program. This is especially important when you are trying to arrange your first meeting with the student.

Your primary responsibility to your student is to be a friend, giving him the opportunity to visit your home and see you as you really are. By becoming a Friendship Partner you show your concern for, and interest in, the international student as a person. As you express your friendship in word and deed, the student will feel more secure in his new surroundings, which will enable him to be more efficient and successful in his studies.

The observant Friendship Partner will find many ways to reach out to the student, helping him to adjust to life in Canada without being judgmental about the student's home country and culture. An atmosphere of curiosity acceptance will go a long way to bridging cultural differences.

After the friendship has begun to develop, you will find there are many occasions when you would like to include your international friend in what you are doing. Feel free to issue the invitation, but be aware that your friend will not always be able to join you, especially if it is a spur-of-the-

moment event. Accept the student's decision, and assure him that it makes no difference to your friendship with him.

It will be of great help to your international friend if you can inform him approximately how long an activity will last. Students often have very full schedules, and they appreciate knowing in advance what time they can expect to be back at their residence.

The International Student Office at the University

All matters pertaining to the status of the international students at the university (whether they are in Canada as "resident aliens", "visiting scholars", "non-resident aliens", or "foreign students") are handled by the International Student Office of the University. The International Student Advisor and the office staff work closely with various government agencies, national, provincial and local, including the Canadian Department of Immigration. They assist the students to comply with all regulations and laws governing their presence in Canada.

In most cases, this Office will match each student with a staff member who acts as a counsellor concerning his academic career. This help often extends to personal matters such as health and emotional stresses, adjustment problems, legal matters, financial difficulties, and family matters such as death or serious illness at home, or a spouse and children who wish to join him in Canada.

A considerable number of Canadian universities have a "Host Family Program" which functions under the direction of the International Student Office. This program has purposes similar to those of the ISMC Friendship Partner Program. ISMC seeks to work in cooperation, not in competition, with the program on the campus. Your ISMC staff contact can give you information of the situation in your city.

The Friendship Partner should be aware of the services available through the International Student Office, and should not try to help the student privately in any of these matters. However, your sympathy and supportive friendship will be very encouraging to the student. If you wish to be of further help, be sure to contact the International Student Office on campus first, and follow their instructions to you.

The International Student -- a Profile

The international student is quite likely a sophisticated adult, and has usually been well educated in his homeland, a country with a unique culture very different from that of Canada. Through ability, intelligence and hard work, and perhaps help from the extended family, the student has been given the opportunity to travel abroad to study. As one of the "cream of the crop" academically speaking, this young person is one of a small number from his country to be given this privilege. He knows that he has a great responsibility to those who have financed this opportunity for an overseas education.

Next to the academic pursuits which are his primary purpose for being in Canada, the international student wants to know more about Canadian life and culture. Much of what he already knows has come from books (travel, history, novels, many written in Britain and USA), movies, and perhaps TV programs (often from the USA). Thus, he may know very little about the "average Canadian family".

The international student has already learned some English through his studies and his private reading, but that does not necessarily make him fluent enough to have full command of the language. As a foreigner living and studying in Canada, he will want to improve his ability to speak, understand and write English.

If an international lacks knowledge about Canadian culture and life-style, that is in no way indicative of his intelligence. You probably know less

about his homeland and culture than he does about Canada.

Canadian customs, traditions, daily routines, social structure and personal freedoms may all seem unusual to a person coming from a different cultural, religious and linguistic background. Your openness to view Canadian life from the student's perspective will create an atmosphere in which friendship and understanding can flourish.

The student will have many questions about Canada, and will feel free to ask them only when he has learned to trust you as a person and as a source of trustworthy information. If you are asked something you feel inadequate to handle, say so, indicating that you will help the student find the answer.

The International Student -- Arriving in Canada

The newly arrived student will face many situations in which he has no way of knowing how to respond acceptably. He will go through a period of "culture shock". It is particularly at this time that your help and advice will give him a sense of social stability and acceptability.

Often the Student Services Office at the university advises these new international students about establishing local bank accounts, renting accommodation, applying for medical coverage, obtaining a telephone, and sometimes finding used furnishings for their rooms. If the student asks for your help, you are wise to first determine what the campus office has done, and how they would advise you to help. Do not offer to loan your student money. Financial problems should be referred to the International Student Office at the university.

The International Student -- Transferring to Your City

Some international students will have studied at another university in Canada or the USA before moving to your city. They will already have made many adjustments, but will need orientation to your city, and new friends to help them fit in locally.

The International Student's Priorities

The international student's first priority is his education. He has come to Canada to learn all he possibly can in his chosen field and related topics. Most Internationals spend at least twice as much time in the university library and lab as they do in the classroom; and they often study late into the night.

Your student will appreciate knowing just when he is expected to arrive for a visit, how long the visit will last, and if you will provide his transportation. Let him know if his roommate is welcome, too.

Feel free to let your student know your own time priorities such as your employment schedule and home responsibilities. Try to be available for get together at mutually convenient times once or twice a month.

When your schedules do not match, keep in touch by telephone or E-mail and with personal notes and cards as appropriate. Using these methods to pass on bits of news and invitations, or just to chat will help to solidify the friendship. The student will know he has not been forgotten, and will not feel isolated by his busy schedule.

Before the First Visit

Before you meet your international friend for the first time, keep these ideas in mind.

WHERE TO MEET

For the first meeting, consider the possibility of an informal time on neutral ground -- neither the student's apartment or your home. This frees the student from the double pressures of meeting strangers and of coping with unfamiliar customs in a Canadian home. However, if it is not practical to meet in a neutral place, then an informal visit to your home is a good choice. Offer to pick him up by car for the first visit, as a trip by city transit to an unknown destination might be quite difficult.

WHERE THE STUDENT IS FROM

You will feel more at ease in talking with your new friend if you are able to locate his home country and city on the map, and have done some reading about life there. If you know something of the educational, political, and religious situations, you will know what to ask, and what to leave out of the conversation. Your public library is a good place to look for up-to-date facts about any country.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Write down your name, address and telephone number to give to your friend. Include all the members of the household, even pets. A special "welcome to Canada" gift is an address book, where you have already written your name, address, and telephone number. Let your student know that if he moves, you want to have his new address and telephone number so you do not lose touch.

PRONUNCIATION OF NAMES

Your first reaction may be, "I can never say that name correctly," but remember that the student may feel the same about your name. If you practice your student's name with him until you both are comfortable with it, you will have shown that he is important to you. Write it out is useful as well. Further, in many countries it is a matter of courtesy to address a person by his surname until you know each other very well. It is best to ask your student what name you should use, both formally and informally.

On the other hand, be prepared to help your friend learn to say your name. In some countries, it is very impolite to address an older person by his given name, so do not be surprised if he prefers to use Mr. & Mrs. If your student is female, she will most likely prefer to use Mr. for the man of the house, while using the wife's given name.

COMMUNICATING WITH UNDERSTANDING

Do not worry about difficulties in communication over the telephone, or in person. Sincerity, friendliness and patience, along with genuine interest and understanding, will serve you well in crossing cultural and language barriers.

COMMUNICATING IN WRITING

Try to follow-up your verbal invitation with a written note. The students will all have E-mail so use it if you have it. This clarifies for your student the exact date, time and place of the meeting, and serves as a reminder of the appointment.

SPEAKING CLEARLY

Speak a bit slower than you normally do, using good pronunciation, and straight-forward sentences. Do NOT raise your voice in an effort to increase understanding - it doesn't work! If you feel your new friend has not understood, repeat the information, perhaps rephrasing it. Overusing the question, "Do you understand?" can undermine your student's confidence in his English skills. Also, listen to yourself so that you do not unconsciously adopt a patronizing tone of voice, as when talking to a child.

USING HUMOR, SLANG, and IDIOMS

Be very careful in using humor and jokes. Every culture has its own sense of what is funny, so your new friend might not understand what you have said. It is best to keep jokes and slang out of the conversation until the friendship is secure. Be alert to the many idioms used in English, and be ready to explain them without waiting to be asked. Govern all you say with sensitivity, tact and good taste.

REFRESHMENTS UPON ARRIVAL

Offering the student some refreshment when he first arrives at your home will make him feel more at ease. This is an essential courtesy in many countries. Sometimes offers of refreshment (or of more servings at the table) must be made several times, especially if the student comes from a culture where it is considered impolite to accept the first or second time an offer is made.

A TOUR OF YOUR HOME

Your student may enjoy touring your home. There may be questions about items uncommon in his background. Be aware that many cultures see Canadians as very materialistic. This is also an easy way to show him where the bathroom is, saving him any embarrassment later if he needs to use it.

USING THE STUDENTS LANGUAGE

A very satisfying way to express your interest in your student is to learn some words from his language. Start with phrases for "Hello", "Good-bye", "Please", "Thank You", "Welcome to our house", and then go on to special greetings for special festival days in his culture. This makes a natural bridge to explaining phrases such as "Happy New Year", "Happy Easter", and "Merry Christmas."

THE STUDENT'S FAMILY

Be sure to ask about your student's immediate, and extended, family. He will appreciate your interest, and enjoy sharing information with you. This will also help him adjust to the loneliness of being far from the security of family and culture. While ages, especially of the oldest and youngest members of the clan, are often freely discussed, you should remember that in many cultures besides Canada's, it is considered impolite to ask about

financial status.

HOMELAND POLITICS

Even if you are sure you disagree with the political system in your student's homeland, or the policies of those in power there, do not criticize. As a Canadian, you will find it difficult perhaps almost impossible, to understand his country and how it is run. He may feel the same about Canada. However, you can still accept each other as individuals, and learn about the other's country. Remember that you are no more responsible for the condition of Canada or for the national and provincial policies than your friend is for his homeland and its policies. When your friendship has grown and matured, you will have a better basis for discussing such matters. Your sense of patriotism should not prevent you from admitting the weaknesses in Canada's system of government, or from accepting the obvious strengths of the system in your friend's homeland.

INVITATION TO A FRIEND

When possible, give your student the opportunity to bring a friend to your house. This is especially helpful if the friend can provide transportation. If the friend is also an international, do not be surprised or offended if the two of them converse in their own language at times.

DEALING WITH JET LAG AND CULTURE SHOCK

Do not overwhelm your student with activities when he first arrives in Canada or immediately after he transfers from another city to yours. He will be coping with jet lag and culture shock, as well as unpacking, finding his way around the campus and the city, and adjusting to our food and water. It could take some time before he feels like himself, and is ready for more adventures. If you meet him at the airport when he first comes to Canada, and he has no place to stay, then one of the greatest kindnesses you can do for him is take him home and let him sleep as long as he needs to.

Culture shock is a physical, emotional and mental disorientation brought on by an encounter with a strange culture for which the person does not know the "unwritten rules of interaction". Help your student by not giving him any more social challenges than necessary. Let him get to know you and your family before he meets friends, neighbours, and relatives.

Learn the location of restaurants that specialize in cuisine from your student's homeland. Take him there, as your "private gourmet guide" to what to eat. Help him locate stores which stock items used in cooking food he is used to at home. Then offer him the use of your kitchen to prepare it.

INVITING THE STUDENT TO YOUR CHURCH

Do not rush into inviting your student to attend church with you. However, if he is a Christian, he will likely be more open to joining you. In any case, be sure your student understands that this invitation is for one time, unless he asks to go with you again later. Take time to explain, especially to students from non-Christian traditions, what will take place in the various parts of the service, that he is invited to be an observer, and is not expected to participate in any part of the service unless he wishes to do so. Explain that the Bible is the Christian "Holy book", and that the offering is not an "admission fee", but a free-will gift by regular attendees.

Remember that many religious groups have their own "Holy Book", which is treated with the greatest respect at all times. Do not offend your

student's sensibilities by placing your Bible, Prayer Book, or Hymn Book on the floor, or where someone might sit on it.

ENDING THE VISIT

Because customs vary among cultures, you, the Canadian Friendship Partner should be the one to initiate the end of a visit, especially the first one. In most cases, when you invite the student you should tell him approximately how long the visit might last. When it is time to say "good night", let the student know you have enjoyed the visit and then make arrangements for your next get together.

ARRANGING THE NEXT VISIT

Before your student leaves, make definite plans for the second visit. This is an important act in many cultures, and will assure the student of your acceptance of him as a friend. Try to plan around his busy times (lectures, seminars, exams) and plan for times that are "free" (reading week, holidays, etc.).

Be sure to be specific on date, place and time. If this is not possible, then agree to be in touch by telephone or E-mail within a given time to make the plans. Often students cannot make plans far in advance except for a very special occasion.

EXPRESSIONS OF THANKS

Although Canadians usually send a "Thank You note", especially after a first visit to a new acquaintance's home, this is not a universal custom. Many cultures do not express their gratitude so directly, even though there is genuine appreciation for what has been done.

If you as a Friendship Partner are open to building a cross-cultural friendship in spite of subtle cultural differences, you will quickly learn the difficulties your student has in understanding our spoken language, and in adjusting to his new environment.

SOME HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

(for establishing and maintaining a good friendship)

SHOWING YOU CARE

As a Friendship Partner, you want to show your interest in your international friend. Use your imagination. Here are some suggestions to get you started:

1. Give cookies or other homemade items, especially during exams, or times of illness.
2. Provide newspaper clippings about his country.
3. Meet him on campus for coffee and a quick visit.

4. Take pictures when he visits, then give him copies to send home.
5. Tell him well in advance about special events in your family so he can be free to join you. Include information about the type of dress, especially if it is an informal, or a very formal, occasion. Bear in mind that many students do not have access to formal dress wear, but that the national costume might be suitable.
6. Encourage him to phone you when he is lonely or free to visit you.
7. Get together with friends or other Friendship Partners for joint activities. Try an "international party".
8. Celebrate special days together -- birthdays (including his), Easter, Christmas, New Year (also his national New Year), Thanksgiving, July 1 and his national day. Be ready to explain the significance of each day.
9. If your student has grown accustomed to being with you on holidays, and you unexpectedly find that you must be out of town, be sure to let him know. He will understand your absence better than your silence. Perhaps a family friend could include him in something special while you are away.
10. Go with your student to events on the campus, especially when he is participating, or when they relate to his homeland.

HELPING YOUR STUDENT ADJUST TO LIFE IN CANADA

1. Many international students have limited personal finances even if they have scholarship funds to cover educational costs. Do not loan money to the student. There are other ways you can help him stretch his spending money. Here are some ideas.

- help him open a bank account, order cheques, and keep track of his funds
- take him to discount stores when appropriate
- help him find used (?free?) furniture and kitchen items
- assist him in shopping for suitable winter clothing
- introduce him to the world of the Garage Sale
- orient him to the city transit system and the student pass

2. If your student brings a gift, accept it graciously, even if it is something you would not usually have in your home. In many cultures, giving a hostess gift is an obligation, especially on the first few visits to a new acquaintance.

3. If your student asks for advice and help in shopping for a car, first make sure he understands and is able to meet all the provincial laws which

apply. He will need a valid driver's license, and he will have to insure and register his vehicle. The International Student Office at the university will have useful information about all this. You may wish to go with the student to look for a car. If so, take the opportunity to teach him how to shop for a vehicle (is it in good condition, is the price reasonable and affordable, is the seller trustworthy, what will it cost to operate? etc)

4. Find out when his birthday is, and celebrate it with him. Quite likely it will not be celebrated unless you care enough to do it. If you give a gift, make it an inexpensive one. Many cultures require that when a gift is given, one must be given in return. Be sure your student knows that his friendship is the best gift he can give you.

5. Be alert for opportunities to take pictures of activities special to your student. Then give him copies to send home to his family. You will encourage him, while saving him money.

6. Mark his graduation day on your calendar, and make sure you are there to celebrate it with him.

ENTERTAINING YOUR STUDENT

Remember that Canadians are wealthy in the eyes of many people around the world. Things which we take for granted are viewed as luxuries in other countries. Try to know enough about your student that you do not embarrass him by explaining things he is familiar with, or by assuming he knows all about things that are, in fact, new to him.

At first, just being with you and learning how you live will provide all the "off-campus" entertainment your student needs. Try to include him in family activities. Do not make major changes in your life-style, but be flexible enough to be truly hospitable. Here are some activities you might want to share with your student.

Sporting events (community, amateur or professional), especially those that are unique to Canada or to your city. Find out what would interest your student, such as hockey, lacrosse, water skiing, golf, bowling, auto racing, soccer, basketball, boating, fishing, etc.

Cultural activities might include hearing the local Symphony Orchestra, seeing a drama, attending an ethnic concert, touring heritage sites such as historic houses, museums and theme parks, visiting the local planetarium or observatory, picnicking at the zoo, taking a guided tour of the facilities of the city newspaper or a radio or TV station, visiting a national or provincial park, etc.

Religious events can be included in your planning. Be sure the student is prepared for what he will see and hear, and has not been pressured in any way to go with you. Let him attend an ordinary Sunday church service with you; invite him to Christmas and Easter celebrations, and, as appropriate, include him when you attend weddings, funerals, and other ceremonials.

In all this, remember that you are not expected to go to a lot of extra expense to entertain your student. He is just as interested in your daily life and family activities as he is in your city "in general". Be aware of activities he enjoys, and include them in your plans when you can.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT (Differences in cultural values)

A Matter of Time: Not all people live at the fast pace of North Americans. In other words, the western world is conscious of the clock,

but the rest of the world concentrates on relationships. Your student may come from a culture which has a more elastic view of the term "being on time" than you do. Be prepared to adjust, but also be ready to help him understand the realities of living by the clock. When you invite him for a visit, always state clearly the specific time at which he is expected. If possible give him written details about the visit. As you get to know each other, you will develop a mutual understanding in this matter.

Grandparents: If you have a grandparent or older relative living in your home, be sure to introduce your student early in his first visit. Many cultures highly respect the elderly. Many students come from close knit extended families and will appreciate being a part of your total family group.

Children: If you have children, they can be an asset in making your student feel at home. Prepare them well for the visit (including possible differences in eating habits) then let their natural friendliness help break down barriers. They will learn valuable lessons from their international friend.

Pets: In many countries, it is not culturally acceptable to have an animal of any kind living in the house. So if you have a pet, keep it out of sight when your student first visits. You will be able to find out how he feels about pets, and can then act accordingly.

At the Table: If you normally pray before you eat, do not change your routine. First explain to your student that this is a "family custom". Do not make a major issue of it.

Don't show surprise if your international friend has table manners which are not like yours. He may prefer chopsticks, or use the cutlery differently. He may show his appreciation for the food by smacking his lips; and may leave a small portion on his plate, showing that he is fully satisfied.

In some cultures, there is very little conversation at meal-time so your guest's silence does not necessarily mean he is uneasy.

THOUGHT FOR FOOD

An easy, enjoyable way to entertain is to share a meal with your international student. Here are some suggestions to help you plan your meals.

1. Review the information you have about your student to see if there are any religious or medical dietary restrictions. For example:
 - Muslims and Jews eat no pork. Some Muslims and Jews eat only "kosher" meats. Use vegetable shortening rather than lard. Jello and gelatin contain a pork product. Muslims usually do not take alcoholic beverages
 - Hindus will not eat beef, and many are vegetarian. This would usually preclude the use of animal shortenings, and perhaps eggs.
2. Rice is a staple food for Asia. Use it, not potatoes for the first meal.
3. Lamb, fish and chicken are usually acceptable meats. Do not use blended or chopped meats which may have unknown ingredients.

4. Many Asians do not like western cheese, but yogurt is often welcome.
5. Try light desserts, not heavy and very sweet ones. Try a fruit salad and cookies, or Jello and whipped cream (see exceptions with Muslims above).
6. Keep your foods simple, with a choice of vegetables and fruits, cooked and raw. Green salad with cucumbers and tomatoes is often a good choice.
7. Consider serving your first meal buffet style, or family style, passing the serving dishes around the table. This frees the student to choose without embarrassment what he wishes to eat.
8. The student may not be used to having cold drinks at the table, so ask what he prefers, giving options. Don't just ask, "What would you like to drink?"
9. Many cultures consider it impolite to accept a second serving until it has been offered several times. You will have to discern if a refusal of more food is due to courtesy, or to truly not wishing to eat any more.

CONVERSATION GUIDELINES

1. Be a good listener, ready to offer insights into your own family and culture, but do not force the conversation into areas the student clearly wishes to avoid. Respect his natural reserve, and do not pry. On the other hand, be prepared for what Canadians would consider personal questions. If your student is from a culture where the extended family is very close-knit, these questions are quite acceptable, and indicate that he feels at home.
2. Do your homework before the student arrives, so you can ask intelligent questions about his homeland. Avoid talking politics until you know your student well. Concentrate on "safer" topics, but watch for indications you are asking awkward questions.
3. Be alert to non-verbal clues (gestures, eye movement, fidgeting, pursed lips, etc.) which indicate that the other person is uncomfortable, doesn't understand what is going on, or doesn't understand why you don't understand him.
4. Remember that each culture has its own concept of "personal space" -- the acceptable distance between two people who are talking. Be prepared for an uncomfortable feeling if your guest moves inside your "personal space" in order to talk. Try not to pull back, as this will make him unsure of what to do. Remember that patting someone on the back, or arm, is a western trait; so is direct eye contact between men and women.
5. Don't ask, "Do you understand?" The answer will always be "Yes." Find other ways to learn if you are being understood. Remember that silence is not always awkward. Your guest may need time to think, or may be preparing to shift the topic to something more in his 'comfort zone'.
6. Don't "fire" questions at him. He may misunderstand your intentions, and become suspicious of your motives in the friendship.

SPECIAL NOTE

If at any time circumstances prevent you from continuing to be a Friendship Partner, please contact your Friendship Partner Coordinator, or the ISMC staff member, as soon as possible. You may discuss the matter directly with your student if you wish, or the staff member can speak with him about your changed situation.

THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FAMILY

If your student is married, his wife and children will most likely not have come with him. Often the family will follow a year later, but sometimes they are not able to come at all. This separation puts a lot of extra stress on your student friend. Look for ways to help him.

When the family does come to Canada, there is more stress. The student will likely need to look for a small apartment, and find the furnishings for it. Introduce him to secondhand stores, and help him purchase and move the things he needs, including pots and pans, linens, and furniture.

This will take time from his education, so he will want to concentrate on his books after the family arrives. Also, he has already adjusted to this country, and may not realize the struggle his family has with all the changes, and the feeling of being left out of his daily life.

You can meet a real need by helping the wife learn to shop for food and clothes (especially warm ones for winter wear), use the transit system, and find items that she needs to cook as she is used to. She will have many new and unexpected responsibilities, and perhaps does not have sufficient English skills.

Help her find a good school for the children if necessary, and put her in touch with the ISMC staff member or the person heading up ISMC's English language program in the city. Getting into an ESL class will give her the chance to expand her communication skills, as well as getting her away from the apartment on a regular basis.

She may enjoy coming to your home to cook some of her traditional foods, and she will also want to learn how to cook the Canadian way. The more quickly she is able to adjust to life here, the easier it will be for the whole family.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between the international student and the Friendship Partner is an adventure in cross-cultural communication. It provides an emotionally secure base for the student and a unique opportunity for the Canadian friend to experience the diversity of the world's cultures without leaving home.

Friendship Partners, who are members of the Christian community in the city, have a unique opportunity to be a living example of the Christian faith to the international student, whether that student is a Christian or not.

As a representative, in your student's eyes, of all Canadians, your hospitality and unconditional friendship will extend far beyond the student to his extended family and his network of friends in the homeland.

In a real sense, you are an ambassador for Canada in your dealings with international students. We trust you will find joy and satisfaction in developing this relationship, and that it will continue long after your student has graduated and returned home.