

---

**AH N**

**Australian Homestay  
Network**

**Homestay Hosts of Saudi Students  
Focus Groups**

*Working together to build complete  
homestay solutions.*

---

*December 2009*

---

# Some Host Observations

- Hosts Australia wide are a very diverse group
  - They are generally passionate about what they do
  - They love being involved and being heard
  - They have developed individual hosting strategies
  - They responded well to support and ideas
-

---

# Key Finding 1

## What homestay hosts found enjoyable about hosting a Saudi Student:

*The vast majority of hosts reported very **enjoyable** and **positive** experiences with Saudi students **when** the student was committed to participating in the cultural exchange.*

*Hosts generally had a genuine interest in learning about the student's life and culture and enjoyed assisting the student participate in the Australian way of life.*

---

---

# Key Finding 1 - Continued

## What homestay hosts found enjoyable about hosting a Saudi Student:

*Hosts reaction to what they enjoyed about Saudi students were often stated as the students being:*

- *reliable*
- *respectful*
- *caring*
- *polite*
- *honest and*

*involved in “family life”.*

---

---

# Key Findings 2

## **What homestay hosts found difficult about hosting a Saudi Student:**

*Clear issues emerged regarding:*

- *use of water/bathroom*
  - *cleanliness*
  - *lack of respect for women*
  - *sleeping habits*
  - *party culture*
  - *noise levels late at night (on phone/internet)*
-

---

# Key Findings - Continued

## What homestay hosts found difficult about hosting a Saudi Student:

*Clear issues emerged regarding:*

- *Hygiene*
  - *meal time punctuality*
  - *'servant' expectation and*
  - *lack of knowledge/preparation of the Saudi student for the homestay experience in Australia*
-

## Key Findings 3

### **Hosts prior knowledge/training re Saudi student's culture:**

*Lack of prior knowledge/training of hosts is a clear issue.*

*Successful placements often resulted when the host had gone to some trouble to understand the culture of the student prior to arrival.*

*Hosts who did prepare generally did this as their own initiative using internet however some support was evident from some Homestay Supervisors in preparing hosts.*

---

---

# Key Findings 4

## **Students prior knowledge/training re: Australian culture/homestay:**

*A major issue is clearly the lack of the preparation of the Saudi student before they arrive in Australia.*

*Where a student did preparation and was willing to participate in the cultural exchange there were more positive outcomes.*

---



---

# Key Findings 5

## **What Saudi Students learned from Homestay**

### **Hosts:**

*In most cases genuine positive learning experiences for the students were reported by hosts. These centred on the cultural exchange opportunities.*

*Prominent areas of learning included: understanding equality of Australian women, personal responsibility and tidiness, and improvements in learning English.*

---

---

# Key Findings 6

## **What Australian Homestay Hosts learned from Saudi Students:**

*There were some mixed responses here as some hosts had experienced a 'bad' placement.*

*The main learning here for hosts was the knowledge gained from the cultural exchange experience (diet, family, religion, lifestyle, etc.) which was positively received.*

---

---

# Key Findings 7

## **Best ways to solve problems:**

*All Homestay Hosts encouraged formal discussions with students as the best way to resolve any issues.*

*For major issues referral to Institution/Homestay Supervisor was seen as the preferred option.*

---

---

# Summary of Those Responding to Question 8

- **Group 1:** 9+, 1, 10, 10, 3, 8, 10, 7, 9, 10
  - **Group 2:** 8, 4, 10, 10, 10, 8, 8, 8, 8, 5
  - **Group 3:** 7+, 9, 9
  - **Group 4:** 8, 8, 7, 9, 10, 9, 8, 7, 4, 7, 10
-

---

# Key Findings 9

## **Key Finding 9 – Having a Saudi student again in Homestay:**

*There was very strong support for having a Saudi student again (90% of participants) and most hosts reported that they would be much better prepared for having already had a Saudi student in Homestay.*

---

---

# Conclusion

- Significant improvements and change is possible through properly planned cultural and “issues” education and orientation programs for Agents, Students, Hosts and Institutions
  - It is recommended that these be developed for this group and that further focus groups are held to establish strategies for other cultures participating in homestay in Australia
-

---

# Questions

---

---

**AH N**

**Australian Homestay  
Network**

**Homestay Hosts of Saudi Students  
Focus Groups**

*Working together to build complete  
homestay solutions.*

---

*December 2009*