

Under 18s

- Before a Student Visa can be granted to a student under eighteen (18) years of age, the Australian Government must be satisfied that there are appropriate accommodation and general welfare arrangements in place for the period that the student will be under 18 while in Australia.
- There are requirements for Education Providers to approve living arrangements, appoint a guardian, and to ensure that younger students are protected and supported appropriately.
- A registered Education Provider (e.g. College or University) may agree to take on responsibility for approving these arrangements. The registered provider must nominate the period for which it takes on the responsibility.
- If the Education Provider has taken on the responsibility under the Migration Regulations for approving your accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements (applicable for students who have not turned 18), they must:
 - Nominate the dates for which the registered provider accepts responsibility for approving your accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements through the Department of Home Affairs
 - Have documented procedures for checking the suitability of your accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements
 - Advise the Department as soon as possible if you change your living arrangements or they (the registered provider) no longer approves of the arrangements
 - If you are under 18 years old and have a Student Visa that covers multiple courses, your Education Provider is responsible for approving arrangements for your accommodation, support and general welfare during that nominated period
- If your Education Provider has taken on these responsibilities and suspends or cancels your enrolment, they must continue to check the suitability of arrangements for you until:
 - you are accepted by another registered provider and that registered provider takes over responsibility for approving your accommodation, support and general welfare arrangements
 - you leave Australia
 - other suitable arrangements are made that satisfy the Migration Regulations, or
 - the registered provider reports to the Department that it can no longer approve of the arrangements for you.
- Australian law protects people under 18 through the Child Protection Act. This means that young people have the right to be safe and to receive care and support. As a person under the age of 18 you have the right to be safe and supported while in Australia.

Accommodation

- Students under the age of 18 may not live in unsupervised apartments or houses
- Homestay involves living with a family, couple or single person/s in their home. Hosts come from a diversity of social and cultural backgrounds. A family could be a mum/dad with children or a single parent or a single person with no children. Hosts may or may not have pets, may smoke, may be vegan, vegetarian or meat-eaters. Hosts may or may not identify as being religious, could be working, studying, unemployed or retired.
- Generally, full-board homestay arrangements include a furnished room, meals and (accommodation-related) bills and shared access to common areas as the kitchen, lounge/family room and bathroom. Additional services such as laundry may also be included
- When living in a new space with new people, there is the possibility of problems arising. When you are a young student you also need to develop skills and confidence in talking about a situation that is not going well for you. The key to resolution in these circumstances is communication (both verbal and written).

Adjusting to Australia: staying safe and healthy

- It is illegal for any person to sell tobacco to an under 18 year old or any person to buy tobacco on behalf of an under 18 year old.
- The legal age for drinking alcohol in Australia is 18 years of age. A person under 18 years of age is not allowed to buy, supply or drink alcohol on licensed or regulated premises, even if they are with their parent or guardian.
- There is no magic trick to making friends, but being connected to a friendship network is very important for your well-being, and your confidence in adjusting to Australian life.
- However you meet people, remember to be careful. When you meet someone new, be cautious until you get to know the person better and feel you can trust him or her.
- If a stranger starts talking to you, they are probably just being friendly. But be safe, and don't give them any of your personal details such as your full name, your phone number or your address. With people you don't know well, always arrange to meet them in a public place, like a cafe or a park, instead of inviting them to your home or going to their house.

- Listen to, trust and act on your instincts. If you are going out, especially at night, remember:
 - consider how you are going to get home
 - what about pre-booking a taxi or arranging transport with a friend or family member
 - Make sure you have enough money to get home or to phone a friend or taxi
 - Never hitch-hike (that is, do not accept a ride from a stranger)
 - Make sure that you stay with your group or party and that someone knows where you are at all times
 - If you sense danger or a bad feeling about someone or place leave immediately and go somewhere where you feel safe
 - Walk purposely and try to appear confident
 - Be wary of casual requests from strangers, like someone asking for a cigarette or directions; it is best to be polite but keep walking
 - Try not to carry your wallet in your back trouser pocket where it is vulnerable and in clear view
 - Try not to walk alone at night, and especially avoid poorly lit dark areas and open spaces such as parks etc. It may be quicker to walk through the park but it is definitely safer to walk around it
 - Try to develop a network or circle of people you can trust. You are in a new country so its important to have people you can ask advice or assistance in an emergency or if you feel your personal safety is threatened. Having your own network of trusted people to talk with will increase your confidence and self esteem
 - Make sure your accommodation is secure and your internet connections have security software installed
 - Always keep your belongings safe, and never leave money, computers or other valuables out of your sight when you are out.