

***Thinking of housing a Duke Divinity School intern?
Please consider...***

Hosting a summer ministry intern in your home is a great way of supporting God's ministry. However, such a commitment requires emotional and relational preparation of all those living at home and physical preparation of your living environment. Inviting a student into your home is not the same as having a family member or friend live with you for a while. In hosting a ministry intern you are inviting a person whom you have never met into your home and possibly into your family environment. This means that communication between you and the student is essential from the very first moment you meet the intern. From the very beginning of your relationship it is important for both of you to respectfully discuss your needs and expectations.

Students and host families will differ from situation to situation. NO two families and no two interns are alike. For example, some students will welcome being treated as a part of your family and will be happy to be a part of family gatherings. Others will feel a strong need for privacy and personal space and may not be as involved in family activities. It is best for hosts to understand their role as essentially offering a housing arrangement for a student for the summer. In this arrangement hosts and students both have the right to courtesy, respect and communication. However, any friendships that develop beyond mutual respect and good will are best to be understood as extra blessings. What follows are some matters you are encouraged to consider before deciding to house a student minister.

1. Personalities and Roles: People have different ideas of what ministers are like, or what they should be, depending on their experiences with different ministers in their lives. However, because no two people are alike, no two ministers are alike, and the student who will live with you may be nothing like any minister you have ever known. Further, it is inappropriate to expect the student to be your 'live in minister.' Ministers, like other people, need to be able to take a break at home. Your home will be a refuge for him or her. (Pastors and congregations are particularly cautioned NOT to house students with the recently bereaved who may be tempted to rely too much upon the intern during a difficult time of transition).

2. Privacy: We all need some private space in our homes. The intern will be expected to avoid going into your 'personal rooms' (bedrooms, studios, etc.) without your permission. Likewise, the intern should be granted the same courtesy and given a room of his or her own for the time that he or she is with you.

- a. The door(s) to the intern(s) room should open and close properly and the room should be left as the intern leaves it. The intern should be able to leave his or her room in any way he or she wishes, i.e., bed made or unmade, the blinds opened or closed, as long as the door is closed. Allow the student to claim the room as his or hers for the time he or she is with you. If issues about housekeeping standards arise, please discuss them before doing something

about them. Students are encouraged not to alter the room (hang items or move furniture) without permission and to alter the room only when there is a need.

b. It may not be possible to remove all the family's personal items from drawers, shelves and closets in the guest room prior to the student arrival, but care should be taken to provide ample space for the intern. Certainly, the host family will want to remove highly personal or often used objects from the room in order to avoid intruding on the student.

c. Privacy also involves your freedom and the student's freedom to come and go as all of you please. Do not ask the student to explain where he or she may be going, although courtesy requires that both parties inform the other about when they may be expected back or if they will be away for the night.

d. Students will likely need to use a telephone for ministry purposes while with you. Student ministers are encouraged to make all calls of a confidential nature from a church phone. However, if the student must make or receive an unexpected call in your home requiring confidentiality please respect his or her need to do so in a private setting. The best way to handle long-distance calling is for the student minister to purchase a calling card or to use a cell phone. Finally, student ministers are encouraged not to tie up the phone for long periods of time while using a computer on-line.

3. Children and Family: When there are children at home the intern may or may not wish to be part of family activities. You may certainly invite the intern to take part in family activities, but do not assume his or her participation and be understanding if the intern does not want to participate in family activities.

- a. Relate and talk to the student as an adult.
- b. Help your children understand how to respect the intern's personal space and property.
- c. Avoid placing the intern in 'babysitting' situations without first discussing it in advance with the intern.

4. Food, Drink and Tobacco: If you wish for the student to share in your mealtime, then invite him or her to do so. The intern will most likely be grateful. If a student is expected at particular meals in the host home, then courtesy dictates that the student inform the host in advance of his or her absence at mealtime. Do not automatically expect the student to eat regularly with you or your family, unless this is your arrangement with the student and the congregation. Most hosts will provide students space in the refrigerator for their own food and access to the kitchen for light food preparation. If hosts and guests do more they are encouraged to talk about the preferences and expectations.

- a. Show the student around your kitchen and point out items and appliances that you consider accessible to him or her. You are not expected to prepare food for or clean up after the student. The student will appreciate some space in the refrigerator and a cabinet area for storing his or her personal items, unless you make some alternate arrangement with him or her.

- b. The use of alcohol while in a Field Education placement is strongly discouraged. Students are not allowed to use alcohol in your home unless they are of legal age and have your approval. Under these conditions they are to refrain from any consumption that impairs their judgment or abilities.
- c. Students are likewise discouraged from using tobacco products. Students who use tobacco and who are of legal age are not allowed to use such products in your home. Due to health concerns, homes where second-hand smoke is common are not suitable for host residences.

5. Cleaning: You are not expected to clean up after the intern. If you wish to assist with laundry, cleaning or straightening, please discuss this with the student. The intern may welcome this. However, he or she may prefer to do his or her own cleaning. You do have a right to expect the intern to keep shared areas (living room, kitchen, etc.) neat and clean (his or her room) clean if not always neat.

- a. Show the student how to work the dishwasher, clothes washer, dryer and other necessary appliances you have agreed for him or her to use. Let him or her provide his or her own soap for laundry, unless you have volunteered otherwise.
- b. Show the intern where to find brooms, mops, plungers and other cleaning supplies for emergency situations.
- c. Students are expected to wash their own clothes and sheets and clean up after themselves in all matters.

6. Guests: Students are not to invite guests to the host home without explicit approval of the host.

7. Communicate, communicate, communicate: Communication, mutual regard, and respect are the keys to a successful shared living arrangement. If there is any problem or misunderstanding, talk about it first with the intern and not with third parties. Both you and the student are adjusting your lifestyles to accommodate each other. Both are strangers at the beginning of the relationship. Consultation and communication with each other along the way will help avoid misunderstanding. Making assumptions about the reasons for behaviors is counter productive. Someone who is quiet may be unhappy, tired, content, sad or just an introvert by nature. If you and your guest keep communication open and do your best to respect each other's privacy and personalities, you both will likely be blessed by your time together.