

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Spare Room? Give Homestay Hosting a Go.

Call for local families to open their homes to students in Townsville.

TOWNSVILLE, Australia – 1 May 2019: The effects of February's devastating floods continue to be felt in North Queensland with accommodation shortages impacting local residents as well as international students studying in Townsville.

The [Australian Homestay Network](http://homestaynetwork.org) (AHN) is experiencing a host shortage after floods damaged the homes of dozens of host families who are still struggling to recover.

AHN's Townsville Manager, Rebecca Paterson, said new hosts are urgently needed to cope with demand.

"Townsville is the fifth most popular international student destination in regional Australia.

"We're looking for locals who are willing to share their homes, treat students like they're part of the family and show them what living in Australia is all about.

"If anyone in the community has a spare bedroom and likes the idea of connecting with people from other countries – give homestay hosting a go," she said.

Denmark student Caroline Pedersen arrived in Townsville in early February as floodwaters were rising.

The first few days with her homestay hosts in Hermit Park "felt a bit like a camping trip" with no power and food prepared on a portable stove, but fortunately the house was undamaged.

Ms Pedersen chose homestay so she could learn more about Australian culture.

"They (her homestay family) share a lot of their culture with me, for instance by telling stories at the dinner table or by buying Australian food. I really appreciate those small things," she said.

"I am lucky to live with the kindest family and I think that adds something extra and unique to my study abroad experience in Townsville."

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AHN pays hosts for each placement and provides training, insurance and 24/7 support for all participants. Short and long-term accommodation for under 18 and over 18 students are required.

Interested families can apply on the Australian Homestay Network website or contact the Townsville office on 07 5606 7013.

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ABOUT AHN

[Australian Homestay Network](http://AustralianHomestayNetwork.org) (AHN) is Australia's largest and most recognised international student homestay provider. We match AHN-certified hosts with visiting international students to provide the highest quality homestay experience while they study in Australia. Since 2008, AHN has placed over 52,000 students from 179 countries in homestay accommodation. AHN is the industry leader, dedicated to delivering global standards, technology and best practices across its network of services.