

No Place to Stay...

Boarding Students

Several teen-age students from the bush have no place to stay this Fall when they come to Fairbanks to school.

About eight of the 20 rural students who will be going to Fairbanks high schools and living with Fairbanks families are still not matched with homes through the Boarding Home program, administered by Tanana Chiefs.

Pipeline impact is probably the major reason for difficulty in finding suitable homes, according to Helen Lee, who finds homes and matches students with them. She said that high rents, which entice people to rent extra rooms, and the job situation, with many on the slope or working long hours are factors in the problem.

Lee does expect to find homes for all of the students, but it may take some time. She said that she doesn't want to make commitments to prospective families too quickly, either. A more compatible home might come along, she said.

The students in the program come from villages without high schools, and are usually those with college aspirations. Students who would benefit most are considered first. The great majority this year are "repeaters," having been in boarding homes with the program in past years.

A number of things are considered before a home is assigned to an incoming student. Interests of the students and families are considered to find

compatible matches. Religious preference, safety of the home, suitability of the home for studying, and many other considerations affect the choice.

Boarding homes must meet certain state regulations of the Division of Family and Children Services to qualify.

Lee said that one thing many prospective boarders don't realize is that they get a stipend of \$200 to help pay for food costs for their boarder.

In closing, she emphasized that the boarders should be treated like a member of the family. We want people to let them "be a member of the family for nine months," she said.