



Host Family Handbook

2010-11



ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE FLORIDA, INC.

Sharing the World with the Sunshine State

RYEFLORIDA.ORG

To the Host Parents,

Congratulations! You are about to become a new parent, probably not for the first time, but this time your new child will already be a teenager upon arrival, may not speak English fluently, and will certainly have cultural traits that are different from yours.

By agreeing to be a host family for a Rotary exchange student, you have agreed to assume parental responsibility for this young ambassador from another country, to provide shelter and sustenance, guidance and counsel, and love and support to the child of strangers who may live thousands of miles from you. But we do not ask you to do this all on your own; Rotarians in your local community as well as those who serve on the Rotary District Youth Exchange Committee will do everything possible to make this exchange a success. You will be provided with the information you need, through Host Family Orientation meetings, the Host Family Introduction and Orientation DVD, and this handbook. Rotarians meet with and provide orientation training to the exchange students upon their arrival, and will, throughout the exchange period, be in contact with both you and the exchange student to answer questions, address concerns, and resolve problems.

All too soon, it will be time for your student to move on to the next host family or return home at the end of the exchange year. Many of the host parents who preceded you do not say "goodbye" when that time comes, but instead say "farewell, until we meet again", with the full intention that this new member of the family will indeed be seen again. We hope you experience those feelings, and will do all we can to have that happen. This handbook provides the information you will need to be a successful Host Family; please refer to it often.

In Youth Exchange Service,

Al Kalter, Chairman
Rotary Youth Exchange Florida

Rotary Youth Exchange Florida Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

Rotary Youth Exchange Florida is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and any other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of each exchange student participant and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact. RYE-Florida maintains a zero tolerance position regarding incidents of abuse and/or harassment.

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Objectives Of The Program

- o **To further international goodwill and understanding** by enabling students to study first hand some of the problems and accomplishments of people in lands other than their own.
- o **To enable students to advance their education** by studying for a year in an environment entirely different from their own, and undertaking the study of courses and subjects not normally available to them in their own country.
- o **To give students opportunities to broaden their outlook** by learning to live with and meet people of different cultures, creeds, and colors and by having to cope with day-to-day problems in an environment completely different from the one they have experienced at home.
- o **To have students act as ambassadors** for their own country by addressing Rotary Clubs, community organizations and youth groups in their host country; by imparting as much knowledge as they can of their own country, its attributes and its problems to the people they meet during their year abroad.
- o **To provide sufficient time to study and observe another country's culture** so that upon returning home students can pass on the knowledge they have gained by addressing Rotary clubs and other organizations and assimilate the positive aspects into their everyday living.

The Rotary Support System

What is Youth Exchange?

Rotary Youth Exchange is a country-to-country exchange of high-school age young people, between the ages of 15 to 18½ years old at the time of arrival in the hosting country, for a cultural and educational experience for both the student and those serving as hosts. The duration of the exchange is 10-12 months, and generally follows the school year as defined by the exchange student's home country.

What is Rotary?

Rotary International, the sponsoring organization of this program, is an international volunteer organization comprised of Rotarians around the world dedicated to improving their community, both locally and worldwide, through service to others. A more comprehensive description of Rotary and its structure can be found in Appendix A of this handbook. However, one term used throughout this book warrants explanation here: **District** is the geographic organization of a number of local Rotary clubs for purposes of governance and support. There are eight Rotary districts in the state of Florida, which have come together to form the multi-district organization known as Rotary Youth Exchange Florida (RYE-Florida).

Role of the Rotary District and Youth Exchange Committee

Rotary Youth Exchange is, more specifically, an exchange of students between two Rotary Districts in different countries. The Florida districts are excited about the possibilities of expanding our Youth Exchange program, involving more and more countries and more and more students. Conduct and administration of the Exchange program is the responsibility RYE-Florida, and of each participating Rotary district under the authority of the respective **District Governor**, a Rotarian elected for a one-year term to provide leadership to the clubs and Rotarians in that District. All Rotary districts participating in the Youth Exchange Program agree to comply with Rotary International guidelines, but retain autonomy in conduct of the program. This responsibility is delegated in each district to the **District Youth Exchange Committee (YEC)**.

For example, the selection, screening, and preparation of "outbound" exchange student candidates is the responsibility of each sending or sponsoring Rotary District, although a uniform application form has been developed for this purpose by Rotary International. On the other hand, once the District YEC has agreed to accept an "inbound" exchange student, and one of the Rotary clubs has agreed to host and support that student, that student agrees to comply with the rules, regulations, and guidelines of RYE-Florida and the host district, as a condition of the exchange.

To assure a complete understanding of those conditions, RYE-Florida provides a comprehensive orientation to our inbound students shortly after their arrival. Even before the student's arrival, the organization establishes and maintains communications with Rotary colleagues in the exchanging district, the inbound students both before their arrival and during their year here, and the outbound students we are sending overseas.

The district Youth Exchange Committee is a valuable resource for both you and the exchange student, and its members are familiar with the conduct of the Exchange Program both here and in the country your student is from. Feel welcome to contact any member of the district YEC anytime you have a question or need help with a problem.

The Host Rotary Club's Role

The local Rotary club provides another level of support to you, the student, and the Exchange Program. Rotary clubs will identify an individual Rotarian as the **Youth Exchange Officer** (or **YEO**) to administer the club's Exchange program, including the recruitment of outbound candidates and host families. This person, or another member of the Rotary club, will be designated as the inbound exchange student's **Club Counselor** for the duration of the exchange. The **Club Counselor** serves primarily as an advisor and advocate for the student, but should certainly also be in contact with the host family on a regular basis, and be available to answer questions or direct host parents to the appropriate resource when needed.

The hosting Rotary club has made or will make arrangements for enrolling the exchange student in your community's high school or a private school shortly after he or she arrives. The YEO or Club Counselor will assist the student in selecting a course of study that should be neither overly-challenging nor boring for the student. As a host parent, you should discuss school work with the student, teachers, and school officials if academic or social problems are becoming apparent.

The hosting club provides another form of support to the Exchange student in the form of a **spending allowance**. Each month the Rotary club will provide \$75 directly to the student, to be used for incidental personal expenses, entertainment, school supplies, etc. Through the Rotary-provided allowance and parental resources, exchange students are expected to be **financially self-supporting** in terms of personal expenses, clothing, entertainment, and travel when not part of a host family event. In addition, RYE-Florida requires that inbound students deposit with the hosting district a **\$300 emergency fund** that can be accessed by the district to pay for such expenses when the student is not able to do so (examples might be unexpected phone bills or dental care expense). Please discuss any financial concerns with the Rotary club and district representatives.

The hosting club will regularly invite the exchange student to attend Rotary meetings and other Rotary events. While students are encouraged to attend Rotary meetings and other events as often as possible, only attendance at the Inbound Orientation and the annual Rotary District Conference are mandatory for the student. Work with the host Rotary Club to arrange transportation to these events, if necessary.

Rotary Support = District + Club

This Team of the **District Youth Exchange Committee**, the local Rotary club **Youth Exchange Officer** and **Club Counselor** are here to help the exchange student and host family have a successful exchange experience. They are available to you, 24 hours a day, to provide you with assistance on any matters of concern. We strongly urge you to seek their involvement and support before problems become too large for simple solutions.

The Exchange Student's Role

Above all else, we expect the inbound students to be involved: involved in your family, involved in school, involved in the community in which you live, and involved in Rotary. To do this successfully, most exchange students must do two things: **learn to communicate in English, and learn to adapt.**

Learning English

All students arrive with some understanding of the English language, and most can speak and understand our language well, having studied English for several years in school. But for most, considerable effort will be needed on their part to understand the English we *speak*, which is often different than the English they were *taught* in school. Practice, by engaging in real conversation, reading, and writing our language, are necessary to develop true proficiency. You can help by asking questions that require more than “yes” or “no” answers, having patience when communications are not clear, and consciously speaking slowly and clearly, with frequent checks for understanding.

Inbound exchange students may be tested for English proficiency shortly after arrival, and tutoring can be arranged by Rotary for students who are experiencing difficulty communicating (the student may have to pay for tutoring, if necessary). School counselors and teachers can also be valuable resources for both the student and host family in addressing communications problems.

Learning to Adapt

Learning to adapt means, for most students, being willing to try new things, do things differently, recognize the cultural basis for the environment they are used to, and accepting that our cultural differences are neither “better or worse”, simply “different”.

Comply with our Rules

All inbound exchange students, and their parents, agreed to comply with the rules, regulations, and guidelines that are part of the Rotary Youth Exchange application. These are common sense conditions that are intended to insure their safety, comply with the standards of the international organizations monitoring exchange programs, and assure that their conduct does not impose a burden on the families who open their homes to these students -- you Host Parents. **The Program Rules & Conditions of Exchange** are located in Appendix B of this handbook for your information. A summary of the more important rules are listed below:

1. **Driving:** Exchange students are **not** permitted to operate motor vehicles, including motorcycles, boats, or any other powered device requiring an operators license as a condition of the medical and accident insurance. Under no circumstances may they take a Driver Education course, even if there is no behind-the-wheel component.
2. **Drinking and Drugs:** We expect all exchange students to comply with our laws, including those applying to possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances. If it is legal, students may, with the approval of the host parents, accept an alcoholic beverage offered by the host parent in the host home.
3. **Smoking:** Applicants are asked to indicate if they smoke on the application, and this information is often the basis for the decision by the host family to host the student. Students who do smoke must comply with the conditions and restrictions imposed by the host family in all cases, and we strongly endorse the requirement that smoking be prohibited in the student's bedroom. Any student who stated on the application that he/she did not smoke is absolutely not permitted to smoke while here on exchange.

4. **School Attendance:** This is an educational exchange, and students are **required to attend school regularly**, and maintain satisfactory class work. On the other hand, the program's objective is not to provide a high school diploma to these students, and each school agreeing to enroll exchange students will determine what, if any, certification will be provided for classes taken. As the host parent, you are responsible for determining the appropriateness of any school absence requested by the student, as you would for your own children. You should know, and comply with, the attendance requirements (and absence notification requirements) for the school your student is attending.
5. **Travel:** Travel for the exchange student as part of your family, or with school, church, or Rotary groups, is highly encouraged and will provide the student with opportunities to learn about the host country. However, **independent travel, or travel without adult supervision** should be given the same level of parental control you would impose on your own children of that age. Additionally, Rotarians at both the host club and district committee need to know where Exchange students are in the event of an emergency. The **Travel Policy for Inbound Exchange students**, contained in Appendix C, will be reviewed in detail with your exchange student, and **compliance with this policy is a condition of the exchange**. We ask that you be familiar with this policy, and enforce it with your student. *Please know that Rotary will always support the host parents when you say NO to travel requests by your student that YOU are not in agreement with.*
6. **Visits by the student's parents, family, and friends:** Program rules prohibit any visitors from the student's home country during the first 8-9 months of the exchange year, and **specifically at any time that will interfere with school, or that will cause an inconvenience to the host family. Furthermore, visits by family or friends during the traditional Christmas, New Year, and Easter holiday periods are expressly forbidden.** On the other hand, parental visits near the conclusion of the exchange year are great opportunities for the student to share their mastery of our language and knowledge of our culture, and introduce natural parents to all of the host families they've lived with. Any such visits planned by the student or his/her parents should be fully acceptable to you, the host parents, and should be discussed with the appropriate Rotarians **before** being finalized.
7. **Use of telephone and Internet:** Students who frequently communicate with family and friends "back home" by telephone, e-mail, online messaging, etc., often delay their own adjustments and adaptation to the exchange, and extend, rather than reduce, feelings of homesickness. In addition, they often do not recognize the cost of lengthy, international telephone calls until the phone bill arrives. **Occasional** (perhaps every 3-4 weeks) telephone calls to or from home, plus calls on special occasions, should be sufficient voice contact when combined with "newsy" letters the student mails home that will likely be cherished and reread by his or her parents long after they arrive. Constant e-mail or instant messaging also prevents a student from becoming part of the host family and community. Students are told to limit that kind of electronic communication with home to once per week. Of course, the student is responsible for any costs incurred for telephone or internet charges, and host parents should decide, in advance, how the student will pay for such usage when it is permitted. If the host family and student agree that it is advisable or necessary for the student to have a cell phone, only prepaid plans from local-area phone providers should be accepted. Students are not permitted to bring cell phones from their home countries.

The Host Family's Role

The operative word here is *Family*, and we ask you to help your exchange student become a part of your family during the period that he or she lives with you. That means treating this young person as you would your own son or daughter, not as a guest, and exercising all of the **parental responsibilities and authorities** you would for your own child. While many factors will influence to what extent you may need to focus on this role, such as your own experience as a host parent, ages of your own children, and whether you are the first, middle, or final host family for this student, here are some suggestions that previous host parents have provided to us:

- **Establish a clear understanding of expectations** soon after your student arrives. Appendix D has a listing of **First Night Questions** that we provide to both students and host parents that cover most of the topics that will help define those expectations. Cultural differences as well as personality differences often lead to misunderstandings unless these topics are discussed and clarified. Many students will use the questions as a “check-off list” to make sure nothing has been overlooked during the first few days; we suggest that host parents also review this list for any topics that are important to them.
- Be prepared to help your student recover from **homesickness**. This can take many forms, from simply general sadness to wishing to stay in his or her room alone. It is perfectly normal for exchange students to have bad days and experience homesickness. If you are sensitive to this, you will be able to reassure your student that their reactions are perfectly normal. Help them to keep busy and involved. These feelings will pass. If they have poured out their frustrations in a letter home (even saying they want to return home immediately), suggest that they put it away for a couple days, re-read it, and only then mail it ... if it still applies. Most times the letter will be thrown out!
- Encourage your student to **get involved**. School extracurricular activities, sports, community activities, church groups, and family activities may be new and unfamiliar to your student, and will likely be very “different” from those activities he or she was involved in back home. If you sense that your student is bored and reluctant to participate in available activities, it may simply be because no one has asked him or her to join in. Try to introduce the student to some people who will help overcome this reluctance.
- **Understand “culture shock”, and help your student learn our culture**. Appendix E in this booklet provides the article *How To Cope With Culture Shock* which may help you understand some of the feelings your student may experience as a result of the differences between our culture and the one they have known since birth.

Other Information for Host Parents

Insurance

All inbound exchange students must have a medical/accidental injury policy that meets Rotary's requirements, under a policy issued by the American International Companies through the CISI Bolduc agency. Instructions for submitting a claim are included in Appendix F. (*Note: Inbound students from Belgium, Denmark, and Sweden are insured under policies issued in their home countries, so the material in Appendix F will not apply to them. They should have brought with them instructions for submitting a claim to their providers.*)

The cost of any medical treatment is the responsibility of the student and his/her natural parents, and the insurance provides for either payment or reimbursement of a portion of those expenses (usually after a nominal deductible has been met). Students should have the financial ability to pay for any medical expenses at the time provided, and host families should not incur any costs in this regard.

However, as host parents, you are asked to make arrangements for medical treatment when necessary, as well as to determine when medical treatment is called for. Your student may be reluctant to discuss medical problems initially, and their own culture, or medical system at home, may be quite different than that which we have, so you may need to patiently ask questions and offer suggestions when you observe conditions that may be medically-based. Many Rotary clubs have arrangements with local medical-services providers (often a member of the Rotary club), and you should be appraised of these arrangements by the Rotary YEO or Club Counselor before a medical problem arises.

It is always advisable to inform the host Rotary club of any medical treatment or medical problems that have occurred so that information is made available to subsequent host families. Serious illnesses or injuries should be made known to the District YE Chair as soon as possible.

Being the First Host Family

While being "first" often provides the greatest challenges for dealing with things like language difficulties and cultural differences, it also provides the opportunity to form a lasting emotional bond with the student that can continue after the student moves on to subsequent host families, since he or she will remain part of your community for the balance of the exchange year.

When the time comes for the student to move on, be prepared for the emotions that come with separation and fear of something new, both for the student and you. It will help to make this transition go smoothly if the student has met the new family, perhaps first in your home, and then later for a visit in the next host family home, to provide opportunities to become familiar with the family and surroundings.

Once your student has moved, maintain contact without undermining the development of relationships with the next family. Inviting your student to share special family events, like birthdays, will reinforce the relationship you developed earlier, and will usually be welcomed by the current host family, just as you welcomed others' invitations to the student when part of your family.

When it is finally time for your student to return home to his or her own family, they will be leaving not one but several **families** that they will consider "home" for the rest of their lives.

Being the Final Host Family

Being the host family at the conclusion of the exchange year could involve dealing with many of the same emotions the student had upon arrival, but this time caused by the realization that the "familiar" is now *our* culture, and the "unknown" involves *returning home*. Understand that the exchange student **must** return home

at the conclusion of the exchange year (generally within two weeks of high school completion, or ten days after the conclusion of a year-end tour, if applicable) as a condition of the exchange program. **A sign of a successful exchange is the student's reluctance to go home, and we wouldn't want it any other way.**

You may need to help your student prepare mentally for this departure, in addition to the many physical aids that will be needed. **Start by selecting an actual departure date** that everyone involved agrees with (including the student's parents), and help the student make the necessary airlines reservations. (Although we require all students to have round-trip airlines tickets, some airlines can only book flights 6-9 months in advance, and many students must change the initial return date once they know graduation and Tour dates, etc.). As the departure date approaches, help the student with packing and luggage, recognizing that much has been collected since their arrival, and it may be necessary to ship some of the student's possessions home to keep suitcases below the airlines' quantity and weight limits.

Help the student wrap up any financial obligations with you and others, especially regarding long-distance or cellular telephone charges. Use of a pre-purchased phone card, or having the student make final calls collect, will minimize phone charges appearing on your telephone bill after the student has departed. Discuss with the student and the Rotary Club Counselor the return of the student's emergency fund.

Involve the prior host families, and the host Rotary club, in planning a farewell event before the student departs. And allow sufficient flexibility in your schedule during the final few days to provide your student with the opportunity to say goodbye to the many friends made during the past year. In many cases, these "good-byes" will be even harder for the student than those said 11 or 12 months earlier, and your understanding and support will make this a happy time for everyone involved.

Lastly, If There Are Questions or Problems.....

While there is no way we or you can guarantee that every exchange student and host parent will enjoy a completely successful exchange, we do our best to help them, and you, and the percentage of unsuccessful exchanges is very small. Most problems that do occur can be taken care of satisfactorily if addressed early, before they become too big to handle.

IF YOU DO HAVE A CONCERN, AND NEED TO DISCUSS SOMETHING, please contact the local Rotary Club Youth Exchange Officer or the student's Club Counselor. If he or she is not available, please contact a member of the District YE Committee. They will get in touch with the student, and if appropriate, the counterpart in the sponsoring district for further information and help, if needed.

Please do not dismiss non-compliance with the rules, or try to solve major problems yourself. Because this is an international program, there may be cultural and/or Rotary subtleties of which you are unaware, and there may also be long-range implications affecting future exchanges. Please call and give the Rotarians who lead this program the opportunity to show you that we are as concerned about the exchange student and the host family and club as you are. We can't help you or the student, if we don't know that there is a problem.

Finally, while much of this booklet addresses rules, regulations, and "dealing with problems", we want you to know that being a host parent is also a lot of fun and full of rewards. You will get to know, and love, someone from another country, another culture, and another part of the world. You will have the opportunity to watch, and help shape, the development and maturity of a young person. You will have opportunities to learn of another culture yourself, and in the process of sharing our culture and our country with this student, gain knowledge and understanding for you and your family. And at the end of the exchange, you will have added to your family a son or daughter who may live in a "foreign" country the rest of their life, but will always be a part of your family.

Host Family Roadmap – A Step-by-Step Guide

Preparing for Your Student's Arrival

Pre-arrival Communication

Before your inbound exchange student arrives in the United States, it is important to establish some type of communication between the student and your family. This will help to make the initial meeting more comfortable for both you and the student. This also makes your student feel more confident in YOUR interest in hosting. Shortly after Rotary has confirmed the placement, initiate contact via e-mail or phone. Communication from siblings is very important, especially if they are the same age as the student. Your student will want to know if his future host brothers and sisters share the same interests. Here are some suggestions for things to include in the letter:

- Describe your family (number and ages of children, family interests, jobs, grandparents);
- Talk about any pets (what kind, their names, how many, do they live inside or out);
- Describe your community (i.e. country, city, or small town; how far are you from town or a large city; population; major features);
- Describe your home (how close is it to school/shopping/etc., how big is the house, do you have a swimming pool, rec. room, etc.);
- Talk about the types of activities your family enjoys;
- Discuss any traditions or weekly observances your family has (church, Easter egg hunts, family reunions, Halloween, “family time” etc.);
- Describe the school your student will attend (size, how far from home, how the student will get there, sports and extra-curricular activities and types of classes available, etc.);
- Send photos of your family, your home, and your community;
- You might want to send any brochures or tourist information you can obtain about your community (check with the Chamber of Commerce and your local tourism dept.);
- Discuss any trips you may be planning that will include your student

Although some of this information may have already been provided by Rotary, your description and discussion will be detailed and personal. The significance in writing this letter is to let the student know that you and your family are genuinely looking forward to his/her arrival. The welcome letter will help to establish a foundation on which a strong relationship can be built.

Gathering and Communicating Information on Your Family and Community

Prior to your student's arrival, your family should work together to gather as much information about your community and family as possible. Some of this information can be included in the initial letter, and the rest can be given to him/her on his arrival.

Community information that might be helpful to the student can include:

- A map of your city or area, with the locations of your home and school marked;
- Information on your community, such as climate, population, industries, etc.;
- Information, including schedules, of any public transportation such as busses, trains, etc. (remember your student can't drive!);
- Pictures and brochures of your community;
- Information on nearby points of interest or places you intend on showing him;
- Exterior and, if available, interior pictures of the student's school;

- Information on extra-curricular activities and sports available at the school.

Helpful family information might include:

- Information on your family's ethnic background;
- Information on any relatives the student can expect to meet here;
- What a typical weekday and a typical weekend day might be like;
- What kinds of things you eat for meals, and when meals are generally eaten;
- Where the student will sleep;
- If a room will be shared with a sibling, give information on the host brother/sister who will share the room.

The Student's Living Space

The issue of whether or not a student should have his/her own room is highly debatable. On one hand, if an extra bedroom is available, it will give the student a place that he/she can feel at home, and where he/she can retreat if the whirlwind of new experiences become too much to handle. On the other hand, sharing a room with a sibling the student's own age helps the student to become a closer part of the host family more quickly. Sharing a room also prevents the student from withdrawing and shutting off from the rest of the host family, which is possible in the first few months of homesickness. If your student does have a separate room, and is showing signs of withdrawing, push him or her to participate in as many activities as possible. Invite him/her along when you run down to the store, go to the Mall, etc. In any case, Rotary requires that the student has his/her own bed, and should have adequate storage space for clothes and personal belongings, and a desk or quiet area in which to study.

Discuss this Manual as a Family

As a host family, you are about to accept a new member into your home and into your lives. However, this new member has had a completely different social upbringing than your own family. What you take for granted as socially polite or acceptable may not be so obvious to your student. Discuss the enclosed list of "first night questions" (Appendix D). Use it as a guideline, along with the list of Rotary rules, to discuss family rules for the student. Have your family decide together on issues such as curfew, chores, television, and bedtimes. Discuss what issues you believe may arise during the exchange, and think about the most effective way of handling those circumstances. Remember that the student is here to become an integrated member of your family. The topics discussed in this manual are relevant to each and every member of your family, and you should learn to rely on one another for support and assistance during this challenging time. When everyone works together to strengthen and keep lines of communication open, problem resolution will be much easier, and your hosting experience is sure to be rewarding.

Travel

Your Inbound student should contact you as soon as possible with his/her travel arrangements. You should know about any layovers or overnight stops during the student's route. Make sure the student has your home phone number, as well as phone numbers for the Rotary counselors and district YE Chair. Most countries teach English as a required course in school, but students from non-English speaking countries will feel very insecure in their mastery of English.

The Big Day - Your Student Arrives

Reconfirm the Arrival Time

Early arrivals, delays, or cancellations of flights are not uncommon, especially where international travel is concerned. Flights in the summer are quite often overbooked, so it is very important that you check the progress of the flights by phone or on line. Give the student the number of your cell phone or that of a Rotary counselor to call if a delay occurs after you have left for the airport. If there is a last minute delay on a short domestic flight, or some other problem, you need to have some way for the student to get word to you. *(Note that all inbound students will be provided with a toll-free number to call if there are any flight changes, but that number is only functional within the US. If Rotary learns of any changes, the host family will be immediately notified.)*

Meeting Your Student's Flight

Your inbound student is walking off the plane from a flight of 6-8 hours or more. He or she probably doesn't understand a word of what people are saying, is exhausted, confused, and probably scared. Imagine how good it would feel to step off the plane, and see a group of eager friendly people, recognizable from some photographs, holding up a huge welcome sign with his/her name on it! A sign is very important since there will probably be a lot of people milling around the airport. It helps to start the experience on a positive note for your student, and helps him/her feel welcome in the new country. In addition to a sign, balloons or flowers help add an extra note of welcome (as well as making for great pictures!). It's important to have as much of the household at the airport as possible. Recognizing brothers and sisters will help the inbound's confidence, especially when they're smiling! Rotarians will likely also be at the airport to greet your student, and it can be a nice idea to invite some neighbors or students from the local school too.

What to Do if Your Student Is Not on the Plane

If your student is not on the scheduled flight, call the designated emergency contact person immediately. If no word has been received of a delay or problem, contact an airline representative immediately to see if the student missed a connecting flight somewhere en route. Next, call your Rotary Youth Exchange officer. Together, we will be able to determine what happened, and what needs to be done next.

Claiming Luggage

Help your student claim luggage and transport it to the car. If some of the luggage is lost, immediately contact the airport personnel. The inbound will need to give information such as color, size, shape, the student's flight route, whether or not his/her name was on it, etc. Do not leave the airport until the procedure for claiming lost luggage has been completed. The airline should deliver the bags to your home, so you should not have to go back to the airport to pick them up. To make it simpler to reclaim lost luggage, suggest to the student that they take photos of the luggage before leaving the country. Also suggest making a list of what each bag contains in case they cannot be found and the airport has to estimate repayment.

When You Arrive Home

The first thing your student will probably want to do is to call his/her natural parents to let them know that he/she has arrived safely and has been met by the host family. It may be an emotional call, as he/she is tired, disoriented, and has now realized just how far away this is from his friends and family. Be prepared for this and offer appropriate support when the call ends.

The Abbreviated House Tour

After arriving from the airport, show your student his/her bedroom and give a brief tour of your home. Show where the bathroom is located, and where to go for breakfast in the morning. Do not try to orient the student to everything in your home at this time as he/she will most likely be exhausted and in need of sleep. Point out where the necessities are kept (shampoo, towels, water glasses, etc.), and that these are as much his as anyone else's in the family. Make sure he/she knows how the toilets, fixtures (hot and cold), showers, and hair dryer work. Don't try to discuss rules and jobs at this time, because your student is too disoriented to absorb much information.

Sleep

The main thing on your inbound's mind upon arrival will probably be sleep. Waiting in huge airports surrounded by strange languages, carrying heavy luggage, crossing time zones, dealing with customs and passports, and sitting on the plane for half the day will have left your student exhausted. In addition, your student will be experiencing many different emotions that can be confusing and stressful. However, it is recommended that **if** your student arrives early in the day, keep him/her awake until at least 7:00 p.m. That will facilitate adjustment to the time zone, and jet lag will be minimized. You could suggest unpacking and arranging the room, perhaps a walk around the neighborhood, etc.

The First Week

The Expanded House Tour

As a means of integrating your student to feel more a part of the family, plan a detailed tour of your house within the first few days after arrival. Be sure to show how everything works, from running the dishwasher and laundry machines, to locking the front door at night. If necessary, explain how the microwave oven and the stove work. Explain to the female student how to dispose of sanitary products. Take nothing for granted. It may be that your student feels embarrassed to ask how to operate certain items, or is too self-conscious about language skills to ask questions. Putting signs on everything with the word for that object will be a big help in language assimilation for the student with weak English skills. A little extra time spent orienting now can save embarrassing misunderstandings in the future. Discuss empathy with your children, and warn them never to laugh or make fun. What may seem funny to them can be morbidly embarrassing to the student.

The Neighborhood Tour

Show your student around your neighborhood/community to become familiar with these new surroundings. Feeling comfortable in this new town will happen gradually. Encourage the student to ask questions. Introduce him/her to your neighbors and other members of your community. Show where the bus stop and market or corner store is. Let him/her know if there are any dogs to be cautioned about. Point out several landmarks in case he/she becomes lost. If you live in a larger town, provide warnings against talking to strangers, going into bars or nightclubs, trespassing on private property, how to deal with interactions with gangs, what sections of town to avoid, etc. Again, take nothing for granted.

Registering for School

Each school system differs for registration requirements. Before your student arrives, ask your local Rotary club and the counseling staff at the school about registration details. Help your inbound choose classes, and introduce him/her to the school counselor. Some countries have very specific requirements for the classes that your student must take to receive credit for the school year. Your Rotary club should receive information from the student's home Rotary regarding any requirements. The host Rotary Club may be able to help with fees for special classes, such as gymnastics or for a musical instrument, if your student desires to continue their on-going training.

Some students feel they are obligated to assume an almost impossible academic load. It is not unknown for the exchange student to want to take such things as four or five laboratory classes as well as a full schedule of other subjects. On the other hand, some students will want to take as few courses as possible, hoping for a "vacation" year. Striking a reasonable balance, especially if the student's English is shaky, is important. Guidance, with the help of a high school counselor, is necessary in such matters, especially if the student has the goal of graduating from the U.S. high school. (*Note that all students are told ahead of time that there is no guarantee that they will be able to obtain a US high school diploma, and many schools simply will not allow it.*)

If some of your friends have children at the same school, introduce them ahead of time, and ask them to show the student where classes are, and to provide introductions to the teachers. Find out if any members of your local Rotary club are involved in the school and can help the student get oriented. Involve the school's Interact Club (Rotary-sponsored service organization) if one exists. If the school has a language class or club for the student's language, ask if the student can talk to the class. This will help the student meet new people, and help the other students in the school know about him/her. Strongly encourage your inbound to become involved in as many extracurricular activities as possible. This will help the student make friends quickly, and provide opportunities for experiences that otherwise may not come by, such as choir or band trips, theater productions, or community projects.

Bank Account, Return Tickets, and Passport

As part of the Rotary program, students are required to arrive with an emergency fund. This fund will be held on behalf of the student by the District Youth Exchange Committee. This money is to be only used in case of emergency, such as needing replacement of eyeglasses or emergency dental work. New clothes do not normally fall under the category of emergency needs (especially relevant for requests like a new dress for Homecoming).

Normal expenses during the student's stay should be covered by the Rotary monthly stipend and their funds from home. The host parents are not expected to purchase clothing, souvenirs, or postage, pay for the student's long-distance phone calls, or provide spending money. If the host parent chooses to provide an allowance as they do for their natural children, it is at their discretion. The student's natural parents may desire to wire or send a check to the student to cover additional needs, or provide the student with a credit or debit card to purchase things like clothing or school supplies. The student should be encouraged to establish a budget to ensure their available funds will last for the entire exchange. There will be opportunities to go on Rotary or school-sponsored trips that will require payment. Discuss the end-of-the-year trip options with the student to help them budget for this expense if they desire to participate. The travel and housing expenses for these trips, while reasonable, are still considerable, and must be planned in advance. Encourage your student to discuss the options with their Rotary Youth Exchange Officer.

When your exchange student arrives, Rotary will go through a check-in procedure at the airport, reviewing the student's airline tickets, passport, etc. Many clubs prefer that the student entrust their return tickets to the Rotary Youth Exchange Officer or place it in a safe deposit box. Keeping the tickets safe during an entire year, especially during one or more moves to subsequent host families, is a challenge that must be taken into consideration (of course, electronic tickets do not require quite the same concern). The student's passport acts as the student's ID during the year, and is usually kept in the student's possession or in a safe place at home. Verify occasionally that the student still has it in his/her possession, because it will be required to travel to another country and to return home. Also verify that the student has stapled into the passport the copy of his or her DS-2019 form, and the I-94 white card received in US Immigration when the student entered the country.

Rotary Insurance

The students are required to purchase through Rotary a health insurance policy. This consists of a major medical policy, with a stated deductible. The students, not the host families, are responsible for their own medical and dental expenses. The Rotary club may also be able to assist, particularly if a doctor or dentist is a member of the club.

If a student should need health services and is under the age of 18, you will be asked to sign a consent for treatment form. **THESE FORMS OFTEN CONTAIN LANGUAGE MAKING THE SIGNER A GUARANTOR OF PAYMENT.** Make sure you do NOT sign as guarantor. You may need to cross through and initial this section or hand write that the signer is NOT committing to be the guarantor.

If you have any questions about insurance, talk to a Rotary club Youth Exchange Officer or District committee member.

How to Treat Your Student

One of the most common mistakes a new host family makes is to treat their exchange student as a visitor, guest, or tourist instead of a family member. While you may be very enthusiastic about his or her arrival into your home, it is important to spread the enthusiasm throughout the stay. Although your student will want to see as much of the area as possible during the year, it is also expected that inbounds will share in family life. If you have children of your own, remember to treat your student the same way you would treat your own children of the same age. If your student learns early on in the exchange year that he/she will be treated no differently than anyone else in the home, that will result in a much better understanding of the reality of being an exchange student. At first the student may seem to need nurturing and mothering as much as a small child might because the student is insecure, vulnerable, and needs to learn so much before they can be comfortable in the new setting. The sixteen to eighteen year old looks (and tries to act) like an adult, but probably is struggling with fear of embarrassment and homesickness. A little tact and sympathy, combined with a willingness to keep the lines of communication open even if it gets a little uncomfortable, will go a long way to family harmony and a rich and fulfilling exchange experience for both the student and the host family.

Religious observances may be very important in both your own family and in the culture from which your student came. One of the most important issues in your relationship with your inbound can be religious observances. It is important that you be sensitive and open on this subject. Invite your inbound to attend worship with you, but do not insist that they participate in your faith. Encourage them to explore the various ways that people worship in this country by attending services with other families. Respect your student's beliefs, and whenever possible, aid him/her in making arrangements for religious observances of the family. Although differences of this nature can be a source of tension, they can also provide richness to the exchange experience by understanding and sharing some of your student's culture and observances.

Rotary Rules

These are the rules, signed by all Rotary students, and which **MUST** take precedent over family rules. The following are those which apply to the Inbound student:

- 1) The student and host parents will attend orientation meetings under the Rotary program. This means that any inbound student who misses one of the required meetings (Inbound Orientation, District Conference) without prior Rotary permission may be required to return early to his native country.
- 2) All costs of insurance, medical, and transportation to and from the host country are the responsibility of the student. The student must have an emergency fund of \$300, provided by the natural family. This fund is for emergencies only.
- 3) Travel during the exchange year is subject to Rotary and host family control, supervision, and approval. One-day trips other than with the host family (i.e., Rotary, church, school, etc.) must be approved by the host family. Any long distance (out-of-state) or over-night travel with the host family requires that Rotary be informed, and provided with the itinerary and contact phone numbers. Written permission from the natural parents may also be required, and is required if the student is leaving the host country. Students cannot travel with anyone other than a Rotary member or the host parents, or if school will be missed, without strict host family and Rotary District Chair permission. The host family includes past, present, or future host families. Permission for travel may be denied if the Rotary or host parents decide that adult supervision is not adequate, or if the school will not give permission for the student to be absent.
- 4) While in the host country, supervision of the student is solely in the hands of host district, host clubs, and host families.

- 5) The student will become an integral part of the host family, assuming duties and responsibilities usual for a family member of that age, respect the wishes of the host family, and accept such guidance and restrictions as the host family and Rotary may impose.
- 6) The student must attend school full-time as specified by the host district during the year of the exchange, and it is understood that no request will be made or granted for matriculation at a school level other than that specified by the host district. However, it is recommended that the student avoid an exceptionally demanding course schedule. They will have challenges adjusting to the culture without the additional stress of a heavy course load.
- 7) The student will not be allowed to secure employment except under certain non-competitive conditions (baby-sitting, yard work, etc.) where payment is in cash, no Social Security card is required, and no more than 15 hours a week is spent in such activities.
- 8) Laws of the host country are to be observed at all times, and it is understood that in case of violation, no assistance may come from the student's home country.
- 9) Romantic attachments must be avoided.
- 10) Smoking is discouraged, and is forbidden if the student is underage or if the student indicated on the original Rotary Youth Exchange application that he/she does not smoke. The host family also has the authority to prohibit smoking by the exchange student.
- 11) The student is forbidden specifically from:
 - using controlled substances of any kind except those prescribed by a physician for valid medical reasons;
 - consuming alcoholic beverages of any kind, unless in the presence of and with the permission of the host family;
 - driving or controlling any motorized vehicle during the exchange year (including motorcycles, off-road vehicles, snowmobiles, boats, etc.).
- 12) Attendance may be required at Rotary sponsored events.
- 13) Costs related to an early return home, for whatever reason, are the sole responsibility of the student and his/her natural parents, as are any other costs not stated above as being the responsibility of the host club.
- 14) The student will return home at the end of their exchange year, by a direct route, as directed by the host district and host family.

The basic hard and fast rules that every student must abide by are the famous four D's: No **D**inking, no **D**riving, no (serious) **D**ating, and no **D**rugs. (Although experienced exchange students add a fifth D: "**D**on't get caught!", Rotarians often add a sixth: "**D**on't think we won't find out!")

Sometimes a student is returned home prior to the scheduled conclusion of his stay. In most cases, early program termination is the result of one or more serious violations of the Rotary Rules. But there are other ways for a student to get sent home early, such as failure to attend school, ongoing conflicts with host families, disrespectful behavior, etc.

Conducting a Discussion on Family Rules and Routines

This is a very important discussion to have with your inbound soon after arrival. By familiarizing your new family member with your rules and routines, you can avoid many misunderstandings.

Before your student arrives, have a family meeting to discuss the rules (both spoken and unspoken). Spoken rules will be fairly easy to identify, i.e. weekday and weekend curfews, everyone eats dinner together, no television until after homework is finished, etc. Unspoken rules, such as Don't talk with your mouth full, Don't slam the door, Ask to be excused from the table, Always put the toilet seat down afterwards, etc., may present a greater challenge. Family routines (i.e. What is the order for using the bathrooms in the morning, and how long does each person get? Does the family regularly eat out Friday nights? When does the family get up on weekends? How late can friends call me? etc.) are the most difficult to identify, because they may be second nature to you.

Be understanding about mistakes (e.g., swearing without knowing what the word really means, putting feet on the coffee table and elbows on the table, etc.) But, in the enforcement of the rules, be up-front about the consequences. Let your student know how you treat your own children in the same situation, and if it happens again, carry out the treatment. This will make for a much smoother and more positive experience for you and your student, as well as avoiding jealousy and negative feelings from your own children.

Remember that the hosted teenager is not unlike the American teenager, and all adolescents are difficult to cope with at times. Your student may be enthralled with music that you find less than enjoyable, needs limits set in where he/she can go and what hours to keep, reminders to clean up after themselves, and discussions on the "why's" of the house rules. The situation is complicated by the fact that, no matter how good the student's preparation was for their exchange, they are still strangers in a strange land. Appreciation for the beauty of the English language, as well as its inconsistencies, is gained from the deep involvement of words between the host family and the hosted student. Both the host family and the student will come face to face with their and other's prejudices, which may be an uncomfortable experience since most of us are sure that we don't have any!

The vast majority of problems that arise between the host family and the student are due to communication misunderstandings. This is no time for subtlety. If something that is happening is bothering you, don't assume the student is inconsiderate or selfish, discuss the issue as soon as possible rather than letting it fester. If you approach the issue as a communication problem, saying that when the student does whatever it is that bothers you that it makes you feel uncomfortable, or angry, or worried, and suggest a better way for the student to act, then the discussion will be less confrontational. Even if the discussion does become a little heated, this is better than trying to bury your feelings, hoping it will get better. Remember that the host Rotary club Youth Exchange Officer is your best resource, and can put you in touch with experienced host parents and other Rotary Youth Exchange folks to help with any problems.

In Appendix, D, there is a list of "First Night Questions" that are usually provided to Rotary exchange students worldwide. You should use this list as a guide in deciding and discussing household rules with your student.

Assigning Chores

Along with the topic of family rules comes the distribution of household chores. You should expect your student to contribute an equal share to the running of the household, as do your own children. To expect anything less would not only prevent the student from making the transition from guest to family, but it will also risk jealousy and anger from your own children.

Many of the families of exchange students from other countries may be very wealthy, and are used to having servants do the manual work. These students may need a little extra encouragement, as well as basic instructions on things like how to run a vacuum cleaner, how to dust, and how to wash their own clothes. Be patient but firm, and don't mistake lack of experience for laziness.

It often helps to create a list that includes each family member's responsibilities and how many times per week the chores are expected to be accomplished. Post this list in a place where the whole family will see it. It would be helpful if this were an established custom when your exchange student arrives, so others in the family are used to checking the list to make sure chores are done, and can guide your student in doing the same.

Discussing Transportation Options

Transportation issues can sometimes be a source of tension between students and their host parents. Host parents may feel that their student is too demanding and expects them to take him wherever he/she wishes to go. Students sometimes feel frustrated by the fact that Rotary International does not allow them to drive during their exchange year. Additionally, many students come from cities where they grew up relying on a well-developed system of public transportation and find it difficult adjusting to placement in areas not serviced by public transportation. Host parents, being sensitive to this background and these limitations, need to discuss school, after school, and weekend transportation with the student. Certain guidelines regarding transportation should be set to prevent misunderstandings and unrealistic expectations. One possible option is for the host family to help the student secure a used bicycle for use during his exchange. The bike can then be sold before departure, and most of the funds spent on the bike can be recovered.

Challenges You May Face

Culture Shock

Most students who spend time living and studying in a foreign country experience varying degrees of culture shock. The term “culture shock” is used to describe the feelings of disorientation experienced by people when living in a culture different from their own. It results from the awareness that one’s basic assumptions about life and one’s familiar ways of behaving are no longer appropriate or functional. Generally, culture shock begins around the second month of a student’s exchange and may continue for up to three months. When international students experience culture shock, they may exhibit one or more of the following behaviors:

- Criticize the American educational system;
- Avoid attending classes because they feel that their peers are not friendly enough;
- Express an exaggerated reaction to certain comments;
- Exhibit irritability over minor events;
- Withdraw and spend extended periods of time alone;
- Write or call home frequently;
- Express feelings of being misunderstood;
- Increase food consumption;
- Exhibit complete loss of appetite;
- Complain of insomnia; or
- Sleep excessively.

This list is, by no means, complete. And, as you can see, behavioral patterns at either end of the spectrum can be indicative of culture shock. The best assessment of whether or not your student is experiencing culture shock is to ask yourself if he/she seems to be exhibiting any unusual behavior that you consider extreme or out of the ordinary.

When experiencing culture shock, your student may feel as though there is something wrong with him and the way he is handling his adjustment. It is helpful for you to explain - based on the information we have provided - the dynamics of culture shock and outline some of the examples we have provided above. Your student needs to be reassured that these feelings are normal and should not be viewed as a weakness on his part. Host families need to be prepared to offer emotional support to their student during this difficult time. The busier your inbound is, the quicker he will adjust to the new culture. If he has too much time to think about how different everything is, the recovery process will take much longer.

If your student attends school with, or has access to, people who speak his native language, your student may spend excessive amounts of time with these people conversing in their language rather than in English. This situation should be strongly discouraged. Avoiding practicing English, even though speaking in English may be very stressful to the student, will significantly prolong the student’s adjustment period. The more quickly the student masters English, becoming familiar with colloquial phrases and slang, the faster he will be able to make many friends and have many positive experiences during his exchange year.

Two issues that may be a challenge relating to differences in culture are drinking alcohol and smoking. States laws restrict smoking to those 18 or older, and alcohol consumption to those 21 and older. It is difficult enough to adjust to a new culture without also dealing with a sudden cessation of smoking. Also, older exchange students (over 17) may be accustomed to going out drinking with their friends on a regular basis, and don’t understand why they cannot continue this practice in the U.S. Talk to your Rotary Youth Exchange Officer about suggestions on how to deal with this type of issue. One suggestion is to communicate in advance with your student on legal restrictions regarding smoking in your area so they can be prepared to deal with this. Optimally they will stop smoking before they arrive in this country.

Homesickness

Another aspect of culture shock and the adjustment process is homesickness. Most international students experience this challenge at some point during their exchanges. This is a normal reaction to the separation from family, friends, and familiar surroundings.

To address this challenge, encourage your student to become involved in activities with your family and those sponsored by his school and your church. Not only will this help to facilitate the formation of friendships, it will foster an atmosphere of acceptance. This will help him to feel like a member of a group and take his mind off his friends and family back home. The more active and involved your student becomes, the less time he has to think about the things he misses.

Additionally, try to dissuade your student from spending an excessive amount of time on the phone or on line with his natural family or friends from home. Even though this is a normal reaction to homesickness, it can deepen the feelings of sadness and separation. It isn't the words as much as just the sound of loved ones' voices that trigger the feelings of isolation. As a general rule, Rotary recommends that students speak to their natural families no more than once or twice a month. Instead, encourage your student to write and send pictures to share their experiences. This helps them feel in touch with their natural families while helping them dwell on the positive experiences they are having, rather than how much they miss their home. Also, discuss limiting use of Internet communication to their folks at home. An instant message on how miserable they are will upset their parents long after the student has already moved beyond the immediate crisis of that day.

Some host families may interpret their student's homesick behaviors as a negative reflection on their efforts. This may lead them to the conclusion that the student misses his natural parents as a result of unhappiness with his new American family. Most often this is not the case. However, this kind of misunderstanding can cause tensions between host family members and the student. Host families must remember that working with the student toward decreasing his feelings of homesickness and providing him with a warm and supportive environment will do much to alleviate this situation.

The Conflict of Expectations Versus Reality

Your exchange student will undoubtedly experience a great deal of excitement and anticipation prior to arrival in the United States. This enthusiasm has probably been growing ever since the moment of his or her acceptance into the program.

On arrival, the inbound will find this new environment positive and interesting, and will most likely be eager to see and do everything possible in the shortest amount of time. However, as the novelty wears off, your student may begin to feel confused by confronting new lifestyles, value systems, behaviors, and beliefs. It is important for host families to realize this is a normal reaction. The transition phase of an exchange is a critical, yet often confusing, period for the international student. Offering your support and understanding will be the most effective way to help him or her deal with the conflicting emotions being experienced.

Eventually, your exchange student will reach a level of understanding and respect for the new host culture. Only then will his/her mind be able to accommodate both the positive and negative aspects of the culture and allow effective functioning within it. Frustrations that occur after this transitional period will be handled much more easily by your inbound. You, too, may experience a conflict between your expectations and reality. Finding out that your student is different than what you expected can be disappointing, too. This is particularly challenging for host parents who have had a positive hosting experience in the past. Each student is very much an individual, just as your own children are. Try to evaluate your expectations and make sure that they are realistic.

Comparisons

Your exchange student will naturally compare different aspects of American life with life at home. This is a normal reaction of students during their adjustment process. These comparisons can be healthy observations when phrased in a positive, non-judgmental manner (e.g., “In my country, families buy the groceries they need on a daily basis while I’ve noticed that here, in the U.S., families only shop once a week”). However, they can negatively impact the host family and others when phrased in a judgmental manner (e.g., “If you shopped for the groceries you needed every day, like we do back home, then we would always have fresh food in the house”). This may be difficult for you and your family to tolerate.

A productive way to deal with this situation is to communicate to your student how it makes you feel when he offers his comparisons between his country and the United States in a critical manner. Once your student becomes more conscious of his behaviors and sensitive to your feelings, subsequent comparisons should be expressed in more non-judgmental terms. Keep in mind, though, that you are dealing with young people who sometimes speak first, and think later, especially when they are feeling frustrated. Be empathetic and patient, while continuing to suggest ways your student can share aspects of his home life in positive ways.

There are sure to be differences between your family’s lifestyle and the way other host families live. Your exchange student may verbalize his observations regarding these differences to you and your family. It is easy to hold your discomfort inside because you do not want to offend your student or compare your lifestyle with others (the “keep up with the Jones’s” syndrome). Don’t avoid the issue. Doing so only increases, not alleviates, tensions between you and your student. Again, the most effective way to handle this situation is to talk with your student and make him aware of your feelings.

One significant issue that may occur springs from the fact that many exchange students come from large, urban cities, and many of the Rotary host parents live in suburban or rural settings. When they are interviewed for the program, students are told that they must be prepared to accept a placement in any one of a number of different environments (i.e., city, suburb, small town, or rural), and that many students go to rural areas. Often, they are surprised when they arrive at their new home and discover it is in a much more rural location than they had envisioned. One example is a student from downtown Tokyo that was placed in a small farming community, where her first host family lived on a farm miles from the nearest paved road.

Host families need to prepare themselves for this reaction and not feel offended by it. In an effort to help your student adjust, point out the activities that are unique to your area that may not have been available at home. Accentuate the positive aspects of living in a rural community. Explain to your student that there are many fun things to do in a rural area, they just may be different than the things he considered fun in his country. Try to make an extra effort to accommodate your student in participating in extracurricular activities at school to increase his circle of friends. If you become defensive and hostile, the opportunity to teach your student something genuinely different from his past experiences will be significantly impacted. And remember, if the student wanted things to be the same as they were at home, spending a year as an exchange student is almost guaranteed to be the wrong way to accomplish that!

Bonding With Your Student

The close relationship that can form between you and your student may surely last a lifetime. For this reason, Rotary and most host families believe that this is the most important byproduct of the hosting experience.

It is quite common for an exchange student to build a closer relationship with one host parent than with the other. In some instances, your student will form a close bond with one of your children. However, it is also possible that no bond is ever formed. Please realize that this can happen. Try not to be disappointed if this happens to you. Focus on the many other positive aspects of the experience, such as the chance to learn about another culture, perhaps the good example the exchange student set academically for your own children, etc.

Encouraging Your Student to Share

Because each student comes from a different background, it is possible that your student may not be accustomed to sharing certain things. It may be a difficult transition for an only child to now share a room, the bathroom, household items, and even your attention, with his new host sibling(s). Being aware of this can help you identify and address conflicts before they become serious problems.

Sibling Jealousy

If there are other children in your family, there is the possibility for sibling jealousy to surface. Typically, when your exchange student first arrives in America, he will receive a great deal of attention from his host parents, the community, and the faculty and students at school. Unfortunately, this special treatment may cause his host sibling(s) to experience feelings of neglect and abandonment. As a result, jealousy may develop toward the exchange student and rivalry may emerge between them. Host parents should be aware of these potential problems and monitor their own behavior, and well as the behavior of the natural children. As a host parent, be careful not to contribute to the development of jealousy by comparing your children to your student. Additionally, avoid showing any favoritism to the student.

Keeping the lines of communication open and encouraging discussions of any negative emotions early in the transition process can greatly decrease the possibility of conflict. By addressing this challenge and removing this barrier, the avenues are open to facilitate the development of a good relationship between your children and the student.

Unwillingness to Recognize the Host Mother's Authority

The roles of authority within the American family structure may be very unfamiliar to your international student. In many cultures, the idea of a woman taking charge in the home, much less at work, is unheard of. Therefore, some students may feel they do not have to listen to or obey the requests of their host mothers. It may be necessary for the host father to explain this aspect of American culture so that the host mother's authority is not questioned.

Helping Your Student Make the "Guest to Family Member" Transition

After your student has arrived, you should begin to help him make the transition from guest to family member right away. To do this, host families should start treating their exchange student in the same manner as they do their own children.

As mentioned previously, an important aspect of this is assigning your exchange student his share of the household chores. In doing so, you are communicating to your student that he is an important part of your family, one who shares equally in the responsibility of maintaining the home. Furthermore, by making it clear to your student that he is to abide by the same rules as other members of the family, his place within your family structure is again reinforced.

As a parent, you must be careful to not fall into the habit of making exceptions for your student when he breaks the rules. To do so will cause tensions to develop and will put a strain on the relationships within the home.

Curfews and Whereabouts

You may find that your exchange student was allowed a greater amount of freedom by his natural parents than you feel comfortable permitting while he is living with you. This is not unusual as in many cultures, children are accorded a greater degree of responsibility, and as a by-product, more freedom, than their American counterparts of similar age. Do not feel pressured by this fact to alter your rules. As host parents, you are entrusted with the responsibility of looking after this student as you would your own children.

Be clear with the student from the beginning what your requirements are regarding curfews and whereabouts. By communicating these restrictions to your student, you are confirming to him that you believe he is responsible enough to follow your rules. Let him know what time you expect him in on school nights and on weekends. Let him know that you would like him to call if he is going to be late, and let him know if there are any places or areas that are off-limits. Clearly set the acceptable parameters for him and require him to respect them.

Hygiene and Bathroom Etiquette

This is an issue that many host families do not realize can become a problem. In some cultures, people do not bathe as often as most Americans. This can cause problems for the student with his host family and his peers. One useful intervention is to purchase certain toiletries for all family members, including your exchange student. You can pass these items out, explaining to your children that you bought these for each of them to use daily. By directing these comments to the entire family, and not just your exchange student, you will avoid making him feel as though he was being singled out and criticized. Alternatively, explain in privacy with your student the American customs and toiletries. It would be best if the host parent of the same sex as the student handle this discussion. This would also be an appropriate time to discuss feminine hygiene products with a female exchange student. Be sensitive to embarrassing your student, but don't avoid the issues because it will only make things more difficult later on.

Use of the Bathroom

In most households across the country, mornings are a hectic and rushed time of the day. Furthermore, because sharing a bathroom is typical in most homes, it is necessary for the host family to discuss with their exchange student what the best time would be for him to use the bathroom in the morning. It is also a good idea to set a limit on how long he can stay in the bathroom, since others will probably be waiting to take their turns. Be sure to let him know in what condition he should leave the bathroom when he is finished.

Picking Up After Himself/Herself

This issue should be discussed when explaining the household rules to your exchange student. Make sure your student knows what it means to "pick up" after himself. Use specific examples: clothes he throws on the floor are to be picked up before he leaves and put in the proper place, dishes are to be put in the sink or the dishwasher, homework is to be cleared from the kitchen table before dinner, etc. The more precise and clear you are when establishing these rules, and the more consistently you enforce them, the better your student will perform.

Chores and Household Responsibilities

The importance of assigning chores has been mentioned several times. However, it may be that your student has never had to help out at home before. Therefore, it may be necessary for you to explain and demonstrate how to perform certain tasks. Your student should be quite willing to help, but if he is unsure of what you want him to do or how to do it, a misunderstanding may occur. Be sure to clearly explain what you expect him to do, and maybe walk through the tasks the first time or two with him. If he questions the reason for doing chores, let him know that everyone in the family carries an equal share of the burden. As a family member, this is his share.

Drinking and Drugs

According to Rotary policy, students are not allowed to buy, sell, or use any controlled or illegal substance without the prescription of a doctor. This is the quickest way for your student to be returned to his home country. In addition, students are not allowed to consume alcoholic beverages while in the United States. The only exception to this rule may occur within your home at your discretion. Talk to your Rotary Youth Exchange Officer if you have any questions regarding these policies.

Dating

It is fairly safe to assume that the issue of dating will arise at some point during your student's exchange. You should handle this matter with your student in the same way you would handle it with your own children. Whatever policies you have for your own children regarding dating should apply to your exchange student as well. Rotary prohibits a strong romantic attachment for the student, i.e. going steady or becoming engaged. This is not only to protect the exchange student from emotional hardship when he must return to his home country, but also has significant legal ramifications.

Sex

Sex is a delicate issue regardless of your country of origin. You may choose to address this topic soon after your student arrives, or you may choose to wait until it comes up. Either way you wish to handle it, simply use your best judgment. In talking with your student, try to establish an atmosphere where he feels comfortable approaching you with future questions. If a difficult situation arises that you do not feel comfortable handling, call the student's Rotary counselor for advice.

Time

Among the countries of the world, the concept of times varies widely. Most Americans are very time-conscious and expect others to be as well. Yet, for the international student, arriving thirty minutes late for an appointment may be completely acceptable in his culture.

It is important for you to recognize this difference and to work with your student as he attempts to overcome a lifetime of learning. This process can become significantly easier if the student knows his host family is aware of these cultural differences, and that they will support him in making the appropriate adjustments.

Diet, Meal Times, and Weight Gains

As host parents, you may find yourselves concerned with what and how often your exchange student eats. Some international students are overwhelmed by the variety and quantity of food available to Americans. It is not uncommon for exchange students to average between a 10 to 20 pound weight gain during their stay in America. Overeating can also be the student's way of dealing with the stress of new surroundings.

Regardless of the reasons, the host family can help regulate their student's diet by designating specific times when meals with the family will be eaten. Make sure your exchange student understands that he is expected to be present for these meals. In addition, it is helpful to encourage your student to engage in regular physical activity as a means of controlling his weight.

Language Skills

It is likely that your exchange student will arrive with a limited grasp of English, and in some cases virtually no ability to converse. Even students with many years of instruction in English may have difficulty in understanding and speaking English. During the first few weeks, much of this difficulty can be attributed to the speed at which most Americans speak, and the tremendous amount of slang we use. Also, no matter how good the student's language skills are, if English is a second language, the student must translate every word into his native language before responding. Therefore, in addition to having a little extra patience when dealing with the student, try to make an effort to speak clearly, and avoid using slang as these unfamiliar expressions will confuse your student. Another habit that is common among Americans is the use of acronyms. Instead of stating "I would like you to set the table now," you might be inclined to say, "Can you get that table set ASAP?" For someone who is still learning how to speak English fluently, abbreviations and acronyms can often prove to be meaningless and ambiguous.

Host families should be careful to articulate their speech clearly and speak slightly slower to their international student in the beginning. You should not raise your voice, nor should you speak in broken English the way your student may do, as this will only confuse the student further and undoubtedly make him more self-conscious about communicating. As your student's proficiency increases, begin helping him improve his English by correcting his word usage if he requests help in this area. An old trick, but one that has proved highly effective, is to use cards or notes taped on common household objects ("chair", "bathroom", "refrigerator", etc.) to aid your student in coming up to speed more quickly in their English. You can even make a game of it with the family – you learn the name of the object in your student's language, and the student learns the name in English!

On occasion it may be necessary to seek help from someone fluent in the student's native language to discuss issues that the student's English is just not up to handling. This can be a teacher, a returned exchange student from that country (probably the best source of help!), a family friend, or someone from Rotary. Do not hesitate to do this – it will be the best way to help the student deal with the frustration of knowing that a problem exists, but not being able to communicate with the host family about it or (rarely, but sometimes) trying to avoid dealing with the problem by "pretending" to not understand.

School

While academic success is important for all students, it is even a greater challenge for an exchange student who has to learn English as well. Often, a student who earned high marks in his native country will perform poorly at the beginning of his exchange. The host family needs to work closely with their student and encourage the option of seeking additional help in his studies if such help is warranted. Provide support for the student and speak with his teachers and school counselor when necessary. Encourage the student to work with peers in study sessions or doing homework together. This will also help the student increase his or her circle of friends.

Most American schools generously enroll exchange students without tuition because of the benefit to other students in interacting with the international students. However, if the student's lack of prowess in English is impacting faculty members because of the student's need for special attention, special tutoring may be required. Contact Rotary for help in this area should it prove necessary to improve the student's academic experience.

Establishing Friendships

Exchange students may or may not have a difficult time establishing friendships after the newness of their presence in the school wears off. They soon discover that American teenagers typically form small social groups, or "cliques," and are often not very accepting of new people. International students need to be assured that this is quite common in the United States, and that it is no reflection on them as individuals. Encourage your student to take the first step by approaching new people and trying new activities. Make sure he/she knows you are supportive of these efforts. Often, this can be the most intimidating part of the exchange, particularly if the student is somewhat shy. An inbound may take refuge in associating primarily with other international students, but must be encouraged to cultivate new friends. Becoming part of school clubs or theater groups, or participating in band or choir provide an instant bond with some of the students due to shared experiences, and will help the student to make friends.

Money

The host parents are not required to provide pocket money for the exchange student. If they normally provide an allowance for their natural children, and wish to do so for the student, it is at the host family's discretion. Because the student is not allowed to work at a regular paying job while on exchange, Rotary provides an allowance stipend to provide for the student's needs. The student should be encouraged to develop and stick to a budget to get the most benefit from the stipend. The student's natural parents may also provide additional funds and/or a charge card for the student's use. If the host parents are concerned that the exchange student is making inappropriate use of the charge card or not appropriately managing money, they should discuss their

concerns with the student, and if necessary, communicate their concern with the Rotary Counselor or Youth Exchange Officer.

Telephone Usage

It is important for each host family to establish telephone usage guidelines for the student at the beginning of his stay. As a general rule, Rotary recommends that students speak to their natural families no more than once or twice each month.

As telephone charges vary from country to country, your student will not be familiar with what types of calls cost money in the U.S. It is important to explain to your student what types of calls are free, and what types of calls incur charges. Be sure to discuss such things as “800” numbers, “900” numbers, “411” and “911.” It is also important to point out that charges may still be incurred in some areas even though the student did not have to dial a “1” or a different area code. Exchange students are also sometimes (painfully) surprised to learn that US cell phone companies charge for *receiving* calls and text messages, as well as sending them.

If the student is going to call his natural family from the U.S. due to the generally much lower cost of calls originating in the U.S., the student should consider pre-paid calling cards or a pre-paid telephone debit card. This is a simple method that avoids any unpleasant surprises to the host family.

Preparing for the Move to a New Host Family

It is common in the Rotary Youth Exchange program for the exchange student to stay with two or three families over the course of the year. Now the student, who has become accustomed to your family’s ways of doing things, must start over with a new family. The first transition to a new family usually occurs after Christmas. The Christmas season is often very traumatic to the exchange student, with a great deal of homesickness. By leaving the student with the first host family through the holiday, there is a feeling of continuity among people he or she knows and trusts, thereby minimizing the loneliness and homesickness. The gregarious, confident, outgoing student may be ready to move to a new host family before Christmas, with the move sometimes occurring in this case on Thanksgiving weekend. Make sure the student has a day or two to settle into his new host family before returning to school.

The current host family can do a great deal to ease the transition to a new host family. It is important for the student to meet and get to know the new host family in advance of the move. Invite them over for dinner, or have the new host family invite the student for dinner. Let the student see the new bedroom, and meet the new sibling(s). Discuss the exchange student’s food likes and dislikes, and share the more positive aspects of their presence in your family with the new host parents. Minimize the negative events as much as possible, because your “horror stories” may cause the new host family to form a negative preconception of what their experience will be like. However, advice on what worked well for you in resolving difficulties will make the new host family more comfortable. Provide copies of your student’s Rotary application, permission for treatment forms, medical form, and any other relevant paperwork for the new host family. Pass along this handbook, or, if you want to keep it, request that Rotary provide one to them.

Make sure that Rotary, the school, and the student’s natural family are all informed of the new host family’s address and phone number before the move. Discuss the new host family with your exchange student, accenting the positive aspects of learning a new viewpoint of American culture. Your student may be reluctant to move because they have become comfortable with your family and unwilling to go through the frustration of learning new ways of doing things. The greater the student’s exposure to the new host family ahead of time, the easier the transition will be.

Dealing with Challenges

Steps Toward Resolution

The most important tool in resolving conflicts and misunderstandings is communication. If there is a problem with something your exchange student is doing or saying, you need to discuss this with him or her directly and immediately. Failure to do so will result in an even greater problem later.

Approach your student in a non-threatening manner so that he does not instinctively become defensive. Work toward finding a mutually agreeable resolution to the problem. Be sure to let your student express how he is feeling as well during this process. Remember, if the problem is one reported to you by a sibling or someone at school, the truth is probably somewhere between what the complaint was and the exchange student's version of what happened.

If you do not feel comfortable talking with your student about a particular issue, or if you are unable to achieve an equitable resolution with your student, contact your student's Rotary counselor or Youth Exchange Officer. The Rotary counselor is someone assigned to your student who is outside the host family and can take an independent viewpoint. If a serious problem is encountered, it is important to get Rotary involved as soon as possible before the situation gets out of hand. The student's lack of command of the English language often complicates resolution of a problem. This is where bringing in someone who speaks the student's language can be a big help.

If a Resolution Cannot Be Reached: Changing Families

At times, certain issues arise between students and their host families that cannot be resolved. Although this can create a very difficult situation, it is not unheard of for a student to change host families ahead of schedule. As this is a very serious step to take, changes should not take place until all avenues of resolution have been explored and no other options exist.

Reasons That May Require a Change in Host Families:

- A death or serious illness occurs in the host family;
- A change in the financial circumstances within the host family;
- Damage to the home due to a natural disaster or fire;
- The host family is relocating out of the school district;
- The host family is requesting that a student be moved;
- Irreconcilable differences between a student and the host family.

Reasons That Do Not Require a Change in Host Families:

- Student complains that placement is too rural;
- The student refuses to adjust to the host family;
- The student is unwilling to share a bedroom;
- The student desires to be in another school, city, or state;
- The student desires to be closer geographically to a friend or relative;
- The student is dissatisfied with the school he is attending;
- No public transportation is available;
- The student is unhappy with the presence or absence of host siblings.

If the student does not appear to be making the effort to adjust to what they believe is difficult situation, get the Youth Exchange Officer or the Rotary District staff involved. Often a discussion with the Rotary staff or, if they feel it is necessary, with the student's natural parents, will create an incentive for the student to make more effort to adapt.

Confidentiality

When problems arise between you and your exchange student, it is important to remember not to discuss the circumstances with other members of your community. Very often, these kinds of situations can be exaggerated when they are passed along by a number of different people. We realize the need to discuss personal concerns with close friends or family, but at the same time, please be aware of the potential consequences of talking to people outside of your immediate family. Misunderstandings can occur easily, and there exists an even greater likelihood that rumors may develop. While your feelings are important in these kinds of situations, please also consider the feelings of your exchange student and how he may be affected by you not keeping certain concerns private.

It is particularly important for you to be careful how you discuss your exchange student with future host families. Preconceptions based on misunderstandings can spoil an experience for the new host family where an open mind may have resulted in a very positive experience. Consider carefully what information you pass on to the next host family: be liberal with your positive comments, and very stingy with your complaints. However, share your methods you found successful in resolving any difficulties. This will enable the new host family to feel more confident in welcoming the exchange student into their family.

Preparing for Your Student's Return Home

Return Tickets

Your student arrived in this country with a return ticket, but an open or changeable return date on the ticket. The return date normally should be within a week or two of the end of school, unless the student is participating in a year end trip. Encourage your student to stay in communication with his home Rotary club as the exchange year draws to an end.

Last-Minute Shopping

Preparing for departure will be a very hectic time for your student. He will probably want to purchase last-minute gifts for friends and family before he returns home, so make sure some time is set aside for this. Leaving it to the last minute will only add to the existing pressures of completing everything that your student needs to do before leaving.

Obtaining School Transcripts

If academic credit is important, please be sure that your student obtains an official transcript prior to departure. If the grades are not ready by the departure date, and they are necessary for enrollment in the home country, ask your student to prepay an express mail package prior to departure. When the transcripts arrive, make a copy of them, place the originals in the package, and forward them to your student in his home country. Some countries (such as Brazil) require that transcripts be validated by a Consulate; have your student investigate any such requirements and procedures.

Airline Baggage Restrictions and Penalties

It may be necessary for you or your student to contact the airline he is flying internationally to learn what restrictions they have concerning the amount of baggage each passenger may bring with him. Usually international flights limit the student to two suitcases totaling 70 pounds, plus a carry-on bag, but those with an initial domestic flight may face a 50-pound limit. The maximum proportions of the carry-on bag differ from airplane to airplane, so confirm the size. If the carry-on bag is too large to fit under the seat, your student may have to check the bag. Excess baggage charges are typically very high, so confirm the limits ahead of time. Make sure that last-minute souvenirs and gifts are planned for in the available luggage space.

Shipping Excess Baggage

Whenever possible, encourage your student to ship home any excess baggage prior to departure. Historically, the least expensive way to ship excess baggage has been by surface mail. This method may take several months to reach its destination, and may not be available to all destinations, but the savings are significant. With a little pre-planning, this can be accomplished and the excess baggage can be waiting for the student when he returns home. Help your student organize what he wants to carry in his luggage, and what can be sent to his home several months before his departure. If, by chance, the student's family came to visit during the year, having them take home an extra suitcase or two of the inbound's belongings is the ideal solution.

The Importance of Reconfirming Reservations

As departure times and flights frequently change and as airlines will drop passengers who have not reconfirmed their reservations during the summer season, you should plan to call the airline with which your student has a reservation three days before the scheduled departure date. If the departure time has changed, this will allow you to reach the airport in sufficient time (minimum 2 hours before the flight time).

If Your Student Misses the Flight or the Flight is Canceled

If your student misses the flight or the flight is canceled, contact the airline immediately. Ask them to reschedule your student's flight and then notify Rotary of the student's new arrangements. Have the student call home to inform his parents of the new arrival time.

Saying Goodbye

Goodbyes are never easy. Everyone reacts to these difficult situations in different ways. For example, you may become very emotional while your student is quiet and withdrawn. Do not interpret these behaviors as reflections on you or your student's experience. It is important to remember all the enjoyable times you spent with your student. Often, it is helpful to prepare yourself beforehand for your student's eventual departure. Plan who will go to the airport and who will say goodbye at your home. Encourage your student's peers and other exchange students to go to the airport to see him off. Make plans to keep in touch with your student and possibly even visit one another sometime in the future. Remember the relationship you have built with your student and what you have learned through your hosting experience. Do not think of this goodbye as negative, but simply as another chapter in your life that is now over with.

Realize all the valuable insights you have gained through interactions with your exchange student. Look back on your hosting experience and consider what a unique opportunity it has been to see another culture from the inside. Appreciate how it has allowed your student to experience the American culture and your family's distinctive way of life. So instead of saying "Goodbye," you can simply say "So long for now!"

Appendix A – What is Rotary?

The History of Rotary

Rotary was born on February 23, 1905 in Chicago, Illinois, the world's first and most international service club. The founder of Rotary was attorney Paul P. Harris (1868-1947), who gathered with three others to discuss his idea of a group of businessmen from different professions getting together periodically to become better acquainted. They decided to limit membership to one representative of each profession and to rotate the meeting site among each member's place of business, to acquaint each other with their various vocations and to promote business. The rotation of meeting places is the source of the name "Rotary".

Club membership grew rapidly. The second Rotary Club was founded in San Francisco in 1908. When clubs were formed in Canada and Great Britain, in 1912, Rotary became an international organization.

Since 1905, the ideas of Paul Harris and his friends have become ideals which have been accepted by people of practically all nationalities, and of many political and religious beliefs. Today there are Rotary Clubs in Austria and American Samoa, in Brazil and Brunei, in Italy and India, in Scotland and South Africa - in some 170 countries. The universal acceptance of Rotary principles has been so great that there are now more than 32,000 Rotary clubs, with a membership of over 1.2 million men and women.

Rotary Motto and Themes

Rotary International has adopted as its motto, "*Service Above Self*". A second theme of Rotary is "*He profits most who serves best*". Additionally, each year, the Rotary International President coins a theme for that Rotary year.

Rotarians throughout the world quote the Four Way Test of the things we think, say or do:

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

Rotary in Florida

Each of the more than 32,000 Rotary clubs in the world is a member of Rotary International. Rotary is divided into more than 530 Districts, each of which is headed by a District Governor. The first Rotary club in Florida, the Rotary Club of Jacksonville, was organized in 1912, just seven years after Rotary began in Chicago.

There are eight Rotary Districts in Florida, divided by region along county lines, from District 6940, covering 25 counties in the Panhandle, to District 6990, consisting of the southeast corner of the state, the Florida Keys, and Grand Bahama Island. Some districts are geographically large, some small, but all have between 45 and 65 Rotary clubs.

The District Governor, and all officers of Rotary on the international, district or club level, serve for a Rotary fiscal year that runs from July 1 to June 30.

A number of district-level committees are organized to provide sponsorship or support for Rotary functions and initiatives that involve Rotarians from across our District. The Youth Exchange Committee, or YEC, is an example of a District Committee.

The Rotary Foundation

In 1917, the Rotary Foundation was born. The Rotary Foundation is a philanthropic trust promoting further understanding and friendly relations between peoples of different nations. The Foundation sponsors the largest scholarship program in the world and is supported purely by voluntary contributions from Rotary Clubs and Rotarians.

The Rotary Foundation has several working programs and a budget of approximately \$45-\$50 million (US) each year. These programs include Ambassadorial Scholarships, Rotary Volunteers, The 3H program (for Health, Hunger and Humanity), Rotary Peace Conferences, World Community Service, Special Grants, and two others that you may encounter during your exchange: Group Study Exchange, and Polio-Plus.

Group Study Exchange involves paired districts in different countries sending teams of 4 or 5 business or professional men and women for a 4 week period of study and discussion with their counterparts in the other country. Polio-Plus is Rotary's plan to eliminate polio from the world, a goal that has almost been reached.

Rotary at the Local Level -- The Rotary Club

The "personality" of each Rotary club is a reflection of the community it serves and the membership of that club. Even within each District, club size ranges from less than two dozen members to well over two hundred members. Rotary clubs meet weekly throughout the year; some for a breakfast meeting, others during lunch, some for dinner. Some Rotary club meetings are quiet and "serious", staying to a tight schedule so the members can return to work on time, while other club meetings are less formal and structured.

Exchange students often find that the Rotary club **hosting** them will be very different from the Rotary club **sponsoring** them, and both will be very different from other Rotary clubs they may have the opportunity to visit during their exchange year. But Rotarians around the world all share the common philosophy of Service Above Self, and an exchange student can rely on them to help provide a successful exchange experience.

Rotary clubs are lead by officers who are elected by the membership for one year terms, beginning on July 1, the beginning of the Rotary Year. The officers include the Club President, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-President and/or President-Elect, and Directors. Rotary clubs participating in the Youth Exchange Program generally appoint a Youth Exchange Officer, or YEO, to oversee that program, and that Rotarian, or another member of the host Rotary club, will be designated as the exchange student's Club Counselor. This Rotarian serves as the primary liaison between the Rotary club, the exchange student, and the host families.

Appendix B –Rules & Conditions of Exchange

This appendix contains the Program Rules and Conditions which all exchange students and their parents agreed to follow as part of the Application to the Exchange Program. These are the “universal” set of common sense rules that all Rotary District Youth Exchange Programs expect the student to comply with as a condition of the Exchange.

A Youth Exchange student sponsored by a Rotary club and district must agree to the following rules and conditions of exchange. Violation of any of these rules may result in dismissal from the program and immediate return home, at student’s expense.

Rules and Conditions of Exchange

- 1) You must obey the laws of the host country. If found guilty of violating any law, you can expect no assistance from your sponsors or native country. You must return home at your own expense as soon as released by authorities.
- 2) You will be under the host district’s authority while you are an exchange student and must abide by the rules and conditions of exchange provided by the host district. Parents or legal guardians must not authorize any extra activities directly to you. Any relatives you may have in the host country will have no authority over you while you are in the program.
- 3) You are not allowed to possess or use illegal drugs. Legal medications that are prescribed to you by a physician are allowed.
- 4) The illegal drinking of alcoholic beverages is expressly forbidden. Students who are of legal age should refrain. If your host family offers you an alcoholic drink, it is permissible to accept it under their supervision in the home. Excessive consumption and drunkenness is forbidden.
- 5) You may not operate a motorized vehicle, including but not limited to cars, trucks, motorcycles, aircraft, all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiles, boats, and other watercraft, or participate in driver education programs.
- 6) Smoking is discouraged. If you state in your application that you do not smoke, you will be held to that position throughout your exchange. Your acceptance and host family placement is based on your signed statement. Under no circumstances are you to smoke in your host family’s bedrooms.
- 7) Body piercing or obtaining a tattoo while on your exchange, without the express written permission of your natural parents, host parents, host club, and host district, is prohibited, for health reasons.
- 8) You must make every effort to learn the language of the host country, and may be responsible for any costs for tutoring, language camps, or other instruction.
- 9) Limit your use of the Internet and mobile phones, as directed by your host district, host club, and host family. Excessive or inappropriate use is not acceptable. Accessing or downloading pornographic material is expressly forbidden.
- 10) You must attend school regularly and make an honest attempt to succeed.
- 11) You must have health and accident or travel insurance that provides coverage for accidental injury and illness, death benefits (including repatriation of remains), disability/dismemberment benefits, emergency medical evacuation, emergency visitation expenses, 24-hour emergency assistance services, and legal services, in amounts satisfactory to the host Rotary club or district in consultation with the sponsor Rotary club or district, with coverage from the time of your departure from your home country until your return.
- 12) You must also have liability coverage through a travel insurance or other applicable policy, in amounts satisfactory to the host Rotary club or district in consultation with the sponsor Rotary club or district.
- 13) You must have sufficient financial support to assure your well-being during your exchange. Your host district may require a contingency fund for emergency situations. Unused funds will be returned to you or to your parents or legal guardians at the end of your exchange.
- 14) You must follow the travel rules of your host district. Travel is permitted with host parents or for Rotary club or district functions authorized by the host Rotary club or district with proper adult chaperones. The host district and club, host family, and your parents or legal guardians must approve any other travel in writing, thus exempting Rotary of responsibility and liability.
- 15) You must return home directly by a route mutually agreeable to your host district and your parents or legal guardians.
- 16) Any costs related to an early return home or any other unusual costs (language tutoring, tours, etc.) are the responsibility of you and your parents or legal guardians.
- 17) Visits by your parents or legal guardians, siblings, or friends while you are on exchange may only take place with the host club’s and district’s consent and within their guidelines. Typically, visits may be arranged only in the last quarter of the exchange or during school breaks and are not allowed during major holidays.
- 18) Serious romantic activity is to be avoided. Sexual activity is forbidden.
- 19) Talk with your host club counselor, host parents, or other trusted adult if you encounter any form of abuse or harassment.

Recommendations for a Successful Exchange

- 1) You should communicate with your first host family prior to leaving your home country. The family’s information will be provided to you by your host club or district prior to your departure.
- 2) Respect your host’s wishes. Become an integral part of the host family, assuming duties and responsibilities normal for a student of your age or for children in the family.
- 3) Learn ahead of time as much of the language of your host country as possible, and use the language regularly. Teachers, host parents, Rotary club members, and others you meet in the community will appreciate the effort. It will go a long way in your gaining acceptance in the community and with those who will become lifelong friends.
- 4) Attend Rotary-sponsored events and host family events, and show an interest in these activities. Volunteer to be involved; do not wait to be asked. Lack of interest on your part is detrimental to your exchange and can have a negative impact on future exchanges.
- 5) Get involved in your school and community activities. Plan your recreation and spare-time activities around your school and community friends. Don’t spend all your time with other exchange students. If there is a local Interact club, you are encouraged to join it.
- 6) Choose friends in the community carefully. Ask for and heed the advice of host families, counselors, and school personnel in choosing friends.
- 7) Do not borrow money. Pay any bills promptly. Ask permission to use the family phone or computer, keep track of all calls and time on the Internet, and reimburse your host family each month for the costs you incur.
- 8) If you are offered an opportunity to go on a trip or attend an event, make sure you understand any costs you must pay and your responsibilities before you go.

Additional Program Rules and Conditions for Inbound Students to RYE-Florida:

- 1) Students must arrive with a complete round-trip airline ticket, including both domestic and international segments, and the ticket must have an "OPEN" return.
- 2) Students must bring and maintain an Emergency Fund of \$300 US, to be deposited upon arrival with the host Rotary district. This fund is ONLY to be used in emergencies and then must be replenished immediately by the student or his/her natural parents.
- 3) All inbound students must purchase the Rotary-approved accident and sickness insurance policy, known as "Annual Plan B", from American International Group, Inc., through CISI-Bolduc. Insurance must be paid for prior to the student's arrival, by credit card or by bank check (in US Dollars, drawn on a bank in the USA). Guarantee forms and DS-2019 visa documents will not be issued until the insurance premium is paid.
- 4) Students must certify that they have no dietary or physical restrictions other than those shown on the application. If something occurred after submission of the application and the student needs special attention, the RYE-Florida Chairperson must receive a complete report no later than 2 weeks before departure. If the applicant suffers from mental or medical condition(s), the RYE-Florida Chairperson reserves the right to cancel or terminate the exchange.
- 5) To help in the adaptation of the students, we ask that phone calls home be limited to once per month after the initial phone call on arrival. E-mail to family and friends is permitted once per week.
- 6) Students must attend school regularly and make good effort in classes. Students will attend high school, at the school designated by the host Rotary Club. Under no circumstances will the student be allowed to take driver education or operate a motor vehicle. There is no guarantee whatsoever that an exchange student will be able to earn a US high school diploma.
- 7) Students are prohibited from independent travel. Travel with host family, school groups, or Rotarians is permitted, but the Host District YE Chairperson must be notified in advance of all trips outside the District. Inbound students must arrive directly from their home country, and must return directly to their home country at the end of the exchange year.
- 8) Visits by parents and family members are permitted only during the last quarter of the exchange year. Visits by home country friends are strongly discouraged, and will be allowed only in very special circumstances. Students are not permitted to return home during the exchange year, except in cases of emergency.

Appendix C – Travel Policy for Inbound Exchange Students

This is a cultural and educational exchange, NOT a travel exchange. Exchange students should have no expectations of being a tourist. The Host Rotary club and Host Families are under no obligation to provide or permit it. However, some travel through the generosity of, and with, the Host club, individual Rotarians and Host Families is encouraged. **Under no circumstances shall students make their own travel arrangements and then expect the Host club and Host Family to agree. Inbound Exchange students must comply with this policy, and Host Families are asked to enforce it. Violations of this policy may be grounds for terminating the Exchange, and returning the student to his or her home country immediately.**

IN ALL CASES, THE STUDENT, MUST POSSESS WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM THEIR NATURAL PARENTS AUTHORIZING TRAVEL DURING THE EXCHANGE YEAR.

The reason for these rules is simple. RYE-Florida, its member districts, the host Rotary clubs, and the host parents are responsible for students while in this country. It is essential that we know where students can be reached in case of emergency or a message from home.

Individual travel approvals will vary based upon many factors. Host parents will ask themselves if the travel is something they would allow their own son or daughter to do. Further, common sense must be a guide. For example, students are not allowed to get together with other exchange students every weekend, as this is a detriment to them and the program. Those who choose to be exchange students do so to meet and learn about people from the host country. Further, the travel desires of an exchange student should not place a burden on the host family.

In summary, so there is no misunderstanding:

THERE WILL BE NO TRAVEL ALLOWED THAT HAS NOT BEEN APPROVED BY YOUR HOST PARENTS, CLUB COUNSELOR, AND THE HOST DISTRICT YOUTH EXCHANGE COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THESE RULES.

The purpose is certainly not to prevent exchange students from traveling and having fun. However, Rotary is responsible for the safety of the students, and therefore must know where they are at all times.

TRAVEL APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

Travel guidelines and procedures for obtaining approval for travel are established independently by each district, and distributed by the host district's Youth Exchange chairperson. The following is an example of the travel stipulations that may be in force, and shall serve as the default rules should an individual district not issue their own.

Inbound exchange students are only permitted to travel under the following conditions:

- Student possesses a letter from natural parents authorizing travel (the Travel Authorization Form, signed by parents prior to arrival, suffices for this)
- School is not in session (exceptions: school sponsored trip or Rotary sponsored trip)
- The following information is provided in advance and verified by a Host Parent:
 1. Where the student is going
 2. When the student is leaving and returning
 3. Who the student is traveling with
 4. What means of transportation are being used
 5. Where the student will be staying (name, address and phone number)

FOR TRAVEL WITH: - HOST FAMILY - ROTARIAN - CHURCH/SCHOOL - OTHER ADULT	REQUIREMENTS FOR TRIPS LESS THAN 24 HOURS IN DURATION:	REQUIREMENTS FOR TRIPS GREATER THAN 24 HOURS IN DURATION:
INSIDE THE HOST DISTRICT	HOST PARENT APPROVAL	HOST PARENT APPROVAL HOST CLUB NOTIFIED
OUTSIDE THE HOST DISTRICT	HOST PARENT APPROVAL HOST CLUB NOTIFIED	HOST PARENT APPROVAL HOST CLUB APPROVAL DISTRICT APPROVAL

UNACCOMPANIED TRAVEL:

It is understood that the host parents will verify, by personal conversation with whomever the student will be traveling or staying, all plans and itinerary for the travel.

There must be an individual at the destination who assumes full responsibility for the student, and who has been approved by the Host Parent, and if applicable, the Host Rotary club and district.

UNAUTHORIZED TRAVEL IS JUST CAUSE FOR THE STUDENT TO BE RETURNED HOME IMMEDIATELY

Appendix D – Questions for “First Night” with Host Family

1. What do I call you? “Mom”, “Dad”, or given (first) name?
2. What am I expected to do daily other than:
 - a. Make my bed
 - b. Keep my room tidy
 - c. Clean the bathroom up after I use it?
3. What is the procedure about dirty clothes? Where do I keep them until wash day?
4. Should I wash my own clothes?
5. What is the procedure if I need to iron my clothes?
6. May I use the iron, washing machine, sewing machine, etc.?
7. Where can I keep my bathroom accessories?
8. When is the most convenient time for me to use the bathroom on weekday mornings?
9. When is the best time for me to shower or bathe?
10. When are mealtimes?
11. Do I have a regular job at meal times? Set, clear, wash, dry the dishes; the garbage?
12. May I help myself to food and drinks (non-alcoholic) at any time or must I ask first?
13. What areas are strictly private e.g. your study, bedroom, pantry, etc.?
14. May I put posters and pictures in my room? On the wall? How do you want things hung?
15. What are your feelings about my drinking alcohol if offered by you?
16. Do you object to my having wine at the table with you or an occasional beer?
17. What time must I get up weekday mornings?
18. What time should I get up weekends and holidays?
19. What time must I go to bed weekdays? Weekends?
20. What time must I be in on school nights if I go out? (Exceptions by special arrangement).
21. What time must I be in on weekends if I go out?
22. What dates are the birthdays of family members?

23. May I have friends stay overnight?
24. What is your rule on entertaining friends in my room with the door closed?
25. Can I invite friends over during the day? After school? When no one else is home?
26. What are the rules about phone calls? Local?, Long Distance?, Overseas? How and when may I pay for calls I make? How do you want me to keep track of my pay telephone calls?
27. What are the rules about access to the Internet and e-mail if there is a computer in the house? Are there time limits or time periods that use is permitted or prohibited?
28. May my friends call me? What times are not good?
29. What is the procedure about posting mail?
30. Do any of you have any pet dislikes? e.g.. chewing gum, music types, being late, wearing curlers or a hat at the table, being interrupted while reading, etc.
31. How do I get around? bus, bicycle, be driven, riding with friends, etc.
32. What about transportation to the mall or movies?
33. May I play the stereo or TV?
34. May I use kitchen appliances? Microwave? Dishwasher? Stove?
35. What are the rules about going to church?
36. May I smoke? Where? (Rotary discourages smoking in general and forbids smoking in bedrooms)
37. If I have something bugging me, how do you want me to handle it?
 - a. Write a note explaining it
 - b. Ask for a heart to heart discussion
 - c. Tell my counselor
 - d. Keep it to myself and live with it
38. How often can I go out each week?
39. Who pays for “event” expenses? Me? You? Rotary? (movies, sports events, concerts/shows)
40. Can I use the shampoo and tooth paste or buy my own?
41. What do I do about school lunch? Buy - who pays - me, you, Rotary? Bring from home?
42. Are there any eating habits or foods I need to discuss? I don't like _____.

In general, ask about those things you feel are most important the first night, and then other over the next couple nights. Try to always keep an open and honest communication with your Host Family and Rotary.

Appendix E – How to Cope with Culture Shock

by Arthur Gordon

As the world grows smaller, as ever-increasing numbers of people travel, work or study abroad, more attention is being focused on a kind of silent sickness that often afflicts the inexperienced traveler or the unwary expatriate. It's the loss of emotional equilibrium that a person suffers when he moves from a familiar environment where he has learned to function easily and successfully to one where he has not. The term used to describe this malady is "culture shock".

The effects of culture shock may range from mild uneasiness or temporary homesickness to acute unhappiness or even, in extreme cases, psychological panic, irritability, hyper-sensitivity and loss of perspective are common symptoms. Often the victim doesn't know what's the matter with him. He just knows that something's wrong -- and he feels miserable.

Most experts in inter-cultural communication agree that the basic cause of culture shock is the abrupt loss of the familiar, which in turn causes a sense of isolation and diminished self-importance. "Culture shock", says anthropologist Kalvero Oberg, "is brought on by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse. these signs or cues include the thousand and one ways in which we orient ourselves to the situations of daily life: when to shake hands and what to say when we meet people, when and how to give tips, how to give orders to servants, how to make purchases, when to accept and when to refuse invitations, when to take statements seriously and when not."

According to Dr. Oberg, these cues, which may be words, gestures, facial expressions or customs, are acquired by all of us in the course of growing up and are as much a part of our culture as the language we speak or the beliefs we accept. All of us depend for our peace of mind on hundreds of these cues, even though we may not be consciously aware of them. "When an individual enters a strange culture," Dr. Oberg says, "all or most of these familiar cues are removed. he or she is like a fish out of water. No matter how broad-minded or full of goodwill he may be, a series of props has been knocked out from under him."

Sometimes the transition to an alien culture has an immediate impact. A short term American visitor to certain Eastern European countries may find himself dismayed or depressed by living conditions that seem perfectly normal and acceptable to the people of that country - toilets with no seats, for example, or even more primitive bathroom facilities. It may come as a real shock to a teenager from Texas to find that hamburgers are non-existent, or, that local hairdressers never heard of plastic curlers.

More insidious is what might be termed delayed culture shock. Often when a person takes up residence in a foreign country there's a period of excitement and exhilaration when everything seems new and challenging and fascinating. If one has friends or business connections one may be asked to dinner, taken sight-seeing, made much of -- at first. Also, in the beginning similarities between cultures are more apparent than differences. Almost everywhere people live in houses, go to work, relax on week-ends, do the shopping, eat three meals a day and so on. All this seems reassuring.

It's not until this honeymoon period ends that the newcomer begins to realize that there are endless subtle differences that leave him facing a host of perplexing problems. Many of these problems never bothered him at home, because they solved themselves almost automatically. Now, to his increased dismay, he finds that he has language troubles, housing troubles, money troubles, transportation troubles, food troubles, recreation troubles, perhaps even health troubles. All of these things drain away his reservoir of good-humor and equanimity. Having his laundry done may become a major struggle. Making a telephone call may be a small crisis. It may seem to him that people say yes when they mean no and promise to do things which they never do. Time may be regarded quite differently by the people among whom he finds himself. So may space, in some countries people like to stand very close together when they converse, in others this violates a deep-rooted sense of privacy.

Underlying all these difficulties is the uncomfortable feeling of not really belonging, of being an outsider. In changing cultures, the newcomer has inevitably changed his own status. At home he was "somebody", or at least his place in society was

established and recognized, here he is relatively "nobody". As a foreigner, he is a member of a minority whose voice counts for little or nothing. He may find that his homeland, so important to him, is regarded with suspicion or dismissed as unimportant. In short, as one observer put it, he finds himself in "circumstances of beleaguered self-esteem".

A mature, confident person may be able to shrug off these circumstances. But if the newcomer is insecure or sensitive or shy, they may seem overwhelming. Furthermore, as troubles pile up and he begins to look around for help, he may conclude that the natives of the country in which he finds himself are either incapable of understanding his plight or are indifferent to it. This in turn triggers the emotion that is one of the surest signs of culture shock: hostility to the new environment. The victim says to himself, "These people don't seem to know or care what I'm going through. Therefore they must be selfish, insensitive people. Therefore I don't like them."

Inevitably this reaction tends to increase the isolation of the unhappy visitor because people sense his antagonism and begin to avoid him. When this happens, he may seek out other disgruntled souls, usually expatriates like himself, and find melancholy relief in criticizing all aspects of the host country. These discussions almost never lead to any honest evaluation of the situation or awareness that the difficulty may lie in the attitude of the critics themselves. They are simply gripe-sessions in which the virtues of the home country are exaggerated almost as much as the alleged failing of the country being visited. As Dr. Oberg says, "When Americans or other foreigners get together to grouse about the host country and its people, you can be sure they are suffering from culture shock."

Sometimes the victim of culture shock may go to the other extreme, surrendering his own identity and trying to imitate all the customs and attitudes of the alien culture. Or he may try to solve the problem by withdrawing into himself, refusing to learn the native language, making no effort to find friends among the local people, taking no interest in their history, art, architecture, or any other aspect of their culture. While in this state of mind he may display a variety of unattractive symptoms. One is a tendency to over-react to minor frustrations or delays or inconveniences with irritation or anger out of all proportion to the cause. Another is to be unduly

suspicious, to think that people are out to cheat or swindle him because he is a foreigner. Yet another is over-concern about cleanliness, an unwarranted conviction that water, food or dishes are unsanitary when in fact they are not. Often the person is unaware of the extent to which he is displaying these symptoms.

He does know, however, that he is miserable and that the casual remedies recommended to him --- patience, hard work, mastery of the language and so on -- don't seem to do much good. Sometimes he will develop a marked degree of over-dependence on people from his own country who have passed through their own period of culture shock and are residing successfully and happily in the host country. If they in turn can display wisdom, patience and understanding of his symptoms, they often are able to shorten the span of his misery.

One reason the unhappy expatriate gravitates toward his own countrymen is that in their company he can at least feel sure of being understood. Underlying much of his confusion is the fact that even if he speaks the language of the country there remain endless opportunities for misunderstanding. All experts in communication emphasize the fact that language and voice are by no means our only form of communication, they are supported by hundreds of gestures and facial expressions that are easily misinterpreted.

Yet another stumbling block that compounds the problems of culture shock is the tendency of many people to think of members of other cultures in terms of stereotypes. The excitable Arabs. The amorous French. The touchy Italians. The lazy Latinos. The volatile Hungarians. The materialistic Americans. Some psychologists think that anxiety-prone people cling to stereotypes because it lessens the threat of the unknown by making the world predictable ... and what the victim of culture shock needs desperately is a familiar, predictable world.

Almost always, fortunately, symptoms of culture shock subside with the passage of time. The first sign of recovery may well be the reappearance of the victim's sense of humor; he begins to smile or even laugh at some of the things that irritated him as much at first. As familiarity with local language and customs increases, his self-confidence and self-esteem begin to return. He comes out of his shell and makes tentative overtures to the people around him -- and as soon as he starts being friendly, they

stop seeming hostile. Slowly he progresses from a grudging acceptance of his surroundings to a genuine fondness for them and becomes proud of his growing ability to function in them. In the end, he wonders what he was so unhappy about in the beginning.

Is it possible to shorten the duration of culture shock or minimize its impact? The experts think so. Here are three suggestions they offer to anyone planning a stay in a foreign land.

- First, be aware that such a thing as culture shock exists, that it will probably affect you one way or another, but that it doesn't last forever.
- Next, try to remember, if and when you become thoroughly disenchanted with your surroundings, that the problem probably isn't so much in them as it is in you.
- Third, accept the idea that while it may be somewhat painful, culture shock can be a very valuable experience, a mind-stretching process that will leave you with broader perspectives, deeper insight into yourself and wider tolerance for other people.

If it happens to you, don't think that you're strange or abnormal. If you had a happy life back home, why shouldn't you miss some aspects of it or feel a sense of loss? You'd be abnormal if you didn't.

If it happens to you, don't sit around being negative and critical, this just prolong and deepens your gloom. Try to keep busy. Arrange something pleasant to look forward to. Set goals for yourself -- learning ten new foreign phrases each day, for example-- and stick to them.

If it happens to you, try not to be judgmental. everyone has an ethnocentric tendency to think that

his own culture is superior to all others. Actually, any culture is a good culture if it provides an environment that meets basic human needs.

If it happens to you, force yourself to look for the best, not the worst, in your situation. People who go around looking for trouble usually manage to find it. Train yourself to enjoy the diversity of people and cultures, not fear it or shy away from it.

Recently in Russia two members of an American tour-group at different times during the day bought a candy bar from a booth in a railroad station. Each was given his change in the form of chocolate wafers. One American, disturbed by this departure from the familiar, felt that he was being victimized and protested vehemently. The other, charmed by what seemed to him a quaint and delightful custom, regarded it as a novel and refreshing experience and even bragged about it to his fellow tourists. The first American, it seems reasonable to say, was far more a prisoner of his own culture, than the second.

In sum, before he leaves home the visitor to a foreign land should make up his mind neither to resist the culture in which he finds himself nor surrender to it. What he needs to do is fight or grope or inch his way toward a new and flexible personality, a personality that retains its own cultural identity but recognizes the right of members of other cultures to retain theirs.

If that new personality can help him toward a better understanding of himself and of others, if it can enable him to communicate easily and convey warmth and understanding and goodwill across the culture barricades, then the pain of culture shock will have served its purpose, and the recovered victim will truly have the best of two worlds.

Abridged version reprinted by kind permission of Youth for Understanding

It's OK

It's okay to be afraid
of things we don't understand

It's okay to feel anxious
when things aren't working our way.

It's okay to feel lonely....
even when you're with other people

It's okay to feel unfulfilled
because you know something is missing
(even if you're not sure what it is)

It's okay to think and worry and cry.

It's okay to do
whatever you have to do, but

Just remember too....

That eventually you're going to
adjust to the changes life brings your way.
and you'll realize that,

It's okay to get to love again and laugh again,

It's okay to get to the point where
the life you live is full and satisfying and good to you...

And it will be that way
because you made it that way.

Appendix F – Filing an Insurance Claim

**American International Companies
Through CISI-Bolduc
POLICY NUMBER: GLB 0009024420**

All students who are insured under this program have been provided a claim form, policy, and Insurance Identification Card. If additional forms are required, contact CISI-Bolduc at enrollments@culturalinsurance.com, (800) 303-8120 toll-free, or through their website, www.cisi-bolduc.com.

SEND ALL MEDICAL CLAIMS TO:

**Cultural Insurance Services International
River Plaza
9 West Broad Street
Stamford, CT 06902-3788.**

**For claim submission questions, e-mail
cisiwebadmin@culturalinsurance.com, or call
(203) 399-5130.**

Fill out the form completely. Be sure to give the name and address of the **current** host family. Sign and date where indicated.

If the student is a minor (under age 18), a host parent should sign the claim form to insure that the claim is not delayed due to lack of Authorization acceptable to the insurance company.

Note: be sure that all questions are answered or an N/A (not applicable) is entered in the blanks to show that you have not overlooked anything.

Itemized bills should clearly indicate the charge or payment. Attach any bills that have been received, whether or not they have already been paid.

Be aware that the policy has deductibles which the student and natural parents are responsible for paying.

If the payment has not been received in about one month, call the claims department at the appropriate telephone number to determine what is holding up the payment. They may just need more information which you can give them over the phone.

Claim payments will be made by check in US dollars. Make sure there is a way to cash or deposit the claim check. Also consider where the student will be living four to six weeks from the time the claim is sent in to the insurance company; you don't want it arriving at a host family after you have returned home.

If you have problems, contact your club counselor or the District Youth Exchange Committee.

Sample Health Insurance Claim Form

Cultural Insurance Services International - Claim Form

Policy number _____

Please fill in your policy number.

Instructions

- Complete and sign the medical claim form, indicating whether the doctor/Hospital has been paid.
- Attach original itemized bills for all amounts being claimed. No reimbursement will be considered for medical expenses not accompanied by original bills. When reimbursement of an expense is approved, it will be made to the provider of the service unless the bill is noted as having been paid by you. Payment will be in U.S. dollars unless otherwise requested.
- If payment is to be made to the provider of the service, the provider's name, address, telephone number and taxpayer identification number (if the provider is in the U.S.) must be included on the bill. If payment is to you, it will be mailed to your U.S. address unless otherwise requested.
- Submit form and attachments to Cultural Insurance Services International, River Plaza, 9 West Broad Street, Stamford, CT 06902-3788. For claim submission questions, call (203) 399-5130 or e-mail ciswebadmin@culturalinsurance.com.**

Name _____ Date of birth ____/____/____

U.S. address _____

Overseas address _____ Country _____

E-mail address _____

Phone (_____) _____ Expected departure date to your home country: ____/____/____

Date/place/time/description of injury/Sickness/Accident _____

Attach itemized bills for all amounts being claimed

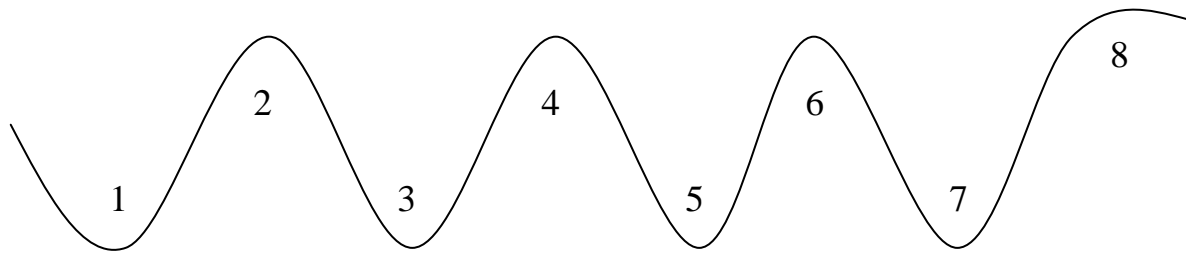
Have these doctor/Hospital bills been paid by you? yes no

I authorize payment to provider of service for medical services claimed. yes no

I hereby authorize any insurance company, Hospital or Physician to release all information which may have a bearing on benefits payable under this plan. I certify the information furnished by me in support of this claim is true and correct.

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

The Exchange Cycle



1. Application Anxiety

2. Selection/Arrival Fascination

*Elation
Expectation*

3. Initial Culture Shock: 1-6 Months

*Novelty wears off
Characteristics:
Sleeping Habits
Disorientation
Language difficulties
Fatigue (Mental/Physical)
Eating*

4. Surface Adjustments

*After initial "down"
Settle in:
Language improves
Navigate culture
Friends
Social Life*

5. Mental Isolation

*Frustration increases
New sense of isolation
Boredom
Lack of motivation
Unresolved problems
Language problems*

6. Integration/Acceptance

*Begin to examine society
Accept surroundings/self*

7. Return Anxiety

*Preparation for departure
Realize changes
Desire to stay
Results:*

*Confusion/Pain
Breaking of bonds
No promise of renewal in future*

8. Shock/Reintegration

*Contrast of old and new
Family/friends
Difficulty to accept change
Not the center of attention
Others not interested in experience details
Reorientation*

All exchange students experience phases of elation, anxiety, and depression. One or more of these phases will be experienced near the time of application processing. Various phases will then continue even after the student returns home. It is important that this be anticipated, and calmly accepted and dealt with.

The best method to resolve each occurrence is to keep busy and remember that all the exchange students before you, with you, and who follow you, will experience similar circumstances.

Parents and host families need to know that exchange students will experience these phases and should not be alarmed. They should be ready to help the student work their way out of the down cycles.

The time necessary to work through each phase is not predictable and will depend on the student and the circumstances.

Ref. Helmut Muscheid, Rotary Youth Exchange Officer, Germany

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