

## EARLY RETURNS: WHY KIDS GET SENT HOME...

Dr. Rosanne Field, Ph.D, District 6330  
PDG Don Moore, District 6330

This session will give an overview of some of the issues facing exchange students which results in them being sent home early. It will also cover some ideas as to what districts can do when the student does return home early.

### Types

#### 1. Self Initiated

2. **Rule Breaking** - should be recognized that some of these are self sabotaging as the student isn't coping, but is reluctant to identify this and so break rules so they get sent home

### External

- ▶ **School Issues** - in some situations, students are not placed in classroom settings or they are placed with much younger peers.
- ▶ **Host Family Issues** - Exchange students can end up placed in a family where marital issues arise, behavioural problems with children develop, health issues develop within the family or extended family members or there is a death in the family or extended family

### FACTORS IN SELF INITIATED RETURN

- ▶ Family Illness or Death in home country and student wants to return to be present
- ▶ Natural Disasters
- ▶ Assault/victim of crime

**FACTORS IN SELF INITIATED RETURN**

**Internal**

- ▶ Homesickness
- ▶ Undisclosed mental health issues-Anxiety, Depression
- ▶ Pressured by parents or others to participate and can't cope
- ▶ Physical Illness
- ▶ Boyfriend/Girlfriend pressure back home

**FACTORS IN SELF INITIATED RETURN**

- ▶ Rule Breaking-keep emphasizing Don't Break The RULES!
- ▶ Prevent Rebounds from talking about rule breaking and getting away with it

**External**

- ▶ Before they go - Develop plans for family health issues, review what to do if they occur. Can a plan occur for them to return home, then go back on exchange?
- ▶ School Issues, host family issues-Talk to your host YEO immediately-emphasize

**WHAT TO DO TO MINIMIZE AND SUPPORT THE STUDENT**

- ▶ Then communicate with district committee - the district committee has to have a process for responding. We may not think it is a big deal, but for a student on their own it can make or break the exchange

**WHAT TO DO TO MINIMIZE AND SUPPORT THE STUDENT**

- ▶ Natural Disasters - share information with the student about the disaster-Nuclear, H1N1-share the info that is sent with the district chair, sponsor Yeo, Host YEO
- ▶ Lines of communication - students and district chairs so we know what is happening

WHAT TO DO TO MINIMIZE AND SUPPORT THE STUDENT

- ▶ Assault/Victim of Crime - Have someone in the sponsor country available to do SKYPE, phone, facetime, to provide support and counselling

WHAT TO DO TO MINIMIZE AND SUPPORT THE STUDENT

**Internal-Homesick, depression, anxiety**

- ▶ Prep as much as possible by training in culture shock, homesickness, stress management, relaxation, comfort strategies, time management - Give them the strategies to deal with the homesickness
- ▶ Set up a Facebook group for all outbounds so they can easily get support from their year of outbounds - Connects with Rotex and YE Committee

WHAT TO DO TO MINIMIZE AND SUPPORT THE STUDENT

- ▶ For Inbounds - have get togethers so Inbounds can support each other
- ▶ Have a counsellor available in sponsoring country who can connect if the student is extremely homesick – connect with that person shortly after student goes on exchange.

WHAT TO DO TO MINIMIZE AND SUPPORT THE STUDENT

**Undisclosed Mental Illness**

If student discloses symptoms of depression, anxiety, bipolar-  
Can a doctor there be found?

WHAT TO DO TO MINIMIZE AND  
SUPPORT THE STUDENT

- ▶ District outbound student needs to be aware of what symptoms are.
- ▶ If symptoms of schizophrenia are identified (host club would typically identify), student will likely need to come home.
- ▶ Suicidal ideation-if disclosed, they must come home.

WHAT TO DO TO MINIMIZE AND  
SUPPORT THE STUDENT

- ▶ Pressured by family members, etc. -Identify before if you can. Discuss with student, work on making sure that they have developed reasons for wanting to go. If they really don't want to-can they opt out before going?
- ▶ When there - Identify things that they really want to do/see/experience so that they wont come home-help them recognize that this is a year where their parents can't tell them what to do

WHAT TO DO TO MINIMIZE AND  
SUPPORT THE STUDENT

- ▶ Physical Illness - help find a translator to communicate with doctor-use the host YEO or another inbound to translate.
- ▶ Help support student with insurance process – students usually find it confusing.
- ▶ -communicate with the host club through outbound to determine if the student should come home

WHAT TO DO TO MINIMIZE AND  
SUPPORT THE STUDENT

- ▶ Boyfriend/Girlfriend-will they break up before they go on exchange?
- ▶ Are they willing to be separated?
- ▶ Is the non-exchange partner supportive?

WHAT TO DO TO MINIMIZE AND SUPPORT THE STUDENT

- ▶ Students will be at risk for depression, sense of failure, low self esteem-
- ▶ Need the opportunity to talk with a Rotarian counsellor- Focus on what they did learn about themselves and how did they grow. What do they see differently? What do they want for the future?
- ▶ They need to see this as a growing experience, as something they benefited from so they can move on.

ON RETURN

**Rotary Responses**

How do chairs/district committees identify concerns that are happening in a region that contributes to early returns,?

Do they share and address that concern ?

Process for how early returns are decided.

Reporting of early returns and why it is important

**Questions?**