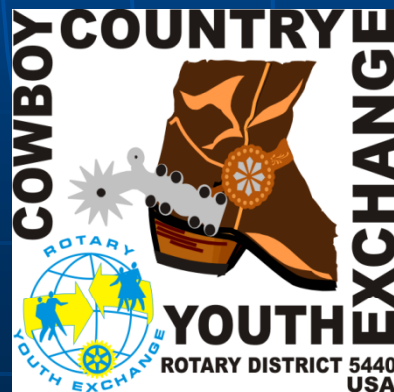


Recruiting, Selecting and Training Host Families



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Recruiting Host Families

- We usually have more high quality students than we can find places for
- If it were only so easy with Host Families!
- RI requirements for Host Family Screening add to the complications

How do we find host families for these really great kids?



What is the most important thing about hosting a student?

- Adults often cite material things – no time, no children at home, insufficient finances, no room, “we are boring”
- The students ALWAYS offer emotional issues... “love me, care about me, nurture me”

INVOLVE STUDENTS WITH CLUB MEMBERS

- The more your membership (including spouses) knows about the students, the better the chances of their being interested to be host families.
- Have student attend club meetings and activities on a regular basis.
- Have student give short presentation early on in their exchange. The talk should focus on their background, interests, hobbies, and skills.
- Follow up with brief bio on student, including how he or she can be contacted and pass this out to the membership

PROGRAM PROMOTION

- Have social YE program each year
- Include committee, student, families, outbound and rebound students
- Have information on the program available, including the importance of protection policies.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

- Schedule YE orientations for new members
- Explain program and hosting opportunities
- Ask if they know of another family, perhaps a relative or neighbor, that might be interested.
- Talk to them!

INBOUND STUDENT APPLICATION

- Review application for background and interests
- If student lists running or biking, he can be placed with a family who enjoys this activity.
- A student who is an accomplished pianist could fit in with a family active in the local symphony.

INBOUND STUDENT CONTACTS

- The inbound students often have made friendships that lead to host families.
- Ask for their recommendations

OUTBOUND STUDENT ORIENTATION

- Host family options should be discussed at outbound student orientation.
- Families may decide that the outbound program is not for them at that time, but they may agree to host an inbound student later.
- Ask the family to agree to recruit possible host family if they are not able or willing to host.

ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE OF ROTARY

- Church. Talk to the priest / minister / rabbi and ask for their help in identifying potential families.
- Fraternal Organizations: Elks, Moose, Lions have active community minded memberships. Ask to address their club and explain the program.
- Athletic Clubs: Baseball, basketball, etc. are great sources of families.
- High school counselors and foreign language teachers can be a source of recommendations.

Getting Repeat Host Families

- Do you give your Host Families a good orientation (or for that matter, any orientation)?
- Do you check in frequently with them to see how the hosting is going?
- Do you offer to provide a “break” for the family by taking student for a week-end?
- Do you invite the Host Family to Rotary meetings and functions as a guest of the Rotary Club?
- Do you introduce Host Families as honored guests?
- Do you do an exit interview of your Host Families after the hosting is complete?
- Do you send a note of thanks and a small gift to the Host Families?

Letter to Potential Families

Dear:

Our club will be hosting a youth exchange student this coming year.

We need host families! Think you might be interested? Read on!

We have received the application of <NAME> from <COUNTRY>. <STUDENT> will be <AGE> upon arrival in August . <NAME> loves <swimming, bike riding and roller-skating>. She's into photography and lists J.R.R. Tolkien as her favorite author. <NAME> would like to be an English translator or a computer graphics designer. She comes from <CITY>, a city of 90,000 people, where she lives with her parents and a younger sister.

Our family has hosted a total of <NUMBER> students. All students have enriched our lives and while some have been challenging, all have been rewarding experiences.

The Excuses!

- **Don't think you have room; be creative!** Each time an older sister or brother moves into our house, the girls gladly give up one or the other of their bedrooms. If possible, it is desirable that the student has his/her own room but this is not absolutely necessary.
- **Think your life is too boring?** All of this is new to these kids; they won't be bored! Host families share our culture with the student as it exists in everyday life. This does not mean elaborate entertainment; it does mean making a visitor a part of your family with the opportunity to share in all aspects - home, school, community and nation - "warts and all."

- **Not sure how to entertain a student?**

The student should not be treated as a special guest. They are expected to assist with household responsibilities as any other child in the family does. Students are encouraged to become involved in school and community activities.

- **What? You don't speak Czech?** Most exchange students will have studied English, sometimes to a considerable extent. But, to even the best students, it will be a "foreign" tongue, a language learned from books rather than daily use. Patience and understanding will be important.

Think you can't afford to host a student? Our

Club will provide the student with a monthly stipend for miscellaneous expenses. The student's own family is expected to provide funds for clothing, travel or other expenses. The host family is expected to pay for the student's activities with the family and there will be some extra expenses to the host family such as meals, gas, extra school outings, haircuts, etc. This is like adding another child to your family for a short period of time.

Not sure you have time to be a host parent?

Hosts should expect to help their students meet Rotary obligations. The student should attend Rotary meetings and functions. These occasions are an important feature of the exchange, part of the plan's ambassadorial aspect.

The Host Family is under no obligation to provide the student with travel experiences. However, if possible it is beneficial to have the student accompany the family on trips or vacations.

Don't have children living at home any more? Some of the best host families are "empty nesters" or single-parent families. Students should be exposed to a variety of different host family situations.

Don't like the idea of having to be subject to a background check? Put yourself in the shoes of the student's natural parents – wouldn't you want that assurance that the family has been checked out a bit?

Letter – the Close

The job of hosting a student required tact, sympathy and patience. But its rewards are great in terms of widening views and understandings. 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.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity
for these students.

“Open your heart, and the rest will
follow”

Yours in Rotary,
Youth Exchange Chairman

Selecting Host Families

Procedures and Criteria to Select:

- Completed Volunteer Affidavit for all family members age 18 or over
- Volunteer Affidavits Submitted to District Protection Officer.
Date Submitted: _____
- Host Family Application completed
- Interviewed all family members in the home
Date of interview: _____
- References checked
- Family is of good reputation and character
- Family can provide comfortable and nurturing environment to student
- Family has adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations.
- Household accommodations are adequate to house student comfortably.

If I were a Rotary exchange student, would I be comfortable residing with this family? _____

Reasons _____

Selected (Yes or No): _____

Club Youth Exchange Officer

Forward this page with host family application to the student's District Country Representative for authorization to place student in this home. You may not move student into this home until authorization is obtained.

District Authorization: Signed and dated by District Country Representative

Family approved for placement:

Training – Host Family Orientation

- Gathering of all host families, club counselor, YE committee, student
- Review and Provide:
 - Student Application
 - RI Youth Exchange handbook
 - Club and District Orientation Information Documents
 - Inbound Student Rules and Conditions of Exchange
 - Youth Protection Policy

Explain:

- Rotary
- Program objectives
- Role of district and club committees
- Hosting and club responsibilities
- Meeting the student
- Family adjustments
- School
- Language
- Finances
- Insurance/medical treatment
- Travel
- Homesickness
- Changing homes
- Rotary obligations - calendar of events
- Questions or problems

Why we need host families!



NAYEN Web Site Resources

<http://yeoresources.org>