



District 6150 of Rotary International

Information for Potential Host Families: Hosting A Rotary Youth Exchange Student

Hosting a Youth Exchange student from another country is a challenge – and an opportunity. Involvement with an exchange student challenges a host family to become familiar with another culture, while providing the opportunity to share a student's hopes and ambitions. These challenges and opportunities promise to enrich the lives of every member of your family.

Host families in the long term exchange Rotary program typically host for about 4 months, so that a student would have 2 – 3 host families during his/her stay. In the short term program a family may host for a period of a few weeks to 3 months.

Host families provide room and board for the exchange student and include the student in family activities. They are responsible for normal expenses as they would their own child. Any activities the exchange student undertakes on his or her own would be at his/her own expense. The Rotary Club provides a monthly allowance to the student that should take care of his/her personal expenses. In addition the Youth Exchange Committee of the club will appoint a Rotarian as "counselor" for the student. The counselor will have regular contact with student, will involve him or her in Rotary Club meetings and activities, will help him/her establish a checking account, and will serve as another adult figure available to assist the student or the host family.

Host family responsibilities:

- Provide normal parental supervision and discipline
- Treat as own child: discipline, chores, TLC
- Room, board and lunch money
- Transportation (Exchangee may not drive)
- Explain and enforce household rules
- Ensure Exchangee adjusts to host family; not vice versa
- Provide assistance and advice regarding school, financial matters (but do not give money) social situations, dating, homesickness, language and culture adaptation.
- Introduce to "right" group in high school
- Provide Exchangee his/her own bed and preferably own room
- Expose Exchangee to local/regional sights, culture, events

Host families are provided with a list of "first night questions" to review with the exchange student. The purpose is to be to establish a common understanding and about the rules and expectations that will guide the relationship for the entire stay. In addition, Exchange students have a Rotary orientation session of several days before they leave home and another Rotary orientation session within a month or so after they arrive to make sure they get on and stay on the right track during their exchange experience. Exchange students are told the Rotary rules at the beginning. One of the most important is that they are not permitted to drive a motor vehicle and that breaking this rule may result in termination and an early return home.

Rotary exchange students are required to have a specific health insurance and to bring evidence of insurance with them when they come.

There are 8,000 Rotary exchanges every year worldwide and many have resulted in international relationships that have spanned generations. We hope you will choose to become part of this wonderful program.

To learn more call Susan Chan, 501-603-0900 or 501-603-9148, schan@novascorp.com