

**CENTRAL STATES ROTARY  
YOUTH EXCHANGE**

[www.csrye.org](http://www.csrye.org)



**INBOUND STUDENT  
HANDBOOK**

**For Inbound Students, Host Families, Youth Exchange Officers**

**CSRYE 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 other volunteers  
to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of  
and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of  
children and young people with whom they come into contact.**

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# IMPORTANT ROTARY CONTACTS

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Host Rotary Club Meetings: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day Time Location

## HOST MOM

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Home Phone Work Phone Cell Phone

## HOST DAD

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Home Phone Work Phone Cell Phone

## HOST CLUB YOUTH EXCHANGE OFFICER

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Home Phone Work Phone Cell Phone

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Address at Home Place of Business

## HOME COUNTRY OUTBOUND COORDINATOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Cell Phone e-mail address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

## HOME COUNTRY DISTRICT CHAIR

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Home Phone Work Phone Cell Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address e-mail address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Place of Business

Important Rotary Contacts  
Continued

**Host District YE INBOUND COORDINATOR**

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Name	Home Phone	Cell Phone
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Address	e-mail
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**Host District CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER**

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Name	Home Phone	Work Phone	Cell Phone
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Address	e-mail
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**Host District YE CHAIR**

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Name	Home Phone	Work Phone	Cell Phone
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Address	e-mail
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**Sponsor District YE REBOUND COORDINATOR**

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Name	Home Phone	Work Phone	Cell Phone
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Address	e-mail
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# INTRODUCTIONS

## **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 170 countries. There are more than 31,000 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.

## **The Rotary Foundation**

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

The Rotary Foundation has eight 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, Group Study Exchange, and Polio-Plus.

## **Central States Rotary Youth Exchange Multi-District**

Rotary has been involved in youth exchange for a long time. However, prior to 1972, any exchange program was essentially a "District to District" exchange. Multi-district organizations involved in youth exchange were rare. What began as two districts working together in the great lakes area in the late 1960's, evolved in 1972 as the Central States Rotary Youth Exchange Multi-District. At that time, there were eight districts working in cooperation with one another. Today, we are 17 districts, geographically located in Ontario, Canada, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Illinois and Indiana.

## **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. Rotary clubs meet weekly throughout the year; some for a breakfast meeting, others during lunch. 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.

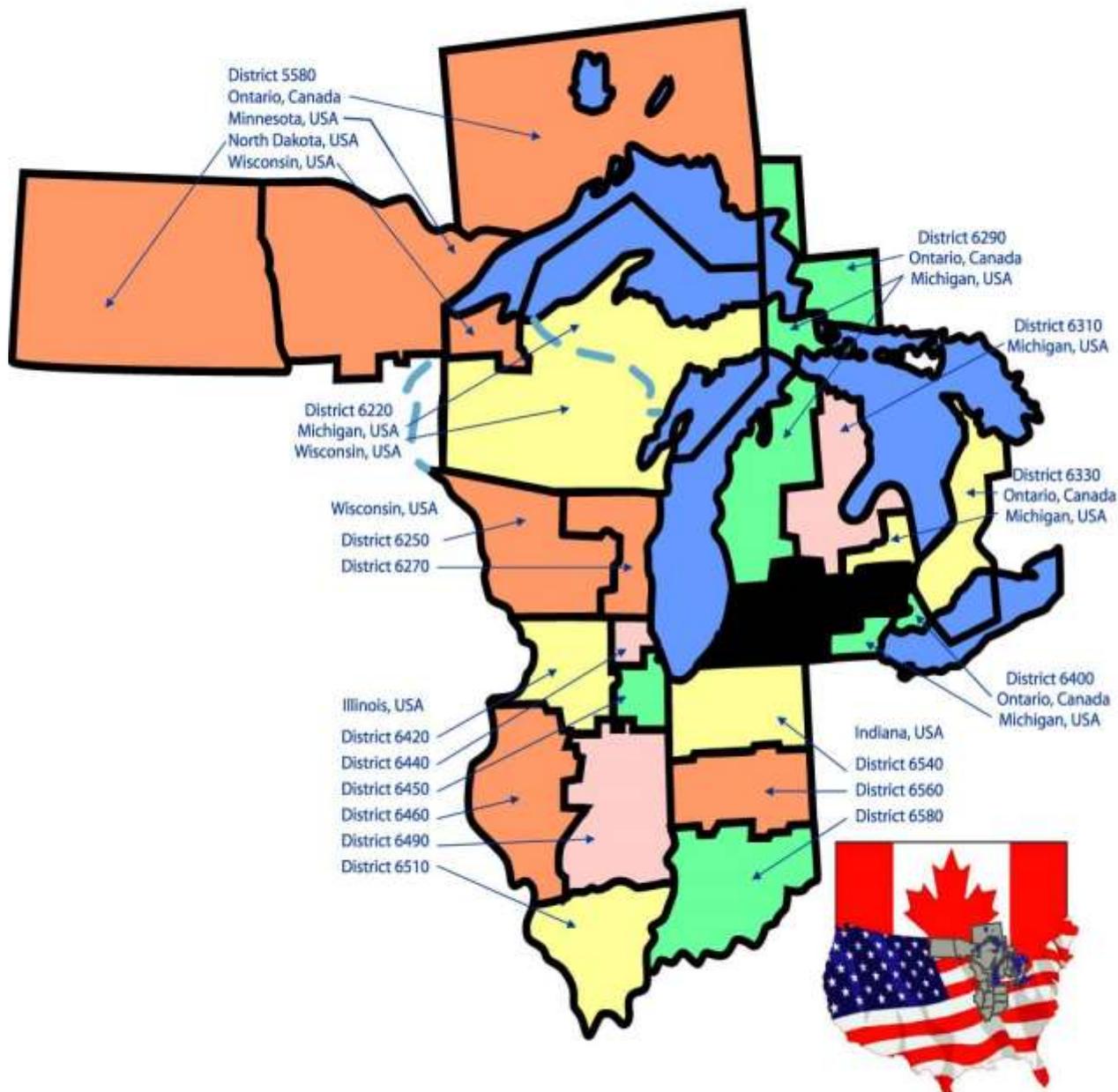
## What is Rotary Continued

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 for Service to others, and as an exchange student, they are there to help provide a successful exchange experience.

As with most organizations, Rotary clubs are lead by officers who are elected by the membership for one year terms, beginning on July 1. 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. 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.

# Central States Rotary Youth Exchange, Inc

Serving 17 Districts in  
Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Wisconsin  
and Ontario, Canada



## Central States Rotary Youth Exchange

### MISSION

**Rotary International CSRYE Programs** are committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all our Youth Exchange Students, both inbound and outbound.

We recognize that all young people have the right to freedom from harassment and abuse.

We ensure that all our staff and volunteers are carefully selected and trained and accept the responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children in their care.

Each district responds swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of harassment and/or abuse, and by providing adults and young people with the opportunity to voice any concerns that they may have.

Each District appoints individual Exchange Student Protection Officers who will act as the main point of contact for parents, children, host families, and outside agencies.

We ensure that access to confidential information is restricted.

We periodically review the effectiveness of our Student Protection Policy and activities.

# **THE ROTARY INTERNATIONAL**

## **4-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 & BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?**
- 4. WILL IT BE BENEFICIAL TO ALL CONCERNED?**

# **ROTARY INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE**

## **Objectives of the Academic Year Program**

The most powerful force in the promotion of international understanding and peace is exposure to different cultures. The world becomes a smaller, friendlier place when we learn that all people – regardless of nationality – desire the same basic things: a safe, comfortable environment that allows for a rich and satisfying life for themselves and for their children. Youth exchange provides thousands of young people with the opportunity to meet people from other lands and to experience their cultures, thus planting the seeds for a lifetime of international understanding.

- Communities all over the world have much to gain from the continued success of the youth exchange program.
- Students learn firsthand about the challenges and accomplishments of people in other countries.
- Young people mature as individuals as their concept of the world grows.
- Host clubs, families, and their communities enjoy extended, friendly contact with someone from a different culture.
- Exchange students return home with a broader view of the world and a deeper understanding of themselves.
- Young adults assume leadership roles that are shaped, in part, by what they learned during their exchange experiences.

## HARASSMENT POLICY

CSRYE and Rotary International take seriously our role to protect students from harassment or abuse. With Rotary, you can be assured that there is help nearby no matter where you happen to be around the globe. We have established an international guideline for Protection of Students from Harassment or Abuse.

As an addition to this handbook, you have been provided with training on our protocols and procedures, in the event you experience harassment or abuse during your exchange experience.

When you arrive in your host country, you will be given additional training on the safety procedures that you can follow during your exchange experience overseas.

With that training, you should be provided with names and phone numbers of Rotarians and victim assistance programs that will provide safety and assistance if needed.

If you do not understand your rights, or need further help, you should contact a trusted Rotarian immediately.

While Harassment and Abuse are very serious issues, you also need to be sensitive to the fact that there is a potential for misunderstandings in cross-cultural situations. What might be acceptable conduct in one country may be offensive in another. Customs, gestures, and manners all differ greatly among the many cultures represented in our inbound youth exchange class, and even between the American and Canadian cultures. Communication from you is important in resolving problems before they get out of hand. However, when a problem reaches the level of ‘harassment,’ then it is time to take action.

At all times, you can be assured that we have taken every precaution to make this exchange year a rewarding and pleasant life experience. We are always here to help and to guide you through problems, whatever they may be.

### ROTARY SUPPORT SYSTEM MODEL

<b>RESOURCE</b>	<b>WHEN NEEDED</b>	<b>CONTACT FREQUENCY</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>Host Family</b>	Every Day	Daily	Your first point of contact with most simple needs. For problems, you will need to use your host club YEO in conjunction with your host family.
<b>Host Club YEO</b>	Structuring your year, planning activities.	Bi-Weekly/Monthly	This is your Rotary contact for host family arrangements, allowances, rules, travel permissions, meeting attendance, etc.
<b>Host Club Counselor</b>	Problems, Successes, Social Occasions	Bi-Weekly/Monthly	This is your advocate for solving problems when things go wrong –to provide advice, support and help when needed.
<b>Host District Coordinator</b>	Routine Reporting, serious problems.	As Needed	Monthly reports are required. Make sure you complete them.
<b>Host District Chairman</b>	Unresolved problems, routine reporting	As Needed	
<b>Sponsor District Coordinator</b>	Routine Reporting, serious problems not solved by previous channels.	Monthly	This is NOT the first person that should learn of a problem you are having!
<b>Sponsor District Chairman</b>	Very Serious Problems	As Needed	
<b>ROTEX</b>	Advice and support	As needed	Will not be able to help with technical issues. They are for your emotional support and mentoring only.
<b>Sponsor Club YEO</b>	Preparation and then report about your experience.	Monthly	You should write to your club regularly to tell of your experiences.
	Routine, non-YE		LIMIT e-mail and phone contact. Write letters

<b>Parents</b>	problems, health emergencies	Regularly – on a SCHEDULE	instead of e-mailing and phoning!
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**THE RULES**

**AND**

**EXPECTATIONS**

## Rotary Youth Exchange Inbound Student Calendar

MONTH	PHASE	WHAT YOU SHOULD BE DOING	REMINDERS
JULY- AUGUST	TRAVEL & HONEYMOON	Get busy. Remember that these first few weeks are your chance to make life-long friends. It is not the time to be shy. Take it all in and get to know your surroundings. Meet your Rotary Club members. Find your routine. Work on your language skills. Identify your cultural mentor.	Watch the phone calls and e-mail
SEPTEMBER	END OF HONEYMOON / START OF ADAPTATION	Start with good habits. Write in your journal every night. Mark on a calendar what you did every day. Answer the phone from time to time. Get to know your host parents. Learning the language is your priority. Watch for homesickness. Use your support system. Keep busy. Cook an "American meal" for your host family.	Write home
OCTOBER	ADAPTATION	Homesick? Don't call home! Talk to your Rotary or Rotex support people. Don't dump it on your parents. Get out of that funk. Break the routine a little every day to keep things fresh. Avoid spending long amounts of time by yourself. Having trouble with the language? Find someone to talk to; a host sibling, a "cultural mentor", or even your Rotary Counselor. Give and take. Make a trade; host language for English.	
NOVEMBER	ADAPTATION	Have you made many friends yet? If not, get out there and mingle. Remember, you want to make as many people miss you as you can when you leave. There is nothing better to make you stop thinking about yourself than to help someone else. If you are feeling a little lost, find someone in need and give him/her a hand. You will get it back 10X. You might hit a language plateau here. Keep working the language. Try something new. Speak at your Rotary Club. If you move host families, you might have another challenge. Make the best of it. Teach them about Thanksgiving.	Send Holiday presents home early. By November 15 <sup>th</sup> .
DECEMBER	ADAPATION/ ASSIMILATION TRANSITION – HOLIDAY BLUES	Time to stay focused. You need to get through the period from the end of November until January 1 <sup>st</sup> strong. Don't get hung up with missing the holidays at home. Keep Rotex in mind here. They will help. The more you contact "home" though, the worse it will be. Tell your host family how you celebrate the holidays.	Keep phone calls and e-mails "home" down.
JANUARY	ADAPTATION/ ASSIMILATION	Now for the good stuff. You should feel good speaking our language and you should have made some friends. Make the most of it. From now on, you are on a roll. Hey! Where's my report!	
FEBRUARY	ADAPTATION/ ASSIMILATION	You should be busy now. Friends, school (for most of you) and lots of activities. Don't forget host families (including the first one).	Call your host counselor and check in with him/her

MARCH	ASSIMILATION	Are you giving as well as taking? Don't just be doing your own thing. You speak the language and you know some people. You fit in. Use it to help other people. Speak to little kids in schools, volunteer in your community, teach someone your language, help with your Rotary Club's projects. This is the part of the roller coaster ride when you get to let go of that safety bar, put your hands in the air and scream as loud as you can. This is "The Monster Hill" of your exchange.	<b><u>Make your flight reservations home.</u></b> Check the dates of Summer Conference – talk to your District Chair.
APRIL	ASSIMILATION	Are your parents visiting? Plan it out for them. Remember, you are the one who is in charge of their having a good experience. Let them into "your world". Introduce them to your host family, your host Rotary Club, your friends and your town. Let them see you as the mature tour guide, master of the language. They aren't coming? No problem - you have a lot going on. Dig in and make the most of it because this time is fleeting! Hey, don't you owe someone a report?!!	
MAY	ASSIMILATION & RE-ENTRY ANXIETY	This should be as good as it gets; you love your host country and you are starting to get that dreaded re-entry anxiety. It has to happen, you know that. Don't waste one second wishing it won't. Spend as much time as you can with friends, host families and the people you will miss most. You can spend time with Americans and other exchange students when you get home so spend what little time you have with people who you won't see for a while.	Make time for your host families!
JUNE	ASSIMILATION & RE-ENTRY ANXIETY	Get ready to leave. Make sure that you are not putting off spending time with people. If you want to buy things to take with you, start early. Don't go rushing around the night before you leave. You will be cheating your friends and family out of your time. Leave gracefully. Don't leave a mess. Pay your obligations. Return what you've borrowed. Say "thank you" as many times as you can.	Read "So You Think You're Home Now"
JULY	RE-ENTRY & REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK	Pack early. Get rid of things that are just clutter. Make sure you have your passport, tickets and that your bank account is closed (if you had one). Have some local currency with you in case you need it at the airport. Enough to get a meal or two. Remember, the success of an exchange is measured in the number of tears when you leave; yours and theirs. Smile when you get back home. Thank your parents for your year. Spend some time with them before you go running around finding your friends. Spend at least two days home before connecting with your friends.	RETURN AFTER SUMMER CONFERENCE  START WORKING ON YOUR ROTARY REBOUND SPEECH.
AUGUST	REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK	Get into your new life here. Listen to what you are saying. Are you being critical about "home"? Are you telling everyone you can find about your year or are you keeping it to yourself? Have you referred to your friends as "Those stupid kids"? Are you keeping busy or are you moping around the house missing "home"? Was it really easy for you to come back? Do you not miss your host country? Think about why that is so. Get ready for school to start. Make little steps each day to get back into this culture. Talk to Rotex and to your District and Club Counselors about what you did and what you are doing now. Remember that the deeper you were able to assimilate into your host culture, the longer it will take you to find that "bi-cultural balance" between your host country "self" and your old "self". This is the start of your third year as an exchange student.	Contact your Sponsoring Club and offer to do a program on your exchange.  Let your District Counselor know what your plans are for the following year. Help us continue to build the program!

## **CSRYE INBOUND RULES AND EXPECTATIONS**

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

01. The costs of an open return airfare (which allows you to return home at any time), Passport and visas are to be paid by the student's natural parents. These documents will be kept in a safe location by the host club after the student's arrival. Students inbound to the United States must keep their government DS2019 form attached to their passports.

Costs related to an emergency or early return home – or other unusual costs of the student – are the responsibility of the student's natural parents.

02. Students are automatically enrolled in the CSRYE Health Insurance and Liability Insurance. If you have other worldwide insurance coverage, then the CSRYE policy will cover you as a 'secondary' policy. Otherwise, it will be your 'primary' coverage.

Deductible and co-pays will apply. Students are responsible for the costs associated with their medical expenses.

03. Students must carry a contingency fund of at least \$500 USA funds, to be replenished by the natural parents if depleted. More is suggested. This sum is not for day-to-day expenses. It is for emergencies, medical care and other unexpected costs that may arise. The funds will be held in an account by the host Rotary club for the duration of your stay.

04. Students must carry proof of immunization to enter USA or Canada. Students coming to Minnesota must bring a specific 'Vaccination Record Form' signed by a physician and parents in order to enroll in school. This form is included with the Welcome Package.

All inbound students are advised to have vaccinations for Tetanus and Diphtheria, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Hepatitis B upon arrival. These vaccinations can be obtained after arrival at the cost of the student.

05. It is certified by signature in the Application Forms that the student has or has had no eating disorders or dietary or physical restrictions other than those noted in the Medical History and Examination. Undisclosed and pre-existing eating and medical problems that subsequently create difficulty may result in the student being sent home by the District.

### **BEHAVIOR**

06. Students must regularly attend high school and attempt to complete the work normally assigned to a class. Any transfer of academic credits must be negotiated between your school in your home country and the school you attend in your host district.. Rotary can not provide guarantees of academic credit transfer and does not have authority over decisions made by the school educational systems.

#### CSRYE - Inbound Rules and Expectations

##### Continued

A student is expected to try hard to achieve as high a grade as possible with existing language capabilities. Expectations are the same for students who have graduated from high school in their own countries prior to exchange.

07. Students are to become a member of the host family, assuming duties and responsibilities normal to a student of his or her age, as the children of the host family.
08. Students are expected to make every effort to learn to speak English fluently.
09. Students are expected to attend Rotary Club meetings and **must attend some mandatory District events.** These events take priority over the personal plans of the student.
10. Students must abide by laws of minimum age for purchase of cigarettes, and must not ask an older friend or adult to purchase cigarettes for them. Students legally able to smoke are discouraged from doing so and must abide by host family expectations which may not permit smoking in the home or while traveling in vehicles. Students cannot smoke while attending Rotary events.
11. Students are not permitted to drive a motorized vehicle of any kind. This includes vehicles such as motorcycles, boats, tractors, snowmobiles and personal watercraft. Students are not permitted travel in a private aircraft. This is a guideline of insurance liability for Rotary International and no exceptions can be made.
12. Students are not permitted to use drugs, other than those prescribed by a physician. Any hint of association with illegal drugs will result in a student being sent home.
13. Students are not permitted to consume alcoholic beverages, unless invited to do so by the host parents and then only under their supervision. Students are warned that a 'drinking culture' is common among high school students. However, IT IS ILLEGAL for anyone under the age of 21 to drink alcohol in the USA and Canada. Any hint of association with drinking may result in a student being sent home.
14. Students are not permitted to become heavily involved in a romantic relationship. A wide circle of friends and group activities will better further the objective of exchange. Any hint of sexual activity while on exchange may result in a student being sent home.
15. Students must obey the laws of the USA and Canada. Assistance from Rotary or from the government of the home or host country is not guaranteed should violations occur.

## **TRAVEL GUIDELINES**

16. Travel is permitted with host parents, with school supervision and on Rotary-related activities. The club YEO must provide approval on all travel. Students may not travel alone within the District and may not travel when accompanied only by other students. Any travel outside the district must be authorized by host family, host club YEO and inbound coordinator/ district chair. The student's natural parents must exempt Rotary of

responsibility and liability in writing. Travel alone by aircraft will be permitted if evidence of accompanied departure and adult reception at the destination is assured. Travel alone by bus or train is unlikely to receive permission.

17. At the end of the exchange, students must return home by the most direct route unless alternative arrangements are approved by all those noted in #21.
18. Natural parents and relatives may only visit at the end of the exchange. At that point they may assume responsibility for the student's return if the return home is not direct. Visits at other times of the year are found to be too disruptive to the student.
19. A student is not expected to make a return visit home or to visit relatives during the exchange. This is particularly important during the holiday season when the student should be experiencing a North American celebration with the host club and host family.

#### **AUTHORITY**

20. The hosts are responsible for the student physically, socially and spiritually. The student must respect their guidance and restrictions even if more formal than accustomed to.
21. Students will be under the authority of their host Rotary District while on exchange. Natural parents must not authorize any extra activities directly with the student. All authorization is to be done through the host club YEO, Inbound Coordinator and District YE Chair. Relatives in the USA or Canada will have no authority over the student while within the Youth Exchange Program.
22. The hosting of the student is the responsibility of the host club. In case of difficulties, the student should first consult the host club YEO and counselor, then the District YE Inbound Coordinator, and then the District YE Chair if the matters are not resolved.
23. If there are unresolved problems with student behavior, the host club will contact the District YE Inbound Coordinator and then the District YE Chair for assistance. If the problem continues, the District YE Chair may contact the Sponsor Rotary District and ultimately may send the student home.

# THE FOUR D'S

## Cardinal Rules for Youth Exchange Students

There are many situations in which you can find yourself on a plane home...early. The most obvious cause would be if you break the laws of your host country...*that is if you are not in jail.* The Four D's address offenses that can get you into trouble and might result in your exchange being terminated.

**DRUGS** - Any association with drugs, drug users or drug dealers will violate the intention of and spirit of youth exchange. If you find yourself in the company of anyone who falls into this category – get out of the situation as quickly as you can. You were selected because you are a leader. Do not behave like a follower.

**DRINKING** – In some countries, alcohol may be consumed at meals. If offered by your host parents in this circumstance, you may accept.

Regardless of the legal drinking age in your host country, you are not permitted to drink alcohol with friends at parties or in bars. Alcohol abuse may be grounds for termination of your exchange year.

**DRIVING** – **You cannot drive any motorized vehicle while on exchange.** Your health insurance will not pay for injuries while driving any motorized vehicle. This includes cars, motorcycles, scooters, farm vehicles, power boats, snowmobiles, personal watercraft, etc. You can not afford to be involved in an accident in which you are the driver. *Do not take this risk. You will not be covered by your insurance.*

**DATING** – You should not become romantically involved during your year abroad. It will lead to emotional stress, and will take away from the objectives of your year...which is to meet many people and enjoy many activities.

# THE ACADEMIC & SPORTS REQUIREMENTS FOR YOUR HIGH-SCHOOL

1. You will be placed in a local high school, by your host Rotary Club. The decision about where you will attend school is made by your club. If you attend a private school, your host club will be responsible for any tuition charged or for obtaining tuition waivers if they are available. Most inbound students attend public schools. There is generally no tuition in public school.

Schools are governed by 'School Districts' and by 'State' or 'Provincial' laws. Rotary has no authority in academic placement or discipline decisions made by the school.

Your YEO will cooperate with the High School and both will help you to understand your grade level placement in school. Your placement will generally follow an 'age' guideline:

9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	-	Freshman	-	generally ages 14-16
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	-	Sophomore	-	generally ages 15-17
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	-	Junior	-	generally ages 16-18
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	-	Senior	-	generally ages 17-19

The ages of our students in each class varies due to birthdate and the age someone has entered school. Depending on your personal academic history and your age upon arrival, you should expect to be placed accordingly.

2. Most or all sports clubs in your area will be offered through the high school. Competition sports are governed by the laws of our countries and exchange students may find some limitations on the level of competition in which they are permitted to participate. This is, unfortunately, the result of schools who sometimes actively recruit professional athletes to play on their teams.

Schools generally require passing grades in all classes, in order to maintain any eligibility for sports participation or competitions.

3. If your high school in your home country offers credits for your studies here, make sure you understand those expectations.

4. If you are placed as a 'Senior', and if 'Graduation' is a goal, you must check with your local high school to learn if this is an option. Some schools do NOT offer graduation diplomas to exchange students. Some schools offer 'honorary diplomas'. Some may require special testing or enrollment (and passing grades) in specific courses before you will be eligible for either. If these options are available, you must meet all qualification criteria of the school in order to graduate. Rotary has no authority over schools with regards to these decisions.

## IMPORTANT POINTS

- All Rotary Exchange Students MUST attend school during the exchange year.
- Talk with your Rotary YEO or Counselor about placement options, graduation requirements, and sports eligibility in your new school
- You must work with your home school for class/credit transfers

# SURVIVAL GUIDE

## YOUR HOST FAMILIES

**Rotary Youth Exchange is an entirely volunteer program.** Families volunteer to host a Rotary exchange student – and must be approved by the Host Club. All are hosting because they want to. Families often make special arrangements to have you in their home. A host brother or sister may have temporarily given up their room or agreed to share their space

Clubs do not provide financial support to host families.

**You should expect to be treated as a family member.** Honor the household rules and make your best effort to adapt to their lifestyle and show respect. Be flexible and understanding. If you do not understand what is expected of you – don't be afraid to ask. You are not a guest. For the moment this is *your* family.

The first few weeks may be difficult, depending on how different things are. You may be homesick. This is normal and we do expect our host parents to be as understanding as possible. But, most of the problems that arise in the youth exchange program are due to the student being unwilling to adapt to their new environment. It is important that you understand how to compromise.

The most important person in your exchange will probably be your first host mom. Seek her advice and listen to what she has to say. What you learn from your first host family will be the foundation for your relationship with others. She is also the one that will be asked the most questions about you.

Most host clubs will have two or three families planned for your stay.. There are 3 reasons for this:

1. To give you an opportunity to experience several different family lifestyles
2. To give more than one family the opportunity to know you
3. To spread the cost of supporting you

If you have developed a good bond, it is sometimes difficult to change host families. Every family is different and one may be more 'comfortable' for you than others. Try not to make comparisons and take time to get to know your second and third families.

Be respectful when you speak about your families to others. Gossip travels quickly and it is easy to cause hurt feelings. Try to appreciate whatever your host families do for you.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HOST FAMILY

In general, ask the questions that you feel are the most important the first night, and then ask the other questions over the next few days. Remember, when in doubt, ask, and always try to be open and honest with your host family and your Rotary YEO. Good communication is essential for a successful exchange.

1. What do I call you?
2. What am I expected to do daily, other than make my bed, always keep my room tidy, and clean the bathroom every time I use it?
3. What is the procedure for dirty clothes?
4. Where do I keep clothes until wash day?
5. Should I wash my own clothes and underclothes?
6. Should I iron my own clothes?
7. May I use the iron, washing machine, sewing machine at any time?
8. When is a convenient time for me to use the shower/bath (a.m. or p.m.)?
9. Where may I keep my toiletries?
10. May I use the family's bathroom toiletries (toothpaste, soap, etc.) or am I responsible for purchasing my own?
11. What time will meals be served?
12. What can I do to assist at mealtimes (help prepare meals, set the table, wash dishes, empty garbage)?
13. May I help myself to food and drink any time or should I ask first?
14. What areas of the house are strictly private (parent's bedroom, study/office)?
15. May I put pictures or posters in my room?
16. May I rearrange my bedroom?
17. What are your rules for me with regard to alcohol and smoking?
18. Where can I store my suitcases?
19. What time must I get up (on weekdays, on weekends)?
20. What time must I go to bed (on school nights, on weekends)?
21. What are the rules for going out at night and at what time must I be home? Can exceptions be made if I ask in advance?
22. May I have friends spend the night or visit during the day?

Sample questions to ask your host family  
Continued

23. What are the rules about me using the telephone? Must I ask first?
24. May my friends call me?
25. May I call my friends?
26. May I make long-distance calls?
27. How do you want me to keep track of the costs of my telephone calls?
28. What is the procedure for mailing letters? What address do I use for my incoming mail?
29. Do you have any dislikes, such as chewing gum, wearing a hat or curlers at the table, loud rock music or smoking?
30. Do my host brothers and sisters have any dislikes?
31. What are the dates of your birthdays?
32. What are the transportation arrangements (car, bus, bike, walking, etc.)?
33. May I use the stereo, TV, computer, etc. at any time? What are the rules for computer and internet use?
34. What are the rules about attending religious services?
35. Would you like me to phone home if I will be more than 30 minutes late?
36. When we go out as a family, should I pay for my own entrance fee, meals, etc.?
37. What arrangements should I make for school lunch? Does the Rotary club pay for my lunch?
38. Does the Rotary club pay my cost of travel to school?
39. Am I to attend Rotary club meetings? If yes, how will I get there?
40. What else can I do around the house (yard work, help clean, babysit)?
41. Please tell me how to interact with the house servants (where applicable).
42. Is there anything else you would like me to know?

# Guidelines And Information for Inbound Exchange Students

## What To Expect

School will end in early June. Summer tours are offered for two weeks in June – after school is out. Our CSRYE Summer Conference is held in mid-July every year. You are encouraged to attend summer conference, and return to your home country at the end of this event. Confirm your travel plans no later than March.

### Terms you should know:

Sponsor Club	- Your HOME Club has sponsored you as an OUTBOUND Student
Sponsor District Student	- Your HOME district AND CSRYE are sponsoring you as an OUTBOUND Student
Host District Student	- The district in your destination country where you will live as an INBOUND Student
Host Club	- The club in your destination city where you will live as an INBOUND Student

### Finances

#### Student Costs while on exchange

- District-Directed costs for health insurance.
- Medical bills not covered by insurance
- Any required language camps (as directed by your host district)
- Sufficient spending money for personal expenses, clothing & entertainment
- Optional travel offered through CSRYE and your Host District

#### Rotary

- Room and board with pre-screened host families
- Monthly allowance equivalent to \$50-\$75 minimum in U.S. currency
- Any required tuition for high school education in your host country

\*Your sponsor club may offer additional support at their discretion. This varies by district and by individual club policy.

You may have arrived with cash or a credit card. You should talk to your YEO about this, and let your club guide you in the best way to manage funds in our country. “Identity Theft” is a common crime. Take precautions to protect credit cards, Travelers Checks, and your cash, especially when traveling. Your club can assist you in protecting any valuables or money upon arrival. Talk to your club counselor or YEO.

Become familiar with the currency of our country and understand the “exchange rate” for conversion to your home currency. The buying power of your dollar will vary, and costs for needed items may be significantly different than what you consider as ‘the norm’. You should establish a budget for your spending money, and you should follow that budget carefully so that you don’t run out of money before you run out of exchange year.

If you take a university course or a community program, you may have to pay those costs yourself. School books may or may not be provided free. You will likely have to buy notebooks, pens, pencils etc. You may also have to wear a school uniform.

## **Passport and Visa**

If you are a U.S. student, your Visa includes a form “DS-2019”. This is a government form, which requires updated signatures if you travel during the year. Make sure you are aware of the location of this document at all times.

If you are placed in one of the CSRYE districts near the border between USA/Canada, you may have been asked to obtain an additional visitor’s visa to the other country. Do not attempt, however, to cross any international border for any reason, without making sure you understand and carry an ADDITIONAL documents needed to cross in BOTH directions. International borders here have become very strict. Without appropriate documents, you might find yourself prevented from returning back to your host home. Your District Chair can assist with planning any international border crossings.

Working to earn income is prohibited while overseas. Your visa restricts this.

## **Travel Reservations (Airlines)**

**You must have “open-return” round-trip airfare as a requirement of the exchange program.** Although airline rules and regulations differ, most airlines will issue the return flight tickets for a specific return date and allow one change with no- or a low-cost change fee. Inform your Sponsor District and those in your host country (Host Club YEO, Host Family, etc.) of your travel itinerary as soon as the information is known. Safeguard your tickets both before and after departure, since they are just like money and will be very difficult to replace if lost. Some host clubs may ask to hold your tickets as a safeguard upon your arrival. If you keep your return tickets, make sure you know where they are.

## **Insurance**

Insurance coverage provided through CSRYE is effective from your date of departure to your date of return home. Instructions for filing a claim are available Online at [www.csrye.org](http://www.csrye.org)

If you have any medical claims, make sure you talk to your YEO or your District Inbound Coordinator about the process needed to get your medical bills paid for. There will be forms to fill out. We will assist you – but you need to tell us, or we won’t know you need help!

Your Rotary policy has some unique coverages that you may find important. Some examples include:

1. A worldwide travel assistance hotline. Carry this information on you while you are traveling. You might need it if you are delayed in a foreign airport with nobody to help you.
2. Reimbursement for airfare for a parent to join you if you are hospitalized and need your family’s assistance while overseas.
3. Reimbursement for emergency return fees, should it be necessary to return home due to a family emergency.

Your health insurance with CSRYE does NOT cover immunizations. If you need an extra vaccine after arrival, you will be expected to pay for this from your personal funds.

### **The Rotary ‘Uniform’ – Your Youth Exchange Blazer**

Your Rotary Blazer will identify you as an Exchange Student and draw attention to you in a positive way. It is always suitable when the occasion calls for “dressing up”. Wear it. Many students report that, by wearing their blazer and Youth Exchange Pins while traveling, their passage through customs and immigration is made easier, officials are happy to offer help, and you become instantly “recognizable” by your hosts on arrival.

### **Medical Records**

If you carry any prescriptions or medical records with you, make sure you discuss this with your YEO or your club Counselor. They can provide assistance with refills or seeing a doctor when needed for check-ups.

### **Make a Plan for Emergencies**

There have been occasions when a student has had to be told by phone of a death of a friend or family member, though they are not necessarily expected to come home. Most often, when a student is called home for a family emergency, it is not an option to return to your host country. Any emergency that causes you to leave should be very serious.

If an emergency does happen, make sure you contact Rotary immediately. Your Rotary insurance may offer financial assistance for the cost of returning home – and (when appropriate), for a return back to your host city. We will assist with the needed communications and arrangements.

### **Banners**

Your Sponsor Rotary Club may have given you several Club Banners. They can be presented to the host country Rotary clubs which host you for functions. You will usually receive one of their banners in return, to bring back to your sponsor club.

### **Prepare To Be An Ambassador**

During your exchange year, you will meet many people who only know your home country through the lens of a movie or TV camera. As an exchange student, one of your roles is to help people change these misconceptions. To do that, you must understand our country, our culture, our government, and our politics.

You might be asked some questions that surprise you or catch you ‘off guard’. Take the time to try and understand what the person is really asking. If you are not certain how you should respond, ask if you can discuss the subject when you have more time to give thoughtful answers.

### **Giving Your Presentation**

Most host Rotary clubs and some high schools in your host country will ask you to speak to them. You should have a fully-prepared 15-minute talk about you, your home town, your region, and your sponsor Rotary club. It’s OK to be nervous. If you are still uncomfortable with the language, in the beginning, consider using more photos and slides. Your Rotary Club will be a ‘friendly’ audience!!

## **SEVEN LESSONS WE CAN LEARN IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Adapted from 'Figuring Foreigners Out' by Craig Storti

*"We learn from experience that not everything which is incredible is untrue"*  
-Cardinal DeRetz

1. When you go abroad, or meet people from abroad, try to entertain the notion That they might be very different from you. If it turns out they aren't, all the better. If it turns out they are, score one for your side.
2. What you think of as 'normal human behavior' may only be cultural. Before you project your 'norms' onto the human race, consider that you might be wrong.
3. Familiar behaviors may have different meanings. The same behavior – saying 'yes' for example – can exist in different cultures and not mean the same thing. Just because you've recognized a given behavior, don't assume therefore that you have understood it.
4. Don't assume that what you meant is what was understood. Check for signs that the other person did or did not understand you.
5. Don't assume that what you understood is what was meant.
6. You don't have to like or accept 'different' behavior, but you should try to understand where it comes from.
7. Most people do behave rationally. You just have to discover the rationale.

## **THE TWELVE COMMANDMENTS**

# OF YOUTH EXCHANGE

- 1. Adapt or fail**
- 2. Ask or remain ignorant**
- 3. Smile at every opportunity**
- 4. Be lively and active**
- 5. Be punctual**
- 6. Plan ahead**
- 7. Be considerate of your hosts**
- 8. Give 100% of yourself and expect nothing in return.**
- 9. Maintain a neat appearance and keep your surroundings orderly**
- 10. Strive to earn the respect of others**
- 11. Learn and share**
- 12. Say 'No' when it is appropriate**

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **YEO, COUNSELOR, STUDENT**

**Your Rotary host club will appoint a Youth Exchange Officer (YEO) and a counselor for you.** Your YEO and counselor should NOT be host parents. When you arrive, you should ask your hosts who your YEO and counselor are, and make contact with them in person if they do not contact you. All Rotary officers are unpaid volunteers who work with the program because they support the meaning of youth exchange.

The following are basic international responsibilities for YEO's, Counselors, and Students:

1. To confirm who the host parents will be during a student's stay. To arrange the date and time of changing host families.
2. To orient the host parents & students as to their responsibilities.
3. To arrange for schooling and introduce student to principal/teachers.
4. To look after student emergency fund and other important papers.
5. To check that insurance coverage is suitable to the local situation and to ensure that activities (such as sports) are covered.
6. To introduce and integrate student into the Host Rotary Club and ensure that student is invited as a guest to meetings and other activities.
7. To be sure that students receive monthly allowance from the host club on time.
8. To deal appropriately with any unresolved difficulties between students and host families and school.
9. To give permission for travel and other situations in which permission is due, and to ensure that permission has been obtained from natural parents, host parents, and school.
10. To find out the dates of the required meetings – and to arrange for transportation. Students should be told of these events well in advance, to help avoid schedule conflicts.
11. To obtain appropriate funds from the host club to cover travel, food and board expenses for student attendance at required meetings.
12. To notify students of any Rotary-approved tours for exchange students in which they might be able to participate.

### **COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES (Advocate/Friend)**

1. To meet with students once or twice per month, to give students sound advice, and to deal with any problems, fears and worries that students may have.
2. To advocate for a student when he/she is having difficulties at home or at school
3. To help a student with self-discipline if he/she goes off track.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Ask for a list of what is expected of you.** If not written, this can be done verbally and you can write down the points.
2. **Use your counselor when you need a shoulder to lean on.** It will keep your relationship with your host families less complicated.
3. **Show your appreciation for all that your hosts do for you.**
4. **Keep your counselor informed of all your activities.**
5. **Always speak the TRUTH to your YEO and Counselor!** You need their trust and their guidance.
6. **Discuss your problems while they are still small.** Don't wait until things are out of hand before you talk to someone.
7. **Accept the decisions and discipline of your YEO and Counselor with grace....even if you disagree.** He/she is guiding you in the place of your parents.
8. **Do not play your YEO, your counselor, and your host parents against one another.** Make them your friends – not your adversaries!

IF a situation arises that you feel you need to speak to a counselor of your gender, ask if this can be arranged.

IF you and your counselor have a clash of personalities, or if he/she seems too busy for you – contact your YEO or Club President and ask if it is possible to change counselors. If that is not possible...then try hard to make the best of things. Adapt your personality and help build the bridge between you.

IF all else has failed – contact your Inbound Coordinator -- write, e-mail, or call. Almost anything can be sorted out with the assistance of the District Inbound Coordinator.

# **YOU ARE NOT ALONE**

**Your exchange experience will be monitored and help is always near.**

If you need help or if you have a problem, you should first **talk to your host family.** They are there to help you with day-to-day difficulties.

If your host family can not help you, then you should contact **your YEO or Counselor.**

If your Rotary club is unable to assist you, then you should contact the **DISTRICT SUPPORT TEAM:**

**Club Counselor**

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**Club YEO**

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**Inbound Coordinator**

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**Child Protection Officer**

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**District Chair**

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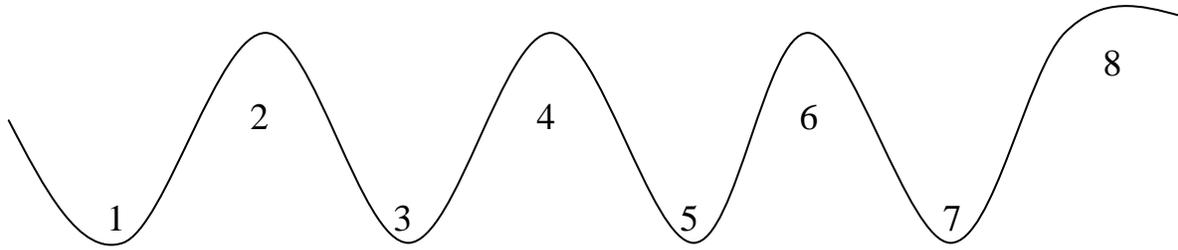
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# The Exchange Cycle



## **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*

## **CULTURE SHOCK IS REAL!**

**Most people who move to a new culture experience a series of emotional ups and downs while they are living there**, especially during the early months when most major adjustments are taking place. The emotional low points that go along with adaptation to a new culture may cause you some anxiety. **These ‘down periods’ are an indication that you are experiencing culture shock.**

Culture shock is a reaction most people feel when they are cut off from familiar ways of communication and interaction with others.

Culture shock is not always easy to notice. It usually builds up slowly, challenging a person’s sub-conscious belief that the way they have always done things in their homeland is the ‘right way’ to do things.

Common symptoms of culture shock include:

- Over eating
- Boredom
- Easily Upset
- Isolation
- Homesickness
- Sleeping too much
- Idealizing Homeland
- Inability to Concentrate
- Unexpected Crying Spells
- Negative attitude toward foreign country

Most people react to culture shock in any of three typical ways:

1. They try to make other people do things *their way*
2. They isolate themselves from the culture
3. They learn to adapt

The first two reactions are entirely normal and common, but in the long run they do not offer the opportunity to absorb more than just a small part of the new culture. In addition, the first two make it nearly impossible for you to be successful and can result in major adjustment problems.

**The third reaction is much more desirable.**

**We try to encourage our students with the motto,  
“It’s not right, it’s not wrong, it’s just different!”**

In order to get you on the right track when dealing with culture shock, we suggest the following:

- It is important that you recognize the symptoms.
- When you see the first signs, try to focus your energy in more positive directions.
- Get more involved in family activities, such as preparing the meal, walking the dog, raking the yard, washing the car, shopping for groceries, etc. It is important that you get involved and stay involved.
- Remember that your daily life will only get better!

We encourage students to limit their telephone calls home to no more than one or two a month and to limit e-mails. Frequent contact with family and friends back home can delay your adjustment. Your natural parents should be made aware of these suggested limitations. It is important to have their support for this, especially in the early months.

You will certainly have periods of homesickness, especially around special holidays.

Plan to share some of your special celebrations with your host family. This can be a wonderful learning experience for everyone and will ease any loneliness you are feeling.

### **MORE ON CULTURE SHOCK**

The culture shock stage begins roughly at the end of the first month and extends sometimes until the fourth month. Seasoned host families report that a student experiencing culture shock might:

- Dread going to school because classmates are ‘unfriendly’
- Lash out in anger because of an innocent remark at the dinner table; or make a retreat to the bedroom for hours.
- Long for family and friends back home who “really understand.”
- Withdraw at times, become irritable, ignore rules or exhibit unusual shyness.
- Describe confusing or threatening situations as “stupid” or “dumb.”
- Complain about feeling unloved or unjustly criticized.
- Escalate minor squabbles with other family members into standoffs.
- Find it difficult to hold normal conversations.

### **THINGS YOU CAN DO TO SURVIVE THIS PERIOD**

Discuss the meaning of culture shock with your family and talk about your feelings. Remind yourself that culture shock behavior is normal. (Sometimes students think this only happens to “weak” or “immature” students). Remember these points:

- It's OK to miss home and to feel sad. Sometimes talking about it helps the pain go away. So if you want to talk, go to your host family – or find a nearby friend.
- Culture shock is normal. It can be difficult to be away from home for a long period of time.
- Your host family can never take the place of your real family, but they care for you very much. You can depend on their support.
- Get out of your room and get active!
- Call or e-mail home less frequently. You might initially feel better after talking to family, but an hour later, you will feel more homesick.
- Limit e-mailing or calling international friends no more than twice a month.

**WARNING SIGNS  
THAT SHOULD BE BROUGHT  
TO THE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION  
OF YOUR YEO**

- Excessive sleeping or insomnia
- Significant weight gain or loss
- Prolonged acute depression
- Constantly feeling sick and/or feeling like you do not want to go to school
- Excessive calls or e-mail home
- Excessive calls or e-mail from parents
- Disrespectfulness
- Serious communications barriers with host family
- Student beginning to say he/she **MUST** go home
- Suicidal tendencies and/or behavior

**THRIVING – NOT JUST SURVIVING**

**Approaching an Intercultural Experience Positively**

**Make Sure You Are Physically and Emotionally Prepared**

**Being immersed in a new culture takes a lot of energy.** Make sure you get enough rest so you can get up in the mornings with the rest of your host family.

**Pay Attention to your exercise and healthy eating habits and follow a routine that works for you.** Expect to gain weight but don't be fussy when it comes to food. It is the change in environment and food preparation practices that cause the weight gain. For the duration of your exchange, experience the food variety and enjoy what is new and different. When you return at the end of the exchange year, any weight gain you suffered will probably come off easily.

**If you become ill – even if it's only a sore throat - tell your host parents immediately.**

## **Work to Remain Positive and Take Responsibility For Your Words and Actions**

The intercultural writer, Margaret Pusch, notes that the three skills critical to being effective in an overseas experience are:

- The ability to manage psychological stress
- The ability to communicate effectively
- The ability to establish interpersonal relationships

“Cross-cultural experience is stressful and cultural ‘fatigue’ does occur: in fact it is argued that it is only with this fatigue that one is receptive to understanding and accepting cultural differences.” (Ken House D5060) But, when that happens, you may surprise yourself with your own negative behaviors. Manage those feelings and keep them under control.

You should realize that the subconscious “values” and “assumptions” which guide our thinking and actions are unmistakably “North American.” Understanding the basis of our culture is a starting point for understanding another culture.

**There is a common saying among Youth Exchange Volunteers:**

***Nothing is better or worse – just different!***

## **WRITING HOME**

**Students: You may be having fun – but your parents NEED to hear about it, too!**

Because you have probably always lived at home, it is unlikely that you have ever considered writing letters to your family. However, it is a blessing that your family will enjoy during this exchange and, again, when you begin your college years and perhaps move away from home in adult life.

The telephone, e-mail and internet chats are “convenient” alternatives – but most certainly are less personal and less comforting. A personal – handwritten letter – is priceless. (Tell your parents the same thing...they should write to you with pen and paper.)

**Write regularly – make them detailed.** Besides the comfort it provides to your family – it will also be a permanent memory of detail that you are definitely going to forget as the months and years pass by.

When you return home – your parents and relatives may be willing to return your letters to your care – in order to add to your memory book.

A variation of this advice: Write a daily journal on letter paper – instead of in a book. Note the dates and number the pages carefully. Every week or two – mail the letters home, along with photos or clippings. Your family can enjoy the exchange at a distance – and when you return home – you can place the letters in a bound journal or scrapbook.

Another former student – Karen Connelly – spent 1986 as an exchange student in Thailand at the age of 17. In 1993, she published “Touch The Dragon – a Thai Journal”. Her book won the prestigious Governor General’s Award for Non-Fiction in Canada. In 1994, it reached #1 on Canada’s Best Seller’s Non-Fiction List. Her book was later appeared in The Readers Digest and in a television series.

OK – you may not publish your own personal journal then again, maybe you will. But if you record nothing more than digital pictures or some rolls of film, you will regret it later. So.....PROMISE YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY THAT YOU WILL WRITE REGULARLY!

*A word of caution about blogging Blogs are popular these days and they are a convenient way to communicate without leaving anyone out. You need to remember that the internet is also an international advertisement that can help anyone find out what your name is, what you look like, and where you live. When/if you use a weblog take precautions by using a reputable provider, use all available security features, and avoid posting personal details. Even with all of these precautions, you are never 100% secure from hackers. Hand-written letters are still your best option.*

**Of course, you should call home when you arrive at your destination and assure your parents that you are safe.** Use the telephone to say ‘happy birthday’ to family members – or to OCCASIONALLY hear their voices. But definitely write about the things that you wish to remember.

## **TRAVEL GUIDELINES**

**The intent of the Rotary Youth Exchange Program is to provide you with an academic year abroad – which will encompass cultural and language immersion. Travel is a privilege, not a right. Your host family may invite you to travel with them. However, not every host family has plans to travel or has the ability to pay for you to travel with them.**

### **Keep these things in mind:**

Remember that you have traveled a long way just to reach your host country.

You will come to understand and meet the people better if you concentrate on your host city and area.

Your host parents certainly wish for you to enjoy your stay, but like your natural parents, they may not have time or money to travel often.

Have fun in your new surroundings. This is a wonderful opportunity to see and learn in another country and another culture. Travel is not the objective.

### **IF YOU DO TRAVEL – YOU MUST:**

1. First obtain permission from your Rotary YEO
2. You and your YEO will be required to provide this information to the District:
  - A. Who you will travel with (must be accompanied by adults)
  - B. What you are doing (purpose of the trip)
  - C. Where you are going (destination address and phone number)
  - D. When you will travel (beginning and ending dates)
  - E. An emergency phone number during your travel
  - F. ALL additional information that will describe your plans

**IF CROSSING AN INTERNATIONAL BORDER, YOU MAY NEED SPECIAL DOCUMENTS. You will get those from your HOST DISTRICT Officer.**

### **MORE ON TRAVEL**

You are not permitted to travel outside your Rotary District, except when being taken by a Rotarian, a Rotary host family or an adult person pre-approved by Rotary.

Trips organized through your school and approved by your Rotary club and host family are permissible.

Rotary-sponsored functions are permissible. If you plan to participate in a Rotary-approved student tour, then you and/or your natural parents are responsible for the costs involved.

You must not travel outside your city of residence alone.

You must not hitch hike at any time.

You must not phone or write to any other Rotary club and ask to be hosted.

Rotary exchange students can not travel in aircraft other than a scheduled flight on a recognized airline.

If you have an opportunity to travel, be sensitive to other exchange students who may not have the same opportunity. It's OK to share your trip but do not boast.

At the end of an exchange, you are to travel home **by the most direct route** unless you are being met by your own parents in your host city. **If you are returning home through the Rotary program – you cannot make any stop-overs or side trips along the way.**

If parents wish to pick you up at the end of exchange you may do some traveling from there. Your Club YEO and District Chair must be informed. You must be aware of your visa expiration date. In this case, Rotary is no longer responsible for you at the time that your parents arrive. Your exchange will officially end....and you are then considered a “tourist” overseas. Your Rotary insurance will also stop at that time.

Other relatives may pick you up only with Rotary approval and written permission from your parents.

Any exceptions to travel rules must have written and signed approval of your natural parents, your Host District YE Chair, your Host Club and your Host Family.

Rotary's greatest concern is for your safety. Please respect the precautions that have been established. You might meet students on exchange with other programs that have more freedom to do as they wish. The Rotary Program, however, is oriented to structure and your best interests are in mind at all times.

If you were to explore the pro's and con's of Rotary and other programs, you will likely discover that Rotary has a powerful reputation for producing young adults who go on to become leaders in their home communities and countries. We feel very secure with the structure and guidelines we have established for International Youth Exchange.

## **PARENTS – VISIT AT THE END OF THE EXCHANGE**

**Your parents can not visit you until near the end of your year (April or later).** Family visits for our Inbound students are not allowed during holiday times. It is of great cultural significance for a student to experience holidays with their host culture....and it is also very meaningful for the host country and host families to share these celebrations with their “adopted” son or daughter.

**It is our experience that students regularly suffer severe culture shock for a second time** after parents depart for home and leave the student behind to finish the year. It is most stressful for the student who must re-experience the pain of separation. However, host families and youth exchange officers are also exhausted with effort to help these students who are suffering – because the emotional changes will include anger, resentment, withdrawal and deep sadness....(similar to the stages of grief).

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Computer and Internet**

Discuss with your host family and/or teacher what the guidelines are for using the computer and what the guidelines are for using the internet. Be sure you understand time limits.

When setting up an email account, it is most helpful during the exchange year to include your name in the address as it makes it easier for people to identify you immediately.

It may be important that you check your email regularly to be sure you receive any announcements from your exchange coordinators. For example, the Inbound Coordinator may use email to send you the questions for your monthly report.

Other than basic responsibilities, the computer and use of the internet should be kept at a MIMIMUM. Chat rooms are convenient but should be used for short visits only. Naturally you want to tell friends and family at home all that's happening the first weeks of your exchange but you will adjust faster and easier if you write down your experiences in a journal. **If you are chatting with old friends and parents all the time, you haven't really left home yet.**

### **Cell Phones**

Some host families may provide you with a cell phone for the convenience of the family, though they are not expected to provide you with a cell phone. The cell phone must go back to the host parents when students move to another family. The next family will set their own rules for cell phones.

If a host family gives you a cell phone as a gift, you must return it when you move to the next family unless your next host family and your YEO gives approval for you to keep it.

If you want to purchase your own cell phone, check with your Rotary officer on what is considered 'acceptable use' policies in your host district. It can easily interfere with your adjustment.

Be sure to check with your school as to rules for cell phones. Many schools prohibit the use of cell phones on premises.

## **GOING TO SCHOOL**

**ALL ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND FULL-TIME SCHOOL AT HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL, TO PARTICIPATE IN A MEANINGFUL WAY AND TO TAKE ALL PRESCRIBED TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS.**

Even if you have completed high school in your home country, do not ask or expect to be enrolled in college or university classes.

Although academic school credits are not the primary objective of our program, the attitude of school officials towards granting you time off for other activities will vary. There may be Rotary functions and Rotary-approved travel that will help to broaden your education....but you must discuss these events with your Rotary YEO and your school principal in advance. You should establish ahead of time, what the policy will be for you to take time off from school.

As an American or Canadian exchange student in a foreign school, you will be fairly obvious and you will be considered a representative (i.e. an ambassador) of your country by teachers and other students. Your behavior – good or bad – will be noticed. Be respectful of your principal and your teachers. Obey the school regulations, even if other students do not.

You will be expected to complete homework assignments the same as any member of your school class. Language may be an obstacle...but nobody will ask you to do more than your best.

Be aware of dress code and customs of your fellow students. You may be different, but respect those around you.

Be aware that schools are places in which drugs, sexual harassment, and violence are not uncommon.

Not all students are nice and some may try to take advantage of you. Be friendly – but choose your friends with care. Avoid the “wrong crowd” and situations that might lead to breaking the law. You can be prosecuted for crimes in your host country, the same as any other resident of that country. Rotary can not protect you from this.

**Participate in school and sports activities outside of the classroom. It is the best way to meet others and begin healthy friendships.**

Avoid spending too much time with other exchange students – though they will be the most “comfortable” group for you in the beginning. You need to stretch out of your “comfort zone” and make local friends with whom you can better integrate into your host culture.

Although you are there to learn their language and culture, be prepared to accept every opportunity to give talks about your country in your school and in other places within the community. Most of the people you meet will probably never have the chance to visit your home country, but they may be interested to know about it.

When you speak – do so carefully. Avoid making “good-bad” comparisons that might embarrass you or hurt others.

Ask your teacher, YEO, and/or counselor to help you prepare a talk if you are asked to give one.

## **MISCELLANEOUS TIPS FOR YOUR YEAR**

- 1. Attend as many meetings of your host Rotary Club as possible.** Attend their functions; expect to help with events. If Rotary meetings conflict with personal plans, the Rotary

function must take precedence. **Always accept personal invitations from Rotarians before visiting with friends.**

2. **Dress neatly and appropriately, especially for Rotary functions (wear your Rotary jacket!)**
3. **Greetings and farewells are very important in all countries.** Acknowledge everyone when you arrive or leave (on a daily basis.) You will find differences in customs between your peers, your host families, and other social groups. For instance, teens often simply speak a greeting (“Hi” or “Hey”); families often hug or pat a shoulder. At Rotary meetings most people will shake your hand.
4. **Ask your host family to tell you if you do anything which they see as inappropriate or objectionable.** You might offend someone with a gesture or a phrase that means something entirely different in your home culture as it does here.
5. **Use good language at all times, in order not to offend anyone.** Swearing and telling dirty jokes does not enhance your own or your country’s image.
6. **Use of the bathroom is an area of potential misunderstanding.** Make sure your use of it fits in with the rest of your host family. If you take lengthy showers, there may not be hot water for others.
7. **If you become ill – even if it’s only a sore throat – tell your host parents immediately.** Always consult your host family before visiting a doctor.
8. **Saying “thank you” is very important in most cultures.** Make sure you thank people who take you places and do things for you. A “thank-you” note may be expected- at the very least it is especially appreciated.
9. **You may or may not be expected to attend church with your host family.** Try to fit in with what their expectations are and maintain an attitude of respect towards religious practices in your host families. Be sure to share your religious expectations with them; they will appreciate and try to accommodate you.
10. **By using appropriate manners and behaviors in your host family, you will make it easier for your host parents to be good hosts.** Consider the situation from their point of view whenever you can.
11. **Maintain a wide circle of friends of all ages.** This will ensure that you learn as much as you can about your new culture.
12. **You will probably gain weight!** Don’t be fussy when it comes to food – it doesn’t matter. It is the change in environment and food preparation that causes the weight gain. Dare to try the foods and enjoy what is new and different about them. You will enjoy the experience and you can rest assured that when you return home at the end of the exchange year, any weight gain you suffered will come off easily.

13. **You may accumulate a lot of souvenirs during your exchange year.** Plan on sending small boxes home by regular mail, in order to avoid expensive overweight charges on your return flight home. Check with your airline to determine what your luggage weight limits are; they are very strict. Also, be informed about customs regulations – they are changing almost daily. If you are carrying things home with you, list all purchases and pack them together to expedite your time spent in customs.

## **“If it is to be – it is up to me.”**

### **THE REPORTS**

**WE ARE REQUIRED TO KEEP A RECORD OF YOUR ACTIVITIES DURING YOUR EXCHANGE YEAR. We must have a monthly report from you in order to accomplish this.**

**YOUR REPORTS ARE DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF EVERY MONTH AND THEN A FINAL REPORT IS DUE A FEW DAYS BEFORE YOU RETURN HOME.**

During your year – if you can make the time – please do send postcards and letters, newspaper clippings and e-mails about your experiences. Those are always fun to get and share with other Rotarians.

**Near the end of the year, please be certain that you communicate your return plans; the date you are leaving and your travel itinerary.**

**E-MAIL OR WRITE to your District Outbound Coordinator OR Your District Chair (as you are instructed)**

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### **REPORT GUIDE**

**This report covers the months of: \*\*\***

**Include: Your Name / Name of Host Rotary Club  
YEO's Name and Phone Number  
Host Family's Name/ Phone # / Address  
Your E-mail address (if changed):**

**Tell us about your life here. These are some ideas of the things we want to hear about:**

**What you are doing in school: new subjects, clubs, sports, friends**

**Your Rotary activities: meetings attended, speaking, travel to other clubs, Rotarians I've met. My relationship with my counselor, (are you getting regular contact with him/her?)  
Is your host club taking the time to know you?**

**Your personal experiences: Have you had any illnesses, problems with host families, problems in school. What solutions have you found?**

**Your social activities: Have you gone to any social events, parties, dances, theatres?**

**Travels?**

**Visits with other exchange students?**

**Church activities?**

**What are you learning? What do you like here? What don't you like here?**

**Include newspaper articles about yourself.**

## **CHANGE OF HOST FAMILY**

Keep us updated on where you are living. A note by e-mail is sufficient – but be sure to include the Name, address and contact phone numbers of your new host home. We need this information in case of an emergency.

# RETURNING HOME

*Rotarians believe that the future of our world is in the hands of our young students.*

## **You are tomorrow's leaders.**

Your year will FLY by (although it may not seem so at the beginning.) When you return, you will have a wealth of experiences and a new language and culture to share with your homeland. PLEASE talk about the positive things you have learned to your family, your friends at school, and your sponsor Rotary club.

We believe that the more we send our young ambassadors abroad, the greater opportunities we will have to foster understanding between our cultures and people around the world. Your success will be our best advertisement. Through you and other Rotary students, we seek to make peace around the globe and you have now become an important factor in helping us to achieve those goals.

## **You are expected to ATTEND and then return home AFTER Summer Conference.**

The Summer Conference event is an important beginning of your new life as a 'Rebound' or 'Rotex' student. You will become re-acquainted with many old friends – and you will make new friends. You will meet the new group of exchange students, as they are preparing for departure overseas, AND you will meet our REBOUND students who have just returned home from a year of study abroad. This is a HUGE event – filled with 'Hello' and 'Goodbye' – tears and hugs – exchange of addresses – and promises to meet again.

When our registration begins, in late spring, you may be thinking you don't want to go. It means the end of your exchange year has arrived and it's natural to resist this. You may want to 'negotiate' a 'few more days' in your host city. But it is important that you understand, your re-adjustment is as or more important than your cultural adjustment at the beginning of your year. Attendance at Summer Conference is EXTREMELY important to this re-adjustment period.

We like to remind our students that the end of your exchange year is NOT the end of anything. It is a new beginning. Right now, it might feel like the single most important thing in your life. But it is only the FIRST of many great things to come.

You will be making a transition from student to teacher. Summer Conference is your first assignment in your new role.