



Host Family Interview Questions

***Please note this form is to help guide your discussion with the host family. It is NOT the form that will be submitted. When finished, please complete the Host Family Interview Report and/or Annual Family and Home Review forms.**

Instructions for Interviewer

This interview should accomplish three things:

- assess whether the family and home environment is appropriate to host a student with Youth For Understanding and document this step per US Department of State regulations,
- obtain information necessary to make a successful placement if this family is accepted, and
- answer the family's questions about YFU and hosting.

Use the words in italics to introduce each section and then proceed to the questions. Please note, questions that YFU is required by the Department of State to ask all host family applicants are flagged with "**DOS required**". The answers to these questions must be recorded in the Interview Report Form. For the rest of the questions, exact answers don't need to be recorded.

Household

Family Name _____
City _____ State _____

Before we begin, I need to be sure that all household members are here.

1. Is there a family member or other person not here? If this is an adult or teenager who spends 100 or more days or nights annually in the home, I will need to make another appointment to meet that person.

Motivation

Just as each YFU international student is unique so are YFU host families. YFU has found that host families have many different reasons for wanting to host and expectations about what their international student will be like.

2. What are some of the reasons your family wants to host a student? What are the differences in how the various family members feel about hosting?
3. When you think about having a student in your family, what is your picture of how he or she would act, think, be...?
4. Describe the relationship each of you would like to have with your exchange student.

Family name: _____

Family city and state: _____

Family Characteristics, Relationships and Communication

YFU must have a sense of what your family is like so that we can help you select an appropriate student.

5. Describe yourselves to me. (Each family member should respond for themselves.)

6. How does your family spend time together?

7. What are meal times like in your family? (i.e., who fixes meals, types of foods, who is there, do people regularly sit down together, who cleans up, etc.)

8. What is a common cause of friction in the family and how is it handled?

9. What happens when someone in your family becomes upset, angry, or sad? How is the feeling expressed?

10. How are feelings of sibling rivalry resolved in your family?

11. What might your exchange student have difficulty adjusting to while living with your family? For example family routine, meal times, etc.

12. Have you ever hosted a student or another person for a period of time in your home? If yes, discuss your experience. (e.g. what was positive and what were the challenges?).

13. Describe the highlights or positives your exchange student will experience while in your family.

YFU exchange students are placed in host families so that they may experience life in the United States first hand. YFU host families are encouraged to treat their students as a member of the family. YFU students are encouraged to be flexible and to share in the host family's lifestyle while educating the family about their own ways of life. During the initial period of adjustment, however, differences can arise. Our experience tells us that when these differences are discussed openly the adjustment phase is smoother.

14. Tell me about one or two of your family's customs that a new family member would need to adjust to (e.g., everyone visits grandma on Sundays; saying goodnight before going to bed, etc.).

15. How are chores assigned and handled in your home?

Family name: _____

Family city and state: _____

16. How are family rules established in your home (curfew, calling to advise whereabouts, etc.)? What are some of the rules? What rules concern dating and bringing friends home to visit? What happens when the rules are broken?

Describe your expectations regarding your student's behavior while in your home, including: homework, household chores, curfew, access to refrigerator and food, smoking, computer/internet/email.

The Host Family's financial responsibility consists of providing a room, transportation to/from school as necessary and three meals a day. You may have questions about what else a host family should or could pay for.

17. How do your own children obtain their spending money (e.g., allowances, part-time jobs, etc.)?
18. How would you treat a situation in which your exchange student has more or less money than your own children?
19. **DOS Required:** Outside of long distance charges, toiletries, etc. what expenses would you expect your student to pay for and which ones might you, as the host parents cover? For instance, if your family goes out together to dinner or the movies.
20. YFU has found that the additional monthly cost for food, transportation and utilities to host an exchange student averages \$100–\$200 depending on the community. Is your family prepared to manage this additional cost?

Interviewer should refer back to answers on the written application in order to discuss attendance at religious practices, etc.

21. What are your family's religious practices (i.e., attendance, frequency of attendance)?
22. Are family members involved in other activities sponsored by your church/synagogue (e.g. youth groups, sport leagues)?

School Work

YFU is a school-based program requiring students to attend school and maintain average or better-than-average grades after an initial adjustment period.

23. How do you help your children with their school work (e.g. is someone available to help with homework, etc.)?
24. How would you support your exchange student if he or she was having difficulties with school subjects and/or language?

Family name: _____

Family city and state: _____

25. Does your family have any rules for studying and homework (i.e., specific time, complete before going out with friends, etc.)?

Living Conditions/Situations

YFU asks families to provide the student with a bed, a study area and space to store belongings. Your student can share a room with only one other person who must be of the same sex and between the ages of 10 and 22. Can we go see the bedroom and study area that your student would use?

26. **DOS Required:** Will your exchange student be sharing a bedroom with a host sibling or other household member? If so, with whom?
27. Briefly describe the personality and habits of the person with whom your exchange student would share a room.
28. **DOS Required:** Where would your exchange student be able to study?
29. **DOS Required:** Will your exchange student have adequate storage space for personal belongings in their bedroom? If not, where will these things be stored?
30. Families must provide access to a telephone. What telephone will your student have access to?

Sometimes there are special circumstances surrounding a family or exchange student.

31. Could your family host a student with special needs (i.e., strict vegetarian, hearing impaired, blind, physically disabled, allergic to animals or dust, diabetic, etc.)?
32. Are there any health conditions (physical or mental) among your family members which might affect the placement of a particular student with your family?
33. If there are pets in the house: Are all of your pets' vaccinations up to date?

School and Community Involvement

YFU highly recommends that students get involved with a variety of school and community activities.

34. Do or will any of your children attend the school which your exchange student would be attending?
35. What school activities is your family involved in (extracurricular, sports, clubs, PTA, coaching teams, etc.)?

Family name: _____

Family city and state: _____

36. What community or other activities are your family members involved in (i.e., service clubs, volunteer work, sports, arts, hobbies)?
37. **DOS Required:** Does any member of your household work for the high school that your student would attend, in a coaching/teaching/ administrative capacity?
38. **DOS Required:** Has any member of your household had contact with a coach regarding the hosting of an exchange student with particular athletic ability? If yes, please describe the contact and the sport.
39. **DOS Required:** What transportation needs exist for extracurricular activities either after school or in the evenings? How would you handle these transportation needs?
40. If you do not have teenagers, how can you assist your exchange student to meet other teenagers?

The Role of YFU with Regard to Students and Host Families

YFU instructs and trains its volunteers to be in regular contact with both students and host families, and to offer assistance if there are any difficulties which the family and student are unable to resolve. There are also YFU policies and procedures that guide student behavior while on program.

41. Will you be able to enforce YFU policies and procedures for your exchange student's behavior and abide by the YFU Host Family Agreement?
42. How do you feel about a YFU representative offering suggestions for adjustment or possible problems?
43. Another YFU representative, not me, will visit your home within the first 2 months of your student's arrival as required by the Department of State. Is that OK with you?

Lifestyle and Student Supervision

44. YFU students can not be left alone overnight. Have you considered who would care for your exchange student if you have to travel (for work or family emergency) during their stay with you?
45. Is there anything about your lifestyle that you think your exchange student or YFU would benefit from knowing before arriving in your home? (e.g. dating habits, sexual orientation, house guests, travel, shift work, shared custody)
46. **DOS Required:** If you have house guests over, will any stay for 15 nights or more during the exchange? If so, we will need to conduct a criminal background check for that person, as required by the Department of State.

Family name: _____

Family city and state: _____

Interest in Other YFU Programs

YFU offers other opportunities in which your family can participate. The YFU American Overseas program gives teenagers the chance to live and study in another country. YFU also offers opportunities to volunteer in your community. Local volunteers, like me, work with students and families to select and prepare them for their exchange experiences and to support them throughout the program. Other volunteers specialize in areas such as public relations, training and orientation, and school presentations.

47. Would you like information on other opportunities with YFU?

48. Have you discussed your hosting application with others who might be interested in a YFU program? For example hosting an international student, sending a teenaged child on exchange, or becoming a YFU volunteer? May I send them information about YFU and use your name when talking with them?

American Overseas opportunities

Hosting opportunities

Volunteer opportunities

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

American Overseas opportunities

Hosting opportunities

Volunteer opportunities

Name _____

Address _____

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School

Local high schools set their own guidelines regarding the enrollment of YFU exchange students. YFU contacts the school to determine whether the school is open to the enrollment of exchange students, the number of students the school will accept from YFU, and other procedures the school may impose. (Tell the family if there are any current issues in their high school that may impact their ability to host or the time frame in which they may do so.)

Closure

Summarize the key concepts and ideas discussed in the interview and make sure the family understands and agrees with them. If you will be recommending the family, reiterate some of the benefits they will experience. Show the family the student profiles you have selected for them. Let them know that you will get back to them with answers to any questions you weren't able to answer. Let them know that their application is not considered complete until all pieces are done and on file in the District Office: processed Criminal Background Check, satisfactory reference checks and School Acceptance Form signed by the school. If you have not already done so, ask to see the sleeping, study space and bathroom that a YFU student would use as well as the family kitchen (in order to verify photos). If photos were missing, please take them now. Thank the family for their time.