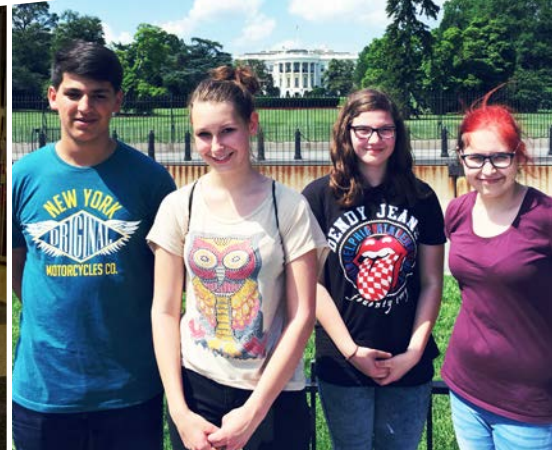




YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING Intercultural Exchange Programs



HOSTING WITH YFU



YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING USA
Intercultural Exchange Programs

HOST FAMILY HANDBOOK

— 2016-2017 EDITION —

Visit us at yfuusa.org

Mission Statement

Youth For Understanding (YFU) advances intercultural understanding, mutual respect, and social responsibility through educational exchanges for youth, families, and communities.

Acknowledgments

We greatly appreciate the revisions and additions contributed by YFU staff and volunteers. Many thanks to all the professional and amateur photographers who have provided pictures for publication in this and previous editions. Numerous YFU staff, alumni, and volunteers contributed their time, energy, and expertise to making this handbook possible.

Important Contact Information

YFU USA National Office: **202.774.5200**

YFU USA Regional Office: **1.800.TEENAGE**

YFU USA Travel Emergencies: **1.800.705.9510**

YFU After Hours Emergency Support: **1.800.424.3691**

US Department of State Student Helpline: **1.866.283.9090**

When you meet your Area Representative in the US, please take a moment to write down his/her contact information below:

Area Representative's Name: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

YFU USA, consistent with its commitment to international understanding, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin in employment or in making its selections and placements.



YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING USA
Intercultural Exchange Programs

YFU USA

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Dear YFU Family,

For nearly 65 years, YFU has thrived on the dedicated efforts and generosity of families opening their homes and hearts to an international teenager. You are participating in a unique, life-changing experience that will expand your family across borders and cultures. Whether you are welcoming a student as an arrival family, are first-time hosts or even a repeat host family, you are making a positive, direct and profound impact on the lives of young people both in your community and around the world.

I have heard so many wonderful stories from YFU families about the many ways in which students have grown and learned on program. Similarly, families grow, too, seeing their own community and culture with fresh eyes. What you may perceive to be your ordinary life is extraordinary to an exchange student. You have an incredible opportunity to share your stories and traditions while introducing your family to a new culture.

Just as students are young ambassadors, recognize that you, too, are a cultural ambassador, just by being yourself. When you receive a host child into your life, you have an opportunity to eliminate stereotypes, build greater understanding of the United States and be a catalyst in making us citizens of one world.

Thank you for bringing the world to your home, for enriching the life of a teenager and for enhancing global understanding through your incredible generosity.

On behalf of the students, I send my warmest regards,

Michael E. Hill
President & Chief Executive Officer

PS – This year I have an even deeper appreciation for your role as host families, as I will host my first exchange son (from Finland). We'll be going through this experience together, and I hope to have many chances to compare stories throughout the year as we all work to make YFU a stronger force for peace in our world.

**"It's a wonderful feeling when an exchange
student asks if she can call her host
parents mom and dad."**

- Linda Pasewalk and Mark Graf, YFU Host Parents

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I. Welcome to YFU

In this chapter, you will learn about YFU's history and mission. You will also learn a bit more about YFU programs and other ways you can be involved with YFU.

INTRODUCTION TO YFU

Welcome to Youth For Understanding (YFU) and thank you for hosting an international exchange student! This handbook will provide you with YFU policies, guidelines, and recommendations for hosting. With this handbook, YFU aims to give you a variety of resources and tools to facilitate a successful exchange experience for your family, the student, the school, and your community.

YFU values families of all compositions, religions, and ethnic backgrounds. Host families can be couples with young children, teenagers, adult children, or no children at all. Some families are single parents, same-sex couples, or a single person. YFU families live in urban, suburban, or rural locations and represent varying economic levels. YFU is proud that host families represent the rich diversity of the United States, and YFU is thankful that international students have the opportunity to discover American culture by being a part of your family. As you read the handbook, consider how these suggestions will work best for your unique family and don't hesitate to contact YFU for additional support.

WHY YFU

YFU's distinctive brand of cultural exchange opens minds and hearts, enables learning that transforms lives, and ultimately helps to make us citizens of one world. Our cultural exchange programs provide the ultimate reality check to a worldview often based on stereotypes. In helping people of all ages to make the world their home, we help them to appreciate differences and embrace similarities.

At its core, YFU is a catalyst for positive global change. Students experience tremendous personal growth, and at the same time, the impressions made by the students themselves as well as the broadened perspectives of host families ripple through schools and across entire communities.

We believe cultural exchange reinforces our common humanity by underscoring that people everywhere experience the same emotions, joys and challenges. YFU offers you the journey of a lifetime, an adventure that allows you to discover the best in yourself and your family, forge lifelong connections, and change the way you see the world.

YFU HISTORY

YFU's history dates back to 1951, when 75 teenagers from Germany and Austria were welcomed to the United States in an effort to heal the wounds of World War II. The hardships prevalent in Germany during this time had devastating effects on the country's people. The hope was that by showing young people a functioning democracy, they would be motivated to go back to Germany and help rebuild their country.

Building on the inspiring intercultural learning experiences of the German youth, YFU grew to include Scandinavia, and later expanded to western and central Europe in the mid-1950s. In 1955, YFU implemented programs to allow American students to study abroad. In 1958, YFU bridged the Pacific and began programs in Japan. The Pacific program now also includes

South Korea, the Philippines, Australia, Thailand, Vietnam, and China. YFU was introduced to Latin America in 1958, beginning with Mexico; South American countries opened their doors to YFU in 1959.

Today, YFU is one of the world's oldest, largest and most respected international exchange programs. YFU operates in 70 countries through 56+ YFU-recognized partner organizations as well as other international agencies and grant program countries. Since its inception, YFU offices around the world have exchanged more than 260,000 students, who have in turn, made lasting impressions on millions of families, volunteers, educators, and others around the globe.

YFU MISSION AND VISION

Youth For Understanding advances intercultural understanding, mutual respect and social responsibility through educational exchanges for youth, families and communities. YFU envisions a peaceful world with responsible and active global citizens.

The organization's values resonate through all YFU programs, and with staff, partners, and volunteers in order to support students and families to carry out the mission. As a host family with YFU, you are encouraged to live these values during your hosting experience and share them with your student.

YFU PROGRAMS

As a YFU host family for an international student, you are now part of the YFU family! You, your family, and your community will experience first-hand the benefits of intercultural exchange. YFU has additional programs that you are encouraged to explore and share with others. These possibilities include study abroad opportunities for American teenagers, cultural learning travel experiences for adults, virtual exchange, and additional programs for international students.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

YFU TRADITIONAL HOMESTAY PROGRAM As a host family with a student on a J-1 visa (High School Cultural Exchange Program), you are hosting as part of the YFU Traditional



Homestay Program. A majority of YFU international students in the US are part of this program and these students come from YFU partner countries. Students on this program study at an American high school for a semester or a full academic year and live with an American family.

GLOBAL EXPLORERS: THE EDUCATION SELECT F-1 HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM The Education Select F-1 High School Program works with 40+ partner secondary schools in the US to offer opportunities for international high school students outside of the J-1 cultural exchange program. Students attend between one and four years of high school (depending on their age, grade level, and school type) and have the opportunity to earn a diploma at the end of their study. With an F-1 visa, international students are able to select the school and location from a list of confirmed partner schools. Schools offered are public day, private day, and boarding schools. Students who attend day schools live with American hosts families, arranged either by the school or by YFU staff. Students who opt for boarding schools live in on-campus residence halls.

GLOBAL EXPLORERS: NON- PARTNER J-1 VISA This program facilitates exchange for students from countries where there is no YFU country office. These students and their American host families receive the same support provided on the Traditional Homestay Program and travel on the same type of visa. Prior to the students' arrival to the US, YFU USA provides an online orientation in lieu of the YFU country office support.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROGRAM The YFU Community College Program works with more than 15 US community

colleges with a majority in the Midwest. Community colleges offer a variety of courses so YFU international students can explore different interests before settling on an academic track. Class sizes are typically smaller, allowing students to directly interact and engage in the classroom. International students on this program enroll in English courses based on their English language ability. YFU offers several options for students when they enroll in this program. Students can elect to live with a host family or in a dorm with other college students. Students also have opportunities to transfer to a four-year university associated with their community college.

This handbook provides important information for all YFU host families of traditional J-1 cultural exchange students. However, those families hosting students on other programs such as the Community College Program and the Education Select F-1 High School program will receive additional support from YFU staff regarding minor differences in procedures for hosting. These differences are outlined in the program-specific hosting agreement. For additional information about hosting with these programs, please email highereducation@yfu.org or educationselect@yfu.org.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN STUDENTS AND OTHERS

YFU STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS YFU offers Study Abroad Programs for American teenagers in more than **50 different countries**, and YFU awards more than **\$2 million** each year in scholarship funding. American students can choose to begin their journey in the spring (January-March), summer (June-July), or fall (August-September).

The majority of the study abroad application is completed online, just like the host family application. Students also submit a teacher recommendation along with school and health information. All eligible applicants will also participate in an application interview with a YFU volunteer. Application deadlines for scholarships are typically in early December, and in mid-March for tuition-based programs. The best time to start thinking about studying abroad is in the beginning of the school year, before the planned departure date.

YFU awards **250+ merit-based scholarships** every year! Full and partial scholarships are available, and students can apply for more than one. Regional scholarships are also available to students living in certain parts of the United States.

YFU Community Grant

As a host family, your children are automatically qualified for the YFU Community Grant, a \$1,000 award toward any program tuition. To apply, simply indicate your status as a host family in your student's online study abroad application!

QUESTIONS? Contact Study Abroad Admissions at admissions@yfu.org.

VIRTUAL EXCHANGE INITIATIVE YFU is excited to announce the launch of our Virtual Exchange Initiative. The program encourages interpersonal diplomacy through virtual dialogues amongst teenagers worldwide – with a unique emphasis on reaching girls, displaced youth, and other under-represented groups who may not easily be able to participate in a physical exchange program.

The curriculum introduces cross-cultural learning opportunities to secondary school students aged 14-22, and uses virtual platforms to connect American young adults to their peers in the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region. Qualifying YFU alumni also participate. Each cohort of students (both American and international) begin by exploring core conversation topics including: cultural contexts, conflict and current events, student interests, and world news.

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS Committed to lifelong learning, YFU USA provides numerous engagement opportunities for the 50,000+ American alumni, host siblings, and international students who now reside in the USA and beyond. Alumni Chapters and the Campus Ambassador Program (CAP) engages alumni of all ages in YFU activities including volunteer opportunities, recruitment campaigns, and activities with students and host families.





II. Who is YFU?

In this chapter, you will learn about the key stakeholders who work with students, families, and volunteers. You will also be introduced to additional ways you can be involved with YFU.

YFU COMMUNITY

YFU is comprised of international partners, the YFU USA staff, YFU volunteers, local educators, dedicated host families, and both new and old alumni. As a host family in the United States, there are many stakeholders who are committed to guiding you and the exchange student through your cross-cultural journey. Our support network includes:

- YFU USA Board of Trustees who provide strategic and governance oversight for the organization;
- A confederation of partners in 70 plus countries, working together in trust and partnership and embracing the same standards of quality for exchange programs;
- Staff members based throughout the United States for whom the work is as much a calling as a job; and
- A global network of trained volunteers, including around 1,200 volunteers in the US to provide support to students and families.

YFU'S ROLE AS A LEADER IN QUALITY STANDARDS FOR INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

YFU adheres to exchange program standards designed to ensure safety and success for participants across its diverse programs.

US DEPARTMENT OF STATE J-1 EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM

YFU is a US Department of State designated sponsor for J-1 academic year cultural exchanges. J-1 regulations provide important parameters related to safety, security, and the well-being of J-1 semester/year YFU students. They recognize the key role of host families in furthering public diplomacy and require YFU to follow specific protocol especially related to the selection of US host families.

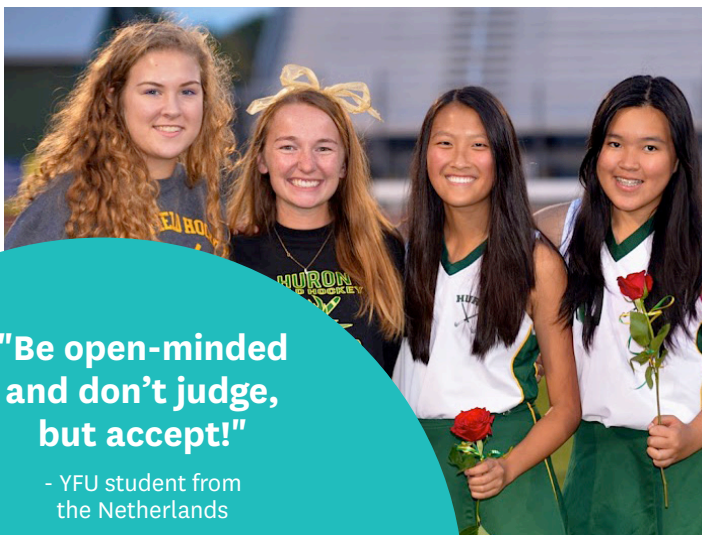
YFU INTERNATIONAL BASIC STANDARDS

YFU USA and its partners worldwide who send or host YFU students subscribe to these standards that embody YFU's commitment to conducting high quality programs. These standards also include guidelines on the host family application and screening.

COUNCIL ON STANDARDS FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL (CSIET)

YFU is a fully listed member of the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel, a leader for oversight to ensure safe, valuable exchanges. CSIET standards apply to international and American semester/year high school students and to YFU's short-term study abroad programs for American students. These standards further guide the host family selection process by YFU partners around the world.

Additionally, YFU partners with schools approved under the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) for F-1 academic exchanges.



"Be open-minded and don't judge, but accept!"

- YFU student from the Netherlands

YFU programs meet State Department standards by:

- Screening and selecting qualified and motivated students in coordination with YFU partner organizations around the world;
- Supporting and monitoring students and host families during the exchange experience;
- Providing a series of orientation programs throughout the exchange;
- Assigning a trained volunteer Area Representative to each family/student as a personal YFU resource;
- Being in touch with the host family and student at least monthly for support and help; and
- Providing at least two in-person visits during the exchange experience.

YFU USA STAFF

As a host parent, your interactions with certain YFU divisions and departments may appear to be limited. However, behind the volunteer who completed the interview to allow YFU to finalize your placement, or perhaps the Field Director who may have been the first YFU

staff person you spoke with, YFU has a robust staff who support the organization's mission. There are more than 80 employees working hard behind the scenes to facilitate a rich cross-cultural experience for you, your family, and the student.

The Programs Division is responsible for the recruitment and selection of program participants and YFU's host families. For most participants, including host families, you will engage with YFU Field Directors (FDs) who are also part of the YFU International Student Programs department. FDs manage YFU activities within specific communities across the US, and connect directly with you and volunteers at the local level. They lead volunteer teams to provide direct support to students and host families, as well as help organize local orientations, and social activities. FDs also lead community outreach efforts and are focused on identifying and screening host families to expand the YFU network within their field. YFU has 29 fields (and 29 FDs) across the US that are organized into three regions (Eastern, Great Lakes and Western). Knowing the name of your FD, your field, and your region is always helpful when accessing information through the website, YFU Host Family Account, or Volunteer Portal (see Appendix I to review the YFU fields and regions).

The Exchange Experience Division is comprised of the Support Services department, Quality Assurance department, Education and Training department, and Volunteer Programs department. This division provides the framework to support students, families, and volunteers when students are in their host country. Exchange Experience staff work with students and families through their Area Reps to provide counseling and additional oversight for students on special US Department of State grant programs. Many of YFU's trainings along with resources, tools, and publications come out of the Exchange Experience. YFU has additional divisions and departments that carry out vital office operations to keep the organization moving forward, such as Finance, Information Technology, External Affairs, and Human Resources.



"In a family, school, and social situation, I have to abandon my way sometimes, but should not forget myself."

- YFU student from Japan

SUPPORT FROM YFU VOLUNTEERS

YFU USA relies on committed volunteers to act as YFU representatives in local communities across the US. YFU prides itself on training and empowering volunteer teams to be actively engaged in programmatic delivery and serve as the public face of the organization. YFU volunteers are of all ages and

backgrounds, and many are alumni, host families, and even YFU staff. Thus they understand the joys and the challenges associated with hosting an exchange student. YFU USA has a network of more than 1,200 volunteers, spread throughout communities across the country, who provide support to YFU participants. Below are some of the important volunteer roles key to your experience as a host family:

AREA REPRESENTATIVES Every student and host family is provided with a volunteer Area Representative (Area Rep or AR) who provides support to the family and the exchange student.

YFU Area Reps are highly trained volunteers. Many have been host parents themselves, or have traveled as exchange students. They bring skills, knowledge, and experience to help your family and the student navigate questions and misunderstandings that sometimes occur during an exchange. YFU provides host families with the Area Rep's name and contact information in the YFU cover letter confirming placement of your student with your family. Students receive Area Rep information prior to leaving their country and on the YFU ID card mailed to them shortly after their arrival in the US.

Your Area Representative is required to:

- *Contact you and your student at least one time every month, either in-person, by telephone or by email*
- *Meet with your student, face-to-face, within two weeks of the student's arrival in your home*
- *Meet with your student, face-to-face, at the beginning of the second semester (for year-long students)*
- *Maintain contact, via in-person meetings, telephone or email, with the school at the beginning, middle and end of the school year, at minimum*

Area Reps contact the host family and student separately each month to check in on everyone's adjustment. In addition, the AR can act as a neutral third party and assist in addressing a specific challenge that a student or family may encounter. Your Area Rep is your YFU "go to person" for help with any concerns, such as cultural misunderstandings, miscommunication due to language, or typical teenager challenges related to rules and family expectations. YFU encourages host families to try to work through challenges directly with the student first; however, never hesitate to



contact your Area Rep to discuss solutions and gain an additional perspective. Your Area Rep and YFU want to help you and your student find solutions; YFU does not look for fault or blame when challenges arise. In fact, points of conflict are often the times that both students and families realize the most personal growth as they learn to communicate and understand one another.

We also encourage you to call your Area Rep to share good news. Sharing good news allows you to develop sharper bonds with your Area Rep, which in turn makes you feel more comfortable in reaching out to your Area Rep if problems arise. If you do not hear from your Area Representative for a while, please initiate contact with them. If you still don't hear from your Area Rep, call your YFU Field Director to let them know you are not receiving regular contact, and to update them on how the exchange is progressing.

If your Area Rep conducted your host family interview, another YFU representative will complete the SEE visit. The SEE visit is a US Department of State requirement that ensures safety for international minors by confirming the student's living environment continues to meet the J-1 regulations assessed in the host family interview. The SEE

visit occurs within 60 days of your student's arrival. You will be contacted about this visit by your Area Rep or Field Director.

ORIENTATION COORDINATORS/FACILITATORS

Experienced YFU Orientation Facilitators and Coordinators lead teams of volunteers to carry out orientations for you and your exchange student. These orientations create space for both students and host families to reflect on their experience to-date and look at the process of cultural adjustment, communication, and becoming a citizen of the world. These volunteers (and sometimes YFU staff) will provide you with tools and tips that will foster relationship building with your student and family. Orientation Coordinators (or your Area Rep) will contact you by email or phone to inform you and your student about the time, place, and related logistics for the orientation event. Please make sure to RSVP to the invitation so they know how many participants to expect. All orientations are required for students (see Appendix XII for more information about YFU orientations).

ACTIVITY COORDINATORS Many locations also have a volunteer Activity Coordinator, who organizes social activities for students and host families. Bringing YFU community members (students, families, volunteers, and staff) together for social time enhances students' cultural exchange experiences overall. Some activities might include: museum visits, movie nights, hikes, small trips, cook-outs, holiday parties, etc. Talk to your Activity Coordinator or Area Rep to find out what activities are planned for your community.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER! YFU always welcomes committed volunteers. In addition to the roles above, there are opportunities to chaperone events with students and families; interview American study abroad applicants; work alongside YFU staff to identify and screen host families; network within your own community to extend YFU's mission to others; and many other rewarding opportunities. Join the volunteer community and be an active part of this global organization. Visit yfuusa.org/volunteer for more details.





III. Thank You For Hosting

In this chapter, you will learn some basic facts about hosting, especially the key roles and responsibilities. This chapter also provides some tips to help you and your family prepare for your student's arrival.

BEING A HOST FAMILY

By opening your home to an exchange student, you are giving the student a life-changing experience with an American family, community, and school. YFU and our global partners thank you for your generosity and commitment to cross-cultural learning.

Host families are cultural brokers who aid the students' understanding of the US and your community. Through your family, an exchange student gains access to the real America, as opposed to scratching the surface of US culture when visiting as a tourist or watching American television.

As a host parent, remember to be patient and understanding. Treat your exchange student as a member of your family and set the tone that he/she is expected to participate in family activities and follow household rules. Keep in mind it will take time for the student to get used to your family just as it will take time for your family to adjust to the student. Make time to really get to know your student and share the real you.

YFU values the diversity of families across the US. We welcome all types of families, including families of any size, race, or ethnicity. Same sex couples, single adults, and childless families are all welcome to host YFU students.

The ultimate goal is that over time the student will feel as though he or she "belongs" with your family, rather than feeling like a "visitor" in your home (see text box on the YFU theme: Visiting to Belonging).



*YFU's approach to international exchange is rooted in the theme: **From Visiting To Belonging**. The international exchange experience is a journey for both students and families. Starting as visitors, or having a visitor in the home, the ultimate destination is belonging. Developing a meaningful relationship with your student and accepting him or her as part of your family will promote cross-cultural learning for both the student and your family. YFU's goal is that by the end of your journey with your student, your family and your student both feel a sense of belonging.*

HOSTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Host families play a key role in the YFU experience. The main responsibilities of a host family include:

- 1. Welcoming students as a member of the family, and caring for the student as he or she is a member of the family.** Host families provide a separate bed, suitable study area, three meals per day, and an emotionally supportive environment. Host parents should also seek medical care for a student if he or she becomes ill.
- 2. Helping students achieve their cultural and educational goals.** Host families contribute to a student's cultural education by helping them adapt to life with their host family, school, and local community. A supportive environment is needed while a student learns how to acclimate to this new setting. When challenges occur, we expect our host families to work with their student and Area Representative to communicate and resolve difficulties and misunderstandings.
- 3. Helping students meet YFU expectations.** Host families should become familiar with YFU policies and encourage students to adhere to policies. Host families must participate in the YFU Host Family Pre-Arrival Orientation, and ensure the student attends their required orientations. Additionally, host families agree to be in touch with their YFU Area Representative at least once per month.

HOST FAMILY AGREEMENT

When committing to becoming a YFU host family, you signed the *Host Family Agreement*. This important document ensures that expectations of the host family and YFU are clearly explained and everyone understands the responsibilities of hosting. Some of the items covered in the agreement are linked directly to US Department of State regulations. Other items are part of the YFU global *International Basic Standards*, which include safety standards. You can review the Host Family Agreement under Appendix VI.

It is important to report any life-changing events that occur in your household (health concerns, births, changes in

household members, job changes and losses, etc.) to your AR, especially if these events make it difficult to meet the requirements in the Host Family Agreement. YFU recognizes that unexpected events can be stressful to a family and YFU's volunteers and staff want to be supportive and work with you to find the best solution for the student and for you.

PREPARING FOR YOUR STUDENT

It's never too early to start preparing for your exchange student. The following are a few recommendations and YFU tools to help you get started.

- **HOST FAMILY PRE-ARRIVAL ORIENTATION** Before your student arrives, you will be invited to attend an online Host Family Pre-Arrival Orientation, or attend an event in your community (or both). The US State Department and YFU require this orientation for all families, regardless of hosting experience with YFU. The orientation will provide you with important information and the most recent developments about hosting, cultural adaptation, and YFU resources. These events also provide you with an opportunity to meet other YFU families.
- **HOST FAMILY ACCOUNT** This resource has key information not only about your student, but also information related to YFU policies and procedures, US State Department regulations, and other resources related to cross-cultural learning and helping your student adapt. Now that you have accepted a student, you have access to lots of information to help you and



¹The *International Basic Standards For Educational Exchanges of Youth For Understanding* is an agreement between all YFU organizations worldwide to set clear guidelines and expectations for working with each other. The document outlines everything from broad educational goals to specific requirements for a number of situations essential to intercultural exchange: among them recruitment of students and families, placement, orientations and support.

your family along this journey. In addition, this account has important information about medical insurance.

- **PREPARE PAPERWORK** Through your Host Family Account, you can read about the medical insurance policy for your student. Research local hospitals and urgent care facilities in your area and know which facilities take the medical insurance policy that covers your exchange student. Many families suggest making photocopies of the policy and other important information and keeping it in the car, and in other places for easy access in case of an emergency.

- **HOW DO YOU DO THINGS IN YOUR HOME?²**

Have a conversation as a family about family rules, expectations, and how your household operates. From this conversation, create a concrete list that you can share with your student within the first week. This list can include: house rules, expected participation in school and family activities, chores they will be responsible for completing, and expectations around communication, socializing with friends, dating, and curfew. This will help you communicate the framework of your family's culture and how your family operates. In many cases, it is a relief to a student to see basic rules written simply, so they


can adjust their behavior accordingly. Recognize that assumptions often lead to conflict and it is best to be clear and direct about daily life in your home.

- **RESEARCH YOUR STUDENT'S HOME COUNTRY** Being well acquainted with the differences in culture will help your family get to know your student. Some helpful topics to understand include religion, dynamics between men and women, family structure, government structure, holidays, and the demographics of your student's particular region. Through your Host Family account you can access CultureGrams³. Use this tool to gain more insight on the traditions and culture of your student.

Welcome Ideas

- *Make a welcome sign with student's name to greet him or her at the airport.*
- *Decorate the bedroom with the local high school colors and themes.*
- *Purchase school supplies so he or she is ready for the first day of school.*
- *Make a Welcome kit with local maps, the community newspaper, and other resources that the student can read so he or she becomes more familiar with the area.*
- *Having a small cookout or meal with close family friends is a great idea to welcome the student, and introduce him or her to your community. However, wait a few weeks (or more) before you do this. Meeting many people within the first weeks could be overwhelming for the student.*

- **PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR A NEW MEMBER** Your student is considered part of your family. Take the time to prepare a welcoming bedroom/living space for them. When reading about your student, take note of their likes and dislikes. If there are certain foods they love, make these meals when they first arrive. Arranging a towel/toiletries, table setting, lunch box, etc. in advance will help make the student feel welcomed and included into your family unit. See the text box on ideas for a welcoming your student.



"It's almost impossible to describe the personal growth our family has experienced through our international student."

- YFU Host Family

²See Appendix XIII How Do You Do Things In Your Home? on topics for you and your family to discuss. These topics can help you think about items to include in your list for discussion with your international student.

³CultureGrams is an online resource that provides information about countries and cultures around the globe.

- **CONNECT WITH THE YFU COMMUNITY** Talk with the person who helped you become a host family; ask to be connected to other host families in the area who can share their experiences and provide tips. Some families have found it useful to invite current exchange students to their home to learn more about exchange, the adjustment curve, and all the challenges and joys of the exchange journey. There might even be American YFU alumni in your area who participated in an YFU exchange program. They can share first-hand experience about learning to adapt to a new culture and living with a host family. All of these conversations will give you more insight to international exchange and the common ups-and-downs that come with this experience.
- **CONNECT WITH YOUR STUDENT BEFORE ARRIVAL** Use email, social networking platforms, instant messaging, or the phone to begin to build rapport with your student. Keep in mind your student may be excited, but also a little nervous, so connecting online is a great way to break the ice and relieve possible anxieties. You might also have the chance to “chat” with the student’s natural parents. This can be helpful, but be mindful that communicating with the natural parents too much can have unintended consequences. Keep in consideration that when the student arrives, you are now his/her parent. Heavy reliance on the natural parents for advice and suggestions on handling issues with your student can undermine your authority and cause confusion for the student.

Finally, be mindful that communicating with your student through his or her natural parents will make it difficult for the student to communicate directly with you when he/she arrives. YFU finds that open, honest communication between host families and student is the most effective approach, rather than the natural parents bridging communication between you and the student. YFU encourages you to think critically about how you communicate with natural parent before the student arrives and while the student is in country. Once the student arrives, it is best to go through the YFU support network ⁴ to solve problems that require natural parents involvement.



⁴ The YFU support network which links YFU USA staff to the international partners will be discussed in detail on page 5.



IV. Your Student

In this chapter, you will learn a bit about international students and exchange, as well as important YFU policies.

MOTIVATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

Students come on exchange for a variety of reasons, as shown on students' applications for studying abroad. It is a good idea to try to learn about your student's motivations to go on exchange when he or she first arrives. This is helpful as it will explain some of the student's goals and hopes while in the US.

Some students come on exchange because they want adventure and are curious about the world. They recognize that spending time in a new environment will be challenging and they are driven to experience it all. Other students have a specific interest in the US and want to learn as much as they can about US culture, society, politics etc. These students may have pre-conceived notions about US culture and in some cases you may have to help them open their eyes to the real US, versus the stereotypes accentuated in the media. In some applications, students articulate a desire to connect with others and form life-long relationships. These students may be especially invested in forming a tight bond with their host family or their classmates. Typically, students have many motivations representing combinations of all of these ideas, and more.

With motivations, come expectations. Many students come to the US with pre-conceived ideas about what their family, school, and community will entail. Often these expectations are based on movies, magazines, and social media; and they're typically unrealistic. Be prepared to ask your student about their expectations and then be ready to provide a gentle reality check. This will also be an opportunity for cross-cultural learning as you explain misconceptions about the US and stereotypes. See the text box featuring some common expectations that many students bring on exchange.

STUDENT PREPARATIONS

Prior to their arrival to the US, students are preparing for their exchange. Just as you are required to participate in a Host Family Pre-Arrival Orientation, students will participate in Pre-Departure Orientation in their home country. During this orientation, they will learn about YFU policies and procedures, cross-cultural communication, and adjustment skills, and they will talk about some of the challenges that they may face when living in a new environment, specifically the experience of culture shock. In addition, all students are encouraged to download and bring with them to the US, the YFU USA student handbook, Passport to the USA. Ask your student about this handbook and review it together.

All students on program must meet English language minimums. Prior to arrival, many students take intensive language classes to strengthen their skills. Also, Rosetta Stone language support is offered through partner countries for students whose English score barely meets the minimum. If you become concerned about your student's English skills, make sure to contact your Area Rep for assessment and additional resources, if deemed necessary.

STUDENT AND FAMILY POLICIES

All YFU students are expected to follow the rules and policies set by their host family, school, YFU USA and YFU international partners. The YFU policies are designed to protect the safety and well-being of participants and also to help everyone have a successful exchange experience. You can find all the YFU and YFU USA specific policies in

Common and Unrealistic Expectations

“My host family will be rich.” Due to myths and the media, some students think that all American families live in a large house and are wealthy. Your student might be surprised to be living with an “average” family. Some students come from cultures where hired help for housekeeping and cooking is common. It might be a surprise to your student when you assign household responsibilities, such as laundry or cleaning up after a meal. Use these “surprises” as an opportunity for cross-cultural learning. Talk about the diversity of America families and how the images in the movies don’t represent all Americans. Show your student how to do the assigned chores and give regular coaching on household responsibilities. Lastly, the expectation that Americans are wealthy may lead to some misconceptions about spending money. See page 22 for tips on handling money issues.

“I will travel and see all of the US.” Many students don’t understand how large the US is and they assume they can see it all. Help the student realize that their study abroad experience is not a tourist experience, but rather a family experience. Talk with your student about your family’s travel plans for the year. If possible, bring your student with you on family trips and if it is a more costly trip that would require student’s financial contributions, have that discussion with your student early so arrangements can be made.

“I will feel comfortable with my family right away.” Many times, students don’t realize how different families can be; they might expect your family to have

the same lifestyles and habits of their natural families. Talk with your student about how your family interacts and communicates with each other. It is helpful to start this discussion when the student first arrives and to learn about your student’s family so you can point out differences. Make sure to emphasize that one way is not better than the other, but rather families are diverse.

“Since the US is so liberal, I will have no rules and can do whatever I want.” Some students may come to the US with the misconception that they will have total independence and that they will be able to do whatever they want. In many cases, this is the exact opposite, especially since many suburban and rural locations have little public transportation and students rely on families to get around. YFU has found that often students are shocked at how host families require communication about where their children are going and when they will be back. For some, a curfew is unexpected.

“US School will be easy for me.” In many cases students come from schools where they take up to eight academic classes per day and there are no extracurricular activities. International students might think that school in the US will be easy, or that they do not need to be serious about academics. Host families should encourage students to experience all their US school can offer by pursuing new interests (sports, clubs, music, etc). Host families should also remind students that they are on a student visa which requires them to be good students and to follow school policies.

Appendix V. Below are some key policies which cover areas of student safety, legal issues, and behaviors that can interfere with student adjustment. Please review these policies and all the policies so you are familiar with YFU expectations for students and families.

DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES: YFU takes safety and security of students and families very seriously, and wants to minimize risks for student accidents. For this reason there are important policies and stipulations concerning student participation in activities that are considered dangerous. Many activities require training from a professional; the use of safety equipment; and additional insurance to cover any injuries. In addition, some activities require a Dangerous Activities Permission Form to be completed. See Appendix IX for the complete list of activities and the details about this policy, as well as the permission form.



DRIVING IS PROHIBITED: This includes cars, trucks, jeeps, ATV, motorcycles, boats etc. Students will be sent home for breaking this policy. Student can operate riding lawn mowers if mowing the lawn is a family chore.

TRAVEL: Student travel with their school, YFU, or with your family is encouraged. However, for legal and safety reasons there are some travel stipulations and approvals required for certain kinds of trips. These include travel without the host family for more than three days; or travel outside the USA (including Mexico and Canada); or if the host family is asking the student to contribute more than \$300; or if the travel requires the student to miss more than five days of school. See Appendix X for the full travel policy and the Permission to Travel Form.

Students and host families must follow all Department of State requirements regarding international travel and proper documentation. If a student leaves the US without proper documentation, including the DS-2019, the student's visa could be terminated in the Homeland Security Student & Exchange Visitor Information System database, SEVIS, and the student would be refused entry to the US. See Appendix III for an example of what the DS-2019 looks like. Make sure your student does not lose this important Department of State document.



SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR: Students are required to attend school on a regular basis, work hard in their classes, and maintain a good standing in the school. Poor grades due to lack of sufficient effort, disrespectful behavior, or behaviors that break school policies are not tolerated. The Area Representative monitors school performance and YFU expects all students to carry a “C” minimum.

STUDENT ADJUSTMENT: Other policies focus on behaviors that can interfere with a student's adjustment and having a successful exchange experience. These include the overuse or abuse of electronics or social media. Excessive communication with friends and family in the student's

home country will prevent successful adaptation. In addition, students are responsible for the content they post online and inappropriate social media posting can result in an early return to one's home country.

US, STATE, AND LOCAL COMMUNITY LAWS: Additionally, students are expected to follow all US, state, and local community laws. YFU policies follow US laws regarding alcohol and drug use. Student and families also need to respect local laws concerning curfews and riding as a passenger with new drivers.

POLICY VIOLATION: Any violation of YFU policies can be grounds for consideration for an early return of the student to his/her home country. Students and host families are responsible for educating themselves with and following all YFU policies and procedures, along with completing any necessary forms, as required. A complete list of all YFU policies and procedures can be found in Appendix V. Students are expected to adhere to household rules and expectations. If a student does not understand a rule or policy, the student is encouraged to speak with their host family and Area Representative. In some cases, a student might challenge rules and laws and want further explanation. YFU expects a student to be respectful, sensitive, and flexible to his or her approach when inquiring about house rules, laws, or policies that are unclear. If your student is not accepting your household rules, YFU policies, and/or US laws, contact your Area Rep so YFU can help resolve the situation.

Should household rules be broken, a host family may give a consequence they feel is appropriate. Examples include: limiting a student's social activities, limiting internet usage, or taking away electronics privileges for a period of time. The Area Representative may be informed and/or offer counseling if a student is regularly breaking families' rules. If a student continues to not follow rules, or the student breaks a very serious family rule, it is important that you inform your Area Rep so that YFU's Support Team may discuss and enforce additional consequences. Depending on the circumstances, a student may receive a warning letter or a probation letter. If the circumstances are more severe, the YFU Support Team will further review the situation and can recommend that a student return to their home country. This same process is followed if a student does not follow a YFU or school policy.

^sIf your exchange student is above the age of 18, remind the student that in the US, 18 years old signifies that a person is an adult. It is important for exchange students to understand that legally, those of age are judged by the law quite differently than minors (those under the age of 18).



V. YFU Support

In this chapter, you will learn about the YFU support network, which includes the Area Representatives, the Support Team, Field Directors, other YFU staff, and international partners. This team works together to ensure the well-being of the student and your family.

24-HOUR EMERGENCY SUPPORT LINE: 1.800.424.3691

SUPPORT SERVICE MANAGERS (SSMs) AND THE SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The YFU Support Services Department works with Area Representatives (volunteers), Field Directors (YFU staff), host families, and students to help resolve any questions or concerns that occur during the exchange year. Each field is assigned a Support Services Manager (SSM) who is trained in counseling and managing international exchange student support issues. The SSMs also operate the YFU after-hours emergency support phone line, which you can use to report and receive help with student-related legal or medical emergencies occurring after regular business hours (1.800.424.3691). SSM's goal is to work with students and families to resolve issues and ensure safety, security and emotional well-being for both the student and the family.

SSMs involvement in a challenge or problem can be initiated by a request from the Area Representative, the Field Director, the school, the host family, or the student. SSMs provide guidance to students and families directly or sometimes through Area Rep. In some cases, an SSM may seek

additional resources for a student, such as counseling, to address specific problems. SSMs are also involved in cases where a student needs to change homes or schools, requires complicated medical care, or unplanned returns to their home country for an emergency. In addition, if YFU policies are not followed, SSMs, issue letters of warning or probation.

Support from Your Area Representative

As explained earlier, your assigned Area Representative (AR) serves as the primary support person and unbiased advocate for both you and your student. When a challenge arises, your AR will confer with your field's Support Services Manager (SSM) to discuss any policy or support-related issues. Your AR, SSM and Field Director may all provide you support in a variety of ways and they are in regular communication to make sure a case is being resolved in a way that ensures safety, security and emotional well-being for all parties.

YFU FIELD DIRECTOR

As described earlier, YFU Field Directors (FD) oversee activities and are the professional representatives for YFU in a specific geographic community. The FD will typically connect with you through your volunteer Area Representative. However, when there are specific

“We can’t imagine what we would have missed out on had we not taken this leap with YFU.”

- YFU Host Family from Michigan

challenges, the Area Rep often reaches out to the FD, in addition to the SSM. FDs are specifically involved in cases when a placement needs to change and a student moves to a new home, legal issues and severe medical issues. In some cases, an FD, SSM, and an Area Rep will all talk together with you to resolve a challenge.

YFU INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

The YFU country organization from which your student is affiliated (also known as the YFU Sending Organization) is a valuable resource for SSMs and YFU USA staff. YFU international partners provide insight to your student's background and culture, and can connect quickly with students' natural families. Your SSM will contact your student's YFU country office to solicit advice, ask questions, report an incident, or request that a message is sent to your student's natural parents. The YFU Sending Organization is well-prepared to discuss sensitive issues with natural parents as they are trained in international exchange student support issues and fluent in both English and your student's native language. Please contact your SSMs

when there is an emergency, and your SSM will contact the Sending Organization or the natural parents. YFU USA's SSMs are the best resource for serious issues that require home country involvement.

WHEN A STUDENT NEEDS TO MOVE

It is normal that sometimes there is conflict as students and families adjust to one another. YFU encourages families and students to work through challenges together, as this is a natural part of the adjustment process and this process typically strengthens the family-student relationship. Area Reps are trained to mediate when there is conflict, and bringing the Area Rep in for assistance is a great way to get the relationship back on track. However, sometimes even with lots of mediation, a student needs to be moved to a new family. This can occur for a variety of reasons, and YFU does not "blame" families when a placement does not work out. If a student needs to be moved for whatever reason, SSMs and Field Directors will facilitate this process in a responsible, respectful way.

Protecting Students and Families

YFU treats issues of student safety with the utmost importance. YFU is committed to protecting students from sexual abuse and harassment by ensuring that students are safe within their host homes and communities. As a host family, it is essential to be aware and vigilant about potential causes and threats of abuse, and to understand how to address such situations. See Appendix VII on important information on abuse prevention, warning signs, and how to take action.



**“Our Area Rep was
always there to offer
support when we
needed it.”**

- YFU Host Family



VI. Cross-Cultural Learning & Tips From Other Host Families

This chapter gives you and your family an introduction to cross-cultural learning and provides some concrete tips to help your family and student adjust. In this chapter you will learn about the Cultural Iceberg, Colored Glasses, and the concept of personal culture. In addition, YFU will share some common challenges and issues to be aware of and think about before your student arrives.

CULTURAL ICEBERG AND COLORED GLASSES

YFU uses two analogies (the Cultural Iceberg and Colored Glasses) to examine cultural awareness and the process of understanding one's own culture in order to be open and ready to learn about other cultures.

YFU defines "culture" as the attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors that a group of people hold in common. By thinking about culture as an iceberg, one can see that certain aspects of culture are very visible. Behavior and what people say and do, as well as food, music, language and dress all express some components of a culture. However, there is much, much more to culture. Underneath the water line is the larger, more significant part of the iceberg. Our values, attitudes, and beliefs are important aspects of our culture that people cannot see. These abstract concepts (attitudes, beliefs, and values) influence our behavior and define who we are. While some theorists debate using the iceberg analogy to describe culture, one thing is certain, a person's culture is so much more than what is observed by the eye.

One way to think about the idea of how we see our environment and

Colored Glasses

Here is a simple fable to help us understand more about culture.

Imagine that here in the U.S., from the time of the first people, today and far into the future, everyone that was ever born or will ever be born has two legs, two arms, two eyes, a nose, a mouth AND a pair of sunglasses. The color of the lenses in the sunglasses is YELLOW. No one has ever thought it strange that the sunglasses are there because they've always been there and they are part of the human body. Everyone has them. Everything that people have seen, learned, or experienced (past, present or future) has been filtered through a yellow lens.

A few hundred miles away in another country (France, for example), from the time of the first people, today and far into the future, everyone that was ever born or will be born was born with two legs, two arms, two eyes, a nose, a mouth AND a pair of sunglasses. The color of the lens in the sunglasses is BLUE. No one has ever thought it strange that the sunglasses are there because they've always been there and they are part of the human body. Everyone has them. Everything that the French people see, learn and experience is filtered through these blue lenses.

An American who wants to go to France may have enough sense to realize that to truly learn about France s/he will have to acquire some French sunglasses so that s/he can experience France the way the French do. When the American traveler arrives in France, s/he buys some blue sunglasses and puts them on, stays for two months and feels he really is learning not only about the food, language and sites in France, but also why the French behave the way they do. S/he actually understands the French because he has been wearing their sunglasses.

He then returns to the U.S. and declares that he is now an 'expert' on France – "they see everything filtered through a GREEN lens!"



others' environments is through the colored glasses analogy developed by Michael Mercier. This fable demonstrates how people see the world through a cultural lens (or colored glasses) and that even when immersed in a new culture; one does not take off their "colored glasses". The fable examines questions and ideas around discovering a new culture and how that experience is impacted by our own culture.

PERSONAL CULTURE

YFU encourages students and families to reflect on their own personal culture. Personal culture includes ethnicity, race, family traditions, and language, as well as societal and community norms that often guide behavior. However, personal culture is so much more: individual thoughts, feelings, and perspectives make up personal culture. Talents, preferences, and dislikes are all part of one's personal culture, too; even friends and family influence our personal culture.

It is important to understand the idea of personal culture in order to prevent one from making assumptions or allowing stereotypes to influence one's judgments about an individual from another culture. YFU challenges you to think about your own personal culture and your family's culture. Recognize that, for example, your family's personal culture is different than your neighbors', even though you live on the same street, you are part of the same community, and perhaps your children attend the same schools. You share many commonalities, yet your families are still very different. Apply this thinking to preparations for your exchange student. Just because he or she is from a certain country does not guarantee that he or she will fit the stereotype. There is much more to the student and getting to know and understand his or her personal culture will result in a rich exchange experience for your family and the student.

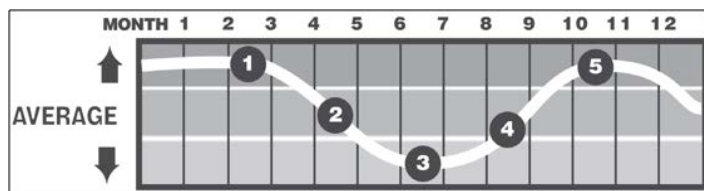
FAMILY AND STUDENT ADJUSTMENT PROCESS

Adapting to a new culture is a process and it is important to be aware of cultural differences that can potentially lead to conflict. By understanding these differences in advance you can talk with your student about the differences, rather than waiting for a miscommunication or misinterpretation of a behavior. Table manners, greetings, showing respect to adults, following family rules, taking part in household chores, communicating requests, showing thanks, and school conduct are all behaviors that are influenced by culture, and US norms for these behaviors vary even across the US. Your exchange student will likely need to learn a completely new way of behaving in order to function successfully within your family and community.

Your exchange student might behave or communicate in ways that are surprising to you. Those same behaviors may be perfectly acceptable in their own culture. Let your student know up front that you understand the challenges of living in and trying to decode a new culture. Explain that you and your family can serve as a "guide" through the adjustment process as he/she learns the US cultural "rules." Ask your student to explain the differences in cultural expectations when they encounter them, and, you can do the same in order to facilitate meaningful dialogue about cultural learning and adaptation. Furthermore, it is your responsibility as the host parent to let your exchange student know when certain behaviors are unacceptable in American or your family's culture. This may get sticky or difficult, but without pointing out inappropriate behavior, the student will not learn and he or she could be offensive to others on accident.



Both students and families go through a series of stages as they get to know one another and build a trusting relationship. Research has shown a cultural adjustment pattern where people go through stages as they learn about their environment and become more comfortable. This is known as the Adjustment Curve, and there are five stages. Understanding the Adjustment Curve will help you and your family support your student through the stages. The Curve also might help explain a student's behavior.



Stage 1: Isn't that interesting (also known as the Honeymoon Period)? The newly-arrived student is excited about everything and sees things as novel and interesting. Reactions are of pleasure and excitement as they try new foods, meet new people, and see new things. Often, the student is the center of attention. Some students skip stage 1 and 2, and jump to stage 3 as everything is too new and sometimes it is simply overwhelming.

Stage 2: The thrill is gone. Routine begins to set in and the student starts to become more accustomed to the environment. Everything is not so fascinating now that the first burst of learning and stimuli is gone. The student is no longer the center of attention.

Stage 3: How can they live like that (Culture Shock)? After several weeks or months away from home, homesickness is common, along with confusion about the new culture. This is the stage often referred to as Culture Shock as the student is often confused by behaviors, social norms, and there is a general feeling of "how can they live like that?" Sometimes there is a rejection of the new culture and the student seeks out friends who are the same nationality. Often students describe culture shock as a "I'm tired of trying" mentality. Culture fatigue is normal, as well as the confusion of trying to understand a different way of life. If holidays are approaching, some students experience various forms of depression, and the student may feel like an outsider.

Stage 4: Let's get on with it! By stage four, the student is beginning to figure out the new culture and is less surprised and confused. He or she is experienced with the host culture and things are starting to click, especially with language skills and making American friends. Home culture values, attitudes, beliefs, and ideas are no longer threatened by the new culture. Often, the student decides that there are only a few months left on program, and he/she will make the best of their time left.

Stage 5: I feel at home. The final stage is achieved when the individual functions just as comfortably in the foreign culture as in their home country. The student begins to act and react much as a native would in the host culture environment. The individual even learns to behave in the very way he or she found so distracting or disturbing in Stage 3. Not all students fully reach stage five, but it is common for students to finally feel at home towards the end of their exchange. In addition, towards the end of the exchange, students are often very perceptive about how they have changed and the stages that they worked through over the course of their exchange. Stage five and the last few months of exchange can be stressful as the student prepares to return home, but it is also a time of celebration, as both your family and the student have grown together through the experience.

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is a normal reaction to living (and even visiting) a foreign culture. Your student will likely need you and your family to provide support and help him/her navigate all the ups and downs of understanding a new



“Without doubt, hosting an exchange student is a life-changing experience!”

- YFU Host Mother

culture, and more specifically handling culture shock.

PUT YOURSELF IN THEIR SHOES

Perhaps you have experienced culture shock when traveling to another country, or even to a very different part of the United States. Many experience culture shock when starting a new job, or meeting a large group of people who are very different from one's typical friends. Anxiety, confusion, frustration, and irritation are often a part of traveling, a new job, or moving. Having to concentrate and think deeply about how to do things that are normally automatic in more familiar circumstances can be exhausting and discouraging. Try to re-connect and remember any time that you experienced culture shock. This will help you better relate to your student. There are both physiological and psychological signs when someone is experiencing culture shock. Here are some of them:

Physiological indicators

- Sleepiness or insomnia
- Compulsive eating or loss of appetite
- Recurrent minor illnesses and rashes
- Upset stomach
- Headaches

Psychological indicators

- Loneliness or boredom
- Homesickness and overly idealized feelings about home
- Sense of helplessness, over-dependence
- Irritability, or perhaps hostility
- Social withdrawal
- Unwarranted concern for cleanliness and/or physical security
- Rebellion against rules
- Crying

Any of these indicators alone do not necessarily mean that your student is finding his or her adjustment difficult. It is important to look at your student's total behavior to determine if he/she needs help in coping with culture shock.

HELPING YOUR STUDENT THROUGH CULTURE SHOCK

When your student shows signs of culture shock ask them try to identify what (even if seemingly insignificant), is contributing to the discomfort. Simply finding out what is bugging the student and trying to understand why he or she is frustrated or confused may relieve the situation a bit.

HELP THEM SET GOALS Setting goals will help your student focus on achievements and being active in his/her adjustment. Talk with your students about specific goals, like starting a conversation with a classmate, or learning how to use the public bus from your home to the local shopping mall. By setting small, but specific goals, your student will focus on gaining new skills and becoming more comfortable in the new environment. Language is an area that students can work on, for example, a student may set a goal such as learning ten new words in English each day or studying English for a set amount of time each day. Or encourage your student to set a goal that requires getting out of the house and interacting with Americans. Each successful encounter should give the student more confidence and will likely diminish the feelings associated with culture shock.

Students might have very critical (and even absurd) views of American life while they are going through culture shock.



It is not easy for us to hear criticism of American habits without becoming defensive. You may be particularly sensitive to these negative views because your family is trying to be supportive to your student. Be patient and try to understand that your student is processing a huge amount of new information and sometimes students are exhausted. This can result in extreme behavior, including being overly critical about things they don't understand. Also, keep in mind that English is not their native language, therefore they may be expressing themselves through the limited vocabulary that they have.

COMMON ADJUSTMENT CHALLENGES

Some areas of adjustment between families and students are more difficult than others. The five topics below are those most commonly cited challenges by host parents and Area Representatives.

CURFEW

Whether the idea of being “free and independent” as teenagers comes from practices in their own cultures or simply false expectations about “laissez-faire” American attitudes, many students do not like the idea of a curfew. Many students see a curfew as a lack of trust rather than a family rule carried out in their best interest. Additionally, students may not know that some cities/communities have curfew laws. For these reasons, it is important that you explain the rules in your home about what time teenagers are to be home. The same rules should apply to both your exchange student and your own children of the same age. These rules should be enforced. If this is carefully done, your student will see that you are not singling him or her out for overprotection, but that everyone in your home must adhere to a standard practice. If you do not have teenagers, you should speak to families with teenage children to find out what time they believe is reasonable as a curfew. You can also check with your Area Representative.

SETTING BOUNDARIES

Although teenagers are young adults, they are still considered minors and are children under your supervision. As such it is your role as a host parent to set boundaries for your student. They should know what those boundaries are as well as the consequences of crossing them. Make sure to go over the ground rules with your student after they have settled in, preferably within the first week of arrival. Use the handout “How Do You Do Things In Your Home” (see Appendix XIII) and review these as a family so you can set boundaries and communicate these boundaries

DISCIPLINE

It is important that in the event that your student breaks a rule, they receive a consequence for their behavior just like you would with your natural children. Appropriate consequences include “grounding” and losing television, computer, and/or device privileges. It is always critical to understand why your student broke a household rule and discuss a way to prevent the behavior from happening again. Refrain from criticizing your student, as that will put them on the defensive. It is NEVER OK to use any form of corporal (physical) punishment as consequences with a YFU student.

RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICE

Some students come to the US with either the expectation that Americans are not religious or, conversely, the concern



about being placed in a very religious family. Students may not understand the idea that religious activities can also serve a social function in the US.

Although YFU expects exchange students to participate in all family activities, religious activities are an exception. If your family attends a church, temple, synagogue, mosque, or other religious institution, invite your student to attend a service with your family. YFU hopes students will try all activities with their host families at least once, but the decision to continue to attend a religious service or not is their decision. It is not the place of host families to convert students or insist that they regularly attend religious services.

If your student is of a different denomination or faith, he or she may prefer to attend his/her own house of worship. It would be helpful if you could arrange for the student to go with a member of that church, temple, etc., so he/she can be introduced to youth activities there. Youth groups can be an excellent opportunity for new friendships and activities.

Please try to be sensitive to your student’s religious feelings and beliefs. Religion is a very intimate, personal matter and your student may be very religious in a manner that is unfamiliar to you. On the other hand, you may have a student who is not interested in religion at all. This is an area in which you and your student need to be as understanding and tolerant as possible with one another.

DRINKING

The legal drinking age in the US is 21 years of age. Violations of any US law could be cause for Early Return (see page 36 for the policy on alcohol).

Remember that many students come from cultures where drinking wine with meals is customary. Many European countries allow teens to drink beer in public places, and in some parts of Europe, 16 year-olds can drink any alcoholic beverage in public. Many students are accustomed to drinking beer or wine, but culturally, it is not acceptable to be drunk. Often exchange students are surprised at the

attitude of American youth about drinking just to get drunk. If there appears to be a problem with your student and drinking, contact your Area Representative.

SIBLING RIVALRY

One of the most common problems that develops between exchange students and host sisters and brothers is jealousy. While “sibling rivalry” is perfectly natural, it creates unique tensions in a host family. In some cases, the host sisters and brothers who thought the exchange student would make them special now find that instead they have to share their friends, their parents’ attention, and sometimes, even their bedrooms. The exchange student is not likely to understand the host siblings’ feelings since from his or her own perspective, the Americans have their own surroundings,



their own families, and no language or school adjustment difficulties.

The number, ages, and gender of the children in the family can determine the nature of sibling rivalry. In families with an only child, the YFU student is the host child’s first experience with sharing parental attention. In larger families, this issue has already been confronted. Competition, jealousy, and hostility between younger children and the YFU student seem to be the most difficult sibling problems.

There are many ways to work through these issues within the family so as to promote growth in all family members. All of your “children” will develop both good and bad feelings about each other, just as they do with natural brothers and sisters. Some of the following suggestions may help you avoid or solve the problem if you find sibling rivalry developing in your home.

First, try not to ask the host brother or sister to make sacrifices for the exchange student. Ideally your own

children were part of the decision-making process of inviting an exchange student to live with you. They can be given a share of the preparations for the new arrival. But when your student arrives, they should not be expected to take him or her with them when going out, unless they want to.

Second, your exchange student, if possible, should receive about the same amount of time and attention as your natural children. Your natural children should not receive less parental attention because there is a new family member in their home. In fact, your natural children may need more of your time while they are trying to adjust to a new brother or sister. The real question is, of course, how to determine if sibling rivalry has gotten out of hand. Talk with your children to find out how they are feeling. Knowing how they feel will help you decide if you need help from YFU. If you need help, contact your Area Representative.

MONEY

As a host family, you are not expected to bear any financial burden beyond the normal necessities of food and housing. This means that you will provide three meals a day, offering a bagged lunch or lunch money for school days. If you have not had a child of high school age before, investigate your school’s lunch costs before school starts. Lunches can cost as little as \$3 or as much as \$8 depending on where you live in the US. An inexpensive way to provide lunch is to prepare a bag lunch. Making lunch each day can be part of his/her daily responsibilities.

Some schools offer students the option to leave campus at lunchtime. This can be more costly than the school-provided lunch. If this is within your budget, you may wish to offer an off-campus lunch to your student every now and then. Many former host families recommend that you offer a bag lunch and if your student decides not to accept it, they can receive money from you equal to what you would have paid for the bag lunch. Any lunch expenses over that amount will be the responsibility of the student.

For personal expenses, your student should have brought, or should receive sufficient money from his or her natural parents and should not require financial assistance from you. Some families have made it a practice to give their exchange students the same allowances as their own children in exchange for the household chores each child assumes. Former families have felt that this fostered their family relationships. This is not necessary of course, but it might work in your family, too.

One suggestion for finances is to pay for those expenses that you also assume for your own children and not those that you expect your children to pay for themselves from

their allowance or after-school jobs. For instance, if your family goes out together to dinner or the movies, the parents typically pay for this family activity. When your student or teenager goes out with a friend, they probably pay themselves. Do not start paying for activities at the beginning of the exchange year that you do not intend to pay for all year long.

In most cases, students communicate with family back home through free internet services such as Google chat, skype, or one of the many others. If using a phone is necessary, YFU recommends students use a pre-paid calling card to avoid bills to your telephone. This will also help students budget their calls better. If you add your student to your cell phone plan, payment for phone service needs to be worked out in advance and paid immediately when your bill arrives in order to avoid any misunderstandings.

To the extent possible, YFU informs exchange students and their natural families about the climate, clothing needs, and costs before students come to the US. Many students wait to purchase clothes in the US because they may be cheaper than in their own countries. Students may need some advice on where to shop.

YFU encourages you to talk with your exchange student about the amount of money your student has brought and how long it is supposed to last. Many students will have a credit card or a debit card provided by their natural parents in order to access funds. Students are encouraged to do research prior to their arrival in the US regarding which banks will facilitate cash withdraws via debit card/ credit card. Host families are encouraged to explain to the student about ATM and foreign currency transaction fees. If necessary, your student can open a bank account in the US. **YFU recommends that you do not open a joint account or co-sign any account with your student.**



Some of the students, especially younger students, may not know how to manage their money, and you may find it necessary to teach your student basic budgeting skills or to assume some supervision over spending, in the form of a savings account or a weekly allowance. As in other areas of the student's life in your home, talk it over openly and candidly, so that it is understood that your help is in the student's best interest.

Informal part-time work (such as baby-sitting, cutting the lawn, or other light yard work) can sometimes be arranged so that the student can earn money for minor expenses. Current government policies do not permit teenage students to take regular part-time jobs during their stay in the US. If your student works over 10 hours per week, that means too much time is being spent away from host family, social, and school activities (see page 39 for the policy on employment).

Your student has been told to avoid borrowing or lending money, even with the host family. Natural parents have been asked not to wire funds directly to a host family. If this must be done to pay a debt, contact your Area Representative to have this authorized through the formal YFU support network. If, because of an emergency situation, you loan money to your student, you and your student should write up an agreement including: the date, the amount owed, the date by which they will pay you back, and both of your signatures. It is also a good idea to let the Area Representative know about this writing. You can also send an email from the natural parents saying that they understand this situation has occurred and they give their approval to the agreement. YFU is not responsible for debts that occur between host families and students.

If your student lacks what you feel are necessary funds, and you are unable to absorb small expenses, contact your Area Representative so that better financial arrangements can be made with the student's natural parents. Before intervening, YFU requires students to request money from home and to inform YFU of their arrangements with natural families.

OPEN, DIRECT COMMUNICATION IS BEST

There is a story of a student who came to an Area Representative in tears after overhearing her host mother on the phone complaining to a neighbor about all the student's bad habits. Unfortunately, the host mother had never alerted the student to her behaviors or discussed how the student could adjust her habits. YFU tells students that if they have problems they should talk to their host family or Area Representative and not the neighbor or a friend down the street. The same courtesy should be given to the student. Open communication is key; talk with your student

if he/she has habits that are culturally unacceptable in America or in your home.

TIPS FROM FAMILIES

Below are some tips that past families wanted to share with you. These will help you get through the first 24 hours, the first week, and onwards through the exchange.

THE FIRST 24 HOURS

Plan some face-to-face time before you leave the airport. The airport is a busy and an overwhelming place for many, especially for student coming off a long, international flight. Plan to stop by at an airport cafeteria or a nearby café to have a snack and to meet one another face-to-face. This will help break the ice and will make the ride home more comfortable and relaxed. This can be important if you live far from the airport and the student has not eaten in several hours.

9-1-1 and Emergency Situations

Don't forget to talk with your student about emergencies. Is your area is prone to tornadoes or earthquakes? Your student may have never experienced anything like this and has no idea about typical safety practices. Review family safety plans, such as going to the basement for tornadoes, or the location of the fire extinguisher. Take nothing for granted with safety, talk with your student about extreme weather and how your family stays safe. Explain the uses of 9-1-1 and provide examples of when the student should use this service. Lastly, make sure your student learns the spelling of your names, your cell phone number, and your home address within the first 48 hours of arrival.

Remember, your student will probably arrive very tired.

Students likely feel over-stimulated and overwhelmed. Give your student a chance to just rest or sleep if that is most appropriate to his or her state of health and mind. Try to keep a flexible schedule for the first few days, but make every effort to be available to them. Avoid inviting guests over the first day, but introduce your new family member to neighbors and friends within the next few days.

Orient your student to your home. First, show them their room, closet, dresser, the bathroom and towels, and the kitchen. Let your student know where to get a glass for water and what food is available to eat if he or she wakes up

before you. In other words, provide information on the most basic necessities without overwhelming him or her. Mention only family rules or procedures that your student needs to know immediately, such as knocking on the bathroom door. Let them know you plan to discuss family rules in more details in a few days.

THE FIRST WEEKS

During the first few weeks, plan to orient your student to the immediate surroundings within your neighborhood and community so they can begin to function on their own.

Introduce the family and “who does what and when”.

Each family has its own unique rules and procedures to make living together possible. You may not realize that your family has these “unwritten rules” until you have your exchange student in your home, so keep your eyes and mind open to your own rules and write them down. Plan a family meeting to go over family rules and comings-and-goings. Be upfront about what can and cannot be done. **Do not store up your complaints; open communication is always the best!**

Family “comings and goings” may be confusing at first for your exchange student. Establish a large family calendar, place it in a well-traveled area, and encourage your student to inform you of his or her activities as far in advance as possible, particularly if transportation is needed. Many students have trouble adjusting to this typical American custom, so inform them early and remind them often.

Family Communication. Think about how your family communicates. Do you text message, or do family members plans way in advance? How should your student let you know (or ask for permission) about social outings? Inform the student about how your family communicates and your expectations about communication.

Introduce the neighborhood. Your student will want to see the surroundings and know how to use public transportation, if available. If your student is less accustomed to getting around on their own, they may enjoy making a map of your area, putting in names of neighbors, locations of banks, grocery stores, etc. and accompany you on your trips to these destinations.

Your student may wish to go shopping, change money, or access cash from a cash machine or bank. Help the student with all of these tasks. Doing these simple things in an unfamiliar place is always a challenge, so he or she will need your assistance and guidance. Note that your student might be excited by all the American things to buy. Try to help them spend thoughtfully in the first few months.

Take your student on a tour of the school. Many students will be eager to see where they will be going to school. Some will still need to be registered for classes. Show your

student how he or she will get to school, either by walking, taking the bus, biking (with a helmet) or car-pooling. If there are no other children in your family going to the same school, introduce your student to your neighborhood high school students, so that he or she is accompanied the first day.

Activities and friends. Students arrive feeling uncertain about when and where they can do things they enjoyed at home. Provide opportunities for your student to meet other people their own age, or to find a partner to share an activity that your student enjoys. Once you help to establish the connections, encourage your student to take responsibility for broadening his or her contacts.

Take it easy. If you make great plans for a night out, and suddenly your student asks to be excused, try not to be insulted or upset. He or she may simply need to regroup, to catch a breath, or to regain a little reflection and processing time.

Treat your student like one of the family. In the beginning, many host families treat their student like guests. If this continues beyond the first day or two, it is harmful for both your family and the student as it will likely confuse your student as to what is expected throughout the year. Gradually work them into your family routines, rules, and responsibilities. Be yourself, and do not treat your student differently from your other children.

Physical adjustments. Minor physical upsets sometimes occur because of the big changes in the student's life. It is not uncommon for students to experience stomach troubles, irregularity, or missed menstrual periods within the first few weeks of their stay. These come from a combination of many factors such as change in diet, time difference, anxiety, excitement, and culture shock. As your student begins to feel more comfortable and develops a routine, the symptoms will likely disappear. If not, consult a doctor and report it to your Area Representative.

Make medical arrangements (Including Emergencies). All students have a physical examination before coming to the US. Before a student arrives, YFU obtains written release (on the Student Health Certificate) from their natural parents to obtain emergency medical attention in the US if it is needed. You may need this form in the event that your students needs to receive medical care. Make sure to make a copy of the medical release and the student's insurance card and carry them with you at all times in case of an emergency. **When a student receives medical treatment, the host parents should never claim themselves as the responsible party.** Instead, the student, YFU, or the natural parents should be claimed as the responsible party in such cases. All serious medical problems and emergencies should be reported to the YFU Area Representative, Field Director, or the Support Service Manager.

Read the insurance information carefully with your student. Most students need help to understand their insurance and how to file claims. Do not pay for your student's medical expenses, and make sure your student knows that he or she is responsible for all medical expenses after insurance payment.

Take your student to receive necessary immunizations. The availability of specific immunizations varies around the world. Your student may have arrived without the shots needed to enroll in school and may be required to take these shots upon arrival. Help them obtain these shots, and make sure they have enough money to pay for them, as the insurance doesn't cover such expenses. In some areas, the local county health department (or equivalent) will offer the immunization at very little or no cost. Contact your local Health Department for details. Many retail drug store chains now have freestanding health clinics which offer immunizations and the physical exams that are required to participate in sports.



After the Honeymoon Period (stage 1 of the Adjustment Curve) and throughout the exchange

Many students and host families experience the "Honeymoon" period when everyone is on their best behaviors and everything and everyone is new and wonderful. After several weeks, however, routine sets in and things start to look more normal and less exciting. Problems may arise that you didn't expect at first. Allow yourself, your student or your family some time to learn about the family rules and adjust to each other. Create an open atmosphere for sharing, and remember that differences will be with you all year. Involve your Area Representative in the early stage of these normal struggles before things become too

difficult to manage. Remember, exchange is not always fun and pleasant, and it is normal to have challenges along the way. Hopefully, by going through these ups and downs, your family grows and is enriched by this experience.

YOUR LAST WEEKS TOGETHER

Your family and your student may find it difficult to think of parting after so much time together. This is especially true if your student has become a real “son” or “daughter” to you and feels very much at home in the US. Some families have said that “letting go” was the most difficult of all their YFU experiences. You may have mixed feelings about your student’s impending departure – resenting their impending departure, envying their natural families and friends back home, and feeling anxious about how your family would re-adjust to the void that your student leaves behind. Pay attention to these feelings and allow yourself to feel your mixed emotions. Share your feelings with each other. Reach out to your Area Representative or other host families who may likely be experiencing very similar feelings.

Your student will also probably have mixed emotions about leaving. They may be feeling sad about leaving your family, American friends, and the US; excited about seeing family and friends back home again; anxious about if he or she will fit back in upon returning home. This is particularly so if your student is returning to a less-than-ideal situation back home.

While a student lives in the US with an American family, he or she changes a great deal. The natural parents of your student may not be prepared for the growth, confidence, and “worldly” view that they see in their child when he or she returns home. The student also may not realize how much he or she has changed because the change was gradual. You can also help your student prepare for the “reverse culture shock.” Talk with your student about the growth in his or her abilities and changes in attitudes and outlook since their arrival in the US, how he or she remembers the natural family, how the family and country probably have changed over the year, and how the natural parents may see the “new” person upon return. This may help prepare your student for the re-entry into his or her natural family and culture. Be sure you and your student attend the Re-Entry Orientation offered by YFU in your area. Encourage the student to share what he or she has learned with your family.

“Everything was planned perfectly, from arrival to departure. I learned much more than I ever expected to.”

- YFU student from Denmark



APPENDIX I: YFU CONTACT INFORMATION

In addition to the local numbers listed, a toll-free number, **1.866.4.YFU.USA** (1.866.493.8872), will automatically connect you with the Regional Office covering your state.

YFU USA NATIONAL OFFICE

641 S Street NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20001 USA
Phone: **202.774.5200**
Fax: **202.588.7571**
yfuusa.org

SAGINAW SATELLITE OFFICE

4305 State Street, Suite 201
Saginaw, MI 48603 USA
Phone: **989.777.4420**
Fax: **989.777.3270**
Toll Free: **1.866.4.YFU.USA** (1.866.493.8872)
yfuusa.org

GREAT LAKES

States covered: **Illinois (IL), Michigan (MI), Wisconsin (WI)**

WESTERN

States covered: **Alaska (AK), Arizona (AZ), Arkansas (AR), California (CA), Colorado (CO), Hawaii (HI), Idaho (ID), Iowa (IA), Kansas (KS), Louisiana (LA), Minnesota (MN), Mississippi (MS), Missouri (MO), Montana (MT), Nebraska (NE), Nevada (NV), New Mexico (NM), North Dakota (ND), Oklahoma (OK), Oregon (OR), South Dakota (SD), Texas (TX), Utah (UT), Washington (WA), Wyoming (WY)**

EASTERN

States covered: **Alabama (AL), Connecticut (CT), Delaware (DE), District of Columbia (DC), Florida (FL), Georgia (GA), Indiana (IN), Kentucky (KY), Maine (ME), Maryland (MD), Massachusetts (MA), New Hampshire (NH), New Jersey (NJ), North Carolina (NC), New York (NY), Ohio (OH), Pennsylvania (PA), Rhode Island (RI), South Carolina (SC), Tennessee (TN), Virginia (VA), Vermont (VT), West Virginia (WV)**

APPENDIX II: US DEPARTMENT OF STATE HOST FAMILY LETTER



United States Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Washington, DC 20547

Dear American Host Family,

On behalf of the U.S. Department of State, thank you for volunteering to host a Secondary School Student Program exchange visitor. This is a unique opportunity for you to experience the richness and diversity of a culture different from your own. Through this program, you are among thousands of American families who volunteer to serve as citizen ambassadors of the United States.

High School programs have been a part of U.S. public diplomacy efforts since 1949. Approximately 25,000 high school students from around the world participate in this program each year. The good will of American host families in opening their homes to these young international visitors is vital to this program's success.

The health, safety, and well-being of the young people who participate in this program are our highest priority. A host family has many responsibilities, the most important of which is properly caring for an international student during the course of his/her program. The student is a guest in your home and in our country and you may be the first "real Americans" this young person meets. How you relate with this student will create a lasting image of our country and its people.

I hope this will be a rewarding experience for you and the exchange student. It is extremely important that you notify your program sponsor if you have any concerns or if the student's personal health, safety, or well-being is threatened in any way. If the sponsor is not responsive to your concerns, please contact the Department of State directly at the 24 hour toll free number (1-866-283-9090) that has been established for this purpose. In addition, the program sponsor provides each student with an identification card, which lists your address and telephone numbers, separate telephone numbers for immediate contact with the sponsor organization and the sponsor's local representative, and the Department of State's toll free phone number and email address (jvisas@state.gov). The student should keep this card with him/her at all times and contact us if s/he has any concerns about his/her health, safety, or well-being.

The Department of State is deeply appreciative of your kindness and generosity in making this educational and cultural experience possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robin J. Lerner".

Robin J. Lerner
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Private Sector Exchange

APPENDIX III: DS-2019 SAMPLE FORM



U.S. Department of State

CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR EXCHANGE VISITORS (J VISA) STATUS

OMB APPROVAL NO.

07/31/2014

ESTIMATED BURDEN TIME: 45 min

*See Page 2

1. Family Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Name: _____ Gender: _____		J-1
Date of Birth (mm-dd-yyyy): _____ City of Birth: _____ Country of Birth: _____ Citizenship Country Code: _____ Citizenship Country: _____		
Legal Permanent Residence Country Code: _____ Legal Permanent Residence Country: _____ Position Code: _____ Position: _____		
Primary Site of Activity: _____		
2. Program Sponsor: Youth For Understanding USA, Inc. Program Number: _____		
Participating Program Official Description: _____		
Purpose of this form: _____		
3. Form Covers Period:	4. Exchange Visitor Category:	
From (mm-dd-yyyy): _____	Subject/Field Code: _____ Subject/Field Code Remarks: _____	
To (mm-dd-yyyy): _____		
5. During the period covered by this form, the total estimated financial support (in U.S. \$) is to be provided to the exchange visitor by: _____		
6. U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE / DHS USE OR CERTIFICATION BY RESPONSIBLE OFFICER OR ALTERNATE RESPONSIBLE OFFICER THAT A NOTIFICATION COPY OF THIS FORM HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE (INCLUDE DATE).		
7.		
Name of Official Preparing Form		Title
641 S Street, NW		
Suite 200		
Washington, DC 20003		
Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer		Telephone Number
Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer		Date (mm-dd-yyyy)
8. Statement of Responsible Officer for Releasing Sponsor (FOR TRANSFER OF PROGRAM)		
Effective date (mm-dd-yyyy): _____ Transfer of this exchange visitor from program number _____ sponsored by _____ to the program specified in item 2 is necessary or highly desirable and is in conformity with the objectives of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended.		
Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer		Date (mm-dd-yyyy) of Signature
PRELIMINARY ENDORSEMENT OF CONSULAR OR IMMIGRATION OFFICER REGARDING SECTION 212(e) OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT AND PL 94-484, AS AMENDED (see item 1(a) of page 2).		
The Exchange Visitor in the above program:		
1. <input type="checkbox"/> Not subject to the two-year residence requirement.		
2. <input type="checkbox"/> Subject to two-year residence requirement based on:		
A. <input type="checkbox"/> Government financing and/or		
B. <input type="checkbox"/> The Exchange Visitor Skills List and/or		
C. <input type="checkbox"/> PL 94-484 as amended		
(ALL USAID PARTICIPANTS G-2-00263 AND ALL ALIEN PHYSICIANS SPONSORED BY P-3-04510 ARE SUBJECT TO THE TWO-YEAR HOME RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT)		
Name _____		Title _____
Signature of Consular or Immigration Officer _____		Date (mm-dd-yyyy) _____
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE FINAL DETERMINATION REGARDING 212 (e).		
TRAVEL VALIDATION BY RESPONSIBLE OFFICER (Maximum validation period is 1 year *)		
*EXCEPT: Maximum validation period is up to 6 months for Short-term Scholars and 4 months for Camp Counselors and Summer Work/Travel.		
(1) Exchange Visitor is in good standing at the present time		
Date (mm-dd-yyyy) _____		
Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer _____		
(2) Exchange Visitor is in good standing at the present time		
Date (mm-dd-yyyy) _____		
Signature of Responsible Officer or Alternate Responsible Officer _____		
EXCHANGE VISITOR CERTIFICATION: I have read and agree with the statement in item 2 on page 2 of this document.		
Signature of Applicant _____		Date (mm-dd-yyyy) _____
Place _____		

APPENDIX IV: DEPARTMENT OF STATE J-1 VISA REGULATIONS

CFR TITLE 22: FOREIGN RELATIONS PART 62—EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM

NOTE ON DEPARTMENT OF STATE REGULATIONS

YFU USA operates in accordance with the US Department of State regulations governing Exchange Visitor Programs. These regulations specify the criteria and sponsor obligations of teenage exchange programs. They are designed to protect the interests and welfare of the students, host families, and schools participating in such programs. The regulations cover a range of areas including participant age, language requirements, insurance, financial responsibility, and more.

Please find below a copy of these regulations, as required by the US Department of State. For more information please visit the US Department of State online at: ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=1bc531bf257789e45b3049bff8b5Od64&r=PART&n=22y1.0.1.7.35

J-1 VISA REGULATIONS

PART 62—EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM

§62.25 Secondary school students.

A. Purpose. This section governs Department of State designated exchange visitor programs under which foreign secondary school students are afforded the opportunity to study in the United States at accredited public or private secondary schools for an academic semester or an academic year, while living with American host families or residing at accredited U.S. boarding schools.

B. Program sponsor eligibility. Eligibility for designation as a secondary school student exchange visitor program sponsor is limited to organizations:

With tax-exempt status as conferred by the Internal Revenue Service pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; and

Which are United States citizens as such term is defined in §62.2.

C. Program eligibility. Secondary school student exchange visitor programs designated by the Department of State must:

Require all exchange students to be enrolled and participating in a full course of study at an accredited academic institution;

Allow entry of exchange students for not less than one academic semester (or quarter equivalency) and not more than two academic semesters (or quarter equivalency) duration; and

Ensure that the program is conducted on a U.S. academic calendar year basis, except for students from countries whose academic year is opposite that of the United States. Exchange students may begin an exchange program in the second semester of a U.S. academic year only if specifically permitted to do so, in writing, by the school in which the exchange student is enrolled. In all cases, sponsors must notify both the host family and school prior to the exchange student's arrival in the United States whether the placement is for an academic semester, an academic year, or a calendar year.

D. Program administration. Sponsors must ensure that all organizational officers, employees, representatives, agents, and volunteers acting on their behalf:

Are adequately trained. Sponsors must administer training for local coordinators that specifically includes, at a minimum, instruction in: Conflict resolution; procedures for handling and reporting emergency situations; awareness or knowledge of child safety standards; information on sexual conduct codes; procedures for handling and reporting allegations of sexual misconduct or any other allegations of abuse or neglect; and the criteria to be used to screen potential host families and exercise good judgment when identifying what constitutes suitable host family placements. In addition to their own training, sponsors must ensure that all local coordinators complete the Department of State mandated training module prior to their appointment as a local coordinator or assumption of duties. The Department of State training module will include instruction designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Exchange Visitor Program; its public diplomacy objectives; and the Secondary School Student category rules and regulations. Sponsors must demonstrate the individual's successful completion of all initial training requirements and that annual refresher training is also successfully completed.

Are adequately supervised. Sponsors must create and implement organization-specific standard operating procedures for the supervision of local coordinators designed to prevent or deter fraud, abuse, or misconduct in the performance of the duties of these employees/agents/volunteers. They must also have sufficient internal controls to ensure that such employees/agents/volunteers comply with such standard operating procedures.

Have been vetted annually through a criminal background check

(which must include a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry);

Place no exchange student with his or her relatives;

Make no exchange student placement beyond 120 miles of the home of the local coordinator authorized to act on the sponsor's behalf in both routine and emergency matters arising from that exchange student's participation in the Exchange Visitor Program;

Make no monetary payments or other incentives to host families;

Provide exchange students with reasonable access to their natural parents and family by telephone and e-mail;

Make certain that the exchange student's government issued documents (i.e., passports, Forms DS-2019) are not removed from his/her possession;

Conduct the host family orientation after the host family has been fully vetted and accepted;

Refrain, without exception, from acting as:

Both a host family and a local coordinator or area supervisor for an exchange student;

A host family for one sponsor and a local coordinator for another sponsor; or

A local coordinator for any exchange student over whom he/she has a position of trust or authority such as the student's teacher or principal. This requirement is not applicable to a boarding school placement.

Maintain, at minimum, a monthly schedule of personal contact with the exchange student. The first monthly contact between the local coordinator and the exchange student must be in person. All other contacts may take place in-person, on the phone, or via electronic mail and must be properly documented. The sponsor is responsible for ensuring that issues raised through such contacts are promptly and appropriately addressed.

That a sponsor representative other than the local coordinator who recruited, screened and selected the host family visit the exchange student/host family home within the first or second month following the student's placement in the home.

Maintain, at a minimum, a monthly schedule of personal contact with the host family. At least once during the fall semester and at least once during the spring semester, (i.e., twice during the academic year) the contact by the local coordinator with the host family must be in person. All other contacts may take place in person, on the phone, or via electronic mail and must be properly documented. The sponsor is responsible for ensuring the issues raised through such contacts are promptly and appropriately addressed.

That host schools are provided contact information for the local organizational representative (including name, direct phone number, and e-mail address), the program sponsor, and the Department's Office of Designation; and

Adhere to all regulatory provisions set forth in this part and all additional terms and conditions governing program administration that the Department may impose.

E. Student selection. In addition to satisfying the requirements of §62.10(a), sponsors must ensure that all participants in a designated secondary school student exchange visitor program:

Are secondary school students in their home countries who have not completed more than 11 years of primary and secondary study, exclusive of kindergarten; or are at least 15 years of age, but not more than 18 years and six months of age as of the program start date;

Demonstrate maturity, good character, and scholastic aptitude; and

Have not previously participated in an academic year or semester secondary school student exchange program in the United States or attended school in the United States in either F-1 or J-1 visa status.

F. Student enrollment.

Sponsors must secure prior written acceptance for the enrollment of any exchange student in a United States public or private secondary school. Such prior acceptance must:

Be secured from the school principal or other authorized school administrator of the school or school system that the exchange student will attend; and

Include written arrangements concerning the payment of tuition or waiver thereof if applicable.

Under no circumstance may a sponsor facilitate the entry into the United States of an exchange student for whom a written school placement has not been secured.

Under no circumstance may a sponsor charge a student private school tuition if such arrangements are not finalized in writing prior to the issuance of Form DS-2019.

Sponsors must maintain copies of all written acceptances for a minimum of three years and make such documents available for Department of State inspection upon request.

Sponsors must provide the school with a translated "written English language summary" of the exchange student's complete academic course work prior to commencement of school, in addition to any additional documents the school may require. Sponsors must inform the prospective host school of any student who has completed secondary school in his/her home country.

Sponsors may not facilitate the enrollment of more than five exchange students in one school unless the school itself has requested, in writing, the placement of more than five students from the sponsor.

Upon issuance of a Form DS-2019 to a prospective participant, the sponsor accepts full responsibility for securing a school and host family placement for the student, except in cases of voluntary

student withdrawal or visa denial.

G. Student orientation. In addition to the orientation requirements set forth at §62.10, all sponsors must provide exchange students, prior to their departure from their home countries, with the following information:

A summary of all operating procedures, rules, and regulations governing student participation in the exchange visitor program along with a detailed summary of travel arrangements;

A copy of the Department's welcome letter to exchange students;

Age and language appropriate information on how to identify and report sexual abuse or exploitation;

A detailed profile of the host family with whom the exchange student will be placed. The profile must state whether the host family is either a permanent placement or a temporary-arrival family;

A detailed profile of the school and community in which the exchange student will be placed. The profile must state whether the student will pay tuition; and

An identification card, that lists the exchange student's name, United States host family placement address and telephone numbers (landline and cellular), sponsor name and main office and emergency telephone numbers, name and telephone numbers (landline and cellular) of the local coordinator and area representative, the telephone number of Department's Office of Designation, and the Secondary School Student program toll free emergency telephone number. The identification card must also contain the name of the health insurance provider and policy number. Such cards must be corrected, reprinted, and reissued to the student if changes in contact information occur due to a change in the student's placement.

H. Student extra-curricular activities. Exchange students may participate in school sanctioned and sponsored extra-curricular activities, including athletics, if such participation is:

Authorized by the local school district in which the student is enrolled; and

Authorized by the state authority responsible for determination of athletic eligibility, if applicable. Sponsors shall not knowingly be party to a placement (inclusive of direct placements) based on athletic abilities, whether initiated by a student, a natural or host family, a school, or any other interested party.

Any placement in which either the student or the sending organization in the foreign country is party to an arrangement with any other party, including receiving school personnel, whereby the student will attend a particular school or live with a particular host family must be reported to the particular school and the National Federation of State High School Associations prior to the first day of classes.

Student employment. Exchange students may not be employed

on either a full or part-time basis but may accept sporadic or intermittent employment such as babysitting or yard work.

J. Host family application and selection. Sponsors must adequately screen and select all potential host families and at a minimum must:

Provide potential host families with a detailed summary of the Exchange Visitor Program and of their requirements, obligations and commitment to host;

Utilize a standard application form developed by the sponsor that includes, at a minimum, all data fields provided in Appendix F, "Information to be Collected on Secondary School Student Host Family Applications". The form must include a statement stating that: "The income data collected will be used solely for the purposes of determining that the basic needs of the exchange student can be met, including three quality meals and transportation to and from school activities." Such application form must be signed and dated at the time of application by all potential host family applicants. The host family application must be designed to provide a detailed summary and profile of the host family, the physical home environment (to include photographs of the host family home's exterior and grounds, kitchen, student's bedroom, bathroom, and family or living room), family composition, and community environment. Exchange students are not permitted to reside with their relatives.

Conduct an in-person interview with all family members residing in the home where the student will be living;

Ensure that the host family is capable of providing a comfortable and nurturing home environment and that the home is clean and sanitary; that the exchange student's bedroom contains a separate bed for the student that is neither convertible nor inflatable in nature; and that the student has adequate storage space for clothes and personal belongings, reasonable access to bathroom facilities, study space if not otherwise available in the house and reasonable, unimpeded access to the outside of the house in the event of a fire or similar emergency. An exchange student may share a bedroom, but with no more than one other individual of the same sex.

Ensure that the host family has a good reputation and character by securing two personal references from within the community from individuals who are not relatives of the potential host family or representatives of the sponsor (i.e., field staff or volunteers), attesting to the host family's good reputation and character;

Ensure that the host family has adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations and is not receiving needs-based government subsidies for food or housing;

Verify that each member of the host family household 18 years of age and older, as well as any new adult member added to the household, or any member of the host family household who will turn eighteen years of age during the exchange student's stay in that household, has undergone a criminal background check

(which must include a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry);

Maintain a record of all documentation on a student's exchange program, including but not limited to application forms, background checks, evaluations, and interviews, for all selected host families for a period of three years following program completion; and

Ensure that a potential single adult host parent without a child in the home undergoes a secondary level review by an organizational representative other than the individual who recruited and selected the applicant. Such secondary review should include demonstrated evidence of the individual's friends or family who can provide an additional support network for the exchange student and evidence of the individual's ties to his/her community. Both the exchange student and his or her natural parents must agree in writing in advance of the student's placement with a single adult host parent without a child in the home.

K. Host family orientation. In addition to the orientation requirements set forth in §62.10, sponsors must:

Inform all host families of the philosophy, rules, and regulations governing the sponsor's exchange visitor program, including examples of "best practices" developed by the exchange community;

Provide all selected host families with a copy of the Department's letter of appreciation to host families;

Provide all selected host families with a copy of Department of State-promulgated Exchange Visitor Program regulations;

Advise all selected host families of strategies for cross-cultural interaction and conduct workshops to familiarize host families with cultural differences and practices; and

Advise host families of their responsibility to inform the sponsor of any and all material changes in the status of the host family or student, including, but not limited to, changes in address, finances, employment and criminal arrests.

L. Host family placement.

Sponsors must secure, prior to the student's departure from his or her home country, a permanent or arrival host family placement for each exchange student participant. Sponsors may not:

Facilitate the entry into the United States of an exchange student for whom a host family placement has not been secured;

Place more than one exchange student with a host family without the express prior written consent of the host family, the natural parents, and the students being placed. Under no circumstance may more than two exchange students be placed with a host family, or in the home of a local coordinator, regional coordinator, or volunteer. Sponsors may not place students from the same countries or with the same native languages in a single home.

Prior to the student's departure from his or her home country,

sponsors must advise both the exchange student and host family, in writing, of the respective family compositions and backgrounds of each, whether the host family placement is a permanent or arrival placement, and facilitate and encourage the exchange of correspondence between the two.

In the event of unforeseen circumstances that necessitate a change of host family placement, the sponsor must document the reason(s) necessitating such change and provide the Department of State with an annual statistical summary reflecting the number and reason(s) for such change in host family placement in the program's annual report.

M. Advertising and marketing for the recruitment of host families. In addition to the requirements set forth in §62.9 in advertising and promoting for host family recruiting, sponsors must:

Utilize only promotional materials that professionally, ethically, and accurately reflect the sponsor's purposes, activities, and sponsorship;

Not publicize the need for host families via any public media with announcements, notices, advertisements, etc. that are not sufficiently in advance of the exchange student's arrival, appeal to public pity or guilt, imply in any way that an exchange student will be denied participation if a host family is not found immediately, or identify photos of individual exchange students and include an appeal for an immediate family;

Not promote or recruit for their programs in any way that compromises the privacy, safety or security of participants, families, or schools. Specifically, sponsors shall not include personal student data or contact information (including addresses, phone numbers or email addresses) or photographs of the student on Web sites or in other promotional materials; and

Ensure that access to exchange student photographs and personally identifying information, either online or in print form, is only made available to potential host families who have been fully vetted and selected for program participation. Such information, if available online, must also be password protected.

N. Reporting requirements. Along with the annual report required by regulations set forth at §62.15, sponsors must file with the Department of State the following information:

Sponsors must immediately report to the Department any incident or allegation involving the actual or alleged sexual exploitation or any other allegations of abuse or neglect of an exchange student. Sponsors must also report such allegations as required by local or state statute or regulation. Failure to report such incidents to the Department and, as required by state law or regulation, to local law enforcement authorities shall be grounds for the suspension and revocation of the sponsor's Exchange Visitor Program designation;

A report of all final academic year and semester program participant placements by August 31 for the upcoming academic

year or January 15 for the Spring semester and calendar year. The report must be in the format directed by the Department and must include at a minimum, the exchange student's full name, Form DS-2019 number (SEVIS ID #), host family placement (current U.S. address), school (site of activity) address, the local coordinator's name and zip code, and other information the Department may request; and

A report of all situations which resulted in the placement of an exchange student with more than one host family or in more than one school. The report must be in a format directed by the Department and include, at a minimum, the exchange student's full name, Form DS-019 number (SEVIS ID #), host family placements (current U.S. address), schools (site of activity address), the reason for the change in placement, and the date of the move. This report is due by July 31 for the previous academic school year.

Appendix F to Part 62—Information To Be Collected on Secondary School Student Host Family Applications

Basic Family Information:

Host Family Member—Full name and relationship (children and adults) either living full-time or part-time in the home or who frequently stay at the home)

Date of Birth (DOB) of all family members

Street Address

Contact information (telephone; e-mail address) of host parents

Employment—employer name, job title, and point of contact for each working resident of the home

Is the residence the site of a functioning business? (e.g., daycare, farm)

Description of each household member (e.g., level of education, profession, interests, community involvement, and relevant behavioral or other characteristics of such household members that could affect the successful integration of the exchange visitor into the household)

Has any member of your household ever been charged with any crime?

Household Pets:

Number of Pets

Type of Pets

Financial Resources:

Average Annual Income Range: Less than \$25,000; \$25,000-\$35,000; \$35,000-\$45,000; \$45,000-\$55,000; \$55,000-\$65,000; \$65,000-\$75,000; and \$75,000 and above. Note: The form must include a statement stating that: "The income data collected will be used solely for the purposes of ensuring that the basic needs of the exchange students can be met, including three quality meals and transportation to and from school activities"

Describe if anyone residing in the home receives any kind of public assistance (financial needs-based government subsidies for food or housing)

Identify those personal expenses expected to be covered by the student

Diet:

Does anyone in the family follow any dietary restrictions? (Y/N)

If yes, describe:

Do you expect the student to follow any dietary restrictions? (Y/N)

If yes, describe:

Would you feel comfortable hosting a student who follows a particular dietary restriction (ex. Vegetarian, Vegan, etc.)? (Y/N)

Would the family provide three (3) square meals daily?

High School Information:

Name and address of school (private or public school)

Name, address, e-mail and telephone number of school official

Approximate size of the school student body

Approximate distance between the school and your home

Approximate start date of the school year

How will the exchange student get to the school (e.g. bus, carpool, walk)?

Would the family provide special transportation for extracurricular activities after school or in the evenings, if required?

Which, if any, of your family's children, presently attend the school in which the exchange visitor is enrolled?

If applicable list sports/clubs/activities, if any, your child(ren) participate(s) in at the school

Does any member of your household work for the high school in a coaching/teaching/or administrative capacity?

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 sport.

Community Information:

In what type of community do you live (e.g.: Urban, Suburban, Rural, Farm)

Population of community

Nearest Major City (Distance and population)

Nearest Airport (Distance)

City or town website

Briefly describe your neighborhood and community

What points of interest are near your area (parks, museums, historical sites)?

Areas in or near neighborhood to be avoided?

Home Description:

Describe your type of home (e.g., single family home, condominium, duplex, apartment, mobile home) and include photographs of the host family home's exterior and grounds, kitchen, student's bedroom, student's bathroom, and family and living areas.

Describe Primary Rooms and Bedrooms

Number of Bathrooms

Will the exchange student share a bedroom? (Y/N)

If yes, with which household resident?

Describe the student's bedroom

Describe amenities to which the student has access

Utilities

Family Activities:

Language spoken in home

Please describe activities and/or sports each family member participates in: (e.g., camping, hiking, dance, crafts, debate, drama, art, music, reading, soccer, baseball, horseback riding)

Describe your expectations regarding the responsibilities and behavior of the student while in your home (e.g., homework, household chores, curfew (school night and weekend), access to refrigerator and food, drinking of alcoholic beverages, driving, smoking, computer/Internet/E-Mail)

Would you be willing voluntarily to inform the exchange visitor in advance of any religious affiliations of household members? (Y/N)

Would any member of the household have difficulty hosting a student whose religious beliefs were different from their own? (Y/N) Note: A host family may want the exchange visitor to attend one or more religious services or programs with the family. The exchange visitor cannot be required to do so, but may decide to experience this facet of U.S. culture at his or her discretion.

How did you learn about being a host family?

References:

[75 FR 65984, May 9, 2011]

APPENDIX V: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

YFU maintains policies to ensure fairness to the students and families, consistency of standards, and program integrity. The following policies provide a framework for the YFU participant support system. This support system includes the host family and host community, the involved YFU organizations, and the natural family. These policies are standardized for all YFU students, and we ask host families to help ensure that they are adhered to.

Students have been informed of YFU policies, which are also found in their Handbook, before arrival in the US. When your student arrives, you should review the contents of the Passport handbook together. This process will help you come to a mutual understanding of program requirements and help establish open communication between you and your student.

In the past, some well-meaning host parents have allowed their exchange students to disregard some of these policies. Please do not allow your family to become one of the few host families to have their students returned to their home countries prematurely for violation of a policy. This cautionary note is particularly important with regard to the driving policy.

This appendix contains the international student policies of YFU, as well as specific procedures that relate to YFU programs in the US. If you need additional clarification of any item, please contact your Area Representative.

ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO

Policy: Students are required to observe all laws of their host country regarding the legal age for alcohol and tobacco consumption. Students are also expected to follow host family guidelines on the use of alcohol and tobacco, including e-cigarettes. YFU students should not use alcohol in a manner that is excessive, unsuitable or embarrassing to the host family or YFU. A student will be considered for Early Return if he/she demonstrates an inability to control his/her use of alcohol.

Specific policy for YFU USA: The legal drinking age in the United States is 21. Therefore, no YFU student can legally drink while on program in the US. Students who decide to drink are breaking the law and will be considered for Early Return. Alcohol related medical treatment may not be covered by student medical insurance.

It is illegal for minors (those under the age of 18) to purchase, possess and/or use cigarettes, tobacco products or vapes. Many Americans recognize the health risks of smoking and some Americans have strong feelings about the dangers of smoking. YFU USA advises students who smoke to reduce or eliminate their smoking habit before coming to the US.

Specific policy for YFU USA: When an arrest is made or a court appearance is scheduled, YFU USA recommends the student acquire a lawyer. The student and the natural parents, not the host family, are responsible for all costs related to legal representation. YFU reserves the right to make a decision regarding the student's program status regardless of any legal decision.

If a student is convicted of an offense requiring him or her to stay in the US, or the court date is after the regularly scheduled departure, the student will be considered Off Program as of the prescheduled return flight time. The student and natural parents, not the host family, will be responsible for any and all necessary arrangements.

A student aged 18 or older who engages in sexual activity with a minor below the age of consent (generally 16-18) is guilty of gross sexual imposition and will be tried as an adult, regardless of the presence of force or threat associated with the sexual act. By law, any such sexual activity between an adult over 18 and a person below the age of consent is assumed to be coercive and nonconsensual. Gross sexual imposition is a serious offense for which offenders can receive lengthy prison sentences. Laws about gross sexual imposition vary widely among states.

BREAKING THE LAW

Policy: The nature and severity of the offense will determine the procedure and possible outcome. Criminal prosecution, theft, or shoplifting may be cause for an Early Return. The student, not YFU or the host family, will be responsible for any expense incurred as a result of the consequence.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Policy: Because of the issues that can arise in YFU exchange programs, confidential information must often be shared to resolve difficulties or help students and host families understand issues. Therefore, YFU students and parents should not expect that all YFU staff and volunteers, including professional counselors, will make promises of confidentiality.

All those participating in YFU programs should expect that YFU will share confidential information with discretion and in accordance with applicable data protection laws. Due to the nature of exchange programs, students will have information relating to their host family's personal life. Students should treat such information with the respect and confidentiality that can be reasonably expected from an exchange student. Students should not publish any sensitive information about their host family and the relationship between them on the internet.

The student's right to privacy must also be respected. YFU considers it wrong to examine and/or confiscate a student's personal belongings, including passports or other identity documents. The student must respect the same rules regarding host family belongings. If it is found that the student's use of personal belongings such as computers, cell phones or tablets makes it hard to fully engage with their host family, YFU may require the student to change or stop using these personal belongings in order to maintain the right to remain on program.

Student/Host Family Address, Telephone Number,

Status on Program: YFU does not allow the release of this information about a student or a host family to people not involved with YFU without the permission of the host family (or the natural parent/legal guardian(s) in the case of a student, unless the sending organization confirms that this is not necessary).

Specific policies for YFU USA: The student must respect the same rules regarding host family belongings.

YFU USA works on a need-to-know basis. Information is shared appropriately with others who need to know such information in order to help participants. This means that information that is shared by the student or the host family with the YFU volunteer may be communicated to YFU USA staff if it is directly related to the student's exchange experience.

COMMUNICATION WITH NATURAL FAMILY AND HOME COUNTRY FRIENDS

Policy: Communication with the natural family and home country or other friends by phone or online (including all forms of social media) has an impact on an exchange student's intercultural learning experience. Therefore, YFU requires students to use such communication tools in ways that help students, natural parent/legal guardian(s), host families and other people in the host community to develop positive relationships which benefit all those participating in the exchange program.

If phone calls, either local or international, and internet usage are charged to the host family, students must pay all

charges on time and before leaving their host country. The host family is not expected to pay bills for students.

Specific policy for YFU USA: It is very important that students are conscious about the level of communication with their natural family and friends at home during their stay in the US. While it is important to stay in touch, excessive contact may negatively affect the exchange experience and relationships with the host family. Students should be aware that any time they spend writing, emailing, or calling home is time that they are not engaging with their host family. Too much contact may increase feelings of homesickness and make the adjustment to the host country much more difficult. Thus, contact with the home country should be limited to not more than one email or call per week. If YFU believes that a student is contacting his or her natural parents too often, both the student and the parents may be asked to limit such contact. If excessive contact continues, this can be grounds for Early Return.

COUNSELING

Specific policy for YFU USA: YFU USA offers counseling services to students, if needed. These services include help from Area Representatives and/or staff, and consultation, evaluation, and counseling by professional counselors arranged for by the YFU Support Services Manager (SSM). YFU USA does not provide on-going, therapeutic counseling. Recommendations from a counselor for such on-going treatment for the student will be grounds for an Early Return recommendation.

Host families and students should always try to talk first with each other if there is a problem or misunderstanding. If this does not resolve the situation, contact your Area Representative. If you are unable to reach a YFU volunteer, you should call the National Office at **1.866.4.YFU.USA**.

DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES

Policy: YFU may withhold authorization for any activity if it is considered hazardous and unacceptable for the student to participate. The following activities are strictly not permitted: hang-gliding, parachute jumping, piloting a private plane, bungee jumping, and para-sailing. Students should be aware that the list of dangerous activities varies from country to country, and that they will receive a list of any additional unacceptable activities in their host country.

The YFU Receiving Organization may permit some activities considered dangerous only if permission is given by the natural parent/legal guardian(s) in writing (unless the sending organization confirms that this is not necessary)

and that the host parents allow the student to participate. This permission must satisfy the YFU Receiving Organization and must release YFU and the host family from all responsibility during the time the student is involved in that activity. The student and natural parent/legal guardian(s) alone are responsible for obtaining additional insurance if necessary.

Specific Policy for YFU USA: YFU USA has very specific guidelines regarding activities that are not permitted for exchange students and are not covered by the insurance students receive. There is an explanation of Dangerous Activities and a Dangerous Activities Permission Form included in Appendix IX.

The YFU Dangerous Activities Permission Form (with all required signatures) must be on file with the SSM before any such activity begins. If the student is unable to get the form to his or her natural parents for their signatures, the natural parents can write a letter which states that they “release Youth For Understanding USA and the host family from all responsibility during the time our son/daughter is engaged in that activity.”

Students are not permitted to drive any motorized vehicles including: all-terrain vehicles (ATV’s), automobiles, snowmobiles, trucks and motorized trail bikes, even on private property. Additionally, permission will not be granted under any circumstances for students to operate the following vehicles: go-carts, jet skis, mopeds or motorcycles. Students are permitted to ride as passengers on the aforementioned vehicles provided they follow all the local laws and practice reasonable safety precautions. Lastly, permission will not be granted for students to participate in the following activities: bungee jumping, hang gliding, parachute jumping, parasailing, piloting a private plane, or wave-running.

Students are expected to take adequate safety precautions and must follow all local laws when participating in any kind of physical activity (i.e., helmets may be required when riding a standard bicycle; life jackets are required when boating or white-water rafting, etc.).

If a student engages in a dangerous activity without seeking permission or after permission is denied, that student will be considered for Early Return. If a student engages in a dangerous activity without having requested permission, the severity of the infraction and the amount of danger involved will determine the consequences.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

YFU follows a disciplinary procedure to bring concerns to students’ attention, provide encouragement for

improvement and to document and review student behavioral issues.

Specific policy for YFU USA: All students are responsible for following host family, school, and YFU rules and regulations, as well as all federal, state, and local laws. If a student violates host family, school or YFU rules and regulations, a warning letter will be issued for the first offense. Repeated disregard for host family, school or YFU rules will result in the student being placed on probation. Additionally, offenses that are deemed more serious in nature may result in immediate probation for the student, without receiving a warning first. **Probationary status means that the student will be considered for involuntary early return** if his or her behavior does not improve or if he or she is reprimanded again for disregarding or breaking a host family, school or YFU rule.

A student who breaks any federal, state, or local law will be considered for immediate Early Return. This decision will be made by YFU USA in consultation with the student’s home country YFU office and law enforcement authorities, and will be based upon the nature of the offense.

DRIVING

Policy: Exchange students are not permitted to drive cars, motorcycles or other motorized vehicles. This policy applies even if the student has an international driving license or the host family thinks that the student is a responsible and careful driver. Students who break this policy will be considered for Early Return to their home country.

This restriction may be waived for those participating in post-secondary education programs, provided the student has the permission of his/her legal guardian (if required by the sending organization), the permission of his/her host family, a valid driver’s license, and proper insurance. Such decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Permission to use farm equipment, other off-road vehicles, trail bikes and mopeds is different in each country, and the decision about their use by students is left to the YFU Receiving Organization. If the YFU Receiving Organization allows the student to use one of the vehicles listed above, the natural parent/legal guardian(s) and/or the student should sign consent and accept liability, and the student is expected to take safety precautions, have sufficient insurance coverage, and obey the laws of their host country.

Specific policy for YFU USA: YFU USA does not allow students to take driver’s education classes or obtain a driver’s license. Students who drive or engage in driver’s education classes will be considered for Early Return.

DRUGS

Policy: YFU students may not buy, sell, possess, or use drugs that are illegal in their home or host country. If they do, they will be considered for Early Return. Evidence of a student breaking this policy normally includes physical evidence, student admission of use or a reliable witness who has seen the student with or using illegal drugs.

Specific policy for YFU USA: In cases of suspected drug use or abuse by a student, YFU USA reserves the right to request a drug test at the student's own expense. Students found using drugs will be considered for Early Return.

EARLY RETURN DEFINITIONS

Voluntary Early Return (VER): A VER occurs when a student wants to return home from their host country earlier than planned. If required by the sending organization and if the natural parent/legal guardian(s) agree with this decision, then the natural parent/legal guardian(s) should provide their agreement in writing to the YFU Sending Organization prior to the return of the student.

Involuntary Early Return (IER): An IER occurs when the YFU Receiving Organization decides, after discussion with the student, host family and YFU Sending Organization, based on stated guidelines, that a student should be removed from the YFU program and returned to their home country. If the student has broken the law of the receiving country or has seriously failed to follow the YFU Policies (e.g., is expelled from school), a student can be considered for an IER immediately. However, prior to this decision, YFU will make an effort to provide the student with support to recognize the nature of their behavior and to work on improving that behavior. Generally, a student will receive a warning letter which advises him/her of the specific issues in their poor behavior. It explains the specific expectations for improving their behavior and the support YFU can provide to help the student achieve those expectations. If the behavior persists, the student will receive a probation letter which again explains issues in the student's behavior as well as expectations for improvement in behavior. The letter will advise the student that if the expectations for improvement in behavior are not achieved, then an IER is the next step.

Specific policy for YFU USA: Early Return usually happens because the student cannot adjust to the host country, does not meet basic program selection requirements, has personal problems, breaks a major YFU policy, violates US law, or has problems at home with the natural family. All Early Returns must be approved by Youth For Understanding.

ELECTRONICS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Specific policy for YFU USA: The consequences of irresponsible "digital" behavior can be more public, more severe, and longer lasting than mistakes people make "offline." Students must follow all host family rules in regards to electronic media use, or they will be placed on disciplinary procedure. Please refer to Appendix VIII for detailed Cell Phone Guidelines for Students and Families, Computer Use and Internet Safety Guidelines and Social Networking Guidelines.

Sexting. Depending on the circumstances, law enforcement may also become involved and criminal charges may be filed. Read more in Appendix VIII.

Harassing or Threatening Texts and Social Media Posts. Students should be aware that such actions could result in criminal actions. Students should report to their YFU Area Representative or host parents if they are the target of harassing or threatening texts or phone calls. Read more in Appendix VIII.

Remember, anything you digitally share is not necessarily private. Even when using apps like Snapchat, someone can take a screenshot or capture the image with another camera. Be thoughtful in what you share, and be sure not to partake in illegal activities or in re-sharing content that does not belong to you.

EMPLOYMENT

Policy: Students in the YFU program are not permitted to work a full-time job during their stay. They should refer to the laws in their host country regarding other kinds of employment (e.g., part-time, casual or voluntary work).

Specific policy for YFU USA: Students hosted in the United States are not allowed to engage in full-time employment during their stay. Students are, however, allowed to work for up to 10 hours per week in accordance with the regulations of their visa, which permits them to study and live in the US. This work must consist of informal jobs, such as babysitting, grass cutting, snow shoveling, yard clean-up, etc., and must not interfere with school and host family activities. Students cannot work in any job that requires a social security number (such as working in a restaurant, retail store, etc.).

Host families should not expect their student to take on more chores and responsibilities than any other family member, or to work in a family business.

EXTENSION OF STAY

Policy: Generally YFU does not grant extensions of stay unless there is demonstrated evidence of a medical or special emergency requiring such an extension.

When a YFU Sending Organization requests an extension of stay in any circumstance other than a medical or special emergency, such an extension of stay must be agreed to by the YFU Receiving Organization. That agreement will take into account a student's prior behavior during the program. The student must agree to continue to uphold the basic guidelines and aims of the YFU program during the period of extension. The student will, however, have no claim on YFU support during that period. The natural parent/legal guardian(s) are responsible for making all the necessary arrangements including, but not limited to, visa arrangements, extension of insurance and reservations for a return flight. In the case of Voluntary (VER) or Involuntary Early Returns (IER), an extension of stay is not permitted.

An exception to this policy may be made for those participating in post-secondary education programs who request to extend their stay in the host country. In this event, a student will not be considered "off program" until after the originally established departure deadline.

INTERNET

Policy: YFU students are not allowed to download or upload copyrighted media files (music, video, images, and software) from or to non-official online stores that require a payment, or official websites that allow downloading even with approval of the copyright holder. This act is known as pirating, and can result in legal consequences. YFU students must not provide their media files online for other users to download. The student, not YFU, its representatives or its host families, is responsible for any payment that may result from a student having broken any law in this way.

LEGAL STATUS

Specific policy for YFU USA: Exchange students in the US are subject to all US national and local laws. If a student needs legal assistance in the US, YFU can assist in identifying a lawyer. The student and natural parents are responsible for all costs related to legal representation. Home country embassies or consulates cannot arrange free legal advice, provide bail, or get a student released from jail. Students who are 18 years old or who turn 18 while on program are considered adults under US law.

MARRIAGE

Policy: Married students are not permitted on the YFU program. If a student marries while participating in a YFU program or is discovered to have married prior to going on a YFU program, the student will be considered for Early Return. This policy also applies to students who are living together with a partner in a committed relationship.

MEDICAL TREATMENT OF A STUDENT (INCLUDING EMERGENCIES)

Policy: All YFU students must have insurance coverage for illness, medical emergencies, and hospitalization, and it must be acceptable to the YFU Receiving Organization. The student (not YFU, its representatives nor its host families) is responsible for any student medical bills regardless of who signs a hospital admission form. The student and natural parent/legal guardian(s) must recognize that YFU, its representatives and its host families are also not responsible for any negative results of emergency and/or other medical treatment.

NATURAL DISASTER

Specific policy for YFU USA: In the event of any natural disaster emergency, the host family should assist their host son or daughter in calling his or her natural parents as soon as possible to relieve concerns about safety or notify the parents of any arrangements that are being made to provide emergency service to the host family. YFU also asks that the host family contact their Area Representative, Field Director, or the National Office (**1.866.4.YFU.USA**) as soon as possible to report their status.

OFF PROGRAM

Policy: If a student is absent without permission from the host family or other place to which YFU has assigned him/her, YFU may determine that this student has left the YFU program. The student and natural parent/legal guardian(s) must recognize that, in such case, YFU is released from all obligations, legal or otherwise, to the student and their natural parent/legal guardian(s) for their current or further well-being. In most countries, the validity of the student's visa is linked to being on program, which means that the visa would no longer be valid if the student is off program.

YFU will, if possible, work with the student to again accept YFU supervision without delay. However, if this cannot be

done, dismissal from the YFU program is final. The student will then lose YFU support and their ticket to their home country will be issued for the earliest possible flight date.

Specific policy for YFU USA: In the US, if a student goes Off Program, the student's US high school will be notified that he or she is no longer a YFU student, and the US Department of State will be notified of the termination of the student's YFU program participation. Airline tickets purchased by YFU must be used within 30 days of program termination or return airfare is forfeited by the student.

ORIENTATIONS

Policy: YFU requires students to attend all orientations throughout their exchange. These are not only opportunities meet other YFU students, but most importantly, they offer students the chance to share feelings, expectations and concerns with YFU volunteers and staff. Orientations are designed to help students in their adaptation process. Attending orientations should be a priority for students and their host families.

PASSPORT OR VISA

Specific policy for YFU USA: Students will have their passports and visas with them when they arrive at their host families' homes. Students should make a record of their passport number and a copy of all the below documents, putting them in a safe place separate from their passport. For identification purposes, students should carry their YFU ID card with them at all times. They only need to carry their passports when traveling. If a student loses his or her passport while in the US, the student should call the home country's consulate or embassy in the US. In such a case, the student might have to travel to the nearest consulate for an in-person application process. All related expenses are the student's responsibility.

If a student loses the DS-2019 he or she should contact their SSM immediately. The student will be financially responsible for securing a replacement. A sample copy of the DS-2019 form can be found in Appendix III. This is not for use, but simply to serve as a visual example of the form.

The student must keep the following documents and forms together at all times:

- his or her passport;
- the DS-2019 form; and
- the I-797 receipt or SEVIS I-901 fee confirmation.

Each of these forms is useless without the others. The student may not travel outside the USA without securing Travel Permission from the YFU National Office. Should the student temporarily leave the US at any time during the stay, **these forms must be taken with him or her.** The DS-2019 form acts as a re-entry permit during the period of the program indicated once it has been signed by a designated YFU National Office staff member (a process outlined in the Permission to Travel form).

PERSONAL GROOMING

Policy: Besides the personal hygiene customs of the host family and culture, students should meet hygiene expectations in all areas: use of bathroom, bathing, grooming, and washing of clothes; and respect the dress codes of the host country, school and family.

POLITICAL EXPRESSION

Specific policy for YFU USA:

Views. The political views students express are their own. Students are in no way official representatives of their countries' governments. Students should tell this to people they meet who may think the students represent their countries officially.

Representation. On the other hand, for many Americans, a YFU student may be the first or the only person from his or her home country they have met. This means that a student's behavior will give people their first impressions of what the student's compatriots are like. YFU hopes that all exchange students are friendly and active, and that they will share some of their culture with their host communities.

Involvement. Since YFU is a non-political organization, students should not become involved in the political activities of the United States, no matter how strongly they feel about an issue or a candidate. A student's involvement may be misunderstood, resented, or disliked, and can result in conflicts or misunderstandings.

PREGNANCY

Policy: For medical, placement, and personal reasons, female students found to be pregnant while on the YFU program will be returned home immediately after notification of the natural parent/legal guardian(s). Individual circumstances may justify exceptions to this

policy; however, all students in this circumstance will be considered for Early Return to their home country.

Male YFU students who cause pregnancies while on program will be subject to the same policy as females.

Specific policy for YFU USA: YFU encourages any pregnant student to inform her natural parents directly of the pregnancy.

RELIGION

Specific policy for YFU USA: Exchange students and their host families frequently have very different ideas about religion. YFU encourages students to join their host families in all their activities, including religious services, unless the students' beliefs prohibit them from doing so. It is the student's choice, however, to attend or not to attend services.

YFU hopes that even if a student's religious beliefs make it impossible to attend services with the host family, the student will take advantage of the many other social activities offered by most US churches, synagogues, and temples. Students may find much better opportunities for friendships and social activities than expected. A student may wish to ask the host family to help find a congregation of the student's faith if it is different from that of the host family and the student wishes to attend those services.

REPLACEMENT

Specific policy for YFU USA: In the process of becoming acquainted, both host families and students may find they need to modify expectations and behavior. YFU Area Representatives can assist the student and host family in working towards a resolution of any difficulties.

Sometimes, students must change host families. This usually happens because of very strong personality differences. Students are not allowed to change families just because they are having trouble adjusting to the USA, want to move to a different community or state, or want to live with a family from a different socioeconomic level. Nor are host family changes permitted because the host school does not offer enough classes, does not grant a diploma or the school or community has an ethnically diverse population. Replacements will not be permitted based on the host family being of a different ethnic group than the student expected.

The decision to change families is made by YFU only after there has been discussion among the Area Representative, student, and host family. YFU strongly believes that it is

important to discuss with all participants any problems that may or may not lead to a replacement.

In the majority of replacements, students will remain in the same area and school. Students will not be moved to a different state.

There are times when the procedures may not be followed due to circumstances unique to the student and host family. However, if a student moves him or herself without the assistance of a YFU representative or without our knowledge, it will put the student out of visa status and Off-Program.

SCHOOL

Attendance: All YFU students on high school or post-secondary education programs are expected to regularly attend secondary school or post-secondary education, and each host country is encouraged to see that a normal course of schoolwork is maintained. Repeated non-attendance, which in some countries is against visa conditions, will result in possible Early Return to the student's home country.

Performance: Allowing for an initial period of linguistic and/or academic adjustment, a student is expected to achieve an adequate school academic record. Within a reasonable period of time, poor motivation, underachievement (e.g., failing grades) or inappropriate behavior, in combination with poor adjustment in general, may be cause for Early Return consideration.

Formal Expulsion: If a student is expelled from school, the student will be considered for Early Return to their home country.

Specific policy for YFU USA: The student will be enrolled in the local high school where arrangements have been made by a YFU representative. Students may attend parochial or private schools if tuition is waived or prior arrangements are made with the natural parents. Schools vary in granting free tuition, books, activities, and lunch programs.

Each student will be placed in an appropriate grade level based on his or her previous course work, English language ability, age, and school policies. It is expected that YFU students maintain an overall "C" average or better in each of their classes. No student hosted in the US should expect, nor can YFU personnel guarantee, the award of a US high school diploma. This is the decision of the individual school, and YFU will support a school's policy in this matter.

Students are responsible for the work and expense of obtaining documents needed for home country school credit requirements. School fees are also the responsibility of the student.

Students asked by the school principal to leave a school based on poor grades or poor behavior will be dismissed from the YFU program. Most US schools will not provide a formal expulsion notice for legal reasons.

SMOKING

Specific policy for YFU USA: Students who smoke are encouraged to discuss house guidelines with host families before smoking in the homes. In the US, it is illegal for minors to purchase, possess and/or use cigarettes or tobacco products & vapes. If a student's smoking habits become a problem in the host family or school, it could result in a warning and probation, and a request from YFU USA to quit smoking.

STUDENT EXPENSES

Policy: Students are not responsible for meals and accommodation. Students are responsible for such expenses as school uniforms, testing fees, school laboratory fees, transportation, books, trips or expenses during trips, telephone calls or other personal expenses. They are also responsible for any property damage they cause.

Specific policy for YFU USA: Host families are expected to provide the student with three meals a day. This will include either a bag lunch or lunch money so that the student can purchase lunch at school. Whether a lunch or lunch money is provided is up to the host family. Students may elect to buy their own lunch.

Students and host families should not borrow from or lend money to one another. If money is lent in an emergency, students and/or host families should get a written receipt in order to make sure that there are no misunderstandings about repayment. YFU is **not** responsible for students' or host families' debts or loans.

Most students will want to open a bank account. By using a W-8 BEN form (obtainable at a bank, online at [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov) or from the YFU Regional Office), a student can open an individual account as a non-US citizen/resident in most areas without providing a social security number. The W-8 BEN form exempts foreign individuals from bank interest withholding rules. **Students should not open a joint account with any host family member.** Should there be any question, the student or host family should contact the Area Representative.

STUDENT TRAVEL

Policy: YFU wishes to:

- Assure student safety to the greatest extent possible
- Have knowledge of a student's location
- Ensure that students participate in host family activities and school programs.

Any travel which might have an impact on any of these factors requires written approval from YFU.

Each YFU organization will have specific travel approval procedures. The YFU National Organization in the host country has the final say in approving travel. Unauthorized travel may be cause for Early Return.

Specific policy for YFU USA: Students hosted in the US are not permitted to participate in trips sponsored by another exchange program, travel agent, community member, etc. The only trips that are permitted are these sponsored by YFU, trips with host parents or an authorized adult, school trips (which the school has officially approved), and/or trips sponsored by a religious or youth organization (if there is adult supervision). School attendance should not be interrupted for travel unless prior permission is given by the school.

Any travel where the student will miss school, will need to contribute \$300 or more to the cost of the trip, will leave the US, or will be without the host family requires YFU USA approval prior to finalizing plans. ***Travel where the student will be gone for more than 3 nights requires submittal of the Permission to Travel Form, and may require YFU USA approval as well.*** Failure to obtain approval from YFU USA may result in forfeiting any payments made if permission to travel is denied. YFU USA has the final authority to grant or deny permission for travel. Unauthorized travel may result in a YFU determination that the student has taken him or herself Off Program. The YFU USA Permission to Travel policy can be found in Appendix X.

TELEPHONE AND COMPUTER USE

Specific policy for YFU USA: Excessive phone or internet use, the posting of inappropriate comments/pictures on social networking sites, or visiting inappropriate sites, will result in warning or probation. If the behavior is not corrected, the student will be considered for Early Return. Refer to Appendix VIII.

Long-Distance and International Calls: Students should make arrangements with their host families before making long-distance and international calls, especially regarding the duration and price of the call.

VISITS FROM NATURAL FAMILY AND HOME COUNTRY FRIENDS

Policy: Natural families and home country friends are strongly discouraged from visiting the exchange student during their exchange program, especially during the initial adjustment period. The visit interrupts continuity of the relationship with the host family and may lessen the exchange experience for the student and the host family. This interruption sometimes leads to adjustment difficulties so serious that YFU may consider Early Return of the student to his/her home country. Natural families who consider such visits must contact the YFU organization in the sending country before any arrangements are made. Host families must not be expected to accommodate a student's visiting family members or friends with regard to room, meals or transport.

Specific policy for YFU USA: Natural family visits and visits from friends must be approved in advance by YFU USA and typically will only be approved if scheduled toward the end of your exchange. **Host families are not authorized to give permission for natural family visits. Students must ask their Support Services Manager for approval.**

YFU IDENTIFICATION CARD

Specific policy for YFU USA: Students will have a YFU identification card that they should carry at all times. Students may need the card to receive student discounts for entry to museums, movie theatres, or other places. The card also has important YFU phone numbers and addresses for use in emergencies.

Special Note: All letters will be sent to the host family's permanent address as listed with YFU. If the host family will be at an address other than the permanent one on record, they should notify their Area Representative or the National Office so that all information can be sent to the appropriate address. Federal regulations require YFU USA keep the government informed of the current residence of every student.

APPENDIX VI: HOST FAMILY AGREEMENT

Our family has volunteered to host a student with Youth For Understanding USA (YFU USA), so that, by sharing our lives with an international visitor, I/we may gain exposure to new ideas and perspectives and promote international friendship.

If selected to host a YFU student our family agrees to:

1. Read the YFU Host Family Handbook and to complete the required on-line orientation to prepare our family for hosting our YFU student.
2. Facilitate the attendance of our YFU student at all YFU-required orientation meetings (post-arrival, mid-year and re-entry) as well as to have at least one parent attend the required pre-arrival host family orientation meeting in our field area; or attend the on-line pre-arrival webinar. YFU strongly advises that a host parent attend the three orientations during the program to benefit from YFU content for host families.
3. Welcome our YFU student as a member of our family and assist in the student's adaptation to our family as well as to U.S. life and culture.
4. Provide a home environment for our YFU student, to include a bed (not inflatable or convertible) in a room with a door for privacy and an exit window or door to the outside for fire safety, a study area, and designated storage space for personal belongings.
5. Provide three nutritious meals per day, including family meals taken outside the home and school lunches.
6. Ensure our YFU student a bedroom shared with no more than one sibling who is of the same sex and between the ages of 10 and 22. Other situations must be approved by YFU and agreed to by the student and natural parents in advance.
7. Help our YFU student meet other Americans through introductions to friends, neighbors and classmates, and by encouraging our student to join clubs or pursue activities which will foster friendships with other teens.
8. Ensure transportation to school for our YFU student and help to arrange necessary transportation for our YFU student for extracurricular activities after school or in the evenings, by driving the student or by providing access to a bicycle, a bus, helping to arrange carpools, rides with friends, etc.
9. Ensure our YFU student access to a telephone for social purposes, for reasonable (weekly) contact with natural parents and YFU representatives, as well as for emergencies, through full access to our landline or by helping the student obtain a cell phone.
10. Provide our YFU student with reasonable access to the internet for the purpose of e-mailing natural parents. Internet access may be provided from our home, a smart phone or a community resource such as a school or public library.
11. Not enter into any non-cancelable or term contracts (e.g., cell phone, health club, lessons) on behalf of the YFU student. Doing so will be at our own risk and YFU is not liable for any costs of such contracts should the student leave the program or our home prior to the end of any contract term.
12. Help our YFU student to become familiar with our community and its resources (e.g., interesting sights, location of and how to use the library and recreation facilities, location and layout of school building, shopping areas).
13. Accept and expect, at minimum, telephone, in-person, or email support contact from a YFU representative with the YFU student and a parent family member once per month. At least two of these contacts will be meetings in our home, one of which will occur within 60 days of our student's arrival. I/We will be flexible in facilitating the scheduling of the required monthly contact with our YFU student and our family. I/We understand that contact through text messaging or Facebook alone does not meet the monthly contact requirement.

14. Expect our YFU student to follow YFU policies (link below) and to obey all local laws. I/We will immediately report any violation of YFU policy or the law to our YFU Area Representative.

15. Work with our YFU student through open communication to solve problems, and to resolve difficulties and misunderstandings. If these remain unresolved, our family will contact our YFU Area Representative. I/we will also contact YFU if issues arise in our family's and/or student's adjustment, in our student's school performance, or if our family must withdraw from the program at any point after a student placement is confirmed for us. If we find it necessary to ask that that student be removed from our home we will give YFU not less than 3 weeks' notice in order that YFU may identify, screen and orient a new family for our student.

16. Notify YFU immediately of any emergency involving our YFU student, our family or the student's natural family, of any change in our household composition (adults moving in or out), parent marital status, change in our contact information (telephone numbers and e-mail addresses), a change in our place of residence, financial or employment status, or of criminal prosecution of a family member.

17. Provide responsible adult supervision at home for our YFU student should we be away overnight.

18. That YFU retains the authority to render any and all final decisions related to the student's welfare and program participation. In particular, I/we will adhere to the YFU Student Travel Permission and Dangerous Activities Permission policies, as these specifically protect my family from legal liability. I/We are not the legal guardians of the YFU student placed in our home, and should not sign any documents or releases as the legal guardian, with the exception of school-related permission forms.

19. Seek medical care for our YFU student should he/she become ill or be involved in an accident, and to provide transportation to providers of such care. We are legally empowered by the student medical release to arrange medical care for our student due to illness or accident. I/We will notify YFU immediately of any accident, hospitalization or serious illness. All students carry illness and accident insurance for the duration of the program. I/we understand that the insurance does not provide coverage for preventative care, preexisting conditions, immunizations or required physicals for school or school sports, non- accident-related dental care, routine eye exams, glasses, or contact lenses; I/we will contact the YFU representative to arrange for natural family consent and payment for such expenses.

20. Respect the privacy of YFU students, host families, volunteers and staff by using information appropriately and preventing the misuse of personal information, including on social media sites.

21. Follow and accept rules the host high school may have about enrolling exchange students which limit the grade level(s) in which a student can be placed, which prohibit exchange students from obtaining a diploma and/or which govern participation in extra-curricular activities. I/we will expect our student to follow school rules while residing in our home. I/We certify that no member of our household has had contact with a coach regarding the hosting of an exchange student with particular athletic ability. I/We agree to share copies of any school documents pertaining to the YFU student with the YFU area representative or other YFU staff.

22. Review a copy of the U.S. Department of State's "Criteria for Exchange—Visitor Teenager Programs."

I/We have read and understand the above guidelines and agree to follow them throughout our participation as a YFU host family. I/We hereby certify that all of the information provided in the YFU Host Family Application, including attachments, is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my/our knowledge.

APPENDIX VII: PROTECTING STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

YFU treats issues of student safety with the utmost importance. We are strongly committed to protecting students from sexual abuse and harassment by ensuring that students are safe within their host homes and communities. As a host family, it is essential to be aware and vigilant about potential causes and threats of abuse, and to understand how to address such situations. Below is important information on how to provide and maintain a secure, healthy environment for your exchange student.

AVOID MISUNDERSTANDINGS

Sometimes misunderstandings and miscommunication can lead to inappropriate and/or harmful behavior towards a student or family. Reduce the number of misunderstandings by openly discussing boundaries at the beginning of the student's exchange. Establish expectations for your student's behavior with adults in the greater community, but also within the host family. Don't avoid a topic of conversation just because it might be uncomfortable to talk about. Discussing rules and expectations at the beginning of the student's stay can help prevent future issues or miscommunication.

- **Set Clear Family Boundaries:** Talk about appropriate behavior, physical interactions, and relationships between the exchange student and all members of the host family. Set firm and clear expectations for behavior, and emphasize that crossing boundaries is not appropriate and can be harmful to the whole family. For example, a romantic or sexual relationship with a host sibling would be inappropriate and would result in severe consequences.
- **Don't Keep Secrets:** Talk to your exchange student about the American culture of open communication. Let them know that as a host parent, you want to hear and talk about their experiences, whether they are positive or negative. Explain that it can be harmful and dangerous to keep secrets, particularly ones that make them feel uncomfortable.
- **Show Respect:** Many exchange students come from cultures in which affection is displayed differently than in the US. If your student is uncomfortable with physical contact, respect their boundaries and avoid pressuring them to act differently. Let the student be the one to decide when he or she feels comfortable hugging, for example. Some students may not be comfortable with this kind of affection.
- **Provide Privacy:** Adjusting to new surroundings, new rules, and new people can be overwhelming at times. It is important for your YFU student to have a private space in the home. Respect the privacy of students in their bedroom and bathroom.
- **Age of Consent:** Both the host family and the student should be aware and cautious of laws in the United States. In the United States, the Age of Consent is 18. Engaging in sexual activity with someone who has not reached the Age of Consent is illegal. Please refer to: aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/08/sr/statelaws/summary.shtml.

RECOGNIZE WARNING SIGNS

By recognizing behaviors that pave the way to abuse, we can prevent harm before it happens! Be mindful and think critically about the relationships your student has with adults in his/her life, both within the home and outside in the community. Remember, your exchange student should be treated as a member of the family, so host parents should exercise the same level of concern and caution as they would towards their own child. Trust your gut: if you feel that your student's relationship with an adult is inappropriate, be sure to express your concerns to a YFU representative. Be aware of the following signs that an adult may be crossing boundaries with your exchange student:

- **Excessive E-communication:** Adults spending excessive time texting, calling, or emailing an exchange student can be a warning sign.
- **Special Relationship:** Adults spending extended time alone with an exchange student or giving gifts or money for no reason may be warning signs.

- **Special Permissions:** Adults allowing an exchange student to break YFU or family rules is strongly discouraged. When an adult asks a student to keep a secret, it may be a warning sign.
- **Denying Privacy:** Adults walking into the bathroom or bedroom when an exchange student is there. Additionally, inviting or allowing the exchange student to enter an adult's bedroom or bathroom can be a warning sign.
- **Inappropriate Sharing:** Adults turning to an exchange student for emotional or physical comfort by sharing personal or private information that would normally be shared with another adult is a warning sign.

TAKE ACTION

The responsibility of keeping exchange students safe belongs to every adult in the community.

- **Trust Your Gut:** As a host parent, you may sense that something is making your exchange student feel uncomfortable, or observe that a relationship is heading down an inappropriate path. Even if there are no public accusations, it is important to trust your instincts if you feel something might be wrong. Talk with your Area Rep or Support Services Manager as soon as you have a concern.
- **Listen and Don't Judge:** Listen to your exchange student. If your exchange student feels uncomfortable, the feeling is legitimate and should not be ignored or denied. It is important not to dismiss any of the student's concerns, and to take the issue seriously.
- **Support and Report:** It is not your responsibility to determine the truth or confront the alleged abuser. Your role is to inform your Area Rep or Support Services Manager of the student's report. Do not be a bystander - doing nothing to stop wrongdoing is an endorsement of wrongdoing.
- **Report to YFU:** Contact your Area Rep and then your Support Services Manager at **1.866.4.YFU.USA** (1.866.493.8872). For events that occur outside of work hours (9 AM - 5 PM EST), call the YFU emergency hotline at **1.800.424.3691**. If you are a mandatory reporter based on your profession, follow the requirements for that profession as well as reporting to YFU.

EXTRA RESOURCES

- **Stop it Now!:** Receive Free and Confidential Guidance on any issues or concerns you have. Contact stopitnow.org through the Hotline **1.888.PREVENT** or email them at stopitnow.org/help-inquiry.
- **Let's Talk:** If you are concerned about your own thoughts and feelings towards children, help is available. StopItNow.org/guidebooks; GetHelp.StopItNow.org.
- **National Center for Exploited and Missing Children:** missingkids.com, or for their Hotline call **1.800.843.5678**.

APPENDIX VIII: COMPUTER USE, INTERNET & SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

Internet, computer, and phone use are increasingly a part of everyday life. They are also a great way for exchange students to stay in touch with their friends and family in their home countries. YFU USA has found in past years that the overuse or misuse of technology can cause extreme tension in a family. It is important to set rules and boundaries for students regarding the use of technology in the home, and to enforce these rules to avoid conflicts. Remember, your exchange student should follow all rules that you have set for your own family, including Internet and computer usage.

GENERAL COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE

- Excessive computer and phone use has previously had negative impacts on host family relationships. It also inhibits the adjustment process, as students who are overly attached to communication back home often have a much harder time assimilating to life in the US. YFU students are not prohibited from communicating with their natural parents or friends during the exchange; however, this should be limited to an appropriate amount, and at no point should it negatively affect their relationships with their host family or friends in the US.
- Host parents are encouraged to discuss safe ways to use the Internet with their students.
- Many students will arrive with their own personal computer and/or smartphone. The student is expected to follow host family rules on usage. Any rules should be clearly communicated to the student.
- Use of the host family computer or access to the Internet is not a guarantee. Students should be prepared for limited or no access in the host family home.
- Students must always respect family time limits and the needs of others regarding computer and phone usage. They should always ask permission before downloading programs or materials from the Internet.
- Nothing on the internet is private, including blogs, personal web pages, and social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, etc.). Everything posted on the internet can be viewed by any person at any time.
- Be aware of the danger of internet predators. Never communicate with strangers over the internet, and do not reveal personal information (name, phone number, address, etc.). Never agree to meet someone in person who you met over the Internet.
- Do not use violent, offensive, or sexually suggestive photos, screen names, or language on the internet. These can result in the student being asked to leave their host family and/or school placement. In such cases, YFU may need to recommend an early return to the home country.
- Pictures or videos depicting nudity or sexual acts must never be viewed, downloaded, or sent over the internet. This is a serious crime in the US that can result in the student being arrested, charged with internet pornography, and sentenced to jail. Do not open or send such files.
- Host parents or school personnel may choose to monitor their student's Internet use, but should always notify the student before checking computer activity. Such monitoring is common and legal in the US (if the activity is on a host family or school computer), but it may be considered an invasion of privacy in many cultures.
- A student's own laptop computer is private property, and YFU host families and representatives can ask a student to surrender the laptop if a condition of probation for overuse, however, no such persons are permitted to violate student privacy by examining personal records or correspondence.

Please don't hesitate to contact your YFU district office at **1.866.4.YFU.USA** with questions or concerns regarding these policies. Additional resources for parents and teens on this topic can be found at the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children website: ncmec.org.

SOCIAL MEDIA USE

- **Facebook is public.** The way you present yourself on Facebook can be seen by hundreds of people that you know and care about. Every time you post something, consider how you are representing yourself, your home country, natural family, YFU and host family. Every year

a few students lose their host family because of what they have posted on Facebook or social media. Don't let this happen!!

- **“Friend” your host parents, host siblings and Area Rep;** it's a great way to improve communication. Many YFU fields have closed group pages on Facebook. Be sure to join your group to share your experience with others and keep informed about what is happening in your area.
- **Limit Facebook activity with your home country.** While you are on exchange, Facebook should be used in English to communicate with your local American friends. Excessive communication with friends and family at home makes it harder to settle into the USA. If this becomes a problem for you, YFU and your host family will ask you to limit your time on Facebook.
- **Post pictures from your American life.** It's fun for others to see what you are doing during your exchange. Plus, you will have a nice photo album to look back on when your exchange year is complete!
- **Keep your profile private** - viewable only by people you know! You do not want to share your phone number, address or email with everyone who has internet access! You can set these limitations in your privacy settings.
- **Delete inappropriate comments from friends.** It's OK to delete things you are embarrassed about or that you would not be proud of later in life. If a friend tags you, you can delete tags of yourself in any pictures that you don't want others to see. Even if your profile is private, your photos can be accessed publicly if you have been “tagged”. Again, every year a few students lose their host family because of an inappropriate photo or post from their friends. Don't let this happen!
- **Don't harass or threaten others.** Spreading rumors or making fun of someone online is called cyber-bullying, and can carry serious consequences. Don't complain about your host school, friends, or host family members on Facebook. Be sure to tell a host parent, teacher or YFU representative if you become the target of cyber-bullying.
- **Join YFU groups and other groups associated with your interests.** This will help you learn about American culture. But don't join groups that might offend or embarrass yourself, your host family or your own parents.

- **Universities and employers are looking at Facebook** pages more and more. Keep in mind that all information and pictures that you post of yourself and your friends can become part of a school or job application later in life, and are part of your YFU application now!
- **YFU staff and volunteers will be viewing your Facebook page.** Any information contained in your Facebook page or posted about you by others that involves a violation of your host family's trust or YFU rules may result in disciplinary action up to and including being sent home.
- **Don't friend anyone you don't know personally.** Only accept friend requests from individuals you have met in person.

APPENDIX IX: DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES

DANGEROUS ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS

A. DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES REQUIRING PERMISSION FORM AND GUIDELINES

Climbing and Rappelling Walls in Controlled Settings

Students must complete appropriate training, use prescribed safety gear, and be supervised by a host parent or responsible adult.

Driving Farm Tractors

Students are permitted to drive standard farm tractors on private property. Instruction and supervision by a host parent or responsible adult are required. Driving tractors or other farm equipment must be in the context of helping out with chores and not a recreational activity. For students covered under the YFU USA insurance plan, driving a tractor is an exception to the motor vehicle exclusion in the medical portion of the policy and it is ultimately up to the insurance company to decide what constitutes a “standard farm tractor” should a claim arise.

Driving Ride-on Lawn Mowers

Students are permitted to drive standard ride-on mowers on private property. Instruction and supervision by a responsible adult are required. Use of ride-on mowers must be in the context of helping out with chores and not a recreational activity. For students covered under the YFU USA insurance plan, driving a ride-on mower is an exception to the motor vehicle exclusion in the medical portion of the policy and it is ultimately up to the insurance company to decide what constitutes a “standard ride-on mower” should a claim arise.

Horse Jumping

Students must be trained and supervised by a qualified instructor. Students must follow safety guidelines and utilize prescribed protective gear. Any injuries sustained during horse racing are excluded from the YFU provided insurance policy.

Hunting and Other Use of Firearms

Students must complete a certified training course in the use of firearms or other weapons used. Students must be properly licensed for both the type of game (animals) sought and the weapon used (including air/spring powered guns and bows and arrows). Students must follow safety guidelines, utilize prescribed protective gear, and follow all local laws. The hunting activity must be supervised by host parent(s) or a responsible adult.

Paint Ball and Archery

Students must complete appropriate training, follow safety guidelines, use prescribed safety gear, and be supervised by a host parent/responsible adult.

Scuba Diving

Students must complete PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) or NAUI (National Association of Underwater Instructors) certified training course and be accompanied by a certified guide. (If student has already completed training course, he/she must provide proof of current certification and be accompanied by a responsible adult.) Students must follow safety guidelines and utilize prescribed protective gear.

Skiing/Snowboarding Outside Ski Resort Maintained Trails/Slopes

Students must complete appropriate training, use prescribed safety gear, follow advisory precautions on local conditions, and be supervised by host parent or a responsible adult.

B. DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES REQUIRING SUPPLEMENTAL MEDICAL INSURANCE, PERMISSION FORM, AND GUIDELINES

Rappelling and Rock Climbing on Natural Formations

For all rappelling, rock climbing, and technical climbing, students must complete a training course and be accompanied by a certified instructor (if student has already completed a training course, he or she must provide proof of current certification and must be accompanied by a responsible adult). Students must follow safety guidelines and utilize prescribed protective gear.

Spelunking

Students must be trained and accompanied by a certified guide, follow safety guidelines, and utilize prescribed protective gear.

White Water Rafting

Students must be trained and accompanied by a certified guide, follow safety guidelines, and wear prescribed protective gear, including a life jacket.

Riding in a Private Plane/Vehicle/Device for Aerial Navigation

The pilot must be properly licensed, local laws followed, and all prescribed safety measures in place. Natural parents must provide proof of medical insurance coverage.

C. PROHIBITED DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES

Bungee jumping

Hang gliding

Parachute jumping

Parasailing

Water skiing

Piloting a private plane

Mountaineering

Racing by horse

Driving

PROHIBITED (even on private property): operation of vehicles including all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), automobiles, snowmobiles, trucks, motorized trail bikes, go-carts, personal watercrafts, mopeds, motorcycles or snowmobiles.

Students are permitted to ride as passengers on the above vehicles provided they follow all local laws and safety precautions and are the vehicle is not racing but under no circumstances are they permitted to drive. Students are **not** covered for injuries/death to themselves or others for accidents when they are driving a vehicle.

DANGEROUS ACTIVITY PERMISSION

Prior to participating in any of the dangerous activities, students must provide this form signed by the student, natural parent(s) and host parent(s). In many cases students must be licensed or certified in the activity and/or provide proof of supplemental medical insurance to cover accidental injuries or death in the pursuit of the high risk or dangerous activity. Student and natural parents must provide proof of other medical insurance coverage as a condition to YFU approving participation in an activity not indemnified through YFU USA group insurance or YFU partner insurance.

Students are expected to take adequate safety precautions and must follow all local laws when participating in any kind of physical activity (i.e. helmets may be required when riding a standard bicycle, life jackets are required when boating or white water rafting, etc.). Violating YFU rules governing dangerous activities (e.g., driving) will nullify a student's medical/liability coverage through YFU.

If you are unsure if an activity is or should be considered dangerous, please contact your Support Services Manager.

YFU USA provided insurance does not provide liability coverage for damage caused by a student in pursuit of Dangerous Activities; the student and the natural family are responsible for finding out whether their private insurance coverage applies. For more information on insurance coverage refer to the YFU website at yfuusa.org.

DANGEROUS ACTIVITY AND PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

YFU Student Name

YFU Student Home Country

YFU Student Date of Birth

DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES REQUIRING PERMISSION FORM AND GUIDELINES

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| • Climbing and Rappelling Walls
in Controlled Settings | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |
| • Driving Farm Tractors | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |
| • Driving Ride-on Lawn Mowers | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |
| • Horse Jumping | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |
| • Hunting and Other Use of Firearms | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |
| • Paint Ball and Archery | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |
| • Scuba Diving | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |
| • Skiing/Snowboarding Outside
Ski Resort Maintained Trails/Slopes | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |

DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES REQUIRING SUPPLEMENTAL MEDICAL INSURANCE, PERMISSION FORM, AND GUIDELINES

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| • Rappelling and Rock Climbing
on Natural Formations | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |
| • Spelunking | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |
| • White Water Rafting | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |
| • Riding in a noncommercial
Plane/Vehicle/ Device
for Aerial Navigation | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> For this time period only _____ |

MEDICAL INSURANCE CONFIRMATION

To participate in any activity requiring Supplemental Medical Insurance, please provide that insurance information here:

Insurer's Name

Policy Number

Policy Effective Dates

PROHIBITED DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES

- | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • Driving | • Parachute jumping | • Piloting a private plane |
| • Bungee jumping | • Parasailing | • Mountaineering |
| • Hang gliding | • Water Skiing | • Racing by Horse |

SIGNATURES FOR APPROVAL

I read the Dangerous Activity Permission Policy and request approval to participate.

Student Signature

Date

Natural Parent Signature

Date

Host Parent Signature

Date

Your Support Services Manager will grant or deny approval via email. Should you have questions, please contact your Support Services Manager.

APPENDIX X: PERMISSION TO TRAVEL POLICY

YFU USA has a responsibility to assure student safety to the greatest extent possible, have knowledge of a student's location, and ensure that students participate in host family activities and school programs. Any travel that might have an impact on any of these factors requires advance approval from YFU. The YFU USA National Office has final authority to grant or deny permission to travel. Unauthorized travel will have the student considered as *Off Program* and may result in dismissal of student and termination of visa status.

Permitted Travel:

- travel with the host family
- travel accompanied by another adult over 25 years authorized by YFU
- independent travel to visit an appropriate adult or host authorized by YFU
- trips sponsored by the high school, or religious, community or youth organizations if YFU determines there is appropriate adult supervision & the cost is appropriate;
- YFU sponsored trips (local and national)
- travel with the natural family at the end of the program year

Travel NOT Allowed:

- independent travel by the student alone or with other students
- trips sponsored by another exchange program, travel agent, or community member
- missing more days of school than school policy allows
- travel with the natural parents without YFU approval or if student will miss school

No Permission to Travel Form Required for

- a trip that meets all of these requirements
 - travel with the host family
 - within the USA
 - when carrying a cell phone known to YFU
 - cost to be paid by the student amount to under \$300
- YFU sponsored trips (they each have their own forms)

Host families and students are encouraged to tell their area representative of any travel plans regardless if a Permission to Travel Form is required.

Permission to Travel Form Required For

Natural Parent Permission is need to be attached/ uploaded for approval. A trip itinerary is necessary for trips with more than one destination.

- travel without the host family, area representative, or school for more than 3 nights
- travel outside of the US
- travel with the Natural Parents
- if student is paying \$300 or more for the trip
- travel with school, or community organization, or religious organization
- local YFU trip
- planned by a YFU staff or volunteer (excludes national trips e.g. Belo)
- if the student misses more than 5 days of school

Do not purchase any airline, bus, or train tickets prior to receiving YFU approval, as many tickets are non-refundable. YFU USA will not reimburse, nor accept any responsibility for financial loss incurred by purchasing tickets or paying deposits prior to obtaining approval from the YFU Support Team for such activities.

Special note: Travel as a passenger or otherwise in any private plane or device for aerial navigation is not covered by YFU USA medical insurance. Such travel requires separate approval and insurance - review the Dangerous Activity Form and contact your Support Services Manager.



PERMISSION TO TRAVEL PROCEDURES

- 1) Complete all applicable sections of the Permission to Travel Form. Forms can be filled out in your Host Family Account.
- 2) Gather any additional paperwork required (invitations, natural parent permission).
- 3) Get required signatures (school principal, host parents, YFU responsible officer).
- 4) Upload all documents to the Travel Form on the Host Family Interface.
- 5) YFU will contact you to let you know if your trip is approved.

This Travel Form is an interactive guide to ensure that the pertinent information is noted while irrelevant sections will be skipped.

The YFU USA National Office has final authority to grant or deny permission to travel. Unauthorized travel will have the student considered as *Off Program* and may result in dismissal of student and termination of visa status.

Please review the following definitions and policies prior to completing the Permission to Travel Form.

School Attendance. YFU USA does not allow travel to interfere with school attendance. Students may not travel during school days unless they have the permission of the school principal (or someone authorized to give this permission) and the permission from YFU. The National Office has final authority, and may deny permission even if the school grants permission to be absent. YFU USA will not consider requests to miss school when the travel is to accompany visiting natural parents or friends from the native country or if the travel is independent travel.

Travel Outside the US. Travel to Canada, Mexico or the Caribbean with the host family will usually be allowed. Other travel outside the United States is normally not allowed. Exceptions for travel with the host family to another foreign country may be made on a case-by-case basis. All such travel must be approved by the National Office in advance of arrangements being made.

Most countries have additional visa requirements for entry and many of our students do not meet these requirements without completing an application for a visa. To check these requirements, visit the website of the country's consulate. The Mexican Embassy recommends all minors traveling without both Natural parents carry a notarized consent letter at all times in the event airline or Mexican immigration officials request one. This is a measure to prevent human trafficking.

A student must have a multiple entry visa to re-enter the US, and must have the **“Certificate of Eligibility, Form DS- 2019”** signed by the YFU responsible officer prior to any travel outside the US **or the student will be denied re-entry at the border. This is a Department of State requirement.** Travel validation, once secured, is valid for up to one year.

To secure the required responsible officer signature, send the original “Certificate of Eligibility, Form DS-2019”, which should be located with the student's passport, by a traceable method to: **Support Services, Youth For Understanding USA, 641 S Street NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20001.** Do not send your passport, just the certificate. Please include a check or money order payable to YFU USA for \$25.00 to cover return of the documents by traceable express service. This process must be initiated no later than two weeks prior to the departure from the USA to ensure documents are received on time. In exceptional cases where the document is needed in a shorter time frame, you may request rush processing where the document is returned as overnight delivery. The cost for this sending method is \$75.00.

CBYX, YES, and FLEX scholarships students who are traveling outside the US must submit a **written Permission to Travel Form, trip itinerary, natural parent permission and the DS-2019** to YFU USA **at least four weeks prior to departure**. YFU USA will forward the DS-2019 document and the information to the Department of State for final approval which necessitates additional time to complete. Scholarship students also need to secure additional health insurance coverage for any international trip they go on.

Means of Travel for Independent Travel. For independent travel of a student, commercial air travel is usually acceptable. Travel by train is approved on a case by case basis. Travel by commercial bus is rarely allowed. Students must travel directly point to point; touring the US en-route is not permitted. The student's natural family must give written permission and relieve YFU of any responsibility for student safety during the trip. Trip itinerary and a letter indicating an invite from the host must also be included.

Authorized Hosts and Responsible Adults/Accommodation. An authorized host for independent travel or a responsible adult for accompanied travel is defined as an adult age 25 years or older who has a strong relationship (friend or relative) with the host or natural family. Overnight (or longer) visits to stay with anyone who is not an adult age 25 years or older is not allowed. Visits to stay in hostels, college dormitories or hotels without an authorized adult or host parent will not be permitted. Under no circumstances may a student miss school to undertake such travel.

Sponsored Trips. Trips sponsored by the high school, or religious or youth organizations, will usually be permitted. YFU will determine if there is appropriate adult supervision, that the trip is fully sponsored by the organization or school, and that the cost seems reasonable. The student's natural family must give written permission and relieve YFU of any responsibility for student safety during the trip. For safety and legal reasons, approval will not be given for students to travel with other groups and/or organizations. If a trip requires the student to pay by check, YFU urges the student to get a cashier's check or money order to pay for the cost. The student should not give money to the host family in exchange for a host family check.

Travel with Student's Natural Family. Such visits and/or travel are strongly discouraged by YFU. If a student and his/her natural family are considering traveling together, the approval process for Accompanied Travel must be followed. It is important to remember that such visits or travel may cause adjustment problems so serious that YFU may have to consider an Early Return of the student. Therefore, YFU will only consider such travel requests for trips towards the end of the exchange experience. Under no circumstances may a student miss school to undertake such travel.

Youth For Understanding USA Sponsored Trips. *YFU sponsored trips local:* YFU Area Representatives are permitted to arrange trips for students that cost less than \$300 per student. Any trips that will cost more than that amount, according to YFU policy, must be operated by a YFU USA approved tour operator. Students need to submit to the Area Representative in charge the completed Permission to Travel Form, Natural Parent Permission, and fee. Responsible Area Representative will give permission, not the Support Services Manager. Area Representative will turn in Permission to Travel and Natural Parent Permission to the Support Services Manager for processing one week before the trip. YFU USA has the right to remove a student from the trip for academic or behavioral problems that occur prior to the trip's departure.

YFU sponsored trips national (i.e. Belo): are offered to all YFU students. Trips and announcement of such trips will be made by mail or email from a YFU Office. YFU Permission to Travel form is not required however other permissions the tour operator asks is required. The tour operator will keep YFU USA informed of who has completed the necessary paperwork. YFU USA has the right to remove a student from the trip for academic or behavioral problems that occur prior to the trip's departure which may result in loss of deposit and /or plane tickets.

Trips with Host Family which require student to pay. If a host family trip requires the student to pay \$300 or more of the necessary cost, the host family and student must write an agreement which includes: the date, the specific cost, what the cost covers, by when the student needs to pay the host family, and signatures from the student, host family, and natural family. This travel must also be approved by YFU USA.

Host Family Trips without the student. Student are allowed to stay with another family for up to 5 nights; the host family must inform their Area Representative and/or Field Director. If the host family is gone for 6 nights or more but a responsible adult (must be at least 25 years) stays in the home with the student, the responsible adult will need to complete a Criminal Background Check with YFU USA. If the student is staying with another family for more than 6 nights, the family will need to complete the YFU USA application process.

APPENDIX XI: ENGLISH LANGUAGE RESOURCES

Rosetta Stone

YFU has partnered with Rosetta Stone, a leading online language tutorial program, to provide additional English language instruction to students who are struggling with their language abilities. Rosetta Stone is available at no cost to the Host Family, and serves as an excellent alternative to a tutor. The Rosetta Stone software can be utilized on laptops and computers with the use of functional headphones and a microphone, and is also available for use on mobile devices, such as a tablet or smartphone. If you think your exchange student could benefit from additional language assistance, please contact your Support Service Manager (SSM) to determine the most appropriate type of language support. Once the SSM has agreed that the student could benefit from Rosetta Stone, an account will be set up for the student who will then receive an email with log in and set-up support information. If at any point you have questions concerning your Rosetta Stone account, your SSM will be your point of contact.

APPENDIX XII: ORIENTATIONS

Teaching students and families to be citizens of the world is a key component of the global YFU mission. YFU orientations provide students and families with the necessary skills to become citizens of one world through hands-on, active learning activities that improve communication and problem solving skills. In addition, cultural adjustment and cross-cultural learning are essential themes which are woven throughout the four orientations. It is highly recommended (and in many cases required) that families and siblings attend orientations, alongside the exchange student. Cross-cultural adjustment is not only challenging for international students, your own family will be adapting to a new household member who likely brings a different set of values and perspectives. By participating in orientations, host families gain knowledge in cultural adjustment, share tips, and can seek guidance from other host parents, as well as trained volunteers and staff.

There are four orientations scheduled throughout the exchange experience. Students are required to attend three of the four orientations. The first orientation is for host families to prepare for the exchange.

Host Family Pre-Arrival Orientation: This orientation typically occurs during the summer and is designed to prepare host families for the students' arrival. The US State Department, as articulated in the Host Family Agreement, requires this orientation for host families. All families, regardless of experience with hosting and/or YFU must participate in this orientation, including YFU staff or volunteers who are also hosting an exchange student. This orientation outlines key policies and YFU procedures and also connects families to one another to build YFU community.

Orientations and Host Parents

Orientations are important for host parents because it is there where you will receive key information about YFU policies, procedures, and details on departure. Most sessions during the orientations provide privacy and host parents and students do not meet together. Typically there is one or two sessions where host families and students are together to discuss a variety of topics.

Post-Arrival Orientation: This orientation usually takes place four to six weeks after students arrive in the US.

For most students, this orientation is scheduled in September or October. This orientation focuses on concepts such as: personal culture, culture shock, and the adjustment curve. In addition, students discuss YFU policies and procedures and review YFU support services. The parent session is often not as long as the student sessions and during this time important information is shared about establishing boundaries, and communicating with your student as they begin this journey.

Mid-Year Orientation: This orientation typically occurs in January or February and serves as a "maintenance check" for students and families mid-way through their exchange. In some cases, students may have changed families or schools, so this orientation provides the opportunity to discuss additional cultural adjustment challenges. In other cases, the holiday season has resulted in homesickness, or perhaps the student is stressed because of semester exams. This orientation gives students the opportunity to seek advice from peers and volunteers, as well as think forward to the second half of their exchange. Communication, goal setting, and problem solving are key themes in this orientation for both host families and students.

Re-Entry Orientation: The Re-Entry Orientation takes place four to six weeks before the students returns to his/her home country. This orientation helps students take stock of all they have accomplished and prepares them for additional cultural adjustment when they are home. Reverse culture shock, saying goodbye to new American friends and families and logistics for departure are all discussed during this orientation.

APPENDIX XIII: HOW DO YOU DO THINGS IN YOUR HOME?

The following questions will help you consider some of your family's most basic habits. Each family is different from every other, and that is particularly true when you compare your family to one from another country. The more you can communicate your habits to your new family member, the smoother your adjustment period will be. Be careful though not to overwhelm your new student with a list of "rules and regulations." Rather, use the questions below to identify some of your family's patterns and take the natural opportunities you will have with your student to share them.

Food

- When does your family eat meals? Is everyone expected to be there? Do you eat breakfast and lunch on your own or with the family?
 - Is snacking allowed? What types of food can you snack on (candy, fruit, leftovers, etc.)?
 - Can you eat in the living room, bedroom, etc.?
 - Is it important that your exchange student uses American table manners?
 - Is it important that everyone eat basically the same thing (same menu) at the table?
 - What appliances do you use in your home? Your student may not be familiar with American appliances.
 - What's for lunch on a school day? Host families will provide 3 meals a day. Clearly define what the family will pay for or at school and/or if food will be available at home for your student to bring lunch.
- Does your student need a cell phone? Help him/her find a stand-alone plan (not part of your family plan).
 - Note: Answering machines and telephones differ from country to country. Make sure to explain the use of your answering machine, and telephone features like call waiting.

Pets

- Is your dog, cat, or other pet allowed inside or outside?
- Do you allow your pet(s) on the furniture or bed?
- Who feeds and cares for your pet(s)?
- May your pet eat the table scraps? May they eat from regular dinner plates?

TV, Music, etc.

- What is the tolerated noise level?
- Who decides which TV channel to watch? Can you change the channel if someone falls asleep or leaves the room, etc.?
- Is there a specific time you want the TV or music turned off?
- Is the TV only allowed on weekends or after homework is completed?
- Do you have rules for playing video games, watching DVDs, playing the Wii or using headphones/iPods?

Dishes

- Who does the dishes, (or loads and unloads the dishwasher)?
- Are dirty dishes washed immediately, or is it acceptable to leave them in the sink or on the counter until a later time?
- What soap is used for dishes, in the dishwasher, etc.? You may need to explain that only dishwasher soap is used in the dishwasher.

Telephone

- Are there specific hours of use? For example, no calls after 9:00 PM.
- Are there limits on the duration of telephone calls?
- Who pays for long distance calls? Exchange students are responsible for their long distance charges. Explain the costs before your student makes a \$50 phone call to tell the natural parents s/he has arrived!

Internet and Email

- What are your rules about computer/internet use? May your student use the family computer?
- If your student has a laptop, where should it be used and left when not in use?
- Does your family have limits on the use of e-mail or social networking? See YFU Policies in the Host Family Handbook.
- Is there an electronic curfew? (A time for ALL electronics to be charging in a public room for the night)

- If using your family computer - can computer programs be added/deleted? Are computer games permitted? May a student's friends use the family computer?
- Are there printer supplies (paper, ink, etc) that your student is expected to furnish?

Bathroom

- Who uses which one(s)?
- What is the most convenient time to use the bathroom for showering/ bathing and how much time is allowed?
- How long is too long?
- Do you expect everyone to shower everyday?
- Should the toilet seat and cover be up or down?
- Where should wet towels be put? How often are they washed?
- Should the door to the bathroom be open or closed when not in use?
- Exchange Students should buy their own personal hygiene products, such as deodorant, etc.

Laundry

- Where should dirty laundry be left - in a hamper, bathroom, bedroom floor, etc.?
- Does everyone do their own laundry, or does one person take responsibility?
- How often are sheets changed and who is responsible for changing them?

Bedroom

- Should the door be left closed or open?
- Do you knock before entering bedrooms or just open the door?
- Does the bed have to be made every day, never, or just on special occasions?
- Is it acceptable for your student to pile his or her clothes on the bed, chair, or floor? Should clothes be put away at all times?
- Who is responsible for cleaning the bedroom(s)?
- Is your student allowed to hang things on the wall with tacks, tape, or other materials?
- If your student is sharing a bedroom, how can each individual adapt to each other smoothly?

- What are the concerns about lights, music, keeping windows open or closed, etc? When do you get up and go to bed? How will each of you study and where?
- What are the rules surrounding friends (of both sexes) in the bedroom?

Odds and Ends

- Who uses the living room and for what purpose?
- Can you put your feet on the furniture?
- Are shoes to be worn in the house or taken off?
- Are lights to be turned off when leaving a room or left on?
- Are doors and windows to be kept shut, open, locked, or unlocked?
- Do you have curfew? What are the "house" rules? What are the consequences of breaking them?
- Are there assigned household chores, weekly, daily, rotating, etc.?
- Who brings in the mail and pays for stamps? Show your student how to address an envelope and where to place the stamp.
- Does the family attend a place of worship together? Every week or only on certain occasions? Should your student wear his or her best clothes to the place of worship?
- Are there designated "family times" daily or weekly? Explain when family members are encouraged to be together in common areas to play games, watch TV, etc.
- Is there a central family calendar?
- When are the family birthdays? What is your family's culture around celebrating and gift giving?
- What should your student call you - Mom, Dad or by first name?
- What transportation is available - school bus, public bus, bicycle? Is it safe to walk around the area alone?
- What are the unwritten family rules? Think of iceberg and those rules below the water.

APPENDIX XIV: ACRONYM LIST

AC	Area Coordinator
APP	Application
AR	Area Representative
CCP	Community College Program
ELTiS	English Language Test for International Students
FD	Field Director
HF	Host Family
IER	Involuntary Early Return
IS	International Student
J1	Student Visa for International Students
NF	Natural Father
NM	Natural Mother
NO	National Office
NP	Natural Parents
NVAC	National Volunteer Advisory Council
OC	Outreach Coordinator
PAO	Post Arrival Orientation
PDO	Pre-Departure Orientation
RD	Regional Director
REO	Re-Entry Orientation
RM	Recruitment Manager
RS	Registration Specialist
SA	Study Abroad
SAF	School Acceptance Form
SEE VISIT	Student Environment Evaluation Visit
SLEP	Secondary Level English Proficiency Test
SSM	Support Services Manager
STD	Student
VER	Voluntary Early Return
VOL	Volunteer
VPC	Volunteer Program Coordinator
YFU	Youth For Understanding



YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING USA **Intercultural Exchange Programs**

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