

Midyear Orientation Summary

Thank you

Thank you for joining the E&T team and volunteering to work with us to carry out orientations across the country! E&T is here to support you and provide you with tools and information to organize and host a meaningful orientation. As we strive to support orientation leaders and standardize YFU's orientations, we have two goals in mind: **ensure that all students and families participate in high quality orientations; and to build volunteer capacity so that volunteers can take full ownership of orientations and carry these out at the local level.** We appreciate all the recent feedback and suggestions that have come from volunteers on how to do this. With this feedback, we have developed the following guidelines for orientations:

- Facilitators follow the E&T curriculum to the best of their ability
- Each orientation meets a minimum length of time, as described in this Orientation Summary developed for each orientation
- All Orientation Coordinators submit sign in sheets lists to E&T at orientations@yfu.org, (preferably within one week of the orientation)
- Coordinators and facilitators are encouraged to participate in webinars and collaborative meetings with E&T staff to discuss the content of the orientation. FDs are also welcome to participate.

Midyear Overview

The Midyear Orientation is for students and families, and it occurs at the midpoint of the exchange experience. Most sessions are facilitated separately for the students and families, bringing everyone together for a wrap up at the end of the day for everyone to share the highs and lows they have experienced thus far.

Why is the Midyear orientation important for families and students? The purpose of the Midyear Orientation is to provide additional support to students at the midpoint of their exchange experience. It also serves as a "maintenance check" for any issues that may need to be addressed to assist the student in learning skills to continue a successful experience.

In some cases, students may have moved to a second family and/or a new school and thus had to adapt to a new setting for a second time. This may have left them with even less time to accomplish their goals with family, friends, and school and they may demonstrate some signs of anxiety. The Midyear Orientation gives these students an opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings as well as seek advice from YFU volunteers and other students in order to have a successful experience. The Midyear Orientation also gives all students an opportunity to examine their experience thus far, identify concerns, and set realistic goals for the time remaining.

The **Midyear Orientation** focuses on achieving five objectives:

To **energize** students' commitment to a positive experience.

To **encourage** students to discuss the challenges of their exchange as well as personal changes and to learn what they have experienced to date.

To **look forward** to the remainder of their experience and come up with concrete steps that can be taken in order to continue personal growth and overcome past challenges.

To **encourage** students to consider the application of skills and knowledge to the international community.

Time Suggestions & Class Size This orientation has a total of seven sessions. If you have a group of ten or more students, we suggest that you plan for full day (at least 4.5 hours, not including lunch or breaks). Smaller groups will require less time. If you have a large orientation of 25 or more students and can have two learning spaces at the venue, it is best to break the group in half and run two smaller “classes” simultaneously. For those carrying out home-based orientations with groups of three or fewer students, you will be provided with a PowerPoint and activities; this session will take a few hours.

The Importance of Preparation for a Successful Orientation

The Midyear orientation requires careful preparation. In addition to the host family and student sessions running simultaneously, both sessions have specific preparation tasks, such as creating flipcharts and organizing specific games and activities. **Facilitators need to read the curriculum, be familiar with the activities they are leading (and the activities’ instructions), and understand how graphics and other tools support the session.** The key to successful facilitation is knowing what you are going to do and knowing *how* you are going to do it.

Midyear Curriculum Sessions The **sample** agenda below represents a 5.6 hour orientation, including lunch and two 15 minute breaks. Take a look at the specific sessions using this link:

<http://yfuusa.org/info/mid-year-orientation.php>.

Time	Length	Session Title
	:30	Welcome Session
	:35	Adjustment Process
	:15	Break
	:60	Dear Area Rep Problem Solving
	:30	LUNCH
	:30	Culture
	:85	Building Relationships
	:15	Break
	:20	Goal Setting
	:20	Wrap Up
Total: 5.6 hours (including 30 min lunch and 2 - 15 min breaks)	5.6 hr	

Parent Session: We have created a survey to use with the parents, so please access this survey on the Mid Year Orientation page of my.yfu.

Also, be sure to **enter your orientation dates on my.yfu** under the Events tab on the home page, so all the volunteers in your local area will be aware of when volunteer help is needed. At this time, **evaluations are not required** (we are re-thinking our evaluation strategy), however, you can encourage individuals (facilitators, families, and students) to send feedback to orientations@yfu.org . If you would like to use the current evaluation form with your group, please send us the completed forms. E&T would be happy to look at these to help us revise our approach to evaluating local orientations.

Thank you so much for your commitment to organize and lead orientations. Please reach out to the E&T team if you have additional questions about orientations. Kristie Rotz at krotz@yfu.org is leading this work with assistance from other E&T staff. Reach out directly to her with her questions.