

Volunteer Handbook

 **YFU** | USA
Intercultural Exchange Program

Mission Statement

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

Important Contact Information

YFU USA District Office: 1.866.4.YFU.USA (1.866.493.8872)

YFU USA Travel Emergencies: 1.800.705.9510

YFU After Hours Emergency Support: 1.800.424.3691

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

Welcome to YFU!

Willkommen!

**Yokoso
irashmashita!***

Bienvenue!

Bem-Vindos!

Tervetuloa!

Vitjte!

Benvenuti!

Welcome to the world of Youth For Understanding (YFU). Since 1951, YFU has advanced intercultural understanding, mutual respect, and social responsibility through educational exchanges for youth, families and communities. Begun as a post-war effort to bridge divisions and diminish stereotypes, YFU has grown into a world-wide network with programs and offices currently in 64 countries.

Sveicinati!

Velkommen!

None of this growth and progress could have taken place without the support of volunteers. Thousands of people have put their knowledge, skills, and caring attitudes to use by becoming YFU volunteers for teens and their families from around the world.

Velkommen!

¡Bienvenido!

As you work through this Volunteer Handbook and begin your work in international exchange, the most important thing to remember through it all is...

Valkommen!

Mabuhay!

ENJOY!

Bem-Vindos!

Welkom!

Dobro pozchalyat!*

Kalosorisote!*

The languages used above, in clockwise order on the page beginning at One o'clock are: Japanese, Portuguese, Czech, Latvian, Danish, Swedish, Russian, Greek, Dutch, Tagalog, Spanish, Norwegian, Italian, Finnish, French, and German. Note: the * indicates the word is written in its transliteration form, i.e., using the Roman alphabet rather than Cyrillic, Greek, Hiragana, or Katakana.

*“There would be no Youth For Understanding if it wasn’t for
the volunteers. What a job they do!”*

- YFU Founder, Rachel Andresen (1959)

Dear YFU Volunteer,

Thank you for serving in one of the most important jobs we have at YFU: that of a volunteer! For more than 60 years, YFU has depended upon the dedicated efforts of trained volunteers to deliver the YFU program in local communities around the world.

YFU’s impact on the world would not be possible without the direct engagement of volunteers. Whether you will be mentoring an international student, finding and interviewing host families, or reviewing scholarship applications, you make a positive, direct, and oftentimes, profound impact on the development of a young person and through them on our world’s future.

This is my first year leading this incredible organization. From my earliest days at YFU, I have heard wonderful stories about the ways that YFU volunteers bring out the best in our host families, our young ambassadors, and through their work, discover the best in themselves.

We challenge YFU students to look at themselves as young ambassadors, representing a myriad of countries from around the globe. We hope that you, too, will see yourselves as critical ambassadors from the United States. From Maine to California, Florida to Washington State and in Hawaii and Alaska, you showcase the best that our nation has to offer when you receive and interact with our young people and their host families. I sincerely hope you will thrive in your new role as a YFU ambassador and look forward to hearing your unique YFU story.

Thank you for dedicating your time and energy to make a difference in the life of a teenager and host family who are exploring new cultures and advancing intercultural understanding, mutual respect, and social responsibility. Thank you for helping support YFU families in your community to expand their world. Thank you for everything you do to fulfill YFU’s mission.

With warm regards,



Michael E. Hill
President & CEO
Youth For Understanding USA

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Youth For Understanding USA

THE ORGANIZATION

1. What is Youth For Understanding?

Youth For Understanding (YFU) is a worldwide network of interdependent, yet autonomous organizations committed to advancing intercultural understanding, mutual respect and social responsibility through educational exchanges for youth, families and communities. “YFU,” as it is most often called, is one of the world’s oldest and largest international youth exchange programs.

2. What is YFU’s history?

Dr. Rachel Andresen founded YFU in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1951 (biography in Appendix 1). The first participants were 75 German teenagers invited to live with American host families as part of the post-World War II effort to rebuild international friendship.

Since 1951, more than 250,000 high school students have participated in YFU exchange programs. Each year approximately 4,000 participants take part in YFU programs worldwide.

3. How is YFU organized?

YFU USA is a not-for-profit organization incorporated in 2002 in Delaware. YFU USA is directed by a President who reports to a board of trustees.

Currently, there are more than 50 YFU national organizations around the world. Most of these national organizations are autonomous and legally constituted in their own countries. A list of YFU partner organizations can be found in Appendix 2.

The YFU USA National Office is located in Bethesda, MD. The National Office supports the efforts of five District Offices and their staff located around the country. District staff positions for YFU USA can be seen in Appendix 6.

4. If the majority of YFU national organizations around the world are autonomous, how are programs coordinated?

Worldwide consistency of quality in programs and operations is provided by a set of YFU International

Basic Standards for Educational Exchanges of Youth For Understanding (appendix 15), developed by the YFU International Advisory Council in consultation with all YFU national organizations. All YFU national organizations have agreed to adhere to these standards. The standards guide each country in assuring a level of quality, but allow each organization to provide such quality through its own style, approaches, and cultural context.

5. How is YFU USA financed?

Most of YFU USA’s annual operating revenue comes from tuition paid by the families of exchange students or raised through individual and community projects. The balance of the revenue comes from governments, corporations, foundations, and individuals. Many special scholarship programs are underwritten by more than thirty-five corporations worldwide. Currently, the governments of Finland, Japan, Germany and the United States also provide scholarship support.

YFU USA is exempt from federal income taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code. A contribution to YFU USA qualifies as a charitable deduction.

In other countries, YFU national organizations generally have non-profit status as it is defined under local laws. In some countries, YFU enjoys local government subsidies and/or other support.

6. What is the tax status for contributions intended for an individual program participant?

Money can not be given to YFU USA as a charitable contribution and directed to help pay for a specific student’s program tuition. People may make a payment directly to YFU USA on behalf of a student, but it is not considered an allowable deduction by the IRS. Contributions to the YFU USA general fund, on the other hand, may be claimed as a deduction.

7. What services are located in the YFU USA National Office?

Staff at the National Office provide financial, travel,

and other administrative services to our District Offices in the US and national offices worldwide. There is a YFU USA National Office organizational chart in Appendix 4.

8. What role does the YFU International Secretariat play?

The YFU International Secretariat is an independent YFU organization that coordinates communications, resources and services on behalf of YFU's national organizations in over 60 countries around the world. In terms of impact, the Secretariat facilitates the operation and development of YFU national organizations and strengthens the vitality and solidarity of the YFU network. Its team of professional staff work to:

- promote and support learning within the YFU international network on YFU-related topics, general management know-how, trends and worldwide developments;
- provide leadership for developing and managing IT resources and know-how/expertise to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of national office operations and collaboration between offices;
- support and provide consultation to national offices to improve organizational performance and the effectiveness of development efforts;
- provide leadership for activities and services that involve cooperative actions among YFU partners to strengthen the performance and solidarity of the network;
- support the core operations of each YFU national office by coordinating essential administrative and communication services that are most efficiently accomplished centrally;
- coordinate the activities of YFU's volunteer International Advisory Council which advises the YFU community about issues of international concern, including the setting of student policies, approval of new programs, and planning for organizational development and contingencies.

9. In which countries does YFU have programs?

Presently, YFU USA exchanges with more than 60 organizations. Some of these are pilot programs coordinated by affiliates or partners that in the future may gain full YFU recognition as defined by the International Basic Standards. A number of YFU countries have exchanges among themselves as well as with the USA.

10. What types of programs does YFU USA have?

YFU USA has a number of different homestay programs for Americans and international students. This diversity allows flexibility in matching individual needs with YFU programs. American students ("AO" for Americans Overseas) participate in academic semester or year programs, non-school-based summer programs or a variety of gap year programs. Students between the ages of 15 and 18 coming to the USA from other countries ("IS" for International Students) attend secondary schools for semester or academic year programs. The community college program offers international students between the ages of 18 and 22 an opportunity to live with a host family in the USA and attend a community college.

11. How does YFU USA monitor reactions to its programs and support?

YFU USA conducts a program evaluation with students, host families and schools at the end of each program year. YFU USA maintains a system of staff support in the District and National Offices to whom issues can be addressed. The Support Services Manager and District Director are always monitoring the program in the District. The Support Services Liaison in the National office also:

- provides an appropriate and timely response to each participant concern that is received;
- assists in the development and refinement of policies and procedures to reflect concerns; and
- assesses complaints and provides feedback to management, and the appropriate departments.

As appropriate, the office also assists overseas National Offices with their participant concerns, assesses complaints, and provides feedback.

12. As an enrolled volunteer, how do I access information?

YFU USA has an active intranet page, <https://my.yfu.org>, where staff and volunteers can find and update student and host family information as well as access resources such as orientation curriculum, volunteer training materials, placement strategies and important forms and documents. This page is a critical tool in every volunteer's success. Once you've enrolled as an active volunteer your District Office will help you create a log-in and password so that you have access to student profiles, noteworthy organizational updates, and much more. You'll become familiar with my.yfu.org very quickly!

VOLUNTEERING

for Youth For Understanding USA

1. How many volunteers work with YFU USA

You are joining more than 1,400 US-based YFU volunteers who report that their work with YFU is highly rewarding. Many of these volunteers work to deliver YFU programs in the five districts of the USA. In addition, there are volunteers and interns working with departments in the National Office. The following questions and answers pertain primarily to the volunteers who work in the Districts.

2. What are the volunteer positions with YFU?

There are many ways volunteers accomplish YFU goals. The most common job is securing host families and supporting those families and international students throughout the students' stay in the USA. These volunteers are called Area Representatives. Other volunteers recruit and support American students to go overseas, conduct orientations for families and students, and promote YFU programs in their communities. Many volunteers opt to be even more generous with their time and perform the duties of more than one position.

3. Are there volunteer position descriptions?

Yes. These descriptions help match volunteer needs, interests and skills with the specific needs of the organization. They specify volunteer duties. Brief volunteer position descriptions are in Appendix 7 and full descriptions are available on my.yfu.org.

4. What are the qualifications of YFU volunteers?

Volunteers need enthusiasm for the international exchange experience, maturity, sound judgment, and flexibility. In addition, volunteers should possess the ability to work with adults and teens in a positive way, and a willingness to learn and carry out YFU policies and procedures. Volunteers must be at least 18 years old, have access to a computer, and be able to pass a criminal background check. Volunteers use skills in active listening, problem solving and organization. A lively sense of humor is also a great asset.

5. What are the steps to becoming a YFU volunteer?

Because YFU volunteers assume great responsibility and the organization is regulated by the US Department of State, the application and screening process is thorough. Volunteers first complete a YFU Volunteer Application, which includes signing a Volunteer Agreement and releasing YFU to conduct a criminal background check (CBC). Participants then participate in an interview (in-person or via telephone) and take the US Department of State Local Coordinator Certification test. Finally, volunteers complete the minimum training requirements for their assigned task(s).

6. How are volunteers organized, supervised, and supported?

Within the five Districts, volunteers are generally organized by Field. Fields are comprised of several areas. Many YFU areas have a local volunteer Area Coordinator (AC) who provides leadership and supervision for volunteers in that part of the Field. Area Coordinators are supervised, in turn, by Field Directors (FD) or Recruitment Managers (RM) who report to District Directors. Appendix 3 lists each District Office with states administered. Appendix 5 has a sample district organizational chart.

7. What is expected of a volunteer?

You are the YFU representative in your community, and in most cases, the primary contact for your students, host families, and schools. To help you carry out your responsibilities, you will receive orientation and training to familiarize you with YFU programs, policies, and procedures. In addition to self-directed and one-on-one trainings, you may be invited to webinar and in-person training programs in order to gain special skills in areas such as cross-cultural understanding, interviewing, counseling, and program promotion. YFU has a wealth of resources available online to support your volunteer activities. You are encouraged to ask for assistance and advice from your Area Coordinator or District Office as needed.

8. What do volunteers receive?

As a YFU volunteer, you receive the following:

- a position description (available on my.yfu.org);
- an initial live webinar New Volunteer Orientation, additional live trainings, and resource materials;
- on-going skills training*;
- regular information about YFU;
- access to a supervisor for advice and support;
- reimbursement of specified out-of-pocket expenses (see #10 below); and
- self-satisfaction and enjoyment gained by working with students from various cultures, host families, and other volunteers in your community.

* To be eligible for the skills training events, each volunteer needs to fulfill the requirements set between the volunteer and Area Coordinator and/or staff member. See the Volunteer Agreement in Appendix 10.

9. Are YFU volunteers covered by liability insurance?

All registered YFU volunteers are covered by the same general liability insurance coverage that protects Youth For Understanding USA. This coverage is in force while volunteers are acting at the direction of and within the scope of their duties for YFU USA and in accordance with the YFU Volunteer Agreement. The coverage protects YFU USA and volunteers in matters involving bodily injury or property damage to third parties (i.e., persons other than YFU USA or the volunteer). The liability insurance does not extend to situations involving the use of owned or leased automobiles. Such coverage is typically provided under personal automobile insurance policies.

10. How is volunteer performance evaluated?

Your Area Coordinator or staff member works with you to establish goals and monitor progress. If requested, YFU USA will provide you with documentation of your volunteer activities and responsibilities.

11. Are volunteers reimbursed for expenses?

Many volunteers choose to list their YFU expenses as an income tax deduction instead of filing for reimbursement. Instructions about how to do this can be obtained from the IRS website.

YFU USA will reimburse for certain volunteer expenses.

These include mileage, long-distance telephone charges, and postage. Any other large YFU-related business expenses must be pre-approved by the District Director. YFU USA does not reimburse for students' meals. If there is a question about an expense being reimbursed, check with your Area Coordinator or Field Director before incurring the expense.

Approved expenses can be documented on a YFU Volunteer Expense Report and submitted to the District Office.

* All volunteer expenses must be submitted for reimbursement monthly. Submitting expenses monthly helps ensure prompt reimbursement of expenses. Expense reports must be submitted within 30 days of the volunteer incurring the expense to be eligible for reimbursement.

12. What are other channels of communication at YFU USA?

Regular, up-to-date information is shared on the intranet page, my.yfu.org, through the monthly Volunteer Newsletter, through area meetings, training events, and occasionally at District workshops.

13. Are there opportunities to meet other volunteers who do the same job?

You will have the opportunity to share ideas and success stories with your colleagues at area meetings, training workshops, with group emails and at YFU activities (e.g., student/host family orientations).

14. Can you change from one volunteer position to another within YFU?

Yes! When you want to move into a new volunteer position or undertake additional responsibilities with YFU, your Area Coordinator or a staff member will help you make the change.

15. What volunteer opportunities are available with departments in the National Office?

Volunteers who work with departments in the National Office participate in various projects such as scholarship evaluation for our American Overseas programs and curriculum development for orientations. Volunteers for the National Office will receive training and supervision from the department that is engaging them.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

1. Where can I find volunteer training materials?

All volunteer training information, dates and materials can be found on the intranet page, my.yfu.org, through the Volunteer Training page, the Volunteer Lounge, or listed under the upcoming events.

2. What initial training do volunteers receive?

All volunteers and employees are required to complete an annual US Department of State certification process. All questions on the certification test are drawn from the Department of State J-1 visa regulations listed in Appendix 13. If you have not already completed the certification process, you will be given relevant information from your District Office. You will be required to renew this certification each year.

Along with reviewing this handbook, all new volunteers attend a live New Volunteer Orientation (often on a webinar platform) and Area Reps attend a live Support Skills training series (also as a webinar). Your District's Volunteer Program Coordinator (VPC) will lead you through the initial training process.

3. Where does the initial training take place?

Your training is flexible. It may take place via webinar, printed materials on YFU's intranet page (my.yfu.org), in your own home or that of another volunteer, or at another local site. In some cases, the training may occur by telephone.

4. What other types of volunteer trainings are available?

As volunteers gain more experience working with YFU, there are advanced training sessions available. The advanced training sessions relate to specific responsibilities, so all volunteers may not take the same advanced sessions. Districts and areas hold weekend training workshops. These programs provide opportunities to meet and socialize with fellow volunteers and staff members, learn, enhance and practice useful skills, and learn about new areas

of YFU programs. An abbreviated list of volunteer training topics is listed on the next page.

5. Who presents the live training sessions?

YFU volunteers and employees coordinate and deliver YFU training materials. Certified Trainers are volunteers who have completed a special training course to qualify them to train other YFU volunteers and staff. While they possess the necessary skills to facilitate volunteer training sessions, other knowledgeable and experienced volunteers may also conduct volunteer trainings in your area.

6. Does YFU recognize professional and previous volunteer experience and training?

Learning about your professional skills and previous volunteer experience is part of the initial interview process. You may be asked to submit a list of those experiences. Past experience is taken into consideration when determining volunteer roles and trainings.

7. Why should volunteers attend YFU training?

Training events provide opportunities to improve your skills and learn new ones that will enhance your work with students, families and schools. They also help to strengthen everyone's sense of YFU identity and community. Socializing together in between training sessions allows volunteers to share stories, tips and support.

Training workshops also provide an opportunity to learn new organizational policies and procedures. Because much of student exchange is based on US government regulations and negotiated contracts and agreements with other countries, it is important to know the reasons for YFU procedures and policies, understand the program's basic standards, and realize the limits of the volunteer role. This is a preventative measure for personal and corporate liability and also enables the volunteer to function as a responsible representative of the organization.

Sample of Volunteer Trainings

YFU volunteer trainings are created, updated and revised frequently. Below is a list of some in-person, web-based or telephone training topics that currently available to YFU volunteers. The front page on my.yfu.org has additional planned training dates, updates and training information.

Basic Listening Skills

Skills Trained: using questions, reflection skills, positive asset search

Basic Support Skills

Skills Trained: attending and asking questions, reflective listening and focusing, organizing a systematic interview.

Basic Mediation

Purpose: This training is designed for experienced volunteers and builds on Basic Listening Skills and Dual Perspectives. It trains 7 specific stages of mediation.

Developing a Dual Perspective

Skills Trained: Using Non-judgmental Language, Finding Areas of Missing Information, Describing the Situation from Both Perspectives

Self Disclosure and Advice Giving

Skills Trained: recognizing self disclosure and advice giving as helping interventions; developing guidelines for using self disclosure and advice giving.

The Student's First Visit

Purpose: To be sure your first student contact creates a mutually-beneficial relationship with your student and helps make your repping easier and more rewarding.

Host Family Interviewing

Purpose: to become familiar with YFU's host family standards, understand the US Department of State requirements for the host family interview, ILearn interviewing techniques, learn about warning indicators, and understand how to complete the host family interview forms.

Learning About Language

Identifying adjustment problems that occur while learning a language, describing challenges of total immersion language experience, sorting out nature of student's language proficiency issues and adjustment issues.

Recruitment and Placement

Purpose: identify and learn to access personal networks, extend an invitation to host, be aware of regulations related to host family recruitment and student placement, know how to follow up with the application and interview phases

Standards and Regulations

Purpose: Identify the three institutions that impose standards and regulations on the student exchange industry, Apply standards and regulations to specific YFU scenarios, Understand the importance of complying with the standards and regulations.

Muslim Student Considerations

Purpose: To provide an overview of Islamic beliefs and practices. To emphasize ways Islam is connected to Judaism and Christianity and to address the most common misperceptions about Islam and Muslims.

Keeping Your Students Safe

Skills Trained: recognizing common signs preceding and following an act of sexual exploitation or assault, knowing what to do and who to call when suspicion of a potential or actual assault arises.

Exploring Team Dynamics

Purpose: To explore group dynamics, examine how individuals communicate within the confines of their roles, explore feelings related to the limitations of tasks, roles and boundaries of oneself and other team members, relate how the activity of building a model relates to the YFU structure and the parameters within which a volunteer must function.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS & HOST FAMILIES

1. How many YFU International Students (ISs) come to the USA each year and from where?

Approximately 2,000 YFU students come to live in the USA each year. Almost all of those students arrive in August for an academic year or semester, but some arrive in January for the semester program. Students come from more than 64 nations in Africa, Asia, Europe, North and South America, and the Pacific. You can see a full listing of countries in Appendix 2.

2. What are the YFU programs for International Students?

There are two major programs for international students coming to the US: Secondary School Academic and Community College.

- Secondary School Academic Programs: International students spend either an academic year or semester in the USA. Academic year program students arrive in August and remain until the following June. Semester program students arrive either in August or January and stay for a single academic semester. Program timelines are in Appendix 8.
- Community College Program: The YFU Community College Program provides a semester, year, or two-year degree program of either general study or English language instruction for international students who would like to continue their education while experiencing US culture. Students live with American host families or in on-campus residence halls or apartments, attend 16 credit hours of classes, and participate in community and college campus activities. The Community College office at the National Office coordinates this program directly with partner community colleges.

3. How are International Students selected to come to the USA?

The YFU national or partner office in each home country selects students after they complete a competitive application process. Consistent with YFU

International Basic Standards, the students are asked to supply background information, a letter to their prospective host family, the results of a medical exam, and school records. They must also have an interview with a YFU representative in their country. They are selected based on age requirements (15–18), grades (above average), positive interviews, English language ability, and the genuine desire to live with a family in another culture.

Once selected by their home country YFU office, students undergo an orientation process. The orientation programs prepare them for the exchange experience and help set realistic expectations for life in the USA, their American schools, and their American host families.

4. How is English language ability determined?

The process differs by country and is explained in Chapter 10, Language Services. All students arrive with a foundation of English language skills from which they can advance to acquire fluency and accuracy during their stay. Host families often find that assisting their students in gaining English language proficiency is one of the most gratifying elements of hosting.

5. What information do volunteers receive about students to help select host families for them?

As student files are received from overseas, a profile of each student is written based upon file materials. If your YFU volunteer job is to secure host families and/or place international students, this profile provides a very good synopsis of the student to assist in matching the student and host family appropriately. Student profiles may be accessed by visiting YFU's intranet site: my.yfu.org. As a vetted volunteer (you have completed all of the steps to become a volunteer), you can see more information about students. Once an interested host is vetted (all steps have been completed as described on page 11, number 14), they can see short profiles and photos.

6. What are the benefits of hosting a YFU student?

Hosting is FUN! It's a way to learn about another culture and language without leaving home. Families who host enjoy helping the international students learn and grow. Many families report becoming closer as they share their lives with an international student. Hosting broadens younger children's perspectives on the world, and families can contribute to understanding between people. Many YFU alumni also enjoy hosting as an opportunity to give back to YFU as well as a chance to share the exchange experience with their own children. Most importantly, YFU students become members of the family and often form relationships that last a lifetime.

Families sometimes have other reasons for hosting. A family may have all girls and want to host a boy, or vice versa. Parents with an only child may want to provide the experience of a sibling relationship for their child. Families with young children may want to provide an older sibling and role model but should not expect an au pair (child caretaker) arrangement. And some just like the constant activity of having teens in the house, even if their own children are grown or are very young.

7. How is a YFU host family defined?

A "host family" is defined in a number of ways. YFU USA defines a traditional host family as two persons living together who are related by blood or marriage. Traditional family configurations are married couples, with or without children, or one parent plus a child (or children) living at home. Non-traditional households are encouraged to apply.

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

8. What if a single person or same sex couple wants to host a student?

In accordance with US Department of State requirements, YFU will place students in a single person or same sex household after additional screening procedures have been completed.

9. What is required of a host family?

The family must be a stable unit, prepared to provide an emotionally supportive environment to the

exchange student as s/he goes through his/her adjustment process. The family must be financially able to provide for an additional member. This includes a separate bed, separate bedroom if appropriate, a suitable study area, transportation to and from school, and three meals a day. The family should be in a position to enable the exchange student to participate in the larger community and its activities. The family should articulate an interest in teenagers and international students and should treat the student as they would if s/he were their own child/sibling to the maximum extent practical. The family must be willing to operate within YFU guidelines, be cleared through a criminal background check and agree to have, at minimum, monthly contact with a representative of the program including at least one in-home visit per semester. It is helpful to have realistic expectations of what life with a teenager is like. YFU provides each host family with a Host Family Handbook that contains cross-cultural information, useful suggestions about hosting, and YFU policies and procedures to be followed. YFU host families also receive orientations before and during the exchange experience.

10. What does it cost to host a YFU student?

YFU has found that the additional monthly cost for food, transportation and utilities to host an exchange student averages \$100-\$200 depending on the community. Families are eligible for a \$50 per month tax deduction on their federal income tax return to help defray some of those costs (e.g., food and transportation). YFU students bring their own spending money for personal activities and clothing and are covered by YFU medical insurance.

11. How do volunteers find host families?

One of the first things you may do for YFU is recommend a host family. You can identify families who are interested in hosting a YFU student by talking about YFU within your network of friends and relatives, developing school and community contacts, or talking with people at your place of worship and at your job. By reviewing student profiles, you may see a student who would appeal to families you know or who you would like to see hosted in your community.

If you like media relations, you can help generate interest in your community through newspaper articles or letters to the editor or through radio and TV talk shows. (See Chapter 8, Public Relations.)

Your District Office or Field Director may send you

names of families in your area who have contacted YFU USA seeking information. These inquiries come from many sources, such as school presentations, people who are former YFU program participants, or other outreach activities. You may call leads and talk to them about hosting with YFU. This pre-screening of potential host families is vital to selecting appropriate families for students.

12. What materials are available to help volunteers talk about hosting?

YFU has several promotional materials to assist volunteers: brochures, videos, and other tools. You may obtain materials from my.yfu.org or by contacting your District Office. YFU offers training in how to utilize these resources. You may also refer interested individuals to our website: www.yfu-usa.org.

13. How can I recommend a family to YFU?

The best way to refer a family to YFU is through the YFU Loyalty Program. The Loyalty Program, accessed through my.yfu.org, helps YFU build strong communities by giving current volunteers and host families, who know both YFU and their communities well, the opportunity to recommend host families. By referring families you earn points for yourself and others in your community that can be donated or redeemed for just about anything.

14. How are host families selected?

1. Each family interested in hosting creates an account on YFU's public website, www.yfu-usa.org, where they complete an online application, electronically sign the Host Family Agreement and Background Check authorization and upload pictures to their Family Photo Album.
2. A YFU representative completes two positive reference checks for the family.
3. The family is interviewed in their home. As per US Department of State regulations, the interviewer and reference checker can not be the same person. The interview is an important part of the selection process and quite possibly one of the first tasks you will carry out as a YFU volunteer. Another YFU volunteer or staff member will assist a new volunteer with the interview and host family selection process.
4. School clearance is confirmed using the School Acceptance Form. In some rare cases while registering a student with the school, volunteers may be advised by a school that a family is not suitable

for hosting. Such recommendations should be taken seriously and referred to the District Office.

Prior to confirming a placement of a student in the home, the District Office staff must ensure that all necessary steps have been completed appropriately.

15. What is a placement?

This is a term frequently used by YFU. Making a "placement" consists of three tasks: the identification of an appropriate host family (HF) in the USA who agrees to host a specific YFU International Student (IS), the enrollment of that student in the local high school, and the identification of an Area Representative (AR) who will provide monthly support to the student and host family through the exchange experience. YFU standards dictate that the Area Rep must live within 100 miles of the host family.

16. What if a family wants to host two students?

Families can host two students simultaneously. The two students can not be from the same home country, and they can not share the same native language. In order to secure approval for a double placement, YFU must have written permission from the natural parents and host parents as well as complete a waiver process with the US Department of State. Under no circumstances is YFU allowed to place more than 2 students with a host family.

17. What do volunteers do to support the placement of students?

Volunteers perform a variety of tasks in the placement process. Some of the tasks volunteers perform on behalf of YFU are:

- recruit host families;
- interview host families;
- ensure that the host family's photographs have been uploaded to their host family account;
- ensure that the completed Interview Report and personal references have been uploaded to the host family account;
- help select an appropriate student for the family;
- ensure that the School Acceptance Form is on file in the District Office;
- ensure that the family receives an orientation prior to the arrival of their student and an orientation with their student after he or she arrives.

A YFU representative (who did not conduct the in-home interview) must visit the host family home within 30 days of the student's arrival. The Area

Representative must have an in-person meeting with the student within the first two weeks of arrival and then maintain, at minimum, monthly reported contact with the student and family throughout the student's stay in the USA. More information about how to carry out that contact and support can be found in the Area Representative Training Manual.

18. How do you place a student with a host family?

Once all documents are complete in the host family's account, the prospective host family has been interviewed in their home, background checks for family members 17 and older have been cleared, references have been checked, and school availability has been cleared, you should have enough information to recommend one or two students to the family.

Other experienced volunteers or staff members can assist you in making this selection. It is important to check my.yfu.org to determine whether a particular student is available before you share the student's profile with a host family. You can ask to place the student on hold while you present the student to a host family.

Volunteers should be cautious about seeking or promising too many matching characteristics. Siblings in a natural family are rarely exactly alike, and, in fact, can vary widely in interests without causing problems. Likewise, similarities do not assure successful placements, and efforts to match details create unrealistic expectations that may not be fulfilled. In short, YFU USA is seeking an appropriate host family for each student, rather than a perfect match.

Once the family agrees to host a particular student and the school has agreed to accept the student, the volunteer contacts the local Area Coordinator or District Office. Only after the District Office receives the application, references, interview report, and written school approval, can the placement be communicated to the student and natural parents overseas. The office will send a copy of the student's file to the volunteer, the host family, and the school. The Host Family Handbook is also mailed to the family at this time. It is imperative that a prospective host family and volunteer NOT contact an international student until the placement is final.

19. What are the procedures for enrolling the student in school?

As part of community outreach, you might have already

visited with the school administration to determine what policies and deadlines the individual school has for enrolling YFU exchange students. In this first visit, you should ask who the school contact is for enrolling students. Once a host family has been identified, the school should be informed of the family's interest in hosting. When the family selects a student, you would then follow the procedures for enrollment set forth by that school.

The US Department of State is the government agency that authorizes YFU to issue the visa forms necessary for students to come to the USA. This agency also has issued guidelines that restrict the number of YFU students that can be enrolled in any one school to five per year. If a school wishes to enroll more than five YFU students, the US Department of State will waive this requirement if a written request is made by the school to YFU. Please note that individual schools and school districts may have more restrictive requirements.

20. What kind of visa do YFU Students have?

YFU students are admitted to the USA on a J-1 "Exchange Visitor" visa. This visa is issued when a student presents a DS-2019 form to a US Consular office overseas. This form will indicate that YFU USA is the exchange sponsor. A copy of this form should be stapled to the inside of the student's passport and must remain there throughout the student's exchange program for the visa to be valid. This visa should not be confused with an F-1 "Student" visa, which is issued by colleges, universities, and (infrequently) high schools. Students in the USA with an F-1 visa are sponsored by the school, not by a recognized exchange program.

21. What expectations does YFU USA have of international students and host families?

YFU USA expects both the student and host family to be flexible and adaptable and to jointly share in the benefits, challenges, and joys of learning from one another. Students are expected to comply with YFU Student Policies and Procedures and to make efforts to adjust to the family's way of living. Copies of the policies can be found in Appendix 12 as well as in the Host Family Handbook and the Passport to the USA Student handbook. Host families are expected to comply with the YFU Host Family Agreement, which is signed during the application process. A copy of the Host Family Agreement is printed in the Host Family Handbook and can be found on my.yfu.org and on www.yfu-usa.org in the host family's application page.

YFU SUPPORT SYSTEM

1. What is the basis of YFU's support system?

YFU is grounded in a long-standing tradition of quality care for exchange students and volunteer host families. Year after year, YFU has made it a priority to support participants every step along the way - month by month. It is YFU's responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of each exchange student. We know the exchange experience is enhanced when volunteers do more than just greet students at the airport and be a monthly voice on the phone; a YFU participant should know and trust their local volunteers. Likewise, a volunteer's experience is enriched by more in-depth contact than a mere monthly phone call. The US Department of State guidelines state that support volunteers must be unbiased advocates for the students and stress the importance of establishing and maintaining meaningful relationships with both students and host families.

As an educational program, YFU gives great weight to the desirability for students and host families to adjust effectively to the cross-cultural experience. This constitutes, at the same time, an important cross-cultural learning opportunity for the volunteers involved. This is done through regular support contact and on-going orientation and learning opportunities provided by local YFU volunteers.

YFU makes the assumption that being an exchange student is challenging, and that the experience includes high and low points. Challenges in some aspect(s) is considered inherent in the process. Obstacles (which provide the depth of the experience) can and will usually be overcome. In fact, many challenges provide the best learning opportunities for the students and host families. When students and host families are challenged to work through their struggles, they can gain a great appreciation of each other's cultures and the bond can strengthen.

2. Who supports international students, host families and schools?

The structure of the support system is one of checks and balances so that consistency and quality can be maintained and student safety can be assured. YFU support procedures involve an extensive system that includes the host family, host community, school,

YFU organization and the natural family in the home country. The key support for international students, host families and schools is the volunteer Area Representative. One of the most important tasks of the YFU Area Representative is maintaining regular contact with both students and host families, and building a relationship along the way. One of the reasons people volunteer with YFU is to enjoy the exchange experience by watching the progress of students and families. Area Reps support students and host families through the exciting times as well as the challenging times; they are present to cheer as well as to problem-solve. As Area Reps begin to know their students and families, they establish a basis for communication should issues arise at a later date. Details about how to initiate and maintain contact and gather information are provided in the Area Representative Training Manual.

3. How often do Area Reps contact their students and host families?

Meeting face-to-face with students within the first 2 weeks after arrival is required and then at least once during the second semester. Contacting students and host families separately (in person is ideal, telephone is OK; email is not sufficient) once a month is the minimum. Area Reps may see the family at their home or at a YFU event. They might ask the student out for refreshments, or a visit with their own family. Whatever the occasion or setting, Area Reps always identify the monthly contact as their official monthly check-in. This helps open a space for the host family or student to talk openly about joys and struggles they might be facing.

4. How do Area Reps document their international student, host family and school contacts?

Documentation is required and audited by the US Department of State. The volunteer records information from the monthly contact and other conversations in the Contact Reporting System on my.yfu.org. Quality monthly contact and its thorough documentation is critical as we strive to provide a successful exchange for students and families.

If a situation has not been sufficiently documented, it is difficult or impossible to take the situation into account should a subsequent problem arise.

5. What if the Area Rep needs support?

The Area Rep is supported directly by the volunteer Area Coordinator and/or Support Services Manager (SSM). The SSM, a staff member, must be contacted immediately whenever there is a serious emergency with a student, and an Area Rep is encouraged to contact the SSM for adjustment and family relationship matters. The SSM, in turn, can call upon the services of the YFU USA National Office and professional counselors, authorize YFU language support, and consult with the partner national office staff who are in contact with the student's natural parents. It is important to document all of your contact with the students and host families, both to offer adequate initial support locally to the student, and to bring in support from the Area Coordinator and/or Support Services Manager when necessary.

6. Do YFU students ever change host families?

Annually 97% of students complete the program to the USA successfully, and 78% of them with their original host family. Matching students and host families is not an exact science, however, YFU makes every effort to support the initial placement through a successful exchange. There are times when a placement simply will not work though. If the student and host family have followed the Area Rep and Support Services Manager's guidance in an effort to make the placement work and it is still deemed that the student should move, then YFU "replaces" the student. The replacement process can be smooth or challenging depending on available resources, the needs of the student, and the needs of the YFU community.

Throughout the cycle, volunteers should recruit host families for students who need replacement. In this way, replacement will be easier because the resources have been identified ahead of time. Replacement is difficult when there are limited resources, the student's needs are complicated, and/or the YFU community (either the former host family, the volunteer, or the school) is requesting that the student be removed from the community.

7. Do YFU students ever get sent home for breaking the rules?

It is the intent of YFU that each student who is selected, oriented and arrives on exchange should be able to remain on program for the duration of his/her program. The goal of YFU is to support students, in a timely manner, to overcome the inevitable obstacles of cross-cultural adjustment. However, a small percentage of students will return early. A student can return voluntarily or involuntarily.

Voluntary Early Return

A "voluntary" early return is when the student makes a decision to return home before the program is finished. Permission from the student's natural parents for this decision is mandatory. Voluntary early return may occur for a number of reasons. Some examples are unmet expectations, homesickness, a natural family illness, school entrance in the home country or medical problems.

Involuntary Early Return

An "involuntary" early return occurs when YFU makes the decision to end a student's program participation. Involuntary early return recommendations may be made due to serious YFU policy violations, serious and unresolved emotional problems and serious and chronic behavior problems which make the student unsuited for the family-living, school-based exchange experience or continued lack of motivation.

It is critical that all involved know that the communication, consultation and decision making process takes time. An involuntary early return decision should not and can not be made within the first 24 hours that the overseas National Office has been informed of a problem. If it is in the student's best interest to travel home as soon as possible due to medical or psychiatric reasons, an early return may take place within a shorter period of time. However, both countries must be in agreement.

The YFU USA President and CEO is the ONLY person who is authorized to make an involuntary early return decision. Volunteers should NEVER threaten a student with an early return.

AMERICAN STUDENTS

1. Does YFU USA have a program for American students to live abroad?

Yes. Each year up to 500 American students take part in YFU programs in more than 35 countries. YFU USA refers to its American students who are going abroad as Americans Overseas students or “AOs.”

2. What are the different programs for Americans?

There are a number of YFU programs to fit a student’s interests. They can choose where they go overseas and how long they stay.

- Academic Programs – available for the year or semester. Students live with a host family while attending school. Year programs are typically ten to eleven months in length, while semester programs are four to six months in length. Year programs typically depart mid-July to early September or January to March. Semester programs have summer and winter departure dates.
- Summer Programs – typically four to eight weeks long. Students focus on learning about the host country’s culture and living with a host family. In some, but not all countries, students may visit a school for short periods of time.
- YFU Gap Year Program – available for the year or semester. Designed for recent high school graduates, the gap year and semester options offer traditional academic and specialized programs.

Many YFU programs for Americans have optional organized activities, special orientations, and side trips. The YFU USA website (www.yfu-usa.org) contains a full listing of all AO programs, as well as an application. If you have questions about programs in a particular country, please call the Admissions Department at 1.800.TEENAGE (1.800.833.6243).

3. What are the benefits of participating in the YFU American Overseas program?

As a member of one of the oldest and largest exchange networks in the world, YFU USA has all the necessary experience to work for and with its participants. The YFU admissions process, its support

services, the training it offers volunteers, and its orientation programs and materials are among the best in student exchange.

Being away from home gives American students the opportunity to live with another family and to learn about a new culture. Students learn about themselves as citizens of the USA and what they value as a result of contact with different lifestyles and attitudes. They become more self-confident and independent. They have the opportunity to learn and become fluent in another language. They gain an advantage in college admissions and future careers. Especially appealing to some teenagers is the excitement and adventure of doing “something totally different” and making every day an adventure.

4. Can students select their host country?

Yes. The fact that students can select their country is one of the best reasons for a student to choose YFU. However, there is a maximum number of students that can go on any particular program. The student’s first country choice is assigned if there is space available at the time the application is received and the applicant meets the criteria for that country. If the first country choice is not available, the student will be assigned to his/her second choice.

5. What are the criteria for selection?

Students must be between the ages of 15 and 18 (and 22 for some Gap Year programs - check www.yfu-usa.org for details), in good health, and, have a grade point average of 3.0 for an academic program and 2.0 for a non-academic program. All students are expected to demonstrate an interest in other cultures, curiosity about how other people live, and flexibility in dealing with new and unexpected situations. Applicants who do not meet one of these standards are reviewed for acceptance on a case-by-case basis. Some programs have additional requirements that are explained in detail on the YFU USA website (www.yfu-usa.org). Also, see the discussion of language requirements and programs in various countries in Chapter 10, Language Services.

6. How does an American student apply for a YFU program?

Interested students should visit YFU USA's website (www.yfu-usa.org), which includes a full listing of all programs, scholarships, and an online application. Students should call 1.800.TEENAGE if there are any questions regarding the application process.

The application process follows these steps:

1. The student completes an online application and submits it with a non-refundable application fee to the Admissions Department at the YFU USA National Office.
2. Upon receipt of the application and deposit, the student receives a reservation for the first open country of his/her choice.
3. The YFU volunteer assigned to interview the student has 30 days to complete the student interview. Failure to comply with the time limit can result in the student losing his/her program reservation.
4. An acceptance decision is made after a review of the admissions materials and interview report. Accepted students are called "enrolled" students.

7. What types of scholarship programs are available?

YFU scholarship programs, funded by corporations, individuals and governments, have special eligibility requirements (for example, parents employed by the participating corporation). About 35 US and international corporations offer full and partial scholarships to more than 300 American students each year. Additionally, the governments of Finland, Japan, Germany, and the United States sponsor scholarship programs. Sixty percent of American YFU participants receive some amount of financial assistance. YFU also provides ideas for fund raising in Fundraising Guidelines, which is available on my.yfu.org.

8. How does the cost of the YFU program compare to other programs?

The program tuition charged by YFU USA is in the middle of a wide range; some exchange programs cost more, others less. The most important benefit that separates YFU USA from many of its competitors and which often explains differences in cost is the high quality of personal support and support materials that YFU USA provides its students and families. Students and families are supported by a world wide network of staff and volunteers from

the point of application through the post-exchange experience. Additionally, all YFU programs include the cost of domestic and international travel. More information on YFU support services is provided in Chapter 5 and within the Area Representative Training Manual.

9. How do volunteers participate in the recruitment and support of American students?

YFU USA counts on its volunteers to perform the following services:

- spread the word about YFU to teens you know and their parents;
- follow-up with students who have shown interest and/or applied to the program (including calling, interviewing, and inviting interested students to local YFU activities);
- interview AO and scholarship applicants;
- help identify schools and community venues for presentations about YFU programs;
- educate teachers about YFU programs and encourage their referral and support of students who would be good exchange students;
- recruit parents of current and former American students who would be willing to talk with interested parents about the benefits of YFU programs;
- assist in scheduling and conducting local presentations about various YFU programs;
- assist in AO pre-departure orientation programs;
- identify and include alumni (former YFU program participants) who have appropriate interest and skills to assist with program promotion and student support;
- support students and natural parents during the student's exchange;
- support student through the re-adjustment process post-exchange.

10. What YFU opportunities exist for participants after returning from their overseas exchange?

Alumni are strongly encouraged to continue their involvement with YFU by becoming active volunteers. Recently returned alumni are great program advocates for prospective students. They are often included in social activities with international students, and may offer valuable peer support. In addition, some fields have organized activities and homecoming orientations for alumni.

Contact your Field Director or District Office for more details on alumni activities in your area.

In addition, YFU USA maintains information on more than 100 universities and colleges in the US that offer special scholarships for which YFU alumni are eligible or note that alumni have an advantage in their admissions processes. For more information, find a copy of Beyond Exchange on the public website, www.yfu-usa.org.

What does the program tuition include?

All of the following services are included in the YFU program tuition:

- trained volunteers to support students and families in country of origin,
- Admissions Counselors to help students through the application and orientation process,
- information to assist in the process of obtaining a passport and visa (if required),
- pre-departure cross-cultural preparation through group orientations for students and parents,
- written materials about the cross-cultural experience,
- placement with a qualified YFU host family,
- enrollment in an overseas secondary school (academic programs only),
- language orientation and/or training for year and semester programs if no prior language is required,
- round-trip international and domestic travel from student's point-of-departure to host family location,
- airport staff assistance at designated YFU international point-of-departure and arrival gateways,
- professionally-staffed offices in the US and overseas, trained volunteer support staff, and administration and support services, and
- 24-hour availability for emergency services.

What expenses are not covered in the program tuition?

The following expenses are not included in the program tuition:

- passport and visa fees;
- pre-program related expenses such as medical exams, mailing costs, application fees;
- medical insurance;
- school-related expenses, such as books and notebooks (on most academic programs);
- personal expenses for toiletries, postage, entertainment, etc.;
- scheduled or optional trips planned by the host country office;
- some overseas airport taxes;
- spending money.

Expenses unique to a particular program can be determined by speaking with your Admissions Counselor at 1.800.TEENAGE.

WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

1. What is the importance of schools to YFU USA as an organization?

Good relationships with schools are essential for YFU USA. Not only is the school experience the heart of the year program for international students, but many American Overseas students learn about YFU from a school presentation or a teacher/counselor contact. In addition, schools can benefit from YFU volunteers' extensive training in cross cultural understanding.

2. What is the volunteer's role in representing YFU USA in schools?

The volunteer is the primary link for YFU USA to the school. In fact, a US Department of State survey showed that principals and district administrators often base their opinion of the entire exchange organization on their relationship with the local representative. A knowledgeable volunteer can both communicate information about YFU and be available for ongoing contact with the principal and teachers. As a community member, the volunteer can respond personally to school concerns.

3. What is the process for building a good relationship with a school?

- Discuss the area plan for schools with your Area Coordinator. In some cases a specific volunteer, host family, or staff person may be responsible for handling school relationships.
- Learn about the school before you make your first contact. Find out about previous experiences with YFU - general attitudes toward exchange programs and global education, make-up of the student body and faculty, special programs in the school, school policies for enrolling exchange students and the school contact person. Information and resources can be obtained from the Field Director, Area Coordinators, and other volunteers, as well as the school or district website.
- Begin by scheduling the meeting. Consider the person with whom you will meet, the purpose of the meeting and the time of year (avoid busy times in the school schedule such as the beginning and end of semesters).

- Be prepared by considering what your goals are for the meeting, preparing an introduction, and creating an agenda to share. Anticipate concerns and objections and determine appropriate materials to take with you.
- Be prepared to represent the benefits of YFU to schools and anticipate and respond to any issues raised by the school official.
- Be flexible and change your agenda if your school contact has other ideas about the meeting! Try to set up an additional appointment if the time allocated for the first meeting is not sufficient to cover all the information.
- Keep the Area Coordinator or district office staff informed of your activities with schools and of any issues the school personnel may raise.

4. What are some benefits to schools in working with YFU?

The following are some of the benefits that schools may experience in both accepting an international student and in having an American student participate in a YFU program:

- YFU students benefit language learning by acting as aides and speech models;
- International students can share information about their cultures and countries with schools and groups within the host community;
- History, social studies, government, and world affairs classes benefit from a new perspective offered by international students and former program participants;
- International students can contribute special talents to extra-curricular activities; and
- Experiences with YFU bring an increased sensitivity to cultural differences and increased global awareness.

5. How does YFU distinguish itself from other exchange organizations?

YFU distinguishes itself from other organizations by being a volunteer-based organization. Students are placed and supported by local YFU Area Representatives who do not receive financial compensation for this service.

As a member of the YFU international network, YFU USA is able to draw on over 60 years of experience in the exchange field. YFU students are well-selected and well-prepared for the exchange. If they do encounter problems academically or within their host family, YFU volunteers and staff are always available to offer support and problem-solving expertise.

YFU has extensive orientation materials and activities, language support for international students with limited English, materials for the host family to use in helping a student improve English skills, and dedicated volunteers, trained in cross-cultural skills. A professional staff handles problems beyond the scope of the local volunteer and school. In addition, YFU USA support staff in both District Offices and the National Office are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to assist with any emergency.

6. What resources are available to schools?

YFU has a variety of educational materials that are available to teachers as curriculum supplements and resources. Materials can be found on www.yfu-usa.org or requested directly from the District Office.

7. How can a volunteer maintain a good relationship with a school throughout the year?

You can be an important resource for the school.

As you gain experience, you can offer cross-cultural knowledge that can be invaluable to school administrators and teachers. If you have international experience, you can share the impact it has had on you. By your actions, the school will know that YFU is available and interested.

Schools want to make sure YFU will handle any problems which arise. Appropriate contact, in person, by phone, and through email, shows a commitment of YFU to the school. You want to be available without becoming a burden on the school by requesting unnecessary meetings. Other important elements of a good relationship include offering and following through on services (students to assist at school events) and end-of-year meetings to evaluate procedures and to plan for the following year. And most of all, always remember to say "thank you."

8. Are there specific volunteer positions for educators who want to get involved with YFU?

Yes. Educators make wonderful volunteers. Many of our volunteer positions are appropriate for them, for example - Area Representative, Orientation Facilitator, Certified Trainer, International Student Volunteer, or American Overseas Volunteer. Descriptions of these volunteer positions may be found in Appendix 7 and on my.yfu.org.

What should the YFU volunteer accomplish in meeting with school personnel?

In meeting with school personnel, the volunteer should strive to achieve a number of agreements. For acceptance of international students in that school, the topics for discussion should include:

- the number of YFU students the school will accept;
- school deadlines for enrollment paperwork;
- school policies such as international student grade level, eligibility for graduation, participation in sports, required courses, etc.;
- guidelines, procedures, or forms to which the school wants YFU USA to adhere;
- agreements for support services for YFU students, including naming an ongoing contact person;
- recruitment ideas for host families and any additional services to be provided by YFU or the school; and
- a plan for the utilization of international students as resources in the classroom, and in school organizations and clubs.

For the American Overseas program, topics should include:

- various ways of informing students, parents, teachers and administrators about AO programs and scholarships, such as school presentations, PTA meetings, and distribution of information or materials;
- policies or guidelines of the school regarding academic credit for coursework completed by American Overseas students;
- recommendations of those students who might be interested in the American Overseas programs; and
- a plan for the utilization of alumni as resources in the classroom, school organizations, and clubs.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. How do volunteers perform public relations tasks for YFU USA?

Every time you talk about YFU informally, or represent YFU USA more formally, you contribute to the image and the brand of the organization. This means conversations and communication encouraging a potential family to host, an American student to participate on a program abroad, or contacting a school in your community.

YFU USA depends and thrives on your initiative and support to generate local press coverage in your community. Your District Office staff can share materials and information to use when appealing to the local media- be it via newspapers, radio, television, or social networking sites. YFU USA encourages you to generate interest in your community, which in turn fosters clusters of students and host families.

The YFU USA Communications Department also works to support local press as well as generate state and national press. Public relations are coordinated through, and all media inquiries specific to the organization must be forwarded to the Marketing and Communications Office. This office responds to media requests and coordinates inquiries by providing statements or connecting the inquiring entity to a local representative.

2. What materials are available to volunteers who want to work in public relations?

The Marketing Department designs and produces PR materials for your convenience. These materials may be obtained from your District Office or my.yfu.org. They include posters, brochures, and community notices. Volunteers can also be creative by writing letters to the editor, feature stories, news releases, and TV or radio editorials - though please contact your District Office for final approval prior to

publication.

Following a confirmed host family placement or American student's participation in a program abroad, YFU USA issues a press release to the local newspaper, if the application indicates a newspaper and a desire to have them notified. Often times, a reporter wishes to follow up with a story. In these cases, the Communications Department will contact the family, volunteer, and District Office staff to explain the nature of the inquiry and share the reporter's contact information. It is the responsibility of the Host Family and American Overseas students to contact the reporter. YFU USA will not release contact information to reporters unless there is express consent granted.



3. If volunteers know a reporter at either a local or national publication, should they go ahead and suggest a story about YFU to the reporter?

YFU USA would be thrilled to pursue this opportunity. Volunteers who have connections with the national media through friends, family, or business associates are asked to contact the Marketing and Communications Department at marketing@yfu.org.

4. Can YFU volunteers work in Public Relations?

Yes! Being an active volunteer, you are representing the organization every day, and your first-hand knowledge of the programs and students is invaluable. Discuss possible roles with your Area Coordinator and District Office staff member.

5. Can I promote YFU USA online and on Facebook or other social networking site?

Yes. Promoting YFU USA online through various social media networking sites is encouraged. You can share pages and news found on the YFU USA website, posts from Facebook (www.Facebook.com).

com/YFU.USA.Fan) or Twitter (www.twitter.com/YFU_USA) or videos from the YFU USA YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/yfuusa). The Communications Department has opportunities for volunteers to be online YFU ambassadors by sharing their stories and answering questions on various websites. If you are interested in this role you may email marketing@yfu.org. Further, before you create new YFU specific accounts please contact marketing@yfu.org for current guidelines and training.

When promoting YFU USA and recruiting for YFU USA, on social media network sites or elsewhere, we must continue to adhere to all CSJET and State Department regulations as well as the YFU Basic Standards. This includes not using students' last names, student pictures, desperate language or specifically promoting students involved with sports to coaches.

If you use social media to promote YFU, please be sure to emphasize the positive social and culture impacts of our programs. Further, please refrain from infusing religious or political views into your YFU posts.

6. What should I do if a reporter calls me to ask about specific YFU students or families?

YFU USA volunteers and employees should not speak to the media on behalf of YFU or regarding a specific student or host family. In the event you are contacted by a reporter or other member of the media, please direct the inquiry to the YFU USA Communications Department: 240-235-2102 or eheland@yfu.org.

ORIENTATION SERVICES

1. What is orientation?

YFU believes that all participants in the exchange process (students, host parents and siblings, and natural families) benefit from reading about and discussing what they are experiencing. All of the educational reading materials and the special programs provided before, during and after the exchange experience are called “orientation.”

The YFU USA National Office, District Offices, volunteers and all other national and partner offices share the responsibility for distributing orientation materials and presenting orientation programs. Many of these programs and materials are required by regulatory and accrediting agencies. Holding appropriate orientations for international and American students, natural parents and host families is also an important part of the YFU International Basic Standards for exchange programs, which affect the work of volunteers and staff in all YFU countries. US Department of State regulations and CSIET guidelines specify the kinds of orientations that must be given. At each orientation, YFU uses an event sign-in sheet to record the attendance of each participant. This necessary tool documents YFU meeting regulatory and quality standards.

2. What are volunteers’ responsibilities for orientation?

At the Field level, each Area Representative (AR) assists in making sure that their students and host families attend required orientation programs. Local orientation volunteers plan and give the orientation program by using the lesson plans provided on my.yfu.org. ARs may join with other volunteers to share responsibilities for conducting the program.

Contact your Area Coordinator or District Office if you would like to participate in local orientations. Here are some of the reasons to get involved:

- Orientations are an important opportunity for you to strengthen relationships with students and families you may be working with;
- Your help is always appreciated to staff the sign in table, coordinate snacks, lead small group discussions or to carry out other tasks;

- If questions about your area of volunteer expertise arise, you may be able to answer them better than anyone else; and
- Orientations can provide an excellent opportunity to build the YFU community in your area.

3. What orientation programs are conducted in the USA?

There are several standard orientation programs held in each Field. International Students, host families, American Overseas students and their parents are all invited to attend these different orientations in the USA.

Pre-Arrival Orientations, for Host Families, are usually held in small groups two to four weeks before the students’ arrival. They provide an opportunity for host families to discuss preparations and expectations for hosting a teenager from another country.

Post-Arrival Orientations, for International Students and Host Families, provide an opportunity for host families and their exchange students to plan how to make the most of the experience, learn more about the adjustment process, and discuss issues of mutual concern. They are held two to six weeks after the students arrive.

Midyear Orientations, for International Students and Host Families, are held at the midpoint of the exchange experience. Students and families are given the opportunity to evaluate their progress, see how their goals are being met, and plan for the remainder of the year so their exchange experience can be as satisfying as possible.

Re-Entry Orientations, for International Students and Host Families, provide an opportunity to identify the changes and areas of growth within themselves, to plan how to draw the experience to a close, and to anticipate some of the changes they might encounter upon returning home. They are held six to eight weeks before the students depart for their home countries.

American Overseas students generally have two major orientations in the USA and at least one in their host country.

Pre-Departure Orientations (in the USA) are most often conducted state-wide or with several combined Fields. The purpose of this orientation is to help American students anticipate cultural differences and to explore ways to understand and deal with these differences. Students will also learn about the basic support structure in hosting countries.

Arrival Orientations are provided to American students by their host country; they vary in length and content. Often, arrival orientations include language training along with country-specific information. Details on arrival orientations can be found in the annual welcome letter to students from the National Office of each host country.

Re-Entry Orientations for American students occur toward the end of their stay in their host country. Sometimes they occur in conjunction with a sponsored trip; other times they have a more informal setting (see questions below). The purpose is identical to the re-entry orientations mentioned earlier for international students.

Homecoming Orientations are sometimes held for American students following their return from the exchange experience. Homecomings serve to help recent returnees process their exchange experience, assess the impact of exchange on their life and the impact on their future plans. The orientation consists of group discussions and interactive activities designed to help returnees adjust to being home, take advantage of their new skills, and stay connected to YFU.

4. What materials do volunteers have access to if they are to conduct an orientation?

Thorough orientation materials for each of the YFU USA orientation programs are available on my.yfu.org. Current materials are to be used for planning and conducting all orientations. The sessions are designed in a straightforward manner and provide the steps and information you will need for preparing and presenting the sessions.

The YFU USA Education & Training Department is always looking for new ideas for orientation sessions that have been developed by volunteers. Please contact the Education and Training Department in the National Office at training@yfu.org.

5. How do volunteers plan the orientations and pay for them?

Volunteers who plan orientations work with other

volunteers in the area, the Area Coordinator or the Field Director or Community Development Manager. Together, they determine an orientation site and date, who will be involved in the planning team, projected expenses and a time line for planning process.

The budget for orientation programs is determined by the number of attendees. For example, in the case of Pre-Arrival Orientations for Host Families, the budget is determined by the number of families representing inbound students. Available budget may be requested as an advance at the time the orientation is discussed with your District Office. Actual expenses must be submitted with receipts at the end of the program.

An orientation report, participant invitation list, event sign-in sheet and expense form must be completed within 30 days of the orientation and sent to the District Office for approval. Documented expenses will be reimbursed by check from YFU USA or used to offset the advance.

Copies of the orientation expense and report form can be found on my.yfu.org. Even if no expenses are being reimbursed, a report including a signed attendance sheet must still be submitted to document orientation support that YFU USA has provided to the students and families.

6. What orientation programs are conducted overseas?

Orientation systems in YFU overseas programs differ as a result of history, size of program, philosophy, and the meaning of the word "orientation." For example, in many countries the term "orientation" does not mean exactly the same as it does in the US. Therefore, many international students will have had a preparation program which includes an extensive interview, information nights, or frequent individual contact with the National Office rather than one Pre-Departure Orientation program. As in the US, orientations for all program participants are required to meet basic standards set by YFU.

Educational materials are provided to international students coming to the USA. Also, each country has its own materials that are prepared for both inbound and outbound students.

In their host countries, American students on academic exchanges generally receive an Arrival, Midyear and Re-Entry Orientation or activity.

7. What written educational materials are available?

Each student and family receives a handbook stating YFU rules and regulations and providing extensive suggestions for a successful experience. All of these handbooks are also available in electronic format on my.yfu.org.

Passport to the USA, produced by YFU USA, is provided to all International Students before they arrive in the US.

Host Family Handbook is mailed to all host families soon after they have selected a student and the placement becomes final.

The Guide, produced by the YFU International Secretariat, this handbook is mailed to American Overseas students once they have been accepted to a YFU program

AO Parent Handbook is mailed to the parents of American Overseas students once their child has been accepted to a YFU program.

LANGUAGE SERVICES

1. What foreign language skills must American Overseas students have?

Most YFU countries do not require prior knowledge of their languages. A few countries have school-related requirements for accepting students (such as a number of years of language study) but no competency exam.

Several countries provide intensive short-term language and culture orientation courses for incoming students from all countries, and many provide ongoing assistance when necessary. In some cases, students begin study before departure through work on Rosetta Stone, offered at a discounted rate through the Admissions Department or another self-study program. Details on the language requirements for academic programs can be found on the YFU USA website.

2. How does YFU USA evaluate the English skills of students coming to the USA?

A minimum level of English is required of incoming exchange students for academic programs in the USA. English speaking ability is evaluated as part of the application process.

Because most US schools require proof of language ability before accepting exchange students, YFU students take the SLEP or beginning in 2014, the ELTiS test. These tests are administered by the overseas YFU National Office to students before they are accepted on program and before they come to the US.

These tests measure ability in understanding spoken and written English. They are designed for use with students entering grades seven through twelve and whose native language is not English. Generally, students who score a minimum of 42 on the SLEP test or the equivalent on the ELTiS test can speak and/or understand some English, although their vocabulary and sentence structure may be limited. Most students accepted on the YFU program score higher than the minimum. Additionally, if the student is taking language classes after taking the SLEP or ELTiS, his/her language skills will improve and will be better than the scores reflects.

In many foreign countries, as in American schools, foreign language learning is often limited to classroom activities with little opportunity to practice conversational speaking and listening comprehension.

3. Why do students with similar scores sound so different?

There are many reasons why students' language sounds different. For example, some students are more self-confident, others are shy. Some feel more comfortable in school and with their host family. Others are better able to mimic the sounds of another language. Sometimes the person listening is not used to hearing foreign accents.

4. Does YFU offer any language courses?

Some of our partner organizations purchase Rosetta Stone accounts, a leading online language learning tool, for their students to study English before coming to the US.

Some YFU organizations provide special English courses for applicants to help them improve before coming to the US and many Japanese students attend an intensive language course in the US prior to travelling to their host family.

For American Overseas students on academic programs, the receiving country frequently provides language training during the arrival orientation.

5. Does YFU tell students that language skill is important to the success of the exchange experience?

Yes. Orientation materials for both American and international students emphasize the importance of language. Student handbooks encourage language preparation, outline performance expectations, and give tips for studying prior to departure. These materials also explain what to do if students need help during their exchange experience.

6. What language support does YFU provide to families, volunteers, and schools in the US for international students?

All host families in the USA receive the YFU Host Family Handbook, which includes advice on helping

students to improve their English skills.

If language support seems necessary, the Support Services Manager (SSM) will work with the Area Rep to identify the student's language strengths and weaknesses and from that select the best resource.

YFU offers three language support approaches: tutoring, Rosetta Stone online-language support, or the Oxford Picture Dictionary language workbooks. Other volunteers, students, or friends are often willing to help too, as language buddies. Schools often have free peer tutoring services. If no volunteer tutor can be found, paid tutors can be hired for students who have been referred by families and schools for additional language support.

7. What are the procedures you should follow if you think one of your students needs language help?

Volunteers should do the following:

- call your Area Coordinator or SSM to let them know that your student continues to struggle with English even after the initial settling in phase;
- help to assess a student's specific skills by using the English Language Skills Assessment sheet, available in the Volunteer Lounge; and
- working with the student, host family and SSM, determine which language support approach will work best - a tutor, an online Rosetta Stone account or the Oxford Picture Dictionary.

8. Where does one find a qualified tutor?

- Substitute teachers. These are the best candidates for tutors because, generally, they have more time to work individually with students. Call the school for a list.

- Part-time teachers, either foreign language or English teachers. Since they are already at school, it might be convenient for a part-time teacher to tutor students.
- English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers. These teachers are already working with English learners. Check with the school.
- Full-time teachers. Generally, full-time teachers are too busy with their regular duties to give quality time for tutoring a student; however, it might be possible for an individual teacher to do so or to give you suggestions as to who might be a good tutor. Contact them directly.
- YFU alumni who have become fluent in another language due to their exchange experience.

- American classmates are often interested and with some guidance, qualified to serve as a peer tutor.

The Language Learning Resources sheet, in the Volunteer Lounge also provides helpful suggestions.

9. How does one communicate with a student whose English skills are limited?

Concentrate on what the student is communicating. Listening is more than hearing the sounds of speech and understanding them. It is also watching for all the other clues: how someone looks (sad, happy), the sound of the voice, etc. Furthermore, it is important that you show the student that she or he has been listened to and been understood. Some specific suggestions are given in the box on the next page.

If the student is experiencing adjustment problems, you might want to have a third person present to translate for you. You must realize, however, that utilizing a translator to communicate with the student can sometimes be confusing and may complicate issues due to interpretations by the translator.

“Ich spreche Englisch”

“l'expérience de toute une vie”

“Mi familia anfitrióna”

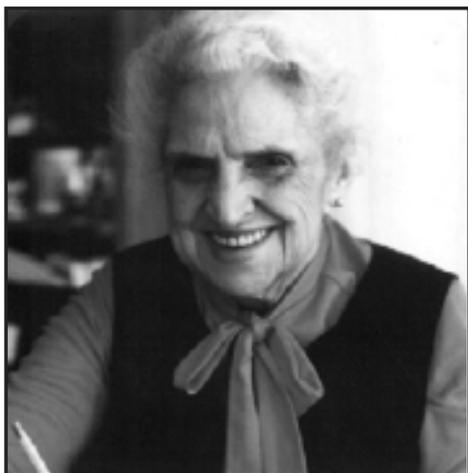
When speaking to a student with limited English skills:

- **Speak slowly** - This does not mean speaking louder; it just means taking it more slowly. This may take some practice;
- **Face the student when you speak** - The expressions on your face and your gestures will help the student understand;
- **Repeat when the student does not understand** - Speaking louder, changing your tone, or changing the words may only confuse him/her;
- **Watch his/her face** for signs that you have been understood, such as a smile, a nod of the head. Avoid asking "Do you understand?" The student will often say "yes" when she/he really does not understand;
- **Correct only the big mistakes** if the student seems to have basic ability in English. At some point it will be more bother than help to be corrected on every detail when speaking;
- **Encourage the student to speak only fast enough to be understood** - It is more important to be understood than to speak quickly;
- **Avoid interrupting and rephrasing** what has already been said. Listen carefully to what the student is trying to say;
- **Use nonverbal explanations** - Using your hands, acting out your meaning, and drawing pictures or diagrams can be very helpful;
- **Occasionally, ask the student to repeat** back to you what she or he has heard you say in order to check the level of comprehension (do this especially in the beginning);
- **Most importantly, use praise for genuine success** and be patient. Your common sense, imagination, and respect for the student's needs will help both of you to weather most difficulties.

RACHEL ANDRESEN

Founder of Youth For Understanding

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



Dr. Rachel Andresen, a native of Deerfield, Michigan, received a Master's degree in social work from the University of Michigan in 1943 and was later appointed Executive Secretary of the Michigan Council of Churches. In 1951, an American minister, John Eberly, proposed to church leaders that teenagers from war-torn Germany be brought to the United States to live with a family and attend high school for a year. This proposal met with approval from State Department officials. The Council's assistance was sought to find host families for the first student group. It was through this initiative that Dr. Andresen became involved in international exchange. She placed the program's first students with Michigan families in August 1951. One of the program's first alumni, Judge Ulrich Zahlten of Hamburg, Germany, returned home in the early 1950s to help found YFU Germany and is a former member of the YFU USA Board of Trustees.

Youth For Understanding's original office opened in Ann Arbor in 1951. Dr. Andresen was a highly energetic woman skilled in community organization. She expanded the program in its first six years to include 18 additional countries. Dr. Andresen was nominated in 1973 for a Nobel Peace prize.

YFU USA is now headquartered in Bethesda, MD, but maintains a District Office in Bridgeport, Michigan. Today, more than 250,000 young people from more than 60 nations in Africa, Asia, Europe, North and South America, and the Pacific have participated in YFU exchanges. Each exchange is coordinated by a worldwide network of national YFU organizations and supported by more than 2,500 trained and dedicated volunteers.

APPENDIX II

Youth For Understanding Country Listing

Below are the countries that YFU USA exchanges with around the world. The list is accurate as of June 2013 and is subject to change (additions and deletions). See the YFU website, www.yfu.org, for the current list.

Africa / Middle East

South Africa*
Cameroon**
Egypt**
Ghana*
Liberia*
Libya**
Kenya**
Mali**
Morocco**
Mozambique**
Nigeria**
Senegal**
Sierra Leone**
Tanzania**
Tunisia**

Asia

Azerbaijan
Bahrain**
Bangladesh**
China
Gaza**
India*
Indonesia*
Israel**
Japan
Jordan**
Kazakhstan
Korea
Kuwait**
Lebanon**
Malaysia**
Mongolia
Oman**
Pakistan**
Philippines*
Qatar**
Saudi Arabia**
Thailand*
Vietnam
West Bank
Yemen**

Europe

Albania**
Austria
Belarus
Belgium
Bosnia & Herzegovina**
Bulgaria*
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
Finland
France
Georgia
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Italy
Latvia
Lithuania
Macedonia**
Moldova
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Russia
Serbia
Slovakia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Turkey*
Ukraine

Latin America

Argentina
Brazil
Chile
Colombia
Costa Rica
Ecuador
Mexico
Paraguay
Suriname**
Uruguay
Venezuela

North America

Canada
United States

Oceania

Australia
New Zealand

* Indicates YFU partner and Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study Program (YES) sending partner.

** Indicates YES sending partner only.

APPENDIX III

YFU USA OFFICES

YFU USA National Office

6400 Goldsboro Road
Suite 100
Bethesda, MD 20817
Phone: 800.424.3691
Fax: 240.235.2104

Founders' District

4901 Towne Centre
Suite 220
Saginaw, MI 48604
Telephone: 989.777.4420
Fax: 989.777.3270
E-mail: founders@yfu.org

States covered:
Indiana (IN), Michigan (MI)

Heartland District

6400 Goldsboro Road
Suite 101
Bethesda, MD 20817
Phone: 515.276.6301
Fax: 877.516.9481
E-mail: heartland@yfu.org

States covered: Iowa (IA), Illinois (IL), Kansas (KS), Minnesota (MN), Missouri (MO), Nebraska (NE), North Dakota (ND), South Dakota (SD), Wisconsin (WI)

Horizon District

155 South Madison Street
Suite 220
Denver, CO 80209
Phone: 303.270.0068
Fax: 303.321.0080
E-mail: horizon@yfu.org

States covered: Alaska (AK), Arizona (AZ), Arkansas (AR), California (CA), Colorado (CO), Georgia (GA), Hawaii (HI), Idaho (ID), Louisiana (LA), Mississippi (MS), Montana (MT), Nevada (NV), New Mexico (NM), Oklahoma (OK), Oregon (OR), Texas (TX), Utah (UT), Washington (WA), Wyoming (WY)

Northeast District

2380 Massachusetts Avenue
Suite 101
Cambridge, MA 02140
Phone: 617.868.3660
Fax: 617.868.3774
E-mail: northeast@yfu.org

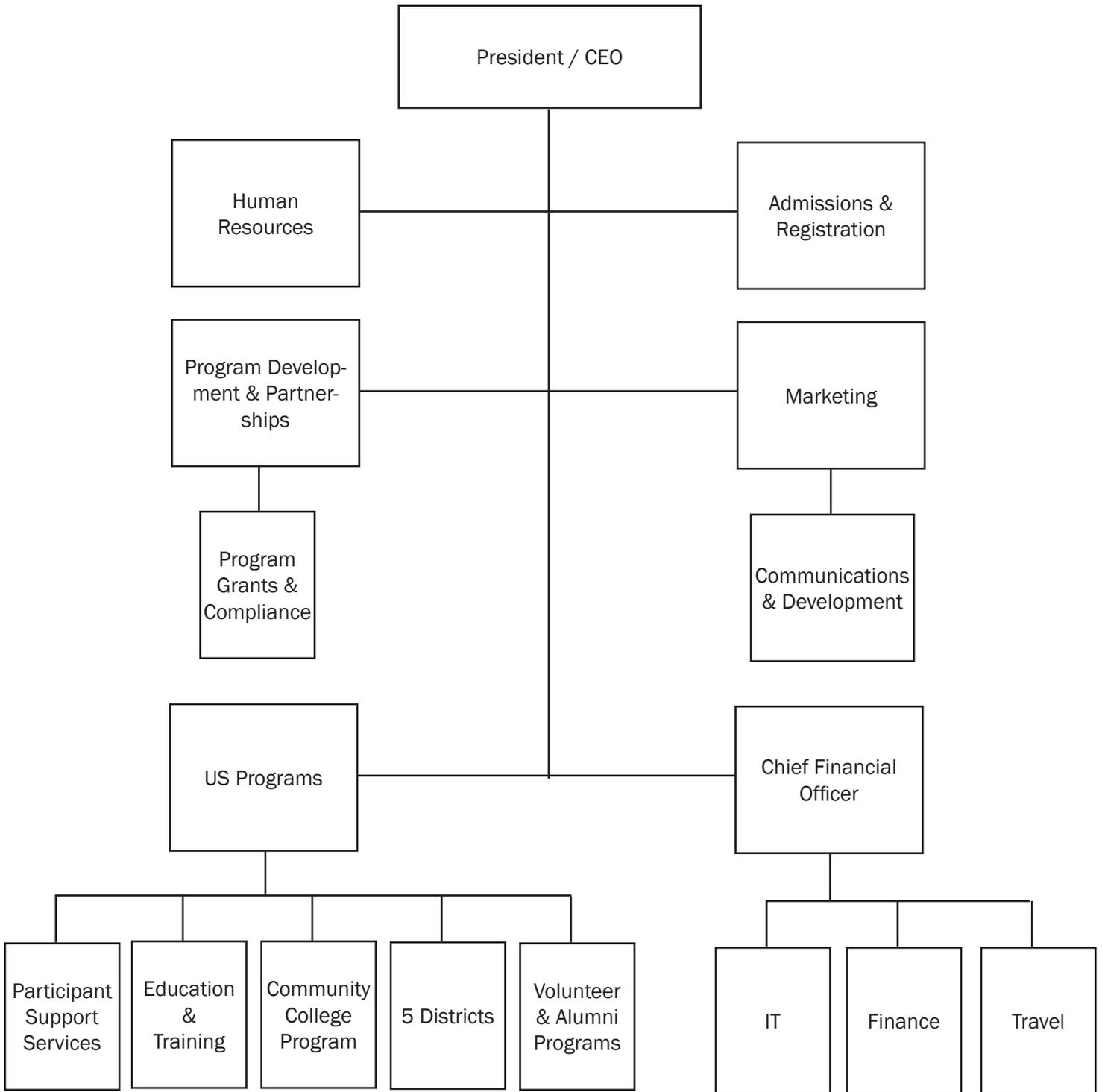
States covered:
Connecticut (CT), Massachusetts (MA), Maine (ME), New Hampshire (NH), New Jersey (NJ), New York (NY), Ohio (OH), Pennsylvania (PA), Rhode Island (RI), Vermont (VT), West Virginia (WV)

Southeast District

6400 Goldsboro Road
Suite 101
Bethesda, MD 20817
Phone: 240.235.2102
Fax: 240.235.2115
Email: southeast@yfu.org

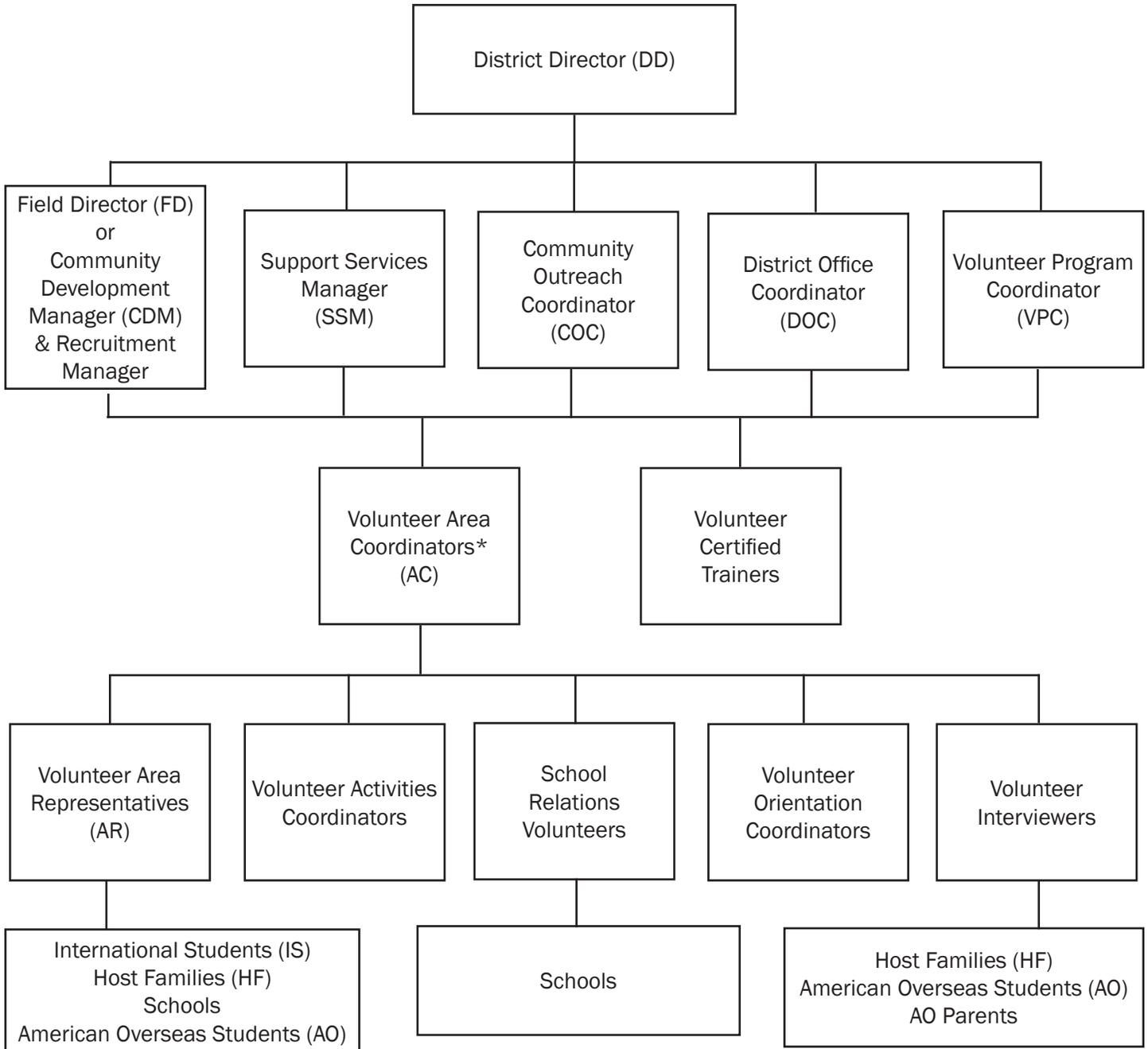
States covered: Alabama (AL), Delaware (DE), District of Columbia (DC), Florida (FL), Georgia (GA), Kentucky (KY), Maryland (MD), North Carolina (NC), South Carolina (SC), Tennessee (TN), Virginia (VA)

YFU USA NATIONAL ORGANIZATION CHART



APPENDIX V

YFU USA DISTRICT ORGANIZATION CHART



* Where there is no Area Coordinator in place, volunteers report directly to YFU staff.

DISTRICT STAFF POSITIONS

District Director (DD): Based on YFU's mission and goals and as directed by the President and the Director of U.S. Programs, the District Director designs, plans, implements, evaluates, and assures an effective inbound and outbound quality student exchange program within their district. The District Director has oversight responsibility for delivery, quality student support, student/host family recruitment, partner relations, volunteer management, fiscal responsibility, training and personnel management for a defined District within U.S. programs. This position reports to the Director of U.S. Programs.

District Office Coordinator (DOC): This position manages and maintains the administrative office and information systems operation in an efficient and accurate manner for the District. Responsible for the review and initial approval of placement documentation submitted by fields to the District Office. Maintain and follow through on standard operating practices and procedures to meet State Department compliance requirements and regulations. Provide administrative outreach to District staff and volunteer.

Volunteer Program Coordinator (VPC): The Volunteer Program Coordinator supports and supplements efforts in the field to aid in the growth of program quality within the key areas targeted for development. The primary goal of the VPC position is to build a volunteer base to support our four primary constituencies: volunteers, host families, students and schools. The VPC works with the District Director and with the District staff to successfully enhance the volunteer, host family and American Overseas recruitment and development strategy within the targeted areas of the District.

Support Services Manager (SSM): The Support Services Manager provides support, training and guidance to students, hosts, schools and volunteers. This position reports to the District Director. The Support Services Manager is also responsible for providing information and support to field staff, Area Coordinators and/or Area Representatives regarding problem resolution for students and families, tutoring requests and replacement of international students. The SSM monitors orientation programs and student travel.

Community Outreach Coordinator (COC): The Community Outreach Coordinator assists the field staff with identifying and recruiting host families. In addition the Community Outreach Coordinator serves as a liaison with the Marketing Department, with a primary focus on recruitment of new members of YFU communities - host families, American Overseas students and volunteers.

Field Director (FD): The Field Director manages the overall field success for student placement, host family recruitment and field development which includes volunteer management, planning and administrative oversight to several volunteers in an assigned geographic field. Most areas are comprised of a volunteer area coordinator who provides leadership and supervision and several volunteers responsible for participant recruitment and support in a particular community. The Field Director ensures that YFU program activities are carried out in accordance with YFU policies and procedures.

In the Horizon District, instead of the Field Director position, there are Community Development Managers and Recruitment Managers.

Community Development Manager (CDM): In the Horizon District, this position manages the overall success for recruitment and training of volunteers, schools and community partners; the training and support of host families and students; and the promotion of the American Overseas Program to support student recruitment in an assigned geographic field, ensuring that the YFU program activities are carried out in accordance with YFU and US State Department policies and procedures.

Recruitment Manager (RM): In the Horizon District, this position manages the overall success for recruitment of host families in an assigned geographic field, ensuring that the YFU program activities are carried out in accordance with YFU and US State Department policies and procedures.

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

As a YFU volunteer, you can choose from a variety of positions to suit your interests, needs and schedule, with flexible hours and locations. The positions listed below show the many ways volunteers contribute their skills to support YFU students, host families, schools and fellow volunteers. Each volunteer may assume and thus be trained for more than one role.

American Overseas Related

AO Area Representative - The AO Area Rep combines the inquiry follow-up, interview, and ongoing support roles. Prior to their departure from the United States, AO students and their families have many questions about the experience ahead. The AO Area Rep addresses issues or concerns that arise, and develop a relationship with the student to support them through the stages of inquiry, application and interview, acceptance, pre-departure orientation, during program, and post program.

Alumni Coordinator - The Alumni Coordinator serves as a channel of communication between local alumni and YFU, developing partnerships between YFU volunteers, YFU District Offices. The Alumni Coordinator acts as a local volunteer leader to assist the alumni to meet the stated goals of YFU USA.

American Overseas Recruiter - The YFU American Overseas program relies heavily on outreach – simply letting students, parents and teachers know that YFU offers international exchange opportunities and more than 300 scholarship opportunities each year. American Overseas Recruiters recruit American high school students for regular and scholarship programs by developing leads through contacts with students, schools and community groups, to pique interest in study abroad, provide resources and answer questions in order to encourage students to apply.

American Overseas Interviewer - After completing the American Overseas application, all applicants are interviewed in person by a YFU representative. The American Overseas Interviewer travels to a mutually agreed upon place to conduct the in-person interview with the American Overseas applicant. The interviewer uses the YFU American Overseas interview packet, which describes the interview process and provides questions to ask.

Scholarship Evaluator - Youth For Understanding USA administers over 300 partial or full competitive scholarships to American teenagers every year. In addition to the standard American Overseas application, each scholarship applicant submits 5 short essays and an additional teacher recommendation. Scholarship Evaluators read and evaluate all applications from US high school students.

Orientation Coordinator - Assist in planning and conducting one or two mandatory Pre-Departure Orientation per year for American Overseas students. These orientations take place in the spring for summer departure students or December for winter departure students. This orientation program is designed to prepare American Overseas students with regard to YFU policies and procedures, expectations, culture shock, the YFU communication chain, and support in the country that the student will be visiting. Volunteers facilitate or co-facilitate orientation sessions using the orientation curriculum provided by YFU.

Orientation Facilitator - Each YFU USA American Overseas student is required to attend a local pre-departure orientation before going on program. This orientation program is designed to prepare American Overseas students with regard to YFU policies and procedures, expectations, culture shock, the YFU communication chain, and support in the country that the student will be visiting. Volunteers facilitate or co-facilitate orientation sessions using the orientation curriculum provided by YFU.

International Student Related

Area Representative - In order to support every international student, host family and high school with enrolled YFU students, YFU assigns one volunteer Area Representative to each international student and host family. This

volunteer serves as an unbiased advocate while supporting the student, Host Family and school. The Area Rep helps all three parties have a positive exchange experience. Area Reps agree to meet each student and host family at least monthly in person or by phone and to document each meeting in a report.

Area Coordinator - In order to support every volunteer—and in turn each International Student, Host Family and high school with enrolled YFU students—YFU offers a volunteer Area Coordinator to facilitate volunteer efforts within the area. This volunteer helps fellow volunteers accomplish their YFU tasks through encouragement, coaching and supervision.

YES Student Cluster Leader - The Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study program (YES) was created in response to the events of September 11th, 2001 in order to build bridges of understanding between the United States and countries of the Arab and Muslim world. The YES Cluster Leader serves as a leader for a cluster of YES students, helping organize them to fulfill the YES requirements for Community Service Projects, Enhancement Activities, the Leadership Mentoring Program and Education and Service Celebrations.

Orientation Coordinator - Assist in planning and conducting four mandatory orientations per year for International Students and Host Families, including Pre-Arrival Host Family orientation (July) Post Arrival Orientation (September), Mid-Year Orientation (January), Re-Entry Orientation (May). These orientation programs are designed to prepare Host Families and International Students with regard to YFU policies and procedures, expectations, culture shock, the YFU communication chain, and support in the U.S. Volunteers facilitate or co-facilitate orientation sessions using the orientation curriculum provided by YFU.

Orientation Facilitator - Each YFU International Student is invited to and required to attend 3 orientations while in the U.S. and Host Families are invited to at least two. These orientation programs are designed to prepare International Students and Host Families with regard to YFU policies and procedures, expectations, culture shock, the YFU communication chain, and support in the U.S. Volunteers facilitate or co-facilitate orientation sessions using the orientation curriculum provided by YFU.

Language Tutor - International students arrive in the U.S. with varying levels of English. While nearly all international students struggle with language at first, most will quickly improve. Some students with weak language skills may need additional help. The language tutor meets with the student on a regular basis to work on areas where the student is weak.

Profile Writer - Successfully highlighting International Students' personalities and interests is a major factor in placement with host families. Write brief profiles on international students who will be living in the United States. The profiles will be presented to U.S. volunteers in order to facilitate effective placement of students with host families.

Activities Coordinator - Planned group social and enrichment activities provide international students an opportunity to extend their social networks, create a local community for students, host families, volunteers and staff members and enhance a student's cultural exchange experience overall. Many host families see an activity as a respite from hosting duties or needing to travel with students.

Trip Coordinator - A YFU USA sponsored trip is one in which students travel together with a YFU chaperone to a designated site within the United States. The Trip Coordinator plans and executes such trips for the exchange students in their district.

Trip Chaperone - A YFU USA sponsored trip is one in which students travel together with a YFU chaperone to a designated site within the United States. The Trip Chaperone accompanies students on such trips in their district. The Trip Chaperone acts as a leader and a representative of the group and works cooperatively with YFU Trip Coordinator, other chaperones, volunteers and staff members following all YFU policies and procedures.

Student File Medical Reviewer - Review files of inbound students with medical issues to assist with information gathering and determining if and how the student can be accommodated in a home=stay program. Position available to volunteers with a licensed medical background.

Host Family Related

Host Family Recruiter - YFU USA must provide a qualified Host Family and school placement for each international student on program. A Host Family Recruiter develops leads, makes contact with families, schools and communities, piques interest in hosting and answers questions for potential Host Families.

Host Family Interviewer - All interested host families must be met and interviewed in their home before a YFU student can be placed with them. The Host Family Interviewer is responsible for conducting the in-home interview and evaluating whether the host family is appropriate for a YFU international student.

Host Family Reference Checker - Conducting a thorough reference check on a prospective volunteer or host family is one of the most important steps in the recruitment process. Although YFU administers criminal background checks, a personal reference check gives far more information to determine that a family or volunteer is appropriate to work with YFU. A Host Family Reference Checker personally telephones the references provided by the Host Family or volunteer applicants, utilizing a YFU-supplied list of questions, to insure the quality of the YFU host families and volunteers.

International Students Placement Volunteer - The main goal of this position is to find families who are willing and excited to host international students as well as to ensure that the local schools are willing to enroll the students. A Placement Volunteer is responsible for matching an international student with a host family. The volunteer should use networking skills to spread the word about YFU's international student program and need for host families.

Host Family Orientation Coordinator - Assist in planning at least one mandatory orientation per year for Host Families - Pre-Arrival Orientation (July). Possibly participate in other joint International Student and Host Family orientations including Post Arrival Orientation (September), Mid-Year Orientation (January), Re-Entry Orientation (May).

Host Family Orientation Facilitator - Each YFU USA Host Family is required to attend a pre-arrival orientation before their student arrives on program. This orientation is designed to prepare host families with regard to YFU policies and procedures, expectations, culture shock, the YFU communication chain, and support provided by YFU USA. Volunteers facilitate or co-facilitate orientation sessions using the orientation curriculum provided by YFU.

Other ways to support YFU

School Liaison - The purpose of this position is to establish and maintain relationships with local schools.

Inquiry Caller - Inquiry Callers follow up with inquiries that could lead to potential host family, volunteer and student applications.

Certified Trainer - Certified Trainers will serve as lead trainers of other YFU USA volunteers in their field and district. Training sessions will be conducted in-person or via telephone. The pre-established training curriculum varies from informational sessions, such as Introduction to YFU, to skills based sessions, such as Developing a Dual Perspective.

Media and Public Relations - Making connections within communities is an essential role of YFU representatives. Each time YFU is presented formally in the media or informally in a grocery store conversation, it is a type of public relations. Media and Public Relations volunteers work within their communities to promote all aspects of YFU.

Presenter - Helping to spread the word about opportunities that YFU offers to students, families, schools and the larger community is one of the organization's most effective marketing methods. Thus, asking volunteers to present their own personal YFU experiences directly connects with people who may otherwise never know about international exchange. In conducting formal presentations about YFU to community, church, civic and school groups, volunteers are seeking to recruit new volunteers, host families and American student applicants.

Administrative Support - assist office-based staff with documentation, phone work, or other duties to support the field-based volunteers and staff.

APPENDIX VIII

PROGRAM TIME LINE

International Students to the USA

Ongoing	Recruit, screen and select host families, secure school placements
July	Host Family pre-arrival orientations
August	Students travel to US host families
September-October	Post arrival orientations for international students and host families
January	Mid-year orientations
May	Re-entry orientations for international students and host families
June	Students return home

American Overseas Students

Ongoing	Student recruitment Interviews and selection for tuition paying students
January - February	Scholarship application deadlines
January - March	Spring semester and year students depart Year students who departed the previous winter return home
April 1	Summer/Fall-departure application deadline
April - May	Scholarship winners selected
May - June	Pre-Departure Orientations
June	Summer students depart Spring semester and year students (who departed in the Fall) return home
July - August	Fall semester and year students depart Summer students return home
October 1	Winter-departure application deadline
December - January	Fall semester students return home Pre-Departure Orientations

APPENDIX IX

YFU USA ACRONYMS & TERMINOLOGY

AC	Area Coordinator	IS	International Student
AO	American Oversees	JAFS	Japan American Friendship Scholars
APP	Application	JPDO	Japan Pre-Departure Orientation
AR	Area Representative	JUSSE	Japan-US Senate Youth Exchange Scholarship
CBYX	Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange	NF	Natural Father
CDR	Change of Departure Request	NM	Natural Mother
CDM	Community Development Manager	NO	National Office
CCP	Community College Program	NP	Natural Parents
CSP	Corporate Scholarship Programs	PAO	Post Arrival Orientation
CT	Certified Trainer	PDO	Pre-Departure Orientation
DD	District Director	REO	Re-Entry Orientation
DO	District Office	SAF	School Acceptance Form
DOC	District Office Coordinator	SEE visit	Student Environment Evaluation Visit
ELTis	English Language Test for international students	SLEP	Secondary Level English Proficiency Test
FCCLA	Family Careers and Community Leaders of America	SSM	Support Services Manager
FD	Field Director	STD	Student
FUSYE	Finland-US Senate Youth Exchange	VER	Voluntary Early Return
FYAP	Finland Young Ambassadors' Program	VOL	Volunteer
HF	Host Family	VPC	Volunteer Program Coordinator
IER	Involuntary Early Return	YES	Youth Exchange and Study Program
		YFU	Youth For Understanding

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Youth For Understanding USA (YFU USA) agrees to provide:

- A Field Director, Community Development Manager, Volunteer Coordinator or other YFU staff person or volunteer who is responsible for a volunteer's appointment, orientation, training, supervision, support, and, when necessary, termination of agreement.
- District Office staff to advise, assist, guide, and support volunteers during regularly scheduled work hours and available for after hours emergency support.
- A written position description of the role agreed to by the volunteer and their designated staff supervisor or volunteer coordinator.
- An orientation to YFU USA and its policies and procedures and a minimum of one in-person training event per calendar year.
- Ongoing training and mentoring by YFU staff, volunteer coordinator, and experienced volunteers, as well as training available in on-line and self-study formats.
- Access to the forms and tools necessary to perform assigned volunteer duties.
- Reimbursement of authorized expenses.
- Liability insurance coverage when operating within YFU USA policies and procedures.

As a YFU USA volunteer, I agree to:

- Accept the supervision and decisions of the Field Director, Community Development Manager and/or appointed delegates (i.e. staff members responsible for certain program areas and/or volunteer coordinators).
- Participate in a new volunteer orientation.
- Attend Field/Area meetings on a regular basis.
- Attend a minimum of one training event per year and keep current on all new YFU trainings associated with my volunteer position/s.
- Be responsible for the functions, tasks, and established goals of the volunteer position.
- Comply with government screening or certification requirements.
- Maintain and support minimum standards/guidelines of YFU programs, including timely submissions of required written reports to meet government and industry regulatory standards.
- Exercise discretion and good judgment in matters of confidentiality concerning all program participants. I will not directly contact a student participant prior to being assigned as his/her Area Representative.
- Advise YFU USA promptly if there are any changes in the information provided in my application, or if I will be unable to perform my volunteer duties under this Agreement.
- Follow practices, policies and procedures described in the YFU USA Volunteer Handbook and in task specific training.
- Maintain insurance on my personal automobile that will cover accidents if my personal automobile is used in fulfillment of my YFU volunteer duties.
- The possibility that my volunteer status can be terminated for reasons including, but not limited to, failure to comply with the terms of this Agreement, failure to pass a criminal background check or other circumstances that are contrary to the best interests of YFU USA, its students or host families.

I agree to abide by the Youth For Understanding USA code of conduct:

- YFU USA is committed to the safety, welfare and well-being of all students participating in YFU programs. We support the rights of our students and will act without hesitation to promote a healthy, safe and secure environment at all times.
- YFU USA supports the rights and well-being of YFU host families, natural families, volunteers and staff and relies on their active participation in building and maintaining a healthy, safe and secure environment for all participants.
- YFU USA respects rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of gender, ability, race, religion, age, physical differences or disabilities, national origin, marital status or sexual orientation.

Appropriate behavior includes but is not limited to:

- at all times conducting oneself in a manner consistent with one's role as a representative of YFU USA, including on social networking sites and at YFU events;
- following YFU USA policies and procedures for the safety of program participants;
- seeking help in order to avoid acting alone when responding to issues of potential risk to program participants, host families, volunteers or staff;
- treating all program participants, families, volunteers, and staff with equal respect;
- taking appropriate steps so that any allegation or suspicion of any type of abuse, including verbal, emotional, physical or sexual, is acted upon and communicated to the appropriate support staff;
- utilizing authority in a responsible and appropriate manner, abiding by program guidelines and regulations closely to avoid allegations of abuse and mistreatment of program participants;
- reporting promptly any decisions made regarding a participant that are outside normal program guidelines or which remove a student for more than 24 hours from the family or school to which the student has been assigned;
- maintaining sensitivity and understanding when dealing with issues pertaining to cultural differences and language deficiencies;
- filing reports using objective language which describe rather than label behaviors of participants;
- respecting the privacy of program participants, host families, volunteers and staff by using information appropriately and preventing the misuse of personal information.

While physical contact between volunteers and students can be appropriate in some settings, it should be limited and monitored. Appropriate physical contact between volunteers and students should be:

- done only with the student's permission: any signs of discomfort or resistance by the student, no matter how subtle, should be respected;
- in response to the need of the student and not the need of the adult;
- respectful and professional, avoiding breasts, buttocks, or groin;
- open and non-secretive.

Confidentiality

Due to the realities of a program such as YFU, confidential information must often be shared to resolve difficulties or facilitate understanding. All YFU staff and volunteers, including professional counselors, should refrain from promises of confidentiality, advising participants of the limitations of confidentiality within our organization. However, all YFU participants have the right to expect that YFU will share confidential information conservatively.

Insurance

YFU volunteers are covered by the general liability insurance coverage that protects Youth For Understanding USA, Inc. This coverage is in force while volunteers are acting at the direction of YFU USA and within the scope of their duties for YFU USA. The coverage protects YFU USA and volunteers in matters involving bodily injury or property damage to third parties (i.e., persons other than YFU USA or the volunteer). The liability insurance does not extend to situations involving the use of owned or leased automobiles. Such coverage must be maintained by the volunteer under personal automobile insurance policies if a personal or leased automobile will be used in fulfillment of YFU volunteer duties.

Termination

YFU USA recognizes volunteers as the primary deliverers of YFU programs in local communities. As such, they represent the organization to the public and also assume the responsibility for carrying out their duties in a safe and responsible manner consistent with the YFU USA mission and values. YFU USA has the discretion to terminate a volunteer in order to protect the safety of its participants and the integrity of the organization. Reasons for termination include but are not limited to:

- Willful violation of a YFU USA policy, CSIET standard or State Department regulation;
- Endangering the health or well-being of YFU participants;
- Demonstrating a pattern of disrespect towards other members of the YFU community;
- Engaging in inappropriate relationships such as dating or demonstrating inappropriate behavior which could be characterized as sexual harassment or abuse toward a YFU participant;
- Failure to perform essential duties or responsibilities of one's volunteer position
- Discrimination because of gender, ability, race, religion, age, physical differences or disabilities, national origin, marital status, or sexual orientation;
- Theft, fraud, or other form of dishonesty including false statements on the Volunteer Application;
- Accepting payment from organizations for proprietary information gained through one's association with YFU USA; or
- Other forms of misconduct such as self-dealing or conflicts of interest that may adversely affect the reputation or integrity of YFU USA or YFU in general.

Release

I release Youth For Understanding USA, Inc. and its officers, members, directors, agents, and employees, from any liability whatsoever arising from, or relating to, any YFU USA programs, undertakings, activities, or events, or my participation therein. I understand that my volunteer assignment is contingent upon agreeing to and abiding by the above provisions.

VOLUNTEER CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

YFU USA volunteers and staff are expected to devote their best efforts to the interests of the organization and its activities. Volunteers must practice ethical standards of conduct in the performance of their duties, observing all laws and regulations governing exchange programs as well as local ordinances.

YFU USA reserves the right to determine when an individual's outside activities or relationships may present a direct or perceived conflict with YFU USA's interests or are the cause of concern with respect to the quality of the YFU program, safety of YFU participants or the reputation of YFU USA. YFU USA will take action necessary to resolve the conflict of interest, from asking the individual to remove him or herself from a project or support position with a participant, up to and including termination if necessary.

What Constitutes a Conflict of Interest?

A potential conflict of interest occurs when a person is involved in making a decision that:

- could result in that person favoring the opinions or reports of the close associate over the opinions or reports of a YFU participant, school official or other YFU reporter;
- could result in that person, a close associate of that person, or that person's company or institution receiving financial gain, such as a contract or order; or
- could result in that person, or a close associate of that person, receiving recognition, such as an award or a scholarship; or
- could result in that person, or a close associate of that person, ignoring red flags in the selection of participants or in the support of participants; or
- could result in that person, or a close associate of that person, using YFU information or material for personal gain in a related business.

A "close association" refers to a relative, a very close personal friend, or a colleague from the same company or institution. A conflict of interest situation could also arise with someone with whom you have a bad relationship (deep personal animosity) or with whom you are competing in business or professional dealings.

Some examples of instances of conflict of interest in YFU are:

- conducting the host family or student program interview for a relative applying to the YFU program;
- providing the reference for an applicant to YFU volunteer and host parent positions;
- serving as the area rep for a family where you are related to one of the parents or one of the parents is employed at the same company as you, or where the parent is a close personal friend (like family);
- serving as the trip coordinator and using a vendor or visiting an attraction in which you have a personal interest or where you are receiving a commission;
- serving as a consultant to a school system setting up its own exchange program, or serving as a representative or host family for another exchange program;
- holding a financial interest, directly or indirectly in a firm which provides services, supplies, materials or equipment to YFU USA;
- misusing information to which you have access to by reason of your position, i.e., disclosing confidential information to competitors or others outside of YFU;
- Intentionally withholding information which could be vital to a decision-making process involving a person, organization or business connected to YFU.

YFU's policy is that the volunteer discloses any known conflict of interest to the YFU District Director or to the supervisor of a given volunteer project. Such disclosures can also be made to the Director of US Programs in the national office. This person will determine whether a conflict of interest exists and/or institute internal controls to remove the conflict of interest.

STUDENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

YFU must have certain policies to be consistent, fair, and protective of all its participants. These guidelines are for all YFU students worldwide. Procedures to implement these policies may vary from country to country. Each YFU National Office may also determine specific procedures for students being hosted in their countries.

Read these policies very carefully so that you understand the rules of the YFU program. If you have questions, ask your National Office before you go to your host country. Please also review these policies with your host family when you arrive, to be sure that you and they both have the same understanding of YFU policies.

Alcohol

Policy: Students are required to observe all laws of their host country with regard to the minimum drinking age. Students are also expected to follow host family guidelines on the use of alcohol. YFU students should not use alcohol in a manner that is excessive, unsuitable or embarrassing to the host family or Youth For Understanding. 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. Students who drink are breaking the law and will be considered for Early Return. Alcohol related medical treatment may not be covered by student medical insurance.

Confidentiality

Policy: Due to the realities of a program such as YFU, confidential information must often be shared to resolve difficulties or facilitate understanding. All YFU staff and volunteers, including professional counselors, should refrain from promises of confidentiality, advising participants of the limitations of confidentiality within our organization. However, all YFU participants have the right to expect that YFU will share confidential information conservatively.

Counseling Sessions: Information shared with a YFU counselor or in a comparable situation is shared only on a need-to-know basis. Resulting reports are written to assist YFU staff in problem identification and prob-

lem solving. These reports are not to be given to non-staff or anyone outside of the organization (without the consent of the writer of the report). Counseling reports are sent to the partner National Office, but are not given to natural parents. Caution: laws in the sending or in the receiving country may require YFU to release such reports.

Student/Host Family's Personal Belongings: The student's right to privacy must be respected. YFU considers it unethical to examine and/or confiscate a student's personal belongings (e.g. mail, diary, etc.). No representative of YFU has the legal right to withhold from the student any legal personal possession such as a passport, visa form, or driver's license. However, in some situations, YFU does have the right to demand, as a condition for remaining on program, that a student agree to destroy or mail the item home. **Student/Host Family Address, Telephone Number, Status on Program:** YFU prohibits any release of such information to non-YFU persons regarding a student or host family without the latter's permission (or that of the natural parent in the case of a student).

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.

Contact from Natural Family, Home Country Friends

Policy: Natural families and home country friends are strongly discouraged from visiting the exchange student during the program year, especially during the initial adjustment period. The interruption breaks the continuity of the relationship with the host family and may lessen the exchange experience for the student and the host family. This break 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 their YFU National or District Office

before any arrangements are made. Host families must not be expected to accommodate visiting family members or friends with regard to room, meals or transportation.

Specific policy for YFU USA: It is very important that students maintain limited contact with natural families during their stay in the USA. Their families will understand much better what the experience as an exchange student means if they are informed of student activities at appropriate intervals. Host families are also encouraged to write to their student's natural family. In this way, the experience includes all family members. Encourage your student to send an e-mail, letter or postcard home to let the natural family know that the student has arrived safely. However, students should not spend so much time writing, sending e-mail, or telephoning home that they don't have enough time to do anything else. 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 e-mail or phone 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 and host families, if needed. These services include help from Area Representatives and/or District Office 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 District Office at 1.866.4.YFUUSA.

Dangerous Activities

Policy: Youth For Understanding may withhold authorization for any activity if it is considered hazardous or unacceptable for the student to participate. The following activities are strictly prohibited: hang-gliding, parachute jumping, piloting a private plane, bungee jumping, parasailing, or driving any motorized vehicles.

National or District Directors may permit or prohibit

some activities judged to involve an element of danger or a range of danger. Written permission will be required from both natural parents and host parents to authorize the student to participate. This permission must satisfy the YFU National Organization in the hosting country and must release Youth For Understanding and the host family from all responsibility during the time the student is involved in that activity. Further, it will be the responsibility of the student and natural parents alone to obtain 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.

The YFU Dangerous Activities Permission Form (with all required signatures) must be on file at the District Office 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 or 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 above 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.

Driving

Policy: Exchange students are not permitted to drive cars or motorcycles. This policy applies even if the

student has an International Driver's License or the host family thinks that the student is a responsible and careful driver. Violators of this policy will be considered for Early Return.

Permission to use farm equipment, trail bikes and mopeds is different in each country, and the decision is left to the hosting National Office. If the hosting National Office allows the student to use one of the above vehicles, the student is expected to take safety precautions and obey the laws. See Dangerous Activities for rules regarding farm equipment, trail bikes and mopeds.

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: Youth For Understanding students may not buy, sell, possess, or use drugs that are illegal in their home or host country. Violators of this policy will be considered for Early Return. A verified violation normally includes physical evidence, student admission of usage or reliable witnesses who have seen the student with or using 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.

Early Return Definitions

Voluntary Early Return: When a student wants to return home early, and the natural parents agree with this decision.

Involuntary Early Return: When the host YFU country decides, based on stated guidelines, including consultation, that a student should be removed from the YFU program and returned home to his/her home country.

Specific policy for YFU USA: Early Return usually happens because the student cannot adjust to the USA, 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.

Employment

Policy: Laws regarding exchange students' employment are different in each country. Many countries limit employment as a condition for giving visas to visitors. Participants in the YFU program are not permitted to work full-time during their stay. Students

should refer to the laws in their host country regarding other kinds of employment (e.g., part-time, casual).

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 baby sitting, 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: YFU will not grant extension of stay, unless there is demonstrated evidence of medical or special emergency requiring such an extension. YFU responsibility ends with the return flight to which the student has been assigned. If a student extends his/her stay, he/she will be considered Off Program.

Legal Status

Specific policy for YFU USA: While an exchange student in the US, he/she is 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 Youth For Understanding program. Students who are discovered to be married or to have married on program will be immediately dismissed from the program.

Medical Treatment of a Student

(including emergencies)

Policy: All YFU students must have insurance coverage for illness, medical emergencies, and hospitalization which is acceptable to the hosting YFU organization. Youth For Understanding, its representatives and its host families are not responsible for any student medical bills regardless of who signs a hospital admission form. Students must have funds available for medical expenses until reimbursement

is processed, and are responsible for following-up on all medical bills. YFU, its representatives and its host families are not responsible for any negative results of emergency and/or other medical treatment.

Natural Disasters

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 District Office (1.866.4.YFUUSA) 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 or her, YFU may determine that this student has removed him or herself from the YFU program. In this case, YFU is released from all obligations, legal or otherwise, to the student and his or her parents or guardians for his or her current or further well-being. In most countries, the validity of the student's visa is linked to being on program. Therefore the visa is no longer valid if the student chooses to go Off Program.

YFU will, if possible, work with the student to again accept YFU supervision. However, if this cannot be done, the separation from the YFU program is final. The student will then lose YFU support and his/her ticket to the home country where applicable.

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.

Passport and 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 put it 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 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 or I-94 form, he or she should contact the District Office. The student will be financially responsible for securing replacements. A sample copy of the DS-2019 form can be found in the appendices of the student and host family handbooks. 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, the I-797 receipt or SEVIS I-901 fee confirmation, and the I-94, also known as the Arrival-Departure Record. 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.

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 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.

Pregnancy

Policy: For medical reasons, placement and personal consideration, female students found to be pregnant while on the Youth For Understanding program will normally be returned home immediately after notification of the natural parents. Individual circumstances may justify exceptions to this policy; however, all stu-

dents will be considered for Early Return.

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 make it impossible. 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 size community or state, or come 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

Policies: Attendance - All Youth For Understanding students on the year or semester program are expected to regularly attend a secondary school, and each host country is encouraged to see that a normal course of schoolwork is maintained. Repeated absence will result in consideration for Early Return.

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, will be cause for Early Return consideration.

Formal Expulsion - If a student is expelled from school, the student will be considered for Early Return. 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 academic 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.

Some schools provide, at their discretion, an honorary diploma or Certificate of Attendance. YFU will not make decisions for replacement on the basis of a student's desire to receive a diploma nor will YFU move a student specifically for this reason. 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: Sometimes students do not say on their applications that they smoke because they fear it may be difficult to find a host family that will allow smoking. Or, they begin smoking after applying for the YFU program. Students who do smoke are encouraged to discuss this issue and 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 smoking materials. If a student's smoking becomes 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 responsible for such expenses as school laboratory fees*, transportation, and books; trips or expenses during trips; telephone calls or other personal expenses. They are also responsible for any property damage they cause. Students are not responsible for meals and lodging.

*In a few countries, some school expenses are included in the program fee.

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 www.irs.gov or from the YFU District 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 has a responsibility 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 a special authorization form. Each National Office will have specific travel approval procedures, and 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 YFU sponsored trips, 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.

All travel where the student will be without the host family, will be gone for more than 2 days, will miss school, or will leave the US requires YFU USA approval prior to finalizing plans. Failure to obtain approval from YFU USA may result in forfeiting any monies paid if permission to travel is denied. Your District Director 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.

Telephone and Computer Use

Specific policy for YFU USA: Students must follow their host family's stated rules when using the host family's telephone and/or computer. The student should not use the phone or computer excessively. Excessive telephone, e-mail or internet use, the posting of inappropriate comments/pictures on social networking sites, or visiting inappropriate sites, will result in warning or probation and if the behavior is not corrected, consideration of Early Return.

Long-Distance and International Calls: Many students will come on program with their own cell phone. However, if a student is using the host family's phone, they should consult with their host family before making any international or long distance calls. If a student incurs charges on the host family's telephone bill, they are responsible for paying their bill immedi-

ately.

Budgeting and paying for calls: YFU USA recommends the use of a pre-paid phone calling card for any long distance or international calls. Such cards are available for purchase at most convenience stores, drug stores and supermarkets. Another lower cost option is to choose a Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) service such as Skype. These services are usually free of charge with appropriate software anywhere in the world. If a student does make calls on their host family's phone, they are expected to reimburse the host family before the bill is due. Neither the host family nor YFU will pay bills for a student. If a student needs to purchase a cell phone once they arrive in the U.S., he or she should purchase a prepaid phone with a prepaid plan. Under no circumstances should a host family enter into a cell phone contract with or on behalf of a student.

Violations of the Law

Policy: The nature and seriousness of the offense will determine procedure and possible outcome. Criminal prosecution for theft/shoplifting may be cause for an Early Return.

Specific policy for YFU USA: When an arrest is made or a court appearance is scheduled, YFU USA recommends the student retain a lawyer. The student and the natural parents 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 flight time. The student

and natural parents will be responsible for any and all necessary arrangements.

Before the age of 18, students are considered to be minors and are afforded special protections in juvenile court. When a student turns 18 however, he or she can be tried as an adult in a court of law. In some states, people as young as 16 can be tried as adults even though they are still considered minors.

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 and a person below the age of consent is assumed to be coercive since the minor is considered unable to give consent to the acts. Gross sexual imposition is a serious offense for which offenders can receive lengthy prison sentences. Laws about gross sexual imposition vary widely among states.

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, they should notify their Area Representative or YFU District 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. ■

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE J-1 VISA REGULATIONS

Glossary of Terms

Sponsor - U.S. organizations designated by the US Department of State to conduct exchange visitor programs. For the purposes of this YFU Study Guide, the term “sponsor” can be replaced with “YFU”.

Exchange Visitor Program - The US Department of State program which uses the J-1 visa to bring people from other countries to the United States for temporary study and work-related educational opportunities.

Secondary School Student Program - One of the oldest and most successful Exchange Visitor Programs; a cornerstone of US Public Diplomacy efforts.

J-1 Visa - The travel visa issued by the US Department of State to students entering the US with an Exchange Visitor Program. It is affixed to the passport in order to gain entry into the United States.

Form DS-2019 - This form enables the exchange student to apply for a J-1 visa at a US Embassy or

Consulate abroad. It is affixed to the passport in order to gain entry into the United States.

Participant - Student who travels to the US with a sponsor organization.

Local Coordinator - Volunteers entrusted to carry out many of the responsibilities of the U.S. sponsor. For the purposes of this test, the term YFU Volunteer is the equivalent of a local coordinator.

The Department - The United States Department of State

Appendix F - An addition to the US Department of State regulations related to information to be collected on secondary school student host family applications

SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) - A web-based program used by the US Department of State to track and monitor schools, programs, students, exchange visitors and their dependents while approved to participate in the U.S. education system.

(a) Purpose.

These Department of State regulations relate to foreign high school students who study in the United States at accredited public or private high schools for an academic semester or an academic year, while living with American host families or staying at accredited U.S. boarding schools.

(b) Program sponsor eligibility.

Eligibility for J-1 Visa status is limited to organizations:

- (1) with tax-exempt status; and
- (2) which are United States citizens as defined in §62.2.

(c) Program eligibility.

Secondary school student exchange programs designated by the Department of State must:

- (1) Require all exchange students to be enrolled and participating in a full course of study at an accredited academic institution;
- (2) Allow entry of exchange students for at least one academic semester and not more than two academic semesters; and
- (3) Ensure that the program is conducted on a U.S. academic calendar-year basis, except for students from coun-

tries whose academic year is opposite that of the United States.

Exchange students may begin an exchange program in the second semester only if permitted to do so in writing by the hosting school. 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:

(1) 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.

(2) 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.

(3) 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);

(4) Place no exchange student with his or her relatives;

(5) 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; NOTE: YFU placement standards require Area Reps to live within 100 miles of the student/host family based on the YFU database measurements.

(6) Make no monetary payments or other incentives to host families;

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

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

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

(10) Refrain, without exception, from acting as:

- (i) Both a host family and a local coordinator or area supervisor for an exchange student;
- (ii) A host family for one organization and a local coordinator for another organization; or
- (iii) 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.

(11) 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. NOTE: YFU support standards require that two in-person monthly contacts be made with the student, one per semester.

(12) 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.

(13) 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. NOTE: YFU support standards require that monthly contacts are made in person or by telephone and not by email.

(14) 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

(15) 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:

(1) 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;

(2) Demonstrate maturity, good character, and scholastic aptitude; and

(3) 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.

(1) 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:

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

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

(2) 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.

(3) 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.

(4) 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.

(5) 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.

(6) 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.

(7) 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:

- (1) 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;
- (2) A copy of the Department's welcome letter to exchange students;
- (3) Age and language appropriate information on how to identify and report sexual abuse or exploitation;
- (4) 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;
- (5) 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
- (6) 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:

- (1) Authorized by the local school district in which the student is enrolled; and
- (2) 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.
- (3) 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.

(i) 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 baby sitting or yard work.

(j) Host family application and selection.

Sponsors must adequately screen and select all potential host families and at a minimum must:

- (1) Provide potential host families with a detailed summary of the Exchange Visitor Program and of their requirements, obligations and commitment to host;
- (2) 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 fam-

ily 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.

- (3) Conduct an in-person interview with all family members residing in the home where the student will be living;
- (4) 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.
- (5) 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; NOTE: YFU standards require that Host Family references must have visited the Host Family's home.
- (6) 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;
- (7) 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);
- (8) 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
- (9) 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:

- (1) 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;
- (2) Provide all selected host families with a copy of the Department's letter of appreciation to host families;
- (3) Provide all selected host families with a copy of Department of State-promulgated Exchange Visitor Program regulations;
- (4) Advise all selected host families of strategies for cross-cultural interaction and conduct workshops to familiarize host families with cultural differences and practices; and
- (5) 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.

- (1) 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:

- (i) Facilitate the entry into the United States of an exchange student for whom a host family placement has not been secured;
 - (ii) 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.
- (2) 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.
- (3) 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:

- (1) Utilize only promotional materials that professionally, ethically, and accurately reflect the sponsor's purposes, activities, and sponsorship;
- (2) 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;
- (3) 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
- (4) 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:

- (1) 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;
- (2) 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
- (3) 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-2019 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.

What is Public Diplomacy?

As traditionally used, the term “diplomacy” refers to government-to-government relations (e.g., an American diplomat discusses an issue officially with a Chinese diplomat). Much newer, however, is the practice of “Public Diplomacy,” where the U.S. Government seeks to directly engage the people of another country.

Public Diplomacy emerged as an important tool of American foreign policy during the Cold War. During that period, the United States brought foreign students, professors, and political and business leaders to the United States for educational and cultural exchanges on the Exchange Visitor Program. By experiencing American society and culture, many of these foreign students and leaders developed positive impressions of the American system, which they shared with their fellow countrymen upon returning home.

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Public Diplomacy took on new importance as American foreign policy actively sought to improve the image of the United States abroad, especially among young people. Educational exchanges, long recognized as one of the best ways to build positive impressions of the United States among the youth of another country, moved to the forefront of the US Department of State’s Public Diplomacy efforts.

Central to this emergence of Public Diplomacy as a major tool of American foreign policy is the belief that citizens of other countries would generally have positive view of the United States if only they knew more about the American people. This assumption turns out to be true. Major research institutes consistently demonstrate that people from other countries who come to the United States are far more likely to have a positive impression of both the United States and the American people. In one particular study, the Travel Industry Association’s research arm, the Discover America Partnership, found that those who have visited the United States are 74% more likely to have a favorable opinion of America and Americans, and 66% of those who have visited are more likely to be supportive of U.S. policies. Similarly, a 2008 report entitled *The Decline in America’s Reputation: Why?* by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs’ Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight found that international visitors to the United States “have more positive views about America and Americans than non-visitors by approximately 10 percentage points.”

Secondary School Student Program exchanges similarly help to improve America’s image abroad. The great majority of exchange students who come to the United States to attend high school enjoy a positive life-changing experience, grow in independence and maturity, improve their English language skills, and build relationships with American citizens. These students will share with their fellow citizens their impressions of America when they return home. This is the core of Public Diplomacy and the reason that the Department of State conducts these types of educational exchanges.

For these reasons, it is important that every exchange student have a positive experience and a successful program. While most exchange students generally return home with a favorable impression of the United States, the Public Diplomacy of the United States can be damaged when a student develops negative feelings toward the United States or the American people. Much of the responsibility to ensure a successful program for each exchange student falls on you, the Local Coordinator.

What is the Exchange Visitor Program?

The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 authorizes the US Department of State to conduct educational exchange programs. Many of these programs fall under the Department’s Exchange Visitor Program, which uses the J-1 visa to bring people from other countries to the United States for temporary study and work-related educational opportunities.

The US Department of State both creates and enforces the federal regulations governing the Exchange Visitor Program. The Department also designates U.S. organizations (known as sponsors) to conduct exchange visitor programs. These sponsors – and all Local Coordinators – are required to follow the federal regulations.

At the present time, 92 sponsors are designated by the US Department of State to conduct Secondary School Student programs under the Exchange Visitor Program. These 92 sponsors collectively manage the programs of approximately 28,000 exchange students each year. As a Local Coordinator, you work directly for one of these sponsors.

Secondary School Student Program

Begun in 1949, the Secondary School Student Program is one of the oldest and most successful Exchange Visitor Programs and is a cornerstone of the United States' Public Diplomacy efforts. The Secondary School Student Program offers an opportunity of a lifetime to young people from around the world to study in an American high school, improve their English, and make lifelong American friends.

The US Department of State requires all Secondary School Student Program sponsors to be non-profit organizations to ensure that this important Public Diplomacy activity retains its volunteer spirit. These sponsors contract with foreign partners (international non-profit organizations, student recruiting agencies, or affiliate organizations of the U.S. sponsor) in other countries to recruit local exchange students to apply for participation in the Secondary School Student Program. Foreign partners then collect application information from the potential exchange students, verify their eligibility for participation, and provide this information to the U.S. sponsor.

The U.S. sponsor is responsible for the selection (or acceptance) of each potential exchange student for participation in the Secondary School Student Program. Screening and selection by the U.S. sponsor includes a review of the student application and an interview to test the student's ability in English, maturity, and readiness to participate in the exchange program. The sponsor is also responsible for the school enrollment, orientation, and monitoring of exchange students.

U.S. sponsors are also responsible for the screening, selection, orientation, and quality assurance monitoring of host families and field staff.

Once fully screened and selected by the U.S. sponsor for participation, an exchange student is provided the Form DS-2019, Certificate of Eligibility. This Form enables the exchange student to apply for a J-1 visa at a United States Embassy or Consulate abroad.

The exchange student uses both the Form DS-2019 and J-1 visa, which is affixed to their passport, to gain entry into the United States and begin their exchange program.

CSIET STANDARDS FOR LONG-TERM INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL PROGRAMS

These standards are intended for use in evaluating both inbound and outbound youth exchange programs of eight or more weeks' duration. For programs of shorter duration, please refer to CSIET Standards for Short-Term Programs. Agent: Individual or organization authorized to represent or act on behalf of the organization in administering one or more aspects of the program, for example, an overseas partner. As revised by the Board of Directors, April 2006

STANDARD 1: EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- A. Programs shall be designed to fulfill educational purposes related to an international experience.
- B. The organization sponsoring the program shall have clearly established goals and learning objectives to fulfill the educational purposes of its programs.

STANDARD 2: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

- A. The structure and administration of the organization shall be clearly defined.
- B. The organization shall have the personnel needed to administer its programs effectively.
 - 1. The organization is accountable for the full scope of the programs it administers, including actions taken and representations made by its agents, and maintains responsibility for its students both within the United States and abroad.
 - 2. The organization shall maintain direct, hands-on control of the placement and supervision of inbound students and the hiring, firing, and remuneration of local representatives. It may not enter into a relationship with another entity that appears to exercise such control.
- C. The organization shall be organized under the laws of one of the 50 states of the United States or the District of Columbia.
- D. The organization shall demonstrate success in international educational travel through at least one full year since its incorporation.

STANDARD 3: FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The organization shall be capable of discharging its financial responsibilities to all participants.
- B. The organization shall have sufficient financial backing to protect all monies paid by participants and to ensure fulfillment of all responsibilities to participants.
- C. The organization shall have an independent Certified Public Accountant annually prepare an audited or review financial statement.

STANDARD 4: PROMOTION

- A. The organization's promotional materials shall professionally, ethically, and accurately reflect its purposes, activities, and sponsorship.
- B. The organization shall not publicize the need for host families via any public media with announcements, notices, advertisements, etc., that:
 - a. are not sufficiently in advance of the student's arrival
 - b. appeal to public pity or guilt
 - c. imply in any way that a student will be denied participation if a host family is not found immediately
 - d. identify photos of individual students and include an appeal for an immediate family.

Following are guidelines for public media advertisements:

CSIET has found the following words or phrases to be unacceptable: Urgently Needed, Don't let me be homeless, This is an emergency...

CSIET has found the following words or phrases to be acceptable: Open your hearts and homes, Host a foreign Exchange Student..

It is permissible to use a picture of a student, a first name, age, country of origin, and a composite or generic listing of interests in an advertisement in order to demonstrate the personal nature of the program and the types of interests that students have. It is not permissible to identify that specific student as needing a home, nor is it permissible to refer to a student's athletic ability or accomplishments. Written waivers must be obtained for the use of any student photographs.

- C. The organization shall not promote or recruit for its programs in any way that compromises the privacy, safety or security of participants, families or schools. Specifically, programs shall not include personal student data or contact information (including address, phone or e-mail addresses) on websites or other promotional materials.
- D. All promotional materials/activities shall distinguish the program and the sponsoring organization from others operating under:
 - a. affiliated or related corporate structures
 - b. the same or similar names or symbols.
- E. The organization shall fully disclose all fees, including school tuition, host family reimbursements, and other required or optional costs to prospective students and their natural families before enrollment. (If host families provide room and board gratis to the students, publicity should state that fees cover "selection and placement in host families" and not imply in any way that the fees paid by the students cover "room and board.")
- F. Neither the organization nor its agents shall promote its programs as providing opportunities for school athletic participation, high school graduation, driver's education instruction, household domestic service, child care, employment, or other activities that might compromise the student, program, or school. Standard 4F specifically prohibits the organization and its agents (this includes foreign partners) from promoting its programs as providing any of the aforementioned activities. The word "promote" as it is used in Standard 4F includes any specific focus on or prominence of pictures and/or text depicting these activities. No prominent pictures and/or text will be considered to be in compliance.)
- G. The organization shall not state or imply in its promotional materials/activities that persons who are compensated other than out-of-pocket expenses are volunteers.

STANDARD 5: STUDENT SELECTION AND ORIENTATION

- A. The organization shall screen and select student participants on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program.

Supplemental Guideline: Athletic Participation in the United States

The following statement must be included on either the student application or other written rules documents: "Athletic eligibility or participation is not guaranteed."

- B. Screening procedures for homestay programs shall include personal interviews with student applicants.
- C. Selection shall be completed sufficiently in advance of the student's departure to ensure adequate time for preparation and orientation.
- D. Students shall be given a suitable orientation before departure and after arrival in the host country, including information on how to identify and report cases of suspected student abuse.
- E. All inbound students enrolled in a U.S. high school must have adequate English language proficiency to function successfully.
- F. All inbound and outbound students enrolled in school must have adequate academic preparation to function successfully.

STANDARD 6: STUDENT PLACEMENT

- A. For programs that include a homestay, the organization shall:
 - 1. select host families on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program.
 - 2. personally interview all prospective host families in their home.
 - 3. match students and host families on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program
 - 4. complete placement arrangements sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from home to ensure adequate time for preparation and orientation of the host family (Whenever possible, a student should be placed with a host family who has made a long-term commitment to host the student prior to the student's departure from

his/her home country. In cases where this is not possible, a student may be placed with a short-term host family until long-term arrangements can be made. All short-term families must be selected and oriented according to the same criteria as are long-term families. The short term nature of the host family placement must be fully disclosed in advance to the student, his/her natural parents, and the school principal and be acceptable to them. Short-term families may, of course, also be utilized when a host family placement has not worked out and a new family must be found).

5. provide suitable orientation and training to the host family (When a family expresses an interest in hosting a student and a representative makes the initial home visit to explain the program, this is not to be considered the “host family orientation.” CSIET suggests that host family orientation include information on the student’s expectations about family and school life, customs, religion, and mores of the student’s native country, the academic program in which the student will be enrolled, potential problems in hosting exchange students, and suggestions on how to cope with such problems).
 6. Vet all adult members of the U.S. host family residing in the home through a national criminal background check in the United States.
- B. Organizations 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. A direct placement is one in which either the student or the sending organization in the foreign country is party to an arrangement with any other party, including school personnel, for the student to attend a particular school or live with a particular host family. Such direct placement must be reported to the particular school and the National Federation of State High School Associations prior to the first day of classes.

Supplemental Guideline: Direct Placement Reports

Direct placement reports should be sorted by U.S. state and include the following information:

U.S. State:

Name of Student:

Country of Origin:

Local Rep Name/Number:

Name/City of U.S. Host School:

Nature of the Direct Placement:

Reports should be emailed to: CSIETREPORT@NFHS.ORG

- C. For programs that include accommodations other than a homestay, the organization shall:
1. arrange accommodations on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program
 2. ensure the adequacy of the accommodations with respect to location, cleanliness, safety, nutrition, and supervision
 3. confirm the accommodations sufficiently in advance of the student’s departure from home.
- D. For programs that include enrollment in U.S. high schools, the organization shall:
- a. secure written acceptance from the school principal or other designated responsible school administrator prior to the exchange student’s departure from his or her home country.
 - b. provide the school with the following information about the student:
 - 1) academic history, including
 - a) academic records, translated into English or other language as appropriate
 - b) number of years of school completed prior to arrival and number of years required in home country for the completion of secondary school
 - 2) level of English language proficiency (for inbound students only)
 - 3) appropriate background information
 - 4) expectations regarding school experience.

STANDARD 7: OPERATIONS

- A. The organization shall ensure adequate care and supervision of students.

Supplemental Guideline: Outbound Student Registry:

Programs must register U.S. students traveling abroad with the U.S. consulate or embassy

- B. Local representatives of the organization shall maintain regular personal contact with students and host families. (Contact should be initiated by the organization's representative at least once a month be it by telephone, a visit to the home, personal contact at a gathering or other means. E-mail alone is not considered sufficient personal contact. Regular monthly contact is to include separate communication with the student and the host family in order to provide each with the opportunity to discuss issues they might not raise in the presence of the other. CSIET expects that there be formal documentation of this contact such as a monthly form, written journal, written log, etc. This is not to imply that representatives have to record every interaction. Rather it is to provide a record for the organization's office of the pattern of student and host family adjustments, activities, and relationships through at least monthly contact with each student and host family.)
- C. The organization shall notify the student, host family, and/or other supervisor of accommodations regarding the travel itinerary sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from the home country.
- D. The organization shall provide adequate support services at the local level to assist with program-related needs and problems, for example, counseling services, travel, medical care, language problems, changes in host family, emergencies.
- E. The organization shall maintain an effective system of screening (including a national criminal background check for U.S. representatives with direct in-person contact with student participants), selecting, training, and supervising program representatives and group leaders.
- F. The organization shall provide all students with an identification card that includes the student's name; the host family's name, address, and telephone; the local representative's name, address, and telephone; the address and telephone of the organization's appropriate national office.
- G. For programs involving school enrollment, the organization shall maintain regular communication with school authorities.
- H. The organization shall provide an opportunity to the student, host family, and school to participate in a post-Exchange evaluation.
- I. The organization shall have in place adequate plans and procedures for dealing with emergency situations that may arise during the program.
- J. The organization shall respond in a timely and appropriate fashion to complaints received from students, families, schools or others concerned with the program and its quality.
- K. For programs utilizing electronic or automated program databases to demonstrate compliance with CSIET Standards, such entries must identify the date and user recording the data. Programs shall also maintain a back up system. To prevent online access to sensitive student information by unauthorized persons, program databases need to be secured by an initial screening prior to issuance of a unique username and password (Standard 7K will take effect for exchange students beginning their program in January of 2007).

STANDARD 8: STUDENT INSURANCE

- A. The organization shall guarantee that every student is covered with adequate health and accident insurance. Such insurance shall:
 - a. Protect students for the duration of their program
 - b. Provide for the return of the student to his/her home in the event of serious illness, accident, or death during the program.
- B. The organization shall provide students, host families, and appropriate supervisor(s) with detailed printed information regarding the terms and limits of insurance coverage and procedures for filing a claim.
- C. Compensated officials and employees of the organization shall not receive compensation from the sale of insurance to its participants.

STANDARD 9: ADHERENCE TO GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

- A. The organization shall comply with all appropriate government regulations regarding international exchange or any other activity under its auspices.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the organization to notify the Council of any change in status with respect to government designation, acknowledgment, acceptance, endorsement and/or sanction.

International Basic Standards for Educational Exchanges of Youth For Understanding

Passed by the IAC on October 12, 1989, May 7, 1991, amended May 10, 1995, October 15, 1997, May 2002, by unanimous consent of the 2004 YFU International Conference on March 22, 2004 and November 5, 2005.

PREFACE

The following Basic Standards, shall, irrespective of their wording, be interpreted to apply, to the extent possible, to all YFU programs. For programs other than the core programs specific variances to the general standards are provided for at the end of the respective section.

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

From its inception in 1951 Youth For Understanding has placed value on the appreciation of cultural diversity. The authenticity of this appreciation has been tested and proven in recent years as we have become increasingly varied in our programs, composition, channels of communication, and country-to-country relationships. Consistent with our most firmly held value - the appreciation of difference - such developments are not only to be encouraged, but cherished.

Simultaneous with our commitment to cultural diversity, we have demonstrated a commitment to the quality and competency with which YFU activities are conducted. The strength of this commitment has resulted in high levels of sophistication, knowledge, and adeptness in our administration of programs. And as our qualitative capacities have increased, so has our desire to ensure that standards are being met wherever YFU activities are being offered.

In April 1985, with both a strong belief in the importance of cultural diversity and the recognition that appreciation of diversity is served best by excellent exchanges, the International Advisory Council (IAC) resolved that international basic standards be developed and applied to YFU operations and programs worldwide. The IAC held as a fundamental principle of the resolution the desirability of achieving a workable balance between universal (within YFU) and local requirements.

In short, we found that diversity and standardization, rather than being contradictory notions, are complementary concepts: Standards must reflect the good of the transnational whole; at the same time, the implementation of standards must be considered and interpreted in ways which are consonant with differing cultural contexts, and which promote respect for and appreciation of cultural diversity.

THE EDUCATIONAL GOALS OF YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING AS THE FUNDAMENTAL CONTEXT FOR STANDARDS

Youth For Understanding was founded on the beliefs that responsible exchange programs can contribute substantially to a more intelligent, cooperative, and peaceful world order, as well as to positive personal changes in the majority of participants. More than five decades of observation and experience confirm the validity of these beliefs as we continue to witness the growth of individuals and, by extension, the improvement of societies.

The YFU mission has attracted the commitment of hundreds of thousands of individuals since 1951. This mission and its supporting goals are essential to note since it is these that stand to be enhanced most directly by the implementation of standards.

YFU's mission is to prepare young people for their responsibilities and opportunities in a changing, interdependent world. YFU thus exists to serve the prospects for a better world. A "better world" we must define as one in which:

- differences of culture, ethnicity, ideology, values, gender, race, religion, language, and personality are appreciated and accepted, not ridiculed or rejected;

- skills of working cooperatively across boundaries of groups and cultures are developed, so that individuals and groups may build problem-solving strategies on an understanding of all the various cultural patterns, value systems, approaches, group interests and objectives involved, rather than just on the potentially aggressive promotion of the concepts of one's own group, nation, or culture;
- individuals exercise knowledgeable, responsible choice in the interest of the greater good, as opposed to remaining passive, ignorant, or self-centered in the midst of a turbulent and interdependent world;
- attitudes of internationalism and cross-cultural friendship guide individual decisions and behaviors, rather than attitudes that are xenophobic or centered on the aggrandizement of one nation at the expense of others; and in which
- a commitment to solve problems through a dynamic, mutually respectful process of consensus is the norm, rather than a process characterized by enmity, coercion, or unilateral actions.

In support of these ideals and expectations, YFU is organized specifically to provide and facilitate opportunities for individuals to immerse themselves in other cultures. This immersion is conceived as a true membership in the life of the host culture. True membership involves full participation in everyday life, typically over the course of an academic year, and is therefore highly varied and differentiated.

First and foremost, it involves membership in a family, the premise being that the family represents the very soul and core of a culture and is at the same time the most complex and valid social unit. In living with and adjusting to the family, one has a profound opportunity to encounter, internalize, and appreciate the essence of both a household and the broader culture it reflects.

Membership in a family, a family's community, and a local school concurrently provide an invaluable opportunity for self-learning. Immersion in the foreign exchange environment creates limitless opportunities to discover, observe, and occasionally change oneself, recognizing in the process the complexity of the individual as a unique personality, a product of one's culture, and a human being in the broadest universal sense. Over time, such multi-dimensional insights and alterations become internalized, and the individual matures.

It is this firsthand, experiential way of learning that creates the values, attitudes, skills, and sensitivities enumerated earlier. Even more importantly, it establishes a frame of reference - which YFU actively reinforces - for continual learning that can be operative in any variety of contexts during the course of one's life. As a result of exchange, we can expect individuals to become more respectful, tactful, constructive, and skilled in inter-group and intercultural relations. In addition, because we are focusing for the most part on an age group whose impressions are still fresh and whose prejudices have not yet crystallized, we can expect exchange to result in individuals whose perspectives about themselves and others are open, flexible, and less determined by preconceptions. The teenager's natural eagerness to learn and the opportunities YFU provides for cultural immersion interact to create optimal conditions for the most profound kind of learning, learning that is not only conducive to personal growth, but to societal advancements as well.

At the same time, however, tremendous difficulties can arise in the exchange experience. Research indicates that exchange students may also, because of the problems they experience, become disillusioned or even antagonistic towards their host country; in such cases, exchange may inadvertently serve to reinforce, rather than remove, cultural barriers. In fact, the same formative process which teenagers typically undergo and which can make the results of exchange so fruitful may also increase the likelihood for major problems, and even casualties, to occur.

Basic standards for an international educational organization such as YFU, which is devoted to promoting intercultural learning, must be derived from the educational mission and goals of the organization. The intercultural living experience is intrinsically conducive to the mission and goals of YFU, in that it provides a powerful vehicle for individual learning and a more cooperative, less dangerous world. In order to be optimized, however, such learning often requires the active participation and support of knowledgeable and experienced staff and volunteers, as well as credible and effective programmatic approaches and organizational structures. All those who serve and participate in YFU programs, students, families, schools, volunteers, and staff have serious and consequential responsibilities to discharge as they cooperate in the conduct of exchange. This requires given levels of effectiveness wherever YFU programs occur.

BASIC STANDARDS FOR EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGES OF YFU

The purpose of YFU is not only to provide opportunities for learning, but also to assist actively in the process of learning. In recognition of this double responsibility, basic international standards must be universally applied in seven key areas:

1. promotion,
2. recruitment and selection,
3. host family selection and placement,
4. orientation,
5. participant support/counseling,
6. ongoing program involvement, and
7. structural and operational issues.

I. Promotion

A. Identity

As an educational organization, YFU must represent its programs by thoughtful promotional materials that emphasize educational objectives and the institutional mission, especially as these serve to distinguish YFU from travel programs.

B. Responsibility

As an educational organization, YFU must represent itself by promotional materials that give accurate and honest descriptions of programs. The respective YFU National Organizations are responsible and accountable for this content as it applies to specific country programs, just as the YFU International Secretariat is responsible and accountable for promotional materials it prepares. If the material pertains to multilateral programs, this responsibility includes the need to verify the applicability to every country involved.

C. Expectations

YFU promotional materials must clearly state what participants can expect to receive by way of program content, activities, and services. Appropriate materials will also specify what is expected of YFU participants by way of compliance with policy and general behaviors suitable for individuals involved in international educational exchange. Areas to be specified include:

1. qualifications required of participants;
2. the selection process;
3. orientations;
4. support provisions; and
5. administrative features (e.g., travel, insurance, pricing).

D. Ethics

The organization shall not publicize the need for host families via any public media with announcements, notices, advertisements, etc. that

1. are not sufficiently in advance of the student's arrival,
2. appeal to public pity or guilt,
3. imply in any way that a student will be denied participation if a host family is not found immediately,
4. identify photos of individual students and include an appeal for an immediate family.

With a written waiver, it is permissible to use a picture of a student, a first name, age, country of origin and a composite or generic listing of interests in an advertisement in order to demonstrate the personal nature of the program and the types of interests that students have. It is not permissible to identify that specific student as needing a home; nor is it permissible to refer to a student's athletic ability or accomplishments.

II. Student Recruitment and Selection

As an educational organization, YFU has a responsibility for the quality of its programs and the well being of participating students as well as participating host families. It must therefore apply an element of selectivity to the recruitment of participants.

A. Outbound Student Selection Qualifications

1. Health: All YFU students must be in good health. They must have no ailment that will preclude them from participating in the typical activities of the exchange experience, or present undue problems for themselves, their host family or the receiving YFU organization. YFU encourages the inclusion of students with physical disabilities, provided that both sending and receiving country demonstrate their ability to accommodate the individual student. However, such cases and other exceptions from established health standards require previous, documented specification and agreement by the YFU organization in the receiving country, based on a realistic assessment of the ability of the receiving country to meet the specific needs of the student.

2. Age: Potential participants must be between 15 and 18 years old to be able to participate in high school level YFU programs. More specific age limits can be set by mutual agreement between sending and receiving YFU organizations.

3. School performance: Potential students must show a good record of school performance and a high level of responsibility towards school and school-related activities. Language ability in a second language should be considered as a positive selection factor.

If necessary, receiving countries can establish language requirements that should be defined as clearly as possible to provide opportunities for meaningful language testing in the various sending countries as part of their selection process.

What constitutes a good school record is evaluated in the context of the educational system of the sending country by that country's YFU organization.

B. Student Selection Procedure

1. All potential participants must be interviewed face-to-face by at least one YFU volunteer or staff member with cross-cultural experience who is committed to the educational goals and adheres to the standards and principles of the YFU organization. This person must have specific experience in this function and/or specific training for it. She or he is responsible to the YFU National Organization. Here and henceforth in these standards, the term "YFU volunteer or staff member with cross-cultural experience" shall be understood to refer to a person with personal experience abroad and/or involvement with foreign students or other foreign nationals in one's own country. Such a volunteer can be a person whose only involvement with YFU is to conduct such interviews on the basis of appropriate YFU training, as e. g. a high school teacher on the spot.

2. At the time of the interview(s), the potential benefits as well as the potential risks that the program could have for the student will be considered as part of the selection process.

3. Although methods of selection are varied among the YFU community, comparable standards in student selection should be used, so as to underscore YFU's worldwide responsibility for selectivity.

4. Student interviews will provide a view from the interviewers' perspective of the student's needs, interests, values, and potentials. These interviews are documented in a written report that is not a substitute for the student's self-description, but a complementary element.

5. Taking into consideration that all individuals have personal traits of their own and that personal history, background, and culture cannot be objectively assessed, as a guide for selection participants' interest in others, their ability to exercise empathy, their high motivation for the student exchange, and their sense of responsibility should be considered for selection. Their ability to adjust and obtain personal growth through this educational experience and the personal and societal impact and benefits of their participation on the program should be assessed.

6. Assessing the risk factors in selection is an important way to prevent potential major problems during the YFU experience that could cause negative results or damage to the participant student and/or family.

7. YFU receiving organizations are urged to provide information and feedback to their YFU sending partners about particular cultural, programmatic, educational or perceived typical individual constraints regarding students with specific identifiable characteristics which create placement or adjustment problems, so that YFU sending organizations can and will take such considerations responsibly into account in their selection processes. YFU receiving organizations will exercise respect for cultural diversity in identifying, assessing and providing such information and feedback.

YFU does not, however, practice a separate acceptance process in the receiving country, except to review the compliance of the selection process with the standards listed above under A 1 through 3, plus any additional selection criteria which would have to be

a. defined as specifically and clearly as possible, in writing, and

b. established only by formal mutual agreement between the sending and the receiving YFU organization, not unilaterally.

The fundamental position of YFU is that selection decisions in the sending countries are meant to be, and except in cases of standards violations, are, in fact, final.

8. Risk factors include among others: that students (or parents) approach YFU as a therapeutic organization, that they have evidenced rigidity, that they are not able to exercise empathy, that they are not willing to grow with the experience,

that their main goal is to use the YFU experience to help them overcome serious personal problems, that they are not prepared to take the responsibility that the educational goals of YFU imply.

III. Host Family Selection and Placement

A. Setting into which YFU Students are Placed

As Youth For Understanding (YFU) International Exchange has entered its second fifty years, and in response to the increasing diversity represented among families and individuals who send students on exchange as well as the families and also, on a case-by-case basis, the individuals who host them, YFU explains the home stay element of exchange as follows:

1. A YFU family consists of at least two persons (one of whom must be a legally responsible adult) who live together, sharing the ordinary and extraordinary events of each other's lives, and supporting and being supported by the very acts of living together and sharing. A YFU family has expressed a genuine and appropriate willingness to host.
2. A YFU family has sufficient emotional, physical and financial resources to enable them to provide an appropriate setting for the YFU student. YFU families exist in urban, suburban, small-town, and rural settings.
3. Members of a YFU family are sufficiently familiar with and representative of the local culture in which they live to ensure that the YFU student enjoys contact with, the influence of, and opportunities to interact with the local culture. Within the household, members of a YFU family speak an official language of the host country, in order to provide the YFU student with an opportunity to learn that language.
4. YFU families may be as diverse as the local culture allows and provides; e.g.
 - a married couple, with or without children at home;
 - a couple that has lived together in a committed relationship for an extended period;
 - a single parent with one or more children at home.
5. Members of the household, adults as well as children, reflect the general population with respect to interests and activities, educational attainment, physical and mental abilities and participation within the local community.
6. In selecting hosts for YFU students and students for participation in YFU programs, Youth For Understanding—consistent with its commitment to international understanding—will not exclude participants e.g., on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin. YFU host families represent the full range of diversity present within the host country. Placements which may be considered highly unusual or controversial due to cultural differences will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
7. Placements with a single adult with no children living in the same household can be accepted on the basis of a previous agreement between sending and hosting YFU organization.

B. Host Family Qualifications

1. Desire to Host

All YFU potential host families must be sincerely willing to open their home to a foreign student and give him/her an opportunity to become fully integrated into the family.

They should understand the educational element of the program, as well as the element of personal growth for the participant and the host family.

Families will not be paid by YFU for hosting students.

2. Provide Room and Board

Families must provide students with adequate room and board, including their own bed.

C. Host Family Selection

Whether a potential host family should be selected for a program is best determined in a specific placement decision. We may say that the potential host family is automatically not qualified only in those cases where, on the basis of a personal interview, there is evidence of the following:

1. motives which are clearly incompatible with the educational goals of YFU;
2. no home life;
3. a family can definitely not afford a student; or

4. lack of willingness on the part of the family to accept YFU's supervision of the student.

D. Placement

As an educational organization, YFU when making a placement emphasizes the importance of obtaining the fullest picture of the potential positive ways in which a host family and a student will complement each other during a long-term interaction. YFU understands that this interaction will be strongly based on an unconditional mutual respect and acceptance between the host family and student. Therefore:

1. Face-to-face interviews are needed in order to have a broad picture of the host family. These interviews should be, when possible, home calls including all the family members in natural interaction.
2. Placements should not be the result of mechanical matching of similar qualities in host family members and students.
3. In evaluating host family applications, the final criterion should be whether a given family, taking into account all available pieces of information, provides the optimal placement among those possible for one specific student.
4. Appropriate information (e.g. host family application forms plus interview reports and/or references) on the host family and on the student should be available to facilitate the task of finding those areas in which students and host families might positively complement each other and of minimizing potential risks and damages.
5. The person responsible for making placements should be at least a YFU volunteer or staff member with cross-cultural experience who is committed to the educational goals and adheres to the standards and principles of the YFU organization. This person must have specific experience in this function and/or special training for it. She or he is responsible to the YFU National Organization. A consultation process between this person and the one who has more direct knowledge about the potential host family is desirable.
6. To ensure timely placements of students, complete student files must be sent to the receiving countries by dates established by the receiving countries. However, these dates must reflect adequate time for the sending country to recruit, select, and prepare files.
7. Appropriate information on the placement must be transmitted to the sending country in advance of the student's departure from home. Minimally, this should include host family name, address, telephone number, occupations of parents and number and ages of family members.

IV. Orientation

As an educational organization, YFU emphasizes orientation programs for all participants, so that they may reach an optimal level of educational benefits, both for their own growth and as a contribution to international and intercultural understanding, cooperation, and respect for diversity and peace from their program participation. Orientation in this sense is an ongoing process that begins before the student's departure for their host country and continues throughout and beyond their exchange experience.

A. Student Orientation Requirements

1. Pre-departure Orientation

Each student participates in a comprehensive orientation program. This takes place substantially prior to the student's actual departure to her/his host country. It addresses a variety of goals that are necessary objectives of a responsible preparation for the exchange experience. These goals include:

- a. awareness of the YFU program as a learning opportunity and a learning process about cultural identities and cultural differences;
- b. awareness of the exchange student's necessary adjustment to the culture of their host country not only as a prerequisite for a satisfying living experience in the foreign personal environment, but also as a learning process in intercultural communication and cooperation;
- c. application of their new intercultural insights and skills and the respect for cultural diversity to the exchange experience itself and beyond to issues and activities in inter-group, intercultural and international relations;
- d. reflection by the students on their identity and role as members of their own culture, with its own distinctive history, structure, values and behavioral norms and patterns, none of which can be assumed to be universal;
- e. understanding of the need to develop increased personal communication skills, including a strong emphasis on

developing proficiency in the language of the host country, both prior to departure and in whichever language training program may be offered through YFU in the host country upon arrival;

- f. specific preparation for characteristic elements of the student's expected personal foreign environment, such as information on the school system, family and community life, and peer-group relationships characteristic of the specific host country; and
- g. detailed and accurate preparation of the student for specific administrative features and other conditions of participation in the YFU program, such as
 - visa requirements,
 - travel procedures,
 - clothing and personal hygiene requirements,
 - YFU behavioral rules, procedures and organizational structure in the host country, as well as the history and purpose of YFU.

Attendance at this orientation program is mandatory. If such programs include students selected to go to a variety of different host countries, some of the information required under f. and g. above may be provided in more detail in post-arrival orientation programs in the respective host countries (see 2. below).

In conjunction with pertinent and sophisticated written materials, which address the specific orientation goals and issues mentioned above and with which students should be furnished prior to arrival on the orientation site, such orientation programs must include at least one full day of group sessions at an appropriate training site. Longer on-site orientation programs are encouraged in order to optimize the educational effect. Orienters must be YFU volunteers or staff members with cross-cultural experience who are committed to the educational goals and adhere to the standards and principles of the YFU organization. These persons must have specific experience in this function and/or specific training for it. They are responsible to the YFU National Organization. In order to enhance student's receptiveness and active participation, as well as to take into account different learning styles, a diversity of teaching methods is employed.

Responsibility for the implementation of this section of YFU orientation programs rests with the YFU organization in the sending country. In preparing contents, tools, and materials, coordination with and verification by receiving countries is essential.

Welcome letters to students will be issued by YFU organizations in receiving countries as soon as possible after student files have been submitted to them. They will be shared with the YFU National Organizations in the sending countries. They will not be restricted to, but include, as a minimum, information on the school system, travel and arrival arrangements, customs, climate, clothing and pocket money.

2. Post-Arrival Orientation

Each student is actively involved in a second orientation program immediately or within a two-month time limit after arriving in the host country. This post-arrival orientation addresses the topic areas described above under 1. a. to d., f. and g. from the perspective of the host country, its culture, and its YFU organization. It is not necessarily limited to those topics, but also addresses e. g. such specific adjustment problems as may already have arisen. It may, where appropriate, be coupled with an intensive language training program in the language of the host country.

Regarding length of program, location, personnel, and diversity of methods, the same standards apply which were described under 1.

Responsibility for this section of the YFU orientation program rests with the YFU organization in the receiving country, notwithstanding the need to coordinate content and materials with the YFU organization in the sending country.

3. Mid-Term Orientation

Additional orientation is provided in the host country at least once during the student's stay ("mid-term orientation"). This does not require large-scale student reunions, but can also be accomplished very economically by thoughtful volunteers and other resource persons at a relatively local level. The program is designed to enhance the student's awareness of the educational process they are undergoing as YFU students as a dynamic process reaching beyond the end of the actual exchange experience. Intercultural learning features described above under I. a. to c. are reinforced. Student adjustment experiences are monitored and examined as preconditions for life in the foreign environment as

well as for their learning potential regarding intercultural communication and cooperation. Through appropriate topics, a more comprehensive look at the history, structure, institutions, and values of the host culture is encouraged.

4. Re-Entry Orientation

Re-entry orientation preceding students' return to their home countries is offered either on an appropriate orientation site or, as a minimum, through adequate written materials. Re-entry orientation addresses the psychological pressures involved in readjusting to one's home culture. It also emphasizes the opportunities and the need for ongoing intercultural educational activities. In both respects, it prepares students and stimulates expectations for their participation in homecoming orientation programs and ongoing international educational activities within or outside YFU (cf. also Section VI A. 2 re: natural parents).

B. Host Family Orientation Requirements

Host family orientation takes place through personal interviews, written materials, and and/or group sessions substantially prior to student arrivals. It addresses the topic areas described above under A.1.a. to c. and g., as well as specific information about differences in student cultural backgrounds inasmuch as such differences are likely to affect family and school integration, behavioral patterns, and peer-group relationships of students. Face-to-face orientation must be conducted by orienters who are YFU volunteers or staff members with cross-cultural experience who are committed to the educational goals and adhere to the standards and principles of the YFU organization. These persons must have specific experience in this function and/or specific training for it. They are responsible to the YFU National Organization.

In addition, involvement of host family members in content-related YFU activities throughout the student's stay in the receiving country is strongly recommended and encouraged.

V. Participant Support / Counseling

A. Adjustment and Learning

1. As an international exchange program, YFU gives great weight to the desirability for students to adjust effectively to the cross-cultural experience, which constitutes at the same time an important cross-cultural learning opportunity for the host family members and volunteers involved.
2. As an educational organization, YFU goes beyond a concern for adjustment and emphasizes the principle that student learning - about self, the host culture, and culture generally - is the ultimate goal of support provided to students. In this sense, student support also has the function of ongoing orientation, with corresponding potential educational benefits for host family members and volunteers.
3. However, it should be noted that YFU is not a therapeutic program, and therefore its responsibility to facilitate either adjustment or learning must be defined within reasonable limits of effort, resource expenditure, and expertise.
4. Persons responsible for participant support/counseling are YFU volunteers or staff members with cross-cultural experience who are committed to the educational goals and adhere to the standards and principles of the YFU organization. These persons must have specific experience and/or specific training in this function. They are responsible to the YFU National Organization.

B. Contact

1. In its emphasis on the importance of support in the fulfillment of its organizational objectives, YFU guarantees each student and host family access to a YFU representative - either volunteer or paid staff - who can be contacted within 24 hours.
2. YFU must also provide telephone numbers for emergency contact.

Regular personal contact shall be maintained by local representatives of the organization. Such contact should be at least once a month and may be implemented by telephone, a visit to the home, or personal contact at a gathering. This contact is to include separate contact with the student and the host family in order to provide each with the opportunity to discuss issues that might not be raised in the presence of the other. The organization shall keep proper records to prove that these contacts have been made.

C. Replacement

As an educational organization, YFU makes every effort to help a student adjust to the cross-cultural experience, learn from the experience, and succeed in the experience. Primarily, such efforts are made in the context of the original host family, and replacement should not automatically be a first resort for problem solving. At the same time, host families

are recognized as important participants in the YFU experience, as are the volunteers who offer their time and energy to the support process. Therefore, decisions on whether to replace a student will carefully weigh the potential benefits and risks involved for student, host family, and the organization itself.

Notification of student replacements includes the following information and is communicated to the YFU organization in the sending country preferably before the replacement, but not later than within 24 hours of the change: host family name, address, telephone number, occupations of parents, number and age of family members, and reason for the change.

D. Consultation

As an educational organization whose international composition requires effective coordination between the sending and host countries in matters of participant support, YFU decides about cases of serious student problems, and especially about involuntary early returns of students on the basis of the following procedures:

1. Such decisions are preceded by extensive and timely communication and discussion, including full consultation with the designated authority of the YFU organization in the sending country.
2. The decision for early return, however, is the ultimate prerogative and responsibility of the host country, based on the consultation process described, which must be fully utilized and must constitute a demonstrably serious part of the decision-making process.
3. Reasonable response time should be a feature of the communication between the host and sending countries regarding student cases, with careful and explicit distinctions made between urgent, important, and routine requests for information. In urgent situations, every effort will be made to respond in 24 hours.
4. In this regard, YFU National Organizations must utilize appropriate communication technology (e.g., telephone, fax, and electronic communication) in keeping with the response time required.

E. Documentation

As an educational organization which values support and recognizes the need to give evidence of support, YFU requires the following:

1. Full documentation regarding student related problems, especially, but not only in early return or potential early return cases, must be made available on a timely basis to the YFU organization in the sending country so that the latter organization can use it, applying reasonable discretion, to explain the situation to authorized persons such as the student's parents.
2. Such documentation must address specifically expressed informational needs of the YFU organization in the sending country.
3. The YFU organization providing such documentation bears legal responsibility for the contents if the YFU organization in the sending country passes such documentation on, in full or in part, to authorized recipients such as the student's parents.
4. Notwithstanding its obligation to provide full and timely documentation as described above, the YFU organization issuing such documentation may declare certain portions of it confidential. Such portions must not be made available to anybody outside of YFU. This restriction can only be lifted by the YFU organization that provided the documentation, unless disclosure is in response to a valid order of a court or any other governmental body or disclosure is otherwise required by law. It must be understood that in some countries or in some cases it may not be legally possible to withhold such information from parents or legal authorities.

VI. Ongoing Program Involvement

As an educational organization, YFU is committed to long-term educational objectives, reaching beyond the programmatic exchange period.

YFU is responsible for an integrated programmatic approach. Selection, orientation, and support help the individual to assume her/his basic responsibility for the exchange period. For the same reasons, re-entry guidance helps program participants to become reintegrated into their home culture in the most effective and future-directed way.

Therefore, the ongoing program responsibility of YFU includes:

- A. Homecoming,
- B. Evaluation,
- C. Long-term international education,

A. Homecoming or Post-Program Orientation

1. A homecoming orientation program focuses on positive approaches towards readjustment to her/his natural environment.
2. It includes natural parents' preparation prior to the return date. Such preparation should at least consist of a message to the natural families prior to the return of their children, describing possible adjustment problems with which their children may confront them. This message should be sent out no later than two weeks prior to the student's return date.
3. Possibilities for involvement in further YFU activities have to be offered.
4. Involvement of returnees in the organizational decision-making processes is desirable in order to recognize and take advantage of their experience.

B. Evaluation

1. Purposes

Evaluation of the experience is necessary for different purposes:

- a. To satisfy the personal needs of the participants to measure the impact of the exchange experience. For this purpose, it is important to examine changes in
 - personality,
 - interest,
 - degree of social integration.
- b. To maintain the educational quality of the programs by soliciting input in order to keep procedures and methodologies adequate and updated.
- c. To develop research and facilitate systematic pursuit of it on the national and international levels regarding the effects and the impact of the exchange experience.
- d. To enhance the visibility of YFU and its reputation as a serious international educational organization by disseminating educationally substantive publications and promotional materials.

2. Materials and Methodology:

Evaluation materials and methodology require quality and efficiency criteria in order to guarantee the quality and reliability of the research, as well as to protect the informant.

3. Subjects for Evaluation:

Evaluation is recommended with, but not limited to:

- a. former participants in the program,
- b. natural parents of former participants,
- c. host families

C. Long-Term International Education

Post-program initiatives will open perspectives on a range of possibilities and opportunities for former participants. These will develop further their cross-cultural skills and their personal responsibility towards society.

D. Opening to Worldwide Representation

By exploring and exploiting relevant opportunities, YFU organizations will give former participants a chance for active involvement in international and intercultural issues. This would include formal representation in youth-oriented organizations addressing such issues.

VII. YFU Structure, Organization, Financial Services, Procedures

A. Status

All YFU organizations work primarily through volunteers who are committed to the educational goals and adhere to the standards and principles of YFU and the specific national organization.

B. Acceptance of Full Integration into the International Community of YFU Organizations, Structures and Programs

1. Each YFU National Organization must operate, to whatever extent possible, exclusively or at least predominantly within the international YFU community and with international YFU partners.
2. It will not conduct, nor participate in the conduct of, programs or activities favoring non-YFU partners over YFU partners, or excluding YFU partners in countries where they exist.
3. It will not be dependent with respect to its funding, its operation and its staff and volunteer structure on any non-YFU organization which could control, direct, or significantly influence its internal decision-making processes or its leadership selection.

C. Independence, Self-Governing Structure and Legal Status

Each YFU National Organization must:

1. display, in demonstrable and documented fashion, including its own written and binding charter, constitution, bylaws, or rules, that it operates on the basis of a legal status which allows it an autonomous, self-governing operation under an appropriate measure of disinterested leadership or supervision;
2. have established itself, wherever and to whatever extent possible, under the laws of its country, as a recognized legal entity or person with a volunteer-based or volunteer-oriented corporate leadership or supervisory authority, as much as feasible inclusive of significant YFU returnee participation;
3. be non-governmental, non-political, and non-religious. It must operate under non-profit principles and, wherever and to whatever extent possible, possess or actively pursue a tax-exempt status;
4. strive for the strongest possible involvement of educationally committed volunteers in its programmatic activities and operations.

D. Non-Discrimination

YFU organizations will, in their operations, neither practice nor condone discrimination. They will not exclude participants on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin.

E. Compliance

YFU National Organizations will comply with operative consumer protection laws and similar regulations in their respective countries. In operating their programs, they will exercise due diligence in taking into account such regulations which their YFU partner organizations in these programs have to observe in their countries.

F. Safety and Security

As an educational organization that conducts programs for youth that have typically not reached the age of majority, YFU has the responsibility to look after the physical safety and security of its students. In this regard, YFU National Organizations will

1. ascertain any emergency (i.e., evacuation) procedures that exist in their respective countries;
2. monitor student whereabouts; especially by having developed adequate on-program travel procedures;
3. make arrangements and establish procedures to contact students in the event of emergency and advise them of appropriate action;
4. coordinate contact and emergency procedures with their respective Embassies to the degree possible, understanding that, with regard to some countries, such contact with foreign embassies regarding students from their countries may require student/parent consent.

G. Financial Aid

As an educational organization concerned with offering its programs to a diverse participant base, YFU in all countries will, through scholarship aid and other means (e.g. deferred payment plans), make its best efforts to facilitate involvement for students who are demonstrably unable to afford the full program fee.

H. Designated Management

All YFU National Organizations will have a designated, legally responsible officer or body in whom the executive authority is vested. YFU will, through its International Secretariat, maintain an International Directory of persons and offices of all YFU National Organizations indicating to whom operational, financial, and programmatic issues can be directed.

I. Insurance

As an educational organization concerned with the well-being of its participants and the continuity and solidity of its programs, YFU must ensure that all students are adequately covered for health contingencies and that the organization itself is adequately covered for liability, or for claims against it.

J. Voluntary Full Compliance with International Standards, General Policies and General Procedures

1. In order to ensure, without infringing upon the autonomy of all YFU National Organizations,

- high international quality levels of programmatic and organizational activity,
- a maximum of international programmatic organizational cohesion,
- integrated programmatic approaches,
- international comparability as well as predictability of processes and procedures,
- reasonably similar and standardized policies,

all YFU National Organizations will voluntarily and fully comply with and adhere to all standards, general policies and general procedures established internationally on a consensus-oriented basis within YFU.

2. Such standards, general policies and general procedures include those established internationally by and/or on the basis of recommendations by the International Advisory Council of Youth For Understanding after international circulation of proposed texts and due consideration of all international reactions within YFU in order to achieve a maximum of international consensus.



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