



YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING
Intercultural Exchange Programs

Marketing “Hard to Place” Students

Let’s face it, some students are easier to match than others. Below is a list of phrases and word-smithing ideas to help you build better profiles by category. By inserting some of these sentences into a profile, you can put a positive spin on the student’s activities and will help a family better envision life with this student. If you have additional student category ideas, please contact the Marketing Department at marketing@yfu.org.

COMPUTER GAMES

Profile currently reads: Johan likes to spend time on the computer...Seems a little boring, right? **Instead, try:** Show Johan how his passion for computers can translate into a fulfilling career!

OR

Who can get the high score in your home? (For video game interest) Active in a STEM chapter (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)? Headed off to the next

- robotics competition?
- math bowl?
- computer programming event?
- comic convention?

Additional resources are located at the end of this document to help you find outreach venues for students who spend time on the computer.

SHOPPERS

AKA seemingly overly social, shoppers, or mall-going students.

These are the students who list going to the mall or hanging out with friends as their primary interests. Many times, the mall is the only social outlet for some of these teens as there really isn’t any place else to “hang out.” Make this group more appealing by listing out what a family can do socially with these “pop culture enthusiasts!” Encourage the family to think outside the mall by asking them to:

- Share your Main Street USA!
- Do you up-cycle? Teach this student how! [*Note: Up-cycling is when you take something old and make it new and useable again.*]
- On a run to the store? Annabelle would be happy to go along!
- Provide her a new shopping experience by taking her antiquing.
- Share your favorite American store!

If going to the mall seems more of a social thing than a shopping habit, reinforce this with the family by suggesting free social activities:

- Looking forward to an active community, Clarissa hopes to join in all the fun!
- What do the kids do in your neighborhood? Anna is looking forward to finding out.
- Encourage this social butterfly to volunteer with you!

READERS

Sometimes, those who list reading as a main interest may be seen as too introverted. Put a fun spin on reading by referring to them as:

- Self-entertaining
- Scholars (check grades first!)
- Imaginative
- Open to new worlds

Invite the family to:

- Share their love of reading
- Bring the student to their next book club event
- Share their favorite English edition books
- Introduce your student to the library or help them sign up for a library card

MOVIES LOVERS

This interest, too, may sometimes lead students to be perceived as introverted. Put a positive spin on this interest by referring to them as:

- Future movie critic
- Aspiring director
- Film buff

Invite the family to do something simple...with no money involved:

- Share your favorite classic American movies with...
- Watch “It’s a Wonderful Life with...”
- Does your school newspaper need a movie critic?
- Do you have any movie discussion groups in your community looking for members?
- Take her interest in movies full circle by introducing her to your local (cinematography, script writing, directing, stage...) group.
- Have a movie festival in your town? Peter would love to become a part of it!

HOME BODIES

Excessively family-oriented students

Have a student that’s so family oriented that they seem to have no other real hobbies? Actively encourage the “simple, every day” in the profile. Encourage the family to look at what they do every day and think about how they can make the student a part of it. Again, keep it simple:

- Does your family have “Taco Tuesdays? Anne wants to help!
- Have room at the homework table for one more? Fredricke would like to have a seat!
- Does your family volunteer? Introduce this family oriented student to your service program.
- Have room on the couch for one more fan? JeeJee would love to learn more about your favorite team.

10% STUDENTS

Due to privacy laws in several of our European partner countries, what we say and how we say it, especially when it comes to health issues, is important. When writing about 10% students:

- Make a suggestion, not a statement.
Example: “Zoe would do well with a cat free home” instead of, “Zoe is allergic to cats.”
- Ask the family questions about their lifestyle:
Does your family prepare gluten free/ meat free/ soy free meals?

Now that you have those targeted profiles on the ready, get them out to your audiences! Refer back to the scripted

templates if you need help starting your outreach. The YFU Marketing Department will make outreach efforts to various national organizations, but local chapter targeting is up to the field.

Remember, put the specialized interest first when contacting!

Have you considered outreach to:

- Local organizations—meet ups, rec-centers, yahoo groups, libraries, community pools, local music teachers, animal rescue groups, high school hangouts.
- Adult learning centers – people interested learning more about computers, cooking, cinematography or any of the other interests listed above.
- Schools with specialty clubs.

Identify who your “hard to place” students are and create an individualized plan for consistent outreach throughout placement. Remember, these and other priority placement students are excellent to feature in “student of the week” highlights you email out to volunteers as you communicate placement progress.

WEB RESOURCES

Below are a few of the outreach targets that the Marketing Department brainstormed during a session examining profiles of students with computer interests. Give this same search formula a try – it can be applied to any student interest.

Initiate your search beginning with the main interest of the student. Begin with (Google) searches such as:

- Computer groups in (fill in town name)
- Teen computer competitions

Scroll through the page to get ideas for alternate search suggestions. Make sure to check out both main websites and related articles as both may provide additional links to helpful resources.

By just doing the above, we identified the following resources in just a matter of minutes!

Computer Students- Outreach Targets

- **Jason.org** - National computer and science learning groups
- STEM - **mn-stem.com** (MN only)
- Science: Teencafe **teensciencecafe.org/directory**
- **teensciencecafe.org/cafes**
- **teensciencecafe.org/affiliates**
- Computer Science: **usaco.org** Computing Olympiad
- American Computer Science League - **acsl.org**
- **code.org**
- High school computer competition – **bdpa.org/?SITES_HSCC**
- Trycomputing.org **trycomputing.org/inspire/computing-student-opportunities**
- Midwest Afterschool Network - This program provides opportunities for quality, active STEM exploration in after school programs in nine Midwest states.
- **projectliftoff.net**
- **projectliftoff.net/afterschool-networks**
- **And don't forget local community hackathons!**