

**ROTARY DISTRICT 7470 YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM**



**EXCHANGE STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**INBOUND & OUTBOUND**



**ROTARY SERVING YOUTH WORLDWIDE**

Revised April 24, 2006



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Dear Student,

Remember that we love you.

In the year that you are away, your family, your friends, and we of Rotary will support you, have faith in you and envy you as you live this great experience.

Life is not all you, even in your own home. We know you will have problems. We know at first you will feel lonely; a bit lost in a strange land where customs and language are different.

We know too, that the world is filled with wonders. You will have new experiences, new friends, and new challenges to stretch your minds to their full potential.

Since we know all these things, we send you to new families hoping that our love for you and your own inner strength (love of self) will make the problems small and the rewards large.

As you give kindness, you will receive kindness. Smile and love your families and the world will smile and love you. We ask that you enjoy and care for your families and yourselves, and that you come home after a year stronger, better and happier, having expanded your personal horizons far beyond your present imagination.

But all through the year, remember **WE LOVE YOU!**

# WHAT IS ROTARY?

Rotary was started by Paul Harris in 1905 in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. and has grown in membership to over one million members in 163 countries.

Rotary is a service association of business and professional leaders united worldwide who conduct humanitarian projects, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations and work toward world understanding and peace.

Rotarians meet weekly to enjoy each other's fellowship and discuss ways to serve others.

Rotary adds fulfillment each year to the lives of some 8,000 young people of secondary school age as they study in countries other than their own.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE ROTARY INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM

1. To further international goodwill and understanding by enabling students to study, at first hand, some of the problems and accomplishments of people in lands other than their own.
2. To enable students to advance their education by studying for a year in an environment entirely different to their own and by undertaking study of courses and subjects not normally available to them in secondary schools of their own country.
3. To broaden their own outlook by learning to live with and meet people of different cultures, creeds and colors than their own, and by having to cope with day-to-day problems in an environment completely different to the one they have experienced at home.
4. To act as Ambassadors for their own country, by addressing Rotary Clubs, Community Organizations and Youth Groups in their host country and by imparting as much knowledge as they can of their own country and its problems to the people they meet during their year abroad.
5. To study and observe all facets of life and culture in the country where they are hosted, so that on their return to their home country, they can pass on the knowledge they have gained by addressing Rotary Clubs, Youth Groups and Community Organizations.

## THE FOUR-WAY TEST

(Things we think, say or do)

1. Is it the truth?
2. Is it fair to all concerned?
3. Will it build good will and better understanding?
4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

Memorize these four questions. They are really the basis of everyone's life. If more people lived by these questions, what a lovely world this would be!

## **THE OBJECTS OF ROTARY**

The object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise and, in particular, to encourage and foster:

1. The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service.
2. High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying by each Rotarian of his occupation as an opportunity to serve society.
3. The application of the ideal of service by every Rotarian to his personal, business, and community life.
4. The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world-fellowship of business and professional men and women united in the ideal of service.

## **SCOPE OF THE PROGRAM**

The Rotary International Youth Exchange Program is an essential part of World Community Service. It is designed for High School students in the age group of 16 to 18 1/2 years of age. In general, the student who is selected to participate in the Program is above average in academic ability, in good health, independent, self-reliant, able to make friends easily, willing to face challenges, and to adjust to a wide variety of people and varying conditions. Students are sponsored by Rotary Clubs in your country to live and study for twelve months in another country. In exchange, students are accepted and hosted from the many countries around the world to be hosted by your Rotary Club. A student lives with one host family for a period of three to four months as a member of the family, not as a guest, then moves on to another host family. He/she attends a school in the community as a regular student, but in some cases in a noncredit (audit) program. Host families can be Rotary families or Rotary approved non-Rotarian families.

## **PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM**

Through the Rotary Youth Exchange Program, we hope to be able to build bridges of friendship and understanding between the peoples of the world by allowing selected students to live for one year in a foreign country, assimilating that country's culture and language, and by being ambassadors of goodwill while they are here. This is accomplished by having the students live with several host families, sharing in the life and love of each family, and by attending a year of high school, so that they develop friends and begin to understand the hosts as if they were part of them. Also, as the students share of themselves, and of their lives and experiences at home, the hosts in turn develop bonds of friendship and understanding with these student's countries. This is what Youth Exchange is all about.

## **HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS**

Individual clubs are responsible for screening of Outbound Students and for arranging host families, schooling and counselors for Inbound Students. The District Chairman and the Committee Members interview and select the actual exchange student. The District Committee also negotiates with the districts in the other countries and sets up the exchanges.

## **DISTRICT YOUTH EXCHANGE COMMITTEE**

Each Rotary year, the District Governor appoints a District Chairman with power to select a number of Rotarians to serve on the District Youth Exchange Committee. The District Chairman is answerable to the District Governor and responsible for the promotion and coordination of the Youth Exchange between the many countries in which Rotary is established. The District Chairman and members of the Committee are concerned with the selection of students for the assignment to Host Clubs in other countries and have the duty to ensure the supervision and welfare of visiting students hosted by the clubs within the District. The District Chairman and District Governor have the final authority concerning all aspects of the entire program with the District. The Committee itself is made up of several Rotarians and their spouses so all aspects of the Youth Exchange year is covered according to the needs of the Youth Exchange year is covered according to the needs of the students.

## **BEING A ROTARY EXCHANGE STUDENT**

This experience you are about to undertake will be scary in the beginning as you will be thrown into situations that you will have to be making decisions on your own. Since you are probably used to your parents make decisions for you at home, it can be very confusing at first. You will mature very fast during your year away from home. Your first mature act was to become an Exchange Student and you probably didn't even realize how mature a decision you made.

This handbook is being written with you in mind and to help you through some of the common and uncommon situations that you will encounter. It is hoped that we have tried our best to cover all the situations that you will take place during your year.

Attend your Host Rotary Club meetings as often as they will allow you. Never pass up an opportunity to attend. Participate in all service projects the Rotary Club is involved in. Get to know the Rotarians from your club and share your thoughts with them. Remember that because of them volunteering to host you for a year, they have committed more than accepting a student. They are the biggest contributors, such as your allowance, making it possible for you to attend District functions, and making sure that you have the best time of your life while you are in their care.

Take the time to learn more about Rotary from your club counselor and why they belong to Rotary. Rotarians are a fountain of information, but unless asked, they tend to forget to share their knowledge.

The way you treat the Rotarians in your club will determine if they will host another student in the future. Many clubs around the world have stopped hosting students, because they had one bad experience with a student. It isn't fair, but it is what happens and nothing you can say will change their minds.

## **TIMES WHEN STUDENTS LEAVE AND ARRIVE**

Arrivals and departures take place in August with additional arrivals in January. This varies in some areas of the world (i.e.: April for some countries). In the United States and Canada, many schools starts the first full week of September and the second semester begins in January. In New Jersey most schools begin Tuesday or Wednesday after Labor Day and second semester begins the third week of January.

Departures are made at the same times of the year, but travel arrangements must be made at least four (4) months before the planned leave. Check your Visa to make sure that the date you plan to leave is before the expiration date. Governments do not want you staying longer than they have authorized your stay. If your

Visa is for less than a year, you, your club, and host family can make arrangements to get your Visa extended at the consulate if necessary. Some visa's are for a time period or completion of program.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER COSTS**

**PARENTS** pay the application fee, round-trip airplane fare, cost of clothing, Rotary approved Youth Exchange Insurance and any special tours that will be offered for the student. Plus up to \$300-500 emergency fund. In addition you will need a Navy Blue blazer to which you will place your Youth Exchange Patch on the breast pocket. During your year abroad you will attach pins you have collected to it.

**HOSTING CLUB** in the receiving District pays High School tuition fees, if any. They give the student an allowance for pocket expenses and any incidentals relating to school activities plus District related functions that the student is expected to attend and District Conference attendance.

**HOSTING FAMILY** gives you a bed to sleep in, feeds you and shares their home with you.

**YOU** (the student) pay for personal things such as toiletries, cosmetics, film, developing your film, movies & entertainment, souvenirs, long distance phone calls, stationary, postage and other things of a personal nature.

# PRE-DEPARTURE PLANNING

When you receive your approval letter from your home district apply for your passport if you don't have one. Respond to Bokoff-Kaplan Travel immediately upon receipt of the packet from them. Once you receive your Guarantee Papers from your host district work with Bokoff-Kaplan Travel to obtain your tickets and visa. Also write or E-mail your host family in your overseas country. In addition you will need to buy Youth Exchange insurance. If you purchase insurance required by the host country or have a personal policy that covers you in your host country you will only need to take Plan 'A' or Plan 'A' with sports rider from CISI – Bolduc Insurance. If you do not have any other insurance then you must take the CISI – Bolduc Insurance Plan 'B'.

You should use the time before your trip to study the country of destination. School and community libraries, consulates, trade missions and similar agencies will have useful materials. You should know something of the history of the host country, something of its literature and arts, and something of its principal problems. You are not expected to become an expert, but you should acquire a foundation on which to build. If you know someone that has been to the country you are going to, it would be useful to talk to him or her. Past Exchange Students are the very best source of information. You will have an opportunity to meet them at the Madison Weekend (first of two outbound orientations).

Remember the Internet can be a great resource to find out more about your country and the country you will be going to. Many Rotary Clubs even have their own web site. It is important to learn all you can about your own country and also the country you are going to.

It is also important to start learning the language of the country to which you are going. You may have taken it in school but now you also need to know how to speak it. Remember you will need to know how to ask some basic questions in your new language when you arrive in your new country.

Talk to your local Rotary Club Youth Exchange Chairman and see if he/she might be able to help you by answering many of the questions you will have.

## PRE-DEPARTURE CORRESPONDENCE

A Guarantee form will be sent to your District Chairman and he will forward to you one copy giving the name and address of your first Host Family. He will also forward to you any additional information you will need to obtain your visa or school information received from the country you are attending. Write to or e-mail your host family and your Club Counselor immediately and they may be writing or e-mailing to you to tell you about the area you will be living and the type of clothing you will need. Keep in contact with them up to your arrival.

Take a copy of your Health records from your application with you. Make sure your immunizations are correct and include the month, day and year of each immunization you received.

Most students have a cultural shock when they arrive at their destination because they didn't take the time to ask their host family or the host Club Chairman anything about the area that they will be living in, or they assumed that the description they read was comparable to city or country life in their own country. There is a difference! Don't be afraid to ask thousands of questions as you correspond with them, as they will want to make sure you know what their area is really like. Ask them if they can send postcard pictures of their area to help acquaint you with the landscape. Also ask about public transportation.

## **TRAVEL TIPS**

1. Always have your Rotary identification badge on your outer clothing. It will help the people meeting you at the airport to identify you easier. Remember you are to travel wearing your Rotary blazer.
2. Always have your camera with you and have several rolls of film.
3. Pack as lightly as possible when traveling to your new country. Pack as least one outfit with underwear in your carry on bag in case your luggage is delayed in catching up with you.
4. Have a small sewing kit with buttons, thread, pins, etc.
5. Always have a towel and your toiletry kit with you in your carry on bag.
6. Try to find out weather conditions at your destination so you can dress accordingly. The Internet is a great place to find up to date weather about you destination.

## **GIFT SUGGESTIONS**

1. Take about 5 banners from your sponsoring Rotary Club. These will be given to your host Rotary club when you first arrive or when you give your slide presentation and any other clubs you visit or for whom you do a presentation. . Generally, the Club will give you one from their club in return.
2. You will be given a banner from our District Governor for you to give to the District Governor of the District you are in this may be done at the District conference or at his official visit to your host club if you are present.
3. Some stamps from your country (especially commemorative stamps) make nice gifts, so steam them off when you receive letters and give them away to friends. You can make them into bookmarks.
4. Small denomination coins from your country also make nice gifts (for the next couple of years we will see New Jersey state quarters which were issued in 1999).
5. Make some tapes of music from your country and share them with your friends.
6. A few small flags of your country make nice gifts.
7. A special gift should be given at the end of your stay to each Host Family. A 5" x 7" or 8" x 10" portrait of you is a great gift.
8. A picture book of your country can be used in your public speaking and given as a gift before you leave.

## **OTHER ITEMS TO BRING**

1. Photo album of your house, family, school friends, town and local interests.
2. Prepare a 20-minute slide show of your area, again including your family, school, town, etc. Include in your slides subjects of major national interest, if possible.
3. A map of your Country or State.

4. Don't leave home without the addresses of all your friends and relatives.
5. A collection of your favorite recipes from home. Learn how to make these dishes before leaving home so you can try them out on your new families. If the recipe calls for chocolate chips or any other different ingredient, make sure you bring it along. This can be a fun experience!

## **CLOTHING**

You will be told whether you will need a winter coat for winter or a light coat for mild weather. Your parents and host families will not know what the rate of exchange between the countries, so price the items in your own country before buying them and ask your host family to give you an idea of the price of the same items. Depending on where you will be going, you may get a better buy in your own country, which will save your parents budget. If you are going to the United States, you will definitely save on the purchase of many items of clothing such as blue jeans, sneakers and coats, as they have clothing outlets where these items can be purchased at nearly half the cost as buying in the regular department stores. Exchange rates are available on the Internet.

1. Take a good and serviceable wardrobe with you.
2. Take comfortable shoes. These are also expensive and should be chosen with care and thought as to suitability. The primary shoes that should be in your wardrobe are dress shoes, sneakers and everyday comfortable shoes.
3. Include several national T-shirts. When students get together, they like to wear these to show what country they come from.
4. Make sure that garments are versatile, as this will increase your wardrobe mileage. Several blouses can go with one skirt for girls and several shirts can go with one pair of pants for boys. Make sure that you have at least one or two nice outfits for dinners, Rotary presentations, and other more formal engagements.
5. If you have a national costume, take it with you. There will be several occasions that you will be asked to wear it, such as speaking engagements, holidays, and District Conferences.

## **MONEY**

Find out the rate of exchange from your local bank or on the Internet and familiarize yourself with it until you don't have to be thinking what it will cost you. When you compare what it is in your own money each time you go to purchase something, it will confuse you as you try to figure it out. In many countries the rate of exchange changes every day, so pick a general number to work with and it will be easier for you. Once you have reached your destination, you will only be working with one denomination and it will be constant.

1. No matter what country is your final destination, protect your money at all times. Do not carry large sums of money on you without dividing it up into smaller amounts in different places. If you must carry large amounts of money, carry traveler's checks that can be replaced, should they be lost. If you have a special hiding place, don't let others see or know where you keep it. Remember there are cash machines in all countries. You may want to set up an account in your home country and bring a Debit or ATM card. This is the best exchange rate for obtaining cash in a foreign country.
2. You will receive a monthly allowance from your Host Rotary Club at the beginning of each month. Check with your Club Counselor, as they are the ones responsible to see that you do receive it. Keep in mind that

every club throughout the world pays a different amount for allowances. The allowance may not be as much as your home club pays its students, but remember that each club gives as much as they can afford. This allowance is for personal needs such as movies, cosmetics, clothing, film, stamps, telephone calls and anything you feel you would like. Sometimes it doesn't go as far as you expect it to go. Try to budget it well so you have what you want.

3. The best way to receive money from your parents is by Debit or ATM card. You do not need to pay wire fees and you will get the best exchange rate. Your parents can send you a check, but whatever country you are in, remember that you will not receive the same amount back as is written on the check. Also, some banks charge you to convert the check from your country's currency into the currency of the country that you are living in. If you happen to be living in the United States for your year, it is best that your parents have their bank make out a check in US dollars. Otherwise, the US bank will accept your check, but you may have to wait several days while they send it to a nearby foreign exchange bank to get it converted.
4. Don't leave your wallet/purse lay around. It is a temptation to some people to find out what is in it, or there are people that will take it thinking that because you are careless, you won't mind sharing it with them. If you consider it valuable, keep it on your person, not a jacket pocket hanging on a wall or thrown over a chair.
5. We recommend that if you have a debit card that you obtain your new country's currency upon arrival. There are cash machines in all the airports.

# WHAT TO DO WHEN EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE GOING WRONG

## 1. No one is at the airport to meet you:

- a. **DON'T PANIC!** Find an information booth or someone in the airport that speaks English, Spanish, German, or your language. Eventually you will find someone that does speak the language you need and will be able to tell them what you need. Many times the Airline that you have flown with has someone who will be happy to help. This has only happened on rare occasions, but we want you to know what to do in case it happens to you.
- b. Before sending your Guarantee form to Bokoff-Kaplan Travel make a copy of it and the letter from your host district these will give your counselor's and host family's address and phone number. Ask the person helping you to help you make the telephone call. All phone systems are NOT the same in every country.
- c. Don't move around in the airport hoping someone will recognize you. Even if they have brought the picture from your application, you have changed in the year of processing by either changing your hairstyle or aging. Ask the person helping you to take you to the paging desk and remain there until someone arrives to pick you up.
- d. **WEAR YOUR BADGE ON YOUR BLAZER THAT WAS REQUIRED BY YOUR SENDING DISTRICT!** This badge and blazer is a very good identifying signal to those looking for you.

## 2. You didn't learn the language of your new country sufficiently before leaving:

- a. Hopefully you brought along a dictionary in the language. Point to the MAJOR words to help the person understand what you are trying to say. Take the time before you leave to learn things like "Thank You", "Please", "Yes" and "No". In most countries, if you have to go to the restroom, you do not ask for a bathroom unless you want to take a bath. Most of the time WC (water closet), Loo or Toilet are the words to use. Also, most public facilities have pictures on the doors so you don't get confused.

NOTE: Flushing toilets can be very confusing. Look around for pull cords over your head, pumps on the tank and if you are lucky, there will be the conventional handle.

- b. Use sign language by pointing to things. The person will get the idea and tell you the word for each object in their language. This is the beginning of you learning their words for things. Remember, you are going to be speaking their language for the next year and you will have mastered it after a couple of months.
- c. The faster you adapt to your new language, the easier it will be for you. Let your host family know that you are uncomfortable at the beginning about not knowing the language, but that you want them to correct you until you learn to say the words correctly. It may be embarrassing to you to ask for help, but people universally like to help others.

### 3. You lose your passport:

- a. Tell your Rotary Counselor immediately! He will take you to the nearest Embassy or Consulate and they will replace it. If there is no Embassy close, it will take time to get a replacement. Do not wait until the last minute. This document should remain in a safe place until you are ready to depart the country!
  - 1) In your diary or another safe place, record the number on your passport with date it expires. Also record the Visa number. This will help everyone to get the replacements.
  - 2) Make copies of your passport, visa and DS-2019 (for inbound students) and Carry them in your wallet and in each piece of luggage you have. This will insure that you have a copy of all your key documents in case you loose your passport. (It makes it easier to replace.)

### 4. You are homesick and think you are going to die:

- a. Our first advise is to "Cry in the Shower", however that isn't going to help the feelings that you are having. Those feelings are very real and it hurts to think you are so far away from the people that love you. Remember, boys feel the homesickness as much as girls do and it isn't a sissy feeling. When you have the feeling coming on, tell your Host Mother that it is coming on and that you would like to be by yourself for a couple hours. She will probably want to do something to make you feel better, but tell her that you really need the time. Go somewhere privately (Shower?) and bawl your eyes out. Crying is a good release for built up tensions. However, set your goal of a couple of hours and be prepared to meet the challenge that you can survive without calling your parents in a panic.
- b. Calling or E-mailing your parents is your first instinct as they have always been there when they were needed all your life. Just remember that they are also in a homesick panic because you are so far away and they can't help you when the feeling hits. The best solution is to sit down and write them a long letter about your homesick feelings, but **DON'T** mail it! Put it in the back of your scrape book and forget it. Pull it out when you get home and go over your thoughts with your parents and let them know what you were feeling at the time. You will get a good laugh out of it later and your parents will know that you were adult enough to be able to cope with your feelings without worrying them.
- c. Now that you have had your cry, get yourself back into action. Tell your Host Mother that you appreciated her being there and helping you through your crisis, but you are ready to conquer the world. She will be more than happy to get you into some sort of activity and may enlist your Host Father and the whole family to help you.

# RULES - RULES - RULES

An Exchange Student lives with the host family as a member of the family in every respect, NOT as a guest. The student is expected to obey the rules and regulations of the family, including those relating to dating and curfew hours, and generally adapts himself/herself to the life at home, school, and in the community. A counselor assigned by the host club acts as the guardian and provides guidance to the student in liaison with the subject to the authority and control of the District Chairman. He also arranges speaking engagements and other programs for the participation of the student.

We adults have many Rules and Regulations that we expect the Exchange Student to follow. These Rules are not because we want to put stumbling blocks in your life! We have had to set them up because before we started making them, students took it upon themselves to do the things we now ask you not to do and it caused many problems with the student being sent home. We ask you to please abide by the following Rules for your own good.

## A. COMMANDMENTS OF ROTARY:

1. **NO DRIVING!** This means no autos, boats, airplanes, dune buggies, motorcycles, riding mowers snowmobiles or anything. Drivers training classes may be required at some school and the student may be required to attend these classes, but you will only be allowed to take the text class. You will not be allowed to get a driver's license or permit therefore *absolutely no behind the wheel instruction will be allowed.*
2. **NO DRINKING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.** No matter what life is like at home, or what the drinking age is at home, if there is one, there is a prohibition against alcohol until the age of 21 in many countries and the United States. If the family has a "glass of wine" for dinner and wishes to include the student, it would be permissible only if this was a home custom of the student. We would also request that the family makes sure that their student really knows the difference between a "little wine" for dinner with the family, and indiscriminate drinking when out in public or at a party. *If everyone else is drinking, it doesn't allow you to. If you get caught it is a reason to be sent home.*
3. **NO DRUGS!** We all know that drugs are available and the easiest place to get them is in the schools or from school friends. This is a Federal Offense in most countries, and we want to make sure that you are not the one being arrested and sent to jail. It is also the fastest way of getting sent home and not only will your parents be made aware of the offense, but your sending Rotary Club will also be notified.

Prescription medicines are permitted, but your hosting family must be notified of the medication and why it is being prescribed. The hosting family has the right to check out your prescription with their doctor or pharmacy. If you are using a prescription from your doctor at home, be sure that you take a copy of it with you so the hosting family can have it refilled for things like allergies.

4. **NO SINGLE OR STEADY DATING.** You may double date, or may go out with a group, but you may not go out with anyone on a steady basis.
5. **NO LOVE/SEX RELATIONSHIPS.** In this day and age it is extremely dangerous for any student to even consider an active sex life. Besides the danger of Aids and Venereal Disease, there is

no longer any such thing as safe sex. Don't play Russian Roulette with your lives at such a young age. ***To get caught is reason to be sent home.***

5. **SMOKING.** If you said you were not a smoker on your application, then you will not be allowed to smoke in your host home. You need to follow your host families rule on smoking including where you will be allowed to smoke if you do smoke
6. **NO TRAVELING ALONE.** You may have to travel from your home country to your final destination, but we know that you will depart from your parents and arrive with your hosting family waiting at the airport. After you have reached your destination, you will be chaperoned until you depart in twelve months. You may travel with your host families, Rotarians, church and school groups, and with others that your family approves of; but never out of your host community alone. If you are traveling with your host family, Rotary families, or approved trips arranged by the school, you must notify the District Exchange Chairman.

Independent travel outside the host community is prohibited except when there is a valid reason for the travel, and the approval of the District Youth Exchange Chairman has been obtained well in advance of the travel date.

The reason for the first restriction is that this is a school exchange, not a travel exchange and school takes priority. The reasons for requiring the District Youth Exchange Chairman approval is to make sure of the safety of the student, and to be certain that the student's parents and hosts all agree that the travel is something the student should be doing. When approval has been granted, the District Chairman, the Hosting Club and the Hosting Family must all be given the address that you will be staying and a phone number where you can be reached in case of an emergency. You will also be required to have written permission from your own parents.

7. **STUDENTS MUST OBEY ALL LAWS.** Being an exchange student does not exempt you from all the consequences of illegal acts. ***You CAN be arrested and you CAN go to jail. Rotary will not defend you and you will be sent home.***

## **B. SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Attend classes regularly each school day. Even if you have completed school in your country, you are expected to attend high school under the Rotary Program.
2. Do all assigned work for each class. You are expected to learn the language of the country.
3. New Jersey has a zero tolerance on weapons of any type. Don't even joke about bringing a weapon to school or using a weapon to shot someone. ***You will be suspended from school and that is a reason to send you home.***
4. Do as well as you can scholastically. We do not tolerate substandard school performance by ANY exchange student.
5. Get into school activities, clubs and sports because that is where the action will happen. Get into whatever it is that you do best, or would like to do. That includes sports, art, music, plays and the car wash. See if there is an Interact Club at your school and join. As a Rotary Exchange student you are required to join Interact if your school has one, since Interact is a Rotary Program.

6. The more outside activities you do regarding school will net more friendships.

### **C. FAMILY REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Do all you can to become a member of each of your families.
2. Do as your host families wish you to do and follow the rules of the house.
3. Host families act as your Guardians while you are in their homes. This includes signing permission slips for you to participate in sports or to enter the hospital.
4. You need to discuss with your host family the use of their computer and the use of the phone lines for Internet access. They govern your use since you may be using their telephone lines. Make sure the service you are using, if you have your own computer, does your internet service have a local phone number or you are required to pay the telephone costs.
4. Students are to change families gracefully, and hopefully will not leave bad feelings behind when they move, nor treat the next family with any less love and respect than they did the previous families. Let all families know of the move since the date is arranged by your host club, not yourself.
5. Don't compare your families, but experience the families for what they are and learn from each of them.

### **D. YOUR OWN FAMILY AT HOME:**

1. Write home at least once a week or every two weeks. Your family will be missing you and hearing from you can keep the family's phone bill down to an acceptable level during your absence. In the world today the use of the Internet is used all the time. If your parents have an Internet address you might want to communicate this way if your host family, school or library has access to the Internet.
2. You are not to call home all the time. One call when you arrive and perhaps on holidays is acceptable. Always seek permission from your host family and offer to pay. When you make your call, keep it short and sweet. It's expensive to call aboard, and many people don't like their phone tied up for longer than 5- 10 minutes.
3. If you brought a cassette recorder with you, record a message to your family and friends and send it home. You can compile 60 to 90 minutes worth of information on a tape and they can hear your voice.
4. Today the best means of communication is by e-mail. Students are expected to be part of the family. If you spend more than one hour per night on the computer it is too much. You are supposed to be making friends in you host country, not spending all your time e-mailing your friends at home.

## **E. IF YOUR OWN FAMILY WANTS TO VISIT:**

1. If your family wishes to visit you at some time during the exchange year, the student's family will need to give prior notice of the intended visit to the hosts, plus to the District Youth Exchange Chairman so that all will know of the family's plans. The rules for these visits are that the student may NOT travel outside the District with just their parents, unless the District Youth Exchange Chairman is notified and agrees with the plans. In no event will the student be permitted to withdraw from school for an extended period to travel or even just visit with his/her family due to the school rules regarding attendance. An occasional day off from school might be arranged with the school, which would be permitted. Remember that the District Chairman *must* be notified.
2. The very best time of the year to have the parents visit is at the end of the exchange year when the student can be released to the family to go wherever they wish. It is a custom in the United States for the student to participate in a graduation ceremony and it is nice if the parents can come to be a part of the festivities. Remember to take off school if your parents come will require the approval of your host club Youth Exchange Officer and the District Youth Exchange committee. Just be sure that the family respects the release date for their student, which is the last day printed on the student's Visa. We will not release the student to the parent's care until that date, except in extraordinary circumstances.
3. Your host family is not responsible for hosting your family at their house and should be consulted on timing. Your family back home should make the arrangements not your host family.

**Rotary International is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.**

***-Rotary International Code of Conduct for Working with Youth -***

## **EXCHANGE STUDENT PROTECTION POLICY**

Each year, the Rotary International Youth Exchange Program sends some 3,000 young people all over the world for a year-long exchange, and many more for short-term exchanges. This program promotes peace and understanding by getting to know people from other countries and cultures, and at the same time helps the young people learn about the world and about themselves.

District 7470 has put together this policy in order to protect our Youth Exchange Students to the best of our abilities. This policy covers the duty of care with regards to abuse, in all aspects of the exchange program. In addition to protecting our students, it also protects Rotarians and Rotary Clubs from being negligent, and promotes the Rotary Youth Exchange Program as a caring and responsible program.

District 7470 Youth Exchange Program, Inc. has appointed an Exchange Student Protection Officer who is the point of contact for Youth Exchange officers, parents, host parents and exchange students, and for organizations such as Social Services, police or other local authorities concerning abuse. His/her principal task is to help a vulnerable young person get the support and protection he/she needs and deserves, and to act as a link to the professional caring agencies.

District 7470 Youth Exchange Committee requires that all committee members, program volunteers, host parents, and any other adults who work with the Youth Exchange students complete and sign the Youth Exchange Officers' Declaration or Host Parent Declaration. This form clearly states that there is no reason why the person signing should not be involved with young people, that the person has no criminal action against him/her, and that District 7470 has permission to investigate the person signing by means of background checks.

The Youth Exchange Committee will provide a copy of this policy, the District 7470 Youth Exchange Student Protection Policy Mission Statement, and the Guidelines for Safeguarding the Welfare of Youth Exchange Students to the schools, host families, and other interested parties.

## **EXCHANGE STUDENT PROTECTION OFFICER**

District 7470 will appoint an Exchange Student Protection Officer to act as a point of contact for Youth Exchange Officers, parents, host parents and exchange students, and for organizations such as Social Services, police and other local authorities concerning abuse.

The principal task of the Exchange Student Protection Officer is to help a vulnerable child get the support and protection he/she needs and deserves, and to act as a link to the professional caring agencies. The Protection Officer's name and contact information should be given to all Youth Exchange officers, including Host Club Chairpersons, Host Club Counselors, all exchange students, host families and school authorities.

If a complaint about abuse is made by an exchange student or an adult involved in the District 7470 Youth Exchange program, or any adult concerning a District 7470 Youth Exchange student, the Exchange Student Protection Officer will inform the appropriate authorities.

For 2006-07 year the District 7470 Youth Exchange Program, Inc. is appointing District 7470's Risk Management Chairperson as that person until such time as a suitable person is found to be the Exchange Student Protection Officer only. This position should be a person who is a mandatory reporter by New Jersey State regulations.

## **District 7470 Youth Exchange Program Exchange Student Protection Policy Information for the Inbound Exchange Student**

Your safety is the first priority of all of us involved in the District 7470 Youth Exchange Program. We hope the following information will help you keep yourself safe. Please read carefully the Guidelines for Safeguarding the Welfare of Youth Exchange Students. This will help you understand some of the dangers concerning abuse, and what you can do to avoid them.

The Important Information form has important contact information, and should be carried at all times. Your Host Club Chairperson will see that you have the information and contact numbers that you need before you leave your home country. Please fill in the rest of the blanks and BE SURE to bring the form with you when you travel.

The Exchange Student's Bill of Rights should reassure you about trusting your own feelings. You know what feels right and wrong to you, and your Bill of Rights supports your right to protect yourself.

Your Personal Safety Code will help you know how to conduct yourself safely under certain circumstances.

District 7470 makes the following commitment to our Youth Exchange Students:

- We are committed to ensuring the safety of every student.
- We will take any allegations or reports of abuse of any kind seriously.
- Students should continue reporting their concerns until someone listens seriously.
- Physical force of any kind is never an appropriate form of discipline
- No student will be sent home because of an allegation of abuse, unless they wish it or their safety is in question.

In addition, please learn the Three "R's" of Youth Protection

- a. **Recognize** that anyone could be a child molester and be aware of situations that could lead to abuse.
- b. **Resist** advances made by child molesters to avoid being abused.
- c. **Report** any situation where you feel uncomfortable to host parents or other trusted adults.

You will be given a District 7470 Support System Flow Chart. This will contain all the names and contact information of Youth Exchange officers from your Host Club Counselor to the District Chairperson. They are all ready to help you if you need them.

It is also important for you to have the name and contact information for your sponsoring Rotary District Counselor, and the sponsoring Rotary District Chairperson. Send monthly reports home to these contacts so that they can know how you are doing.

Before you leave home, set up a "secret message" with your parents to be used in an extreme emergency if you feel you cannot talk freely with them.

Appendices to be Attached:

Exchange Student Policy

District 7470 Youth Exchange Student Protection Policy Mission Statement

Guidelines for Safeguarding the Welfare of Youth Exchange Students

Important Information Form

7

Exchange Student's Bill of Rights

Personal Safety Code

RI D7470

# YOUTH EXCHANGE STUDENT PROTECTION POLICY MISSION STATEMENT

**Rotary International District 7470 Youth Exchange Program** is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all our Youth Exchange Students, both inbound and outbound.

We do this by:

Recognizing that all young people have the right to freedom from abuse.

Ensuring that all our staff and volunteers are carefully selected and accept responsibility for helping to prevent the abuse of children in their care.

Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and by providing adults and young people with the opportunity to voice any concern they may have.

Rotary District 7470 Risk Management Chairperson will act as the Exchange Student Protection Officer for 2006-07. This person will act as the main point of contact for parents, children, host families and outside agencies

Ensuring that access to confidential information is restricted.

Reviewing the effectiveness of our Exchange Student Protection Policy and activities periodically.

Our Exchange Student Protection Officer and Risk Management Chairperson is:

Name Theodore J. Krisanda, PDG

Address 5 Hancock Drive, Morristown, NJ 07960

Telephone Numbers

Home 973-644-9884

FAX 973-898-6534

Cell 973-452-7305

# **GUIDELINES FOR SAFEGUARDING THE WELFARE OF YOUTH EXCHANGE STUDENTS**

## **FORMS OF ABUSE**

### **Sexual Abuse**

Either boys or girls can be considered to be sexually abused if exposed to:

- sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex or fondling
- the viewing of pornographic books or videos
- taking part in the making of videos or pornographic photos.

#### **What to look for:**

- pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in genital area
  - stomach pains
  - discomfort when walking
  - unexplained sources of money
  - inappropriate drawings, language or behavior
  - aggressive or withdrawn behavior or fear of a particular person
  - reluctance to discuss changes in behavior or attitude
- 

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning. In certain situations, abuse may occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the young person's body.

#### **What to look for:**

- unexplained or untreated injuries
  - injuries on unlikely parts of the body
  - cigarette burns, bite or belt marks, scalds
  - fear of host parents being contacted, going home or receiving medical advice
  - flinching when touched
  - reluctance to discuss injuries
  - covering arms or legs
- 

### **Neglect**

Where adults

- fail to meet a young person's basic physical needs, e.g. food, warmth and clothing
- constantly leave a young person alone or unsupervised

- fail or refuse to give a young person love, appropriate affection or attention

Neglect may also occur during organized activities if young people are placed in an unsafe environment, are exposed to extreme weather conditions or are at risk of being injured.

**What to look for:**

- poor personal hygiene
  - constantly hungry
  - inappropriate clothing or dress
  - constantly tired
  - lonely, no friends
  - noticeable loss of weight
  - disheveled appearance
- 

**Emotional abuse**

This form of abuse includes:

- persistent lack of love or affection
- frequent shouting
- taunting
- over-protection which can lead to poor social skills

Emotional abuse may include situations where host parents, coaches or organizers subject young people to criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations.

**What to look for:**

- over-reaction to mistakes
  - sudden speech disorders
  - extremes of emotions
  - self-mutilation
  - sudden weight loss or gain
- 

**WHAT TO DO IF AN EXCHANGE STUDENT TELLS YOU ABOUT ABUSE**

- Most importantly, listen attentively and let him/her know it was right to tell someone about his/her worries.
- Stay calm and make sure that the exchange student feels safe and knows that he/she is not to blame for inappropriate behavior by others.
- Explain that you have to tell someone else about the abuse.
- Only ask questions that establish what was done and who did it. Do not jump to conclusions or promise to take a specific action until the situation is thoroughly investigated.
- Make detailed notes of what the student said and the date and time of your conversation.
- Contact the District 7470 Exchange Student Protection Officer immediately.
- Don't worry that you may be making things worse by reporting your concerns. Few things are worse than allowing child abuse to continue.

## **EXCHANGE STUDENT PROTECTION CODE FOR YOUTH EXCHANGE OFFICERS AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS**

### **Do:**

- treat all young people with respect and be aware of their reactions to your tone of voice and manner
- remember that it is okay to touch young people in a way that is not intrusive or disturbing to him/her or to observers.
- make sure that any allegations are recorded and acted upon, according to District 7470 Youth Protection Policy.

### **Do Not:**

- engage in rough physical games including horseplay
- use physical force in any way, especially as a form of punishment
- touch a young person in an intrusive or sexual manner
- make sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even as a joke

### **Try to Avoid:**

- spending too much time alone with a youth exchange student. Such situations may lead to misunderstandings.

## **PERSONAL SAFETY CODE**

- If you have a problem or are worried about something, always tell someone you trust about it, such as your host parent, host club counselor or host club chairperson. Don't suffer in silence!
- Always pack your own suitcase and never carry items abroad for others.
- When you go out, plan what you would do and where you would go if you got lost or had a problem – a shop, restaurant, police station or library.
- Before you leave your home country, make sure that you have your Important Information form, supplied to you by your Host Club Chairperson.
- Always tell someone where you are going and when you will be home. Be sure to call your host parents if your plans change while you are away from home.
- If you are out at night in a city, stay in places with streetlights. Wherever you are, make sure that you don't get separated from your friends.
- If you need to use a public toilet, go with a friend.
- If you do get lost or separated, follow your plan – or go to a shop or place where you will be seen by lots of people to ask directions.
- If someone you don't know talks to you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, walk away.
- Keep your host family's address and telephone number with you at all times.
- Always keep enough money with you to make a phone call.
- Always arrange for someone to pick you up; don't go home alone.
- Make sure you know who is coming to pick you up. Never get into a car with someone you don't know.
- If you are on a bus or train, and someone makes you feel uncomfortable, move to a seat near the driver.
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly
- Be sensitive to local codes and customs.
- Think things through carefully before you act and do not take unnecessary risks.

## **EXCHANGE STUDENT'S BILL OF RIGHTS**

When feeling threatened, you have the right to:

- Trust your instincts or feelings
- Expect privacy
- Say no to unwanted touching or affection
- Say no to an adult's inappropriate demands or requests
- Withhold information that could jeopardize your safety
- Refuse gifts
- Be rude or unhelpful if the situation warrants
- Run, scream, and make a scene
- Physically fight off unwanted advances
- Ask for help
- Report any situation in which you feel threatened to your Host Club Counselor immediately.

# POLICY ON INSURANCE

## OUTBOUND STUDENTS

For students going over seas, you will be required to take the insurance for the country where you are being hosted and *CISI-Bolduc Insurance Annual plan A*. This is mainly due to the fact that some of the country insurances do not cover you in other countries. You need to buy the CISI-Bolduc Insurance prior to leaving the United States. It will cover you from the time you walk out the door of your house on the way to the airport until you arrive back at your house on the way home. You will receive information about the country insurance along with your Guarantee Form and other papers prior to leaving. You will receive a copy of the insurance plan, claim form and insurance card. The insurance card needs to be carried with you at all times. The Bolduc policy is a primary insurance. This means that it pays first.

If you do not have a foreign policy or another U.S. domestic policy that covers you through your parents then you will be required to purchase *CISI-Bolduc Insurance Plan Policy B*. That policy has more comprehensive medical benefits.

## INBOUND STUDENTS

For students coming to the United States and District 7470 in New Jersey. Each of you are required to purchase *CISI-Bolduc Insurance Annual Plan A* or *Plan A with Sports Rider*, which ever applies, as long with you have insurance from your home country. If you do not have insurance from your international sponsoring Rotary District then you will have to purchase *CISI-Bolduc Insurance Plan B*. This must be purchased either in advance of your arrival or within the first 15 days you are in the United States. Bring Proof of Insurance from your country to the inbound orientation if you are taking either *CISI-Bolduc Annual Plan A* or *Plan A with Sports Rider*.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Insurance Policy will cover any medical bills that you incur during your time away from home. In most cases, the policy covers anything that happens from the time you leave home until the day you return to your home. Most of the time it isn't needed, but if you happen to get very sick, nearly all of your expenses for doctors, hospitals and medications is covered after the "Deductible" is covered, if you have *CISI-Bolduc Insurance Policy A*.

**If you do have to go to a doctor or hospital.** You will be issued an insurance ID card, from either the CISI-Bolduc Insurance and/or the Foreign Insurance, that you should keep in your wallet at all times. It is the first thing doctors and hospitals want to see to be sure that they will receive their money. Most places require that you pay for the first visit with a check or cash. You will have a "Claim Form" in your insurance packet that you will have to fill out and give to the doctor so he can be sure that you are reimbursed.

Remember, any costs incurred for medical treatment should come from your "Emergency Fund", not the Host Family. Your parents can replenish that fund until the Insurance Company reimburses you.

# HOST FAMILIES

1. They are often more restrictive than your family at home. You may not receive as much "freedom" as you are used to in your own country. Sometimes your family may be much more free in letting you do as you wish, but that is much less common among United States families.
2. Chores are usually required at home. You will have certain jobs to do around the house. Sometimes this will be every day and sometimes at regular intervals. See "Getting Started in a New Family" for questions you will ask your host families when you first arrive in their homes. Interactive host family questions are available in different languages in the Youth Exchange Resources section of [http://yeoresources.org/First\\_Night\\_Questions.htm](http://yeoresources.org/First_Night_Questions.htm)
3. Hosting families grant "Privileges" and have forms of "Discipline". Learn what each of these terms means with respect to each of your host families as soon as you get to that family. Knowing can keep you out of a lot of unintended trouble.
4. No "long distance" phone calls without permission of your hosts. It is our opinion, well grounded in past experiences, that there is little to be gained when an exchange student calls home or receives a call from home, except in certain circumstances. As to calling home, about the only times when it makes sense are to say that the student arrived safely, or to deal with a significant situation at home which cannot be handled by a letter, such as important medical or financial problems. We also discourage calls from home, again except for occasions of great importance. From the natural family's point of view this could be because the student hasn't written home for some time (which you should have dealt with long before) or because there is a situation at home that needs a conversation - again, mostly problems of a medical nature such as an injury or death in the family. The family at home might also like to call on the student's birthday, or upon some other special occasion in the student's life that means a lot at home. While keeping the above in mind DISTRICT 7470 HAS APPROVED A RULE WHICH STATES THAT A STUDENT SHOULD CALL HOME ON ARRIVAL IN THERE EXCHANGE COUNTRY THEN THERE ARE TO BE NO CALLS FOR A MINIMUM OF ONE MONTH. This gives the student time to acclimate to their new country and family.
5. Families may advise you about your friends or your prospective friends. Respect their advice since they know more about the people in your area than you do.
6. One of the adjustments you probably will be required to make is changing from one host family to another. It can be hard. Think of it as part of experiencing all phases of the new culture and you will find it beneficial. Change does not mean that you forget previous families, but rather that you have expanded your friendships. Above all, do not ignore your past host families once you have moved on and become established in your new home.

## GETTING STARTED IN A NEW FAMILY

It is hard to know what to do to fit into a family just by observing the family members going about their daily activities. Therefore, it is necessary for each host family to have a family conference with you almost immediately upon your arrival in that family. It doesn't matter whether it is the first family or the last one. Every family will do things differently from the way things where at home and from the way any other host family would do them. If you have a checklist, this would be the time to discuss it. Here are a few examples:

1. What do I call you? Mom & Dad or use first names?

2. What is the bathroom order in the morning? Who comes before whom, and how long is anyone allowed to stay in the bathroom?
3. Are bath towels to be re-used? If so, for how long?
4. Can you use guest towels when washing your hands?
5. Is the bed to be made daily? How long between sheet changes?
6. How about outside chores such as yard work?
7. Are there any kitchen chores to perform? What chores, when, how, and how often?
8. What time is dinner? What should I do to help at meal times? (In many countries it is mandatory for families to eat dinner together every night.)
9. May I help with the cooking? Prepare a meal once in a while of the foods from my country?
10. What does the family consider privileges that could be taken away if violated any family rules?
11. If your family will take disciplinary measures, what will they be, and why would they be imposed?
12. What is curfew, when is it, and can time be modified under special circumstances? How?
13. What will the telephone rules be? Will the family require notice before making local calls? How about permission before making long distance calls? How long may I stay on the telephone? Are there any restrictions regarding the use of the telephone other than these?
14. Does any member of the family have any specific dislikes that would really upset them? Examples: Chewing gum, having their newspapers messed up before they read them, changing televisions channels when they are involved in the program, etc.
15. What about computer use? Am I allowed to use your computer? When? How long? Are you connected to the Internet? How do I sign on your service? I have my own free E-mail from (either hotmail or yahoo).

## **CONFLICT WITH THE HOST FAMILY**

Into each life some rain must fall, goes the old saying. So don't feel too bad if there is something between a gentle drizzle and a hurricane that occurs when you and your host family either don't see eye-to-eye on issues of privileges and discipline, or when a personality conflict develops between you and one or more family members.

1. You are having communication problems with your Host Family:
  - a. The Host Parents let their children do things, but won't let you do the same things.
    - 1) Talk to the Host Parents and ask them why there are different rules for you. They may have a very good reason that they forgot to mention to you. Your Rotary Counselor may have set up guidelines that the family has to follow. Also, they may not be aware that they are segregating you. It happens!

2) Talk to your Rotary Club Counselor about this.

b. You don't get along with the children in your Host Family:

- 1) Do they resent having you there because their parents are doing things for you that they don't get the same attention? If so, talk to the parents and tell them that it isn't fair to treat you special. Sometimes the parents don't realize that they are treating you as a guest instead of one of their own.
- 2) Talk to the children and ask them what you can do that would be fair to all of you. They may have some complaints about the way you do things. Be prepared to accept their reasons and not get angry. Ask them what they would do in each situation. This way you are defending yourself and giving them something to think about. After your talk with them, ask if you can meet with them in a few days to go over things that were discussed and see if all of you can come up with a solution.
- 3) If no solutions can be found between talks to the parents and the children, contact your Rotary Counselor and ask him to talk with them. They may say things to him that they are embarrassed to say to you. Meet with them afterwards and they will be able to tell you what the problem is and may have some suggestions for you on how to adjust to the situation. If they think that a solution can't be reached, they will probably move you on to another family.
- 4) **DON'T** get angry and let everything build up until it is impossible to handle! As the situations arise, get it out in the open as soon as you feel something is wrong. The faster the situation is handled, the easier it will be for all concerned.
- 5) If you are moved to a new family, DON'T discuss the problems you had with the previous family. Your Rotary Counselor has probably already informed them of the problem or else your new family may be friends with the family that you just left. If they openly question you about the situation, tell them that you would rather not discuss it, but if they wish, they can discuss it with your Counselor. Never put people down for their beliefs and the way they live. It is their life and it didn't fit into your life.

2. Examine the problem yourself:

- a. Are you abiding by the family rules?
- b. Are you letting yourself be treated as a guest instead of a member of the family?
- c. Are you doing something that annoys someone in the family without realizing it? Are you doing it on purpose?
- d. Is someone in the family doing something that annoys you and you haven't taken the time to let them know?
- e. Are you joining with groups of students that the family does not approve of? Ask the family why they don't approve of your friends as they will know who is right and who is wrong for your image as an ambassador.
- f. Are your hosting brothers or sisters jealous of you because you are more popular in school than they are? Explain to them that the novelty of your newness will wear off quickly to put them at ease with

your popularity. Also, if you are making friends with students that your brothers and sisters would like to know, take the time to introduce them to each other.

The above is just a beginning to get you started on self-examination.

Usually these matters can be resolved within the family by explaining why things are as they are, and why the family expects what they do from you. If you do not succeed in solving your problem through this or the good offices of the Rotary Counselor from your club, turn next to your District Counselor or the inbound Chair or the District Youth Exchange Chairperson or a member of the Youth Exchange Committee. Don't overlook the use of your principal or guidance counselor at school. They can sometimes be a world of help. If you feel confident enough, talk to them!

## **RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES**

It is quite likely that your family and you will have significantly different religious backgrounds, so you will need to achieve an understanding of each other in order that you might be able to avoid another outbreak of the crusades, modern day fashion. Surprisingly, this situation can hold even if you think that all of you have the same religion. For example, Catholicism varies with the language and the culture of the country. Even within a single country there may very well be differences in attendance, with some going to mass regularly, and others only infrequently on special occasions, so to avoid nasty surprises, you should talk about religion, both yours and your family's, in order to find out how you are going to get along in religious terms.

### **THE BIG THING WITH RELIGION IS TO NOT TRY TO CHANGE ONE ANOTHER'S BELIEFS.**

Try to use all the tolerance you should have for another's innermost beliefs and faith. You have the choice whether to attend the church of your hosting family or asking them to make provisions to get you to the church of your choice. If the family will not provide you with a ride to your church, ask your counselor to help you find a ride.

If you find that your hosting family does not attend church regularly and you would prefer to go, again, ask your counselor to help.

## **YOUR APPEARANCE**

1. The way you dress and look will set the pace for the type of friends you will attract. This cannot be stressed strongly enough. Keep in mind that you are an ambassador for your country and your appearance will reflect upon them.
2. Adults have a fetish about hair on their children, like seeing their face without having it hang in their face. Hair should be washed at least every couple days and worn in a style that is not offensive to the people around them.
3. Shaving is a necessary evil for young men. Your facial hair has not fully developed to give a nice appearance in beards and mustaches. For young women, shaving under the arms and your legs will be your choice according to your customs at home.
4. Bathing and deodorants are a daily must. Nobody likes to be around a person that gives off body odors and presents himself or herself in an unclean appearance.
5. How to dress for Rotary events:
  - a. Neatness is the rule for Rotary Club meetings.

- b. If you are invited to any special Club events, ask what you should wear.
  - c. At the District Conference and other special events, suits and ties are required for boys and party dresses are required for girls.
6. Your clothes should always be clean from the inside to your outer clothing. Learn to wash your own clothes by asking your host mother how to use the washer, dryer and the iron. In some countries your host family may have a maid that would perform this for you and you are very fortunate. However, it is a good idea to know how to perform these duties no matter if you are a girl or boy. Again, because all countries are different, the laundry appliances will be different, so you will have to learn how to operate them.

# CUSTOMS AND CULTURES

## **SOCIAL RELATIONS:**

It is difficult to provide a "guide" to social relations in any country because they are constantly changing and because differences in social conduct exist from one region of the country to another. Change, open expression of one's opinions, and questioning the system are encouraged in many countries. Therefore, trying to understand what the social customs are and trying to find a comfortable way to act and live in this new environment can be perplexing. An introduction to some basic attitudes may be useful as you attempt to understand the pattern and become part of the scene.

## **HOMESICKNESS**

This is the most common problem of an exchange student and may be for you as well. If you are not doing something physical or staying mentally active, homesickness can strike. Don't worry about it. Often expressing your feelings in writing and reading it the next day can help you to sort things out in your mind. Go to your room and cry or mope for a while, if you must, then overcome it by getting active and by getting physical. Some advice that came from a student was "Cry in the shower". Get active in a sport or exercise, but do SOMETHING and you will soon get over your homesickness. You might also share this problem with your host parents so they will know what you are going through and they may be able to help you.

## **WEIGHT GAIN**

This is the second most common problem of an exchange student. You are in a new country with a new diet, and some of it is even good. Most students go home heavier than they arrived. All you can do is control your diet, control how much you eat, and exercise to get rid of excess calories and kilos. Also remember that most people are concerned with their weight, so it is nothing new. The biggest surprise is that a month or two after you return to your own country, all those extra pounds disappear without you even noticing.

Keep in mind that all countries eat different foods than you are used to at the various meals and the time of day for the big meal will be new for your body to adjust to.

## **BEING PHYSICALLY SICK**

It is not uncommon for a student at some time in their year away from home to catch a cold, have an injury, or become ill. If you are not feeling well, tell your Host mother, and she will be able to help you get a doctor's appointment. Do not put off going to the doctor. This is one of the reasons that you have your "Emergency Fund". Once you have paid for your medical expenses and met the "Deductible" of the insurance policy that you purchased, you will be reimbursed for anything extra. Just be sure you send all the bills to the insurance company well before you leave the country. It does take time for these claims to be processed!

If you have allergies, be sure that your Host Family is aware of them, and they will try to avoid exposing you to the things that cause you to become ill. Take a copy of your prescription from your family doctor and tell the doctor in the country that you are going to about your allergies and show him the prescription. He may write a new prescription for you to use in your new country to match the medication that you are using. Pharmacies do not like to fill foreign prescriptions, because they do not know the doctor from your country.

If you have allergies to food, be sure that you let everyone know immediately upon your arrival. This could

save you and your hosting family a lot of unnecessary problems.

## CORRESPONDENCE

1. Phone or e-mail your parents as soon as you have arrived in your new country and have settled in with your host family.
2. Write legibly. Your family and friends will be looking forward to hearing from you, but they have to be able to read your writing.
3. Write or e-mail home to your family at least once a week. Remember, your parents have sent you out in the world, and it is just as dramatic an experience to them as it is to you. Don't cause them anxiety by having to wait weeks before you write. Allow them to grow and experience things with you. Remember, your new experiences are changing you all the time and your parents need to know so that when you return, they will recognize you as a new person.
4. You are in your new country to learn about it. If you are e-mailing your friends at home daily you are not going to have times to make new friends in your new country. E-mail is good since messages can be received almost instantly. Use the Internet and E-mail for your messages but don't abuse it. Make sure you discuss its use with your host family. Make sure that you have a local connection if you have your own computer with you otherwise you will have to pay for the connection. It can be expensive.
5. Remember to write a Thank You note as soon after an event as possible. People like to know if you enjoyed the special event they included you in and it only takes a couple of minutes to let them know.
6. You will collect many items during your year away. It is impossible to bring them all back in your bags, so we suggest you send boxes home during the year. The cheapest way is by boat or surface mail. Label these things well and on the outside write "*Used Items of Returning Rotary Exchange Student*". This way you will not be charged duty taxes. If you do plan to carry everything home with you, be prepared to pay high costs at the airport for excess baggage. It could run as much as \$100 per bag or box, according to the weight.
7. Make sure your monthly reports are e-mailed or sent in on time to the District Youth Exchange Chairman or designated person and that you also send information to your sponsoring Rotary Club. Everyone is interested in what is happening to you and when you write to your sponsoring Club, they will be reading it to the Rotarians at their next meeting. For outbound student you were given this report at your training and needs to be e-mailed to the person noted with the report. Your report will be included in our Youth Exchange newsletter and may be used in the District newsletters.
8. Always carry your writing materials with you when you go outside of the area you are living so you can send notes and make reminders to yourself.
9. You should have a journal that you carry at all times. This can be used to put all your thoughts in and to record special events. If writing a diary is too long, use a calendar and make a note of what you did each day. You will enjoy the memories.
10. If possible, make tapes to send home to family and friends.

## LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

There can be language difficulties for exchange students even when you think you are using the same language, such as English. If you have prepared yourself for the language of the country that you will spend your year, you have probably learned the formal speech. Be prepared, every country has their own form of slang that will be new to you. It is nothing to be embarrassed about. Also, many of the countries have a different sentence structure that can be very confusing because it doesn't sound right in your own language. Think of it as another stumbling block that you will have to overcome, and you will overcome it within a couple of months of hearing it on a daily basis.

Below are several means of mastering the language:

1. Ask your host families to correct you if you have used a word incorrectly. Repeat the sentence back to them using the correct words.
2. Say "Speak more slowly" or "I do not understand" if you are having trouble understanding. If you want to be sure that you understand what is being said to you or asked of you, you can repeat back, "Do you mean \_\_\_\_\_?" Don't just say yes when you don't understand. People are more than happy to get you to understand by using other words.
3. Use a bilingual dictionary when conversation is not working to look up meanings of words heard in the conversation, and for translating.
4. You should not be afraid of asking questions to ensure understanding. The more outgoing you are in demanding understanding, the more rapid will be the transition into terms of thinking and dreaming, as well as speaking. When translating becomes easy, you will have achieved your goal. Most students will achieve this goal within two to four months of their arrival.
5. Spend your time with the students of your adopted country rather than the other exchange students, even if it is a lot more comfortable to be with the exchange students. It is okay to visit with other exchange students occasionally, but not on a steady basis. It will not help you achieve your goal of mastering the language. Also remember someone has to drive you to visit the other exchange students.
6. If you really need more language help than can be obtained in school and at home, ask your host family or your Rotary counselor if they would help you find a tutor in exchange for teaching them your language. It need not be someone that you have to pay.

## OTHER LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

There can also be problems of students always being around students from their own countries. If the people you are living with don't understand the language from your country, it is embarrassing to them when you are speaking your home language with your friends and they are not included in the conversation.

It is not necessary to speak in your own language in front of other people unless it is absolutely necessary to get a point explained. It makes people uncomfortable and it is rude. Be aware of this and try to control yourself around everyone. Remember, you are only to speak the language of your host country.

## **MAKING FRIENDS**

It is not only hard for students to make new friends, but it is hard for those students who have attended the school before. It will take work on your part to break through and make friends. It can be done.

In this mobile society, friendships can be transitory and are often established to meet personal needs in a particular situation. You will probably be greeted with warmth, but this does not always continue. As for Americans, they have many interests and engage in a variety of activities, so the warmth expressed in one meeting between individuals, while genuine and sincere, may be confined to that occasion.

Close friendship are the result of repeated interactions between individuals as they identify similarities of points of view, handle disagreements constructively, and share a variety of experiences.

The casualness of friendship patterns in the United States allows people to move into new social groups with little ceremony, groups that usually form around shared interests, work, and places of residence. Most Americans readily welcome new people into their social groups.

## **HIGH SCHOOLS/SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Upon applying to become an Exchange Student through the Rotary Program, you have volunteered to attend one (1) year in a school at your destination. Your application required that the Principal or the Head Master from your school fill in the part about your education you have had and what type of student you have been. You have given an accounting of the subjects that you have taken so your new school will know what you have completed and what subjects they can help you with in furthering your education. Remember your school transcripts we required attached to your application. The school will try to keep you on course so that when you return to your school the following year, you should be able to pick up where you left off. It is your responsibility to obtain School records if you plan to use any of the subjects you took in another country to count.

There are many subjects that will be requirements of your new school and you may find that languages are the most required. Do your best and after a couple of months, you will probably know the subjects as well as you know your mother tongue.

If you decide to participate in sports at the High School, medical forms may have to be filled out. The host family doesn't have to have the physical examination done by their physician. Many schools provide a doctor. Find out when the doctor is available to do the exam. The school nurse should be able to set that up for you.

## **CONCEPT OF DATING**

Today relationships between women and men have become more informal and the range of shared activities more broad. You may find couples living together, maintaining one exclusive relationship, or individuals dating many people without commitment to only one person. The expectation that someone will be "faithful" after a date or two has caused many foreign students to become disillusioned about dating, especially Americans. Going to social events together, even if this occurs several times, may not imply an emotional attachment, but does indicate that someone's company is enjoyed.

Men still tend to initiate invitations to dances, films, or other evening events, but women may suggest such invitations. Studying together, going to a special lecture, or other everyday activities also provide ways for getting to know someone. Recognizing that few students have a great deal of money, many people go on dates "Dutch Treat" where the cost of social activities is shared. However, if a more formal invitation is extended,

like a prom, expect to share the cost of transportation and entertainment.

The amount of physical contact between men and women depends, of course, on the amount of affection they have developed for each other. The greatest amount of touching, even at a very superficial level, occurs between men and women in our culture while you will find there is less between female friends and practically none among men. Therefore, while a casual hug or holding hands with someone of the opposite sex may appear to be an invitation to greater intimacy, often it is not. Keep in mind the Official Rules of being a Rotary Exchange Student.

## **USE OF NAMES**

Every country has a formal way of addressing each other and an informal way. Upon arrival in your host country, be sure to use the formal address until you are advised otherwise. Some people prefer that you address them by their first names, but never do so until you are invited to do so. Remember that it is out of respect that you use the address such as Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms.

Students will normally address each other by their first names and you will address your host brothers and sisters by their first names.

## **HANDSHAKING - HUGS - KISSES**

Men usually shake hands at the time of their first meeting. Men and women also shake hands, but it is not always done. Women often do not shake hands with each other, but it is acceptable.

It is also acceptable in some countries for men to give each other a hug upon meeting or departure.

Kissing can be a very tricky situation. In some countries, after you have gotten to know the people, it is acceptable to give a kiss on the cheek. The question that arises is which cheek and what comes first. Americans tend to kiss each other on only the right cheek and it usually accompanies a handshake. In Europe you start with the left cheek, then the right cheek. Every country has their own form of greeting, so be observant as soon as you arrive to cut down on embarrassment and bumping heads. Rarely does anyone kiss each other on the lips.

## **INVITATIONS**

Some invitations will be formal and you will receive it in the mail. However, the majority of them will be informal. Check your calendar when you are invited somewhere and make sure that time is available before accepting. Let the person know that you will or will not attend well in advance of the party. If you will be the only guest, they may have been planning something special for you, so offer to set up another date. If many guests have been invited, the person will want to know how many are attending so they can plan the food in advance of the party. Never take an invitation lightly.

A casual, verbal invitation such as "come and see me sometime" or "drop over anytime" is usually given with the understanding that you will call and make more specific plans BEFORE showing up on their doorstep.

The meaning of "RSVP" means Respond If You Please. This generally means that the person inviting you expects you to notify them, in writing, well before the party.

## **CONCEPTS OF TIME**

When you are invited somewhere, ask what time you are expected and be very considerate to show up a few minutes before the expected time. Arriving late is rude and unacceptable. Showing up too early is also rude and unacceptable. If you are unsure how long it would take to get to destination, ask your host family and they will be sure you are on time.

## **GIFTS**

Select one gift from your country that you will give to each Host Family upon departure from their home. This could be something that your country produces that cannot be found in your Host Country, or a photograph of you would be greatly appreciated.

It is not necessary to bring flowers, candy or a gift to a dinner host. However, it would be accepted graciously as a lovely gesture, should you do so. Compliments on the meal and a thank you note to the host are appropriate. They tell the host that you appreciated his or her hospitality.

## **TABLE ETIQUETTE**

You are going to be experiencing a whole new way of eating and many different kinds of foods during your year away from Mom's cooking. Some of it will be so foreign that you have never heard of it before. When new foods are introduced to you, do not make comments or gestures that might insult the cook. Try it, even if it is only a small bite.

When you are at someone's home for dinner and are asked if you would like another serving of a particular dish, do not refuse out of politeness. You should accept if you want something. If you wait to be asked again, you may go hungry. After you have had enough, it is perfectly proper to politely decline additional servings.

If any of the dishes that are being served are not something you would normally eat, be polite in your refusal of that dish or accept a very small serving and at least eat one bite. You may find that you like the food because of the way it is prepared. It is completely acceptable to leave it on your plate.

# QUESTIONS - QUESTIONS - QUESTIONS

In some countries it is very rude to ask newcomers questions about themselves. However, Exchange Students are an exception. People in your new country will be curious about you and your country. Keep in mind that everyone will have a pre-conceived idea of what your country is like and it will be your sharing of information that will set them right. There will be days that you will think that everyone around you must be dumb with all the questions they are asking you, but in the end you will have told your story about yourself and your country so much that you will consider yourself a travel agent.

As you ask your new family or people in general about themselves and their surroundings, think back to before you arrived and what your pre-conceived idea was of your host country. Have you changed your opinion about it since you arrived?

Some questions may appear ridiculous, uninformed, and elementary, but try to be patient in answering them. You may be the first person from your country that they have met, and they will probably have very little understanding of life in your culture. Most people are sincerely interested in learning more about you and your culture.

# MISCELLANEOUS ADVICE

1. Always smile! !! A happy face is more positive and more approachable than a sad or dull face.
2. Have a journal, a scrapbook or a calendar to record your year away and be sure to record your emotions and experiences. It is amazing how quickly you will forget.
3. Think about any problems you may have objectively. Don't worry, as worry is a negative emotion and won't solve your problems - it just makes things worse.
4. Stay clean and brush your teeth.
5. Stay fit. Join a sport at school. Nearly all students gain weight while abroad; so if you find yourself not fitting into your clothes, ask your hosting family to help you adjust your diet.
6. Get a good address book. It will be filled at the end of a year.
7. Keep a calendar/notebook to jot down dates, phone numbers and other important information to be remembered.
8. Write down your goals and objectives and review them at least weekly. Add more goals as you progress. Remember; review your goals at least weekly. Start NOW!!!
9. Keep your passport and personal documents in a safe place. Most host families will be glad to put them in a safe place. Make copies of you passport and Visa for use while in the country.
10. Trust yourself and know your capabilities. Don't allow problems to get you down - problems are only opportunities to expand your abilities.
11. By being selected to participate in this program, you were judged acceptable, so dress appropriately for the occasion.
12. Make the most of this opportunity, because you only get it once. Always remember the others back home who were not selected and that you're representing them all as their Ambassador.
13. Your experience will be what you make of it. You can stay home and watch TV or play on the computer or you can go for a walk and explore your new community.
13. E-mail or send in your Monthly Reports to your Chairman or designated member of the committee. Let them know the good things and any problems you can't work out at your end.

***SMILE AND HAVE FUN***

# PUBLIC SPEAKING

1. Spectacular achievement follows unspectacular practice. Put together outlines on typical talks about home, school, church, family, vacations, friends, hobbies and country. People are interested in what you do, not statistics about your country.
2. Practice in front of a mirror.
3. Projection is important, and you must bear in mind that you have to talk to the person who is furthest away or at the back of the room.
4. Eye contact is a **MUST** with your audience. Don't read your speech!
5. Plan your talk in full, and then transfer it to small cards. Do not transfer every word, only the highlights.
6. Should you, for some reason, lose track of your line of thought, go back and repeat your last point, then continue with your speech. In this way, your speech doesn't become disjointed, and you will retain the attention of your audience.
7. Remember there is usually a time limit to talks. Find out the time limit and adjust your talk accordingly. Leave room for some questions, if possible.
8. Put together a small table display with items from home, so you can generate some additional interest.
9. Questions can help you with feedback, so that you can constantly be looking to improve your talks.
10. Conclude your speech clearly and only **ONCE**.
11. Look like you are enjoying yourself during your speech. **SMILE!**
12. Look for speaking engagements. Besides Rotary, the High School may want you to give your speech to different classes. Also, Elementary School might want to introduce you to the small children for their geography class to tell them about your country.
13. Alter your talks according to your audience. Primary school children vs. Rotary Clubs vs. Church Groups.
14. Your audience won't eat you, they can only bite. Remember, you generate the fear! The more prepared you are, the easier it is.
15. The more often you speak, the easier it will get and the better you will become. Start giving those speeches as soon as possible.
16. In your speech, be sure you convert measurements into the ones used in the host country so that the information you are giving is pertinent, and they can relate to it. The measurement doesn't have to be exact to the decimal point.

# STORES AND SHOPPING

This will be an overwhelming experience that you will have to have one of the host family go with you the first few times to help orientate you to the stores and shops. Everything will be unfamiliar to you.

The law in most countries stipulates that buyers must beware. It is advisable to compare prices. The same items are frequently sold at different prices in different stores. Ask your friends where to buy goods at bargain prices.

Read tags and labels and check sales slips and written guarantees. Be sure you understand them. Keep sales slips in a safe place for large items so they will be readily available in case of a problem or if the item has to be returned because it is not working right.

# WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Most food products are sold by weight. Most recipes are stated in units of dry or liquid volume. Although the metric system is used in many countries, it is not used everywhere, such as the United States. Also listed below are abbreviations most common to recipes:

1 T. or 1 tbsp.	= 1 tablespoon or 3 teaspoons	oz.	= ounce
1 t. or 1 tsp.	= 1 teaspoon	pt.	= pint or 2 cups or 16 ounces
1 c. or 1 cu.	= 1 cup or 16 tablespoons	qt.	= quart or 4 cups or 32 ounces
		gal.	= gallon or 4 quarts

**Net. wt.** = weight of contents not including weight of container

1 tsp.	= 5 cubic centimeters or 5 milliliters
1 tbsp.	= 15 cc
1 oz.	=30 cc
1 Pt.	=450 cc or 1/2 liter
1 qt.	= 900 cc or 1 liter
1 gal.	=4 liters

**Linear Measure:** 1 foot = 12 inches = 0.3048 meters  
1 yard = 3 feet = 0.9144 meters  
1 meter = 39.37 inches = 3.28 feet = 1.09 yards  
1 mile = 1.6 kilometers

**Liquid Measure:** 1 British gallon = 1.2 US gallons  
1 liter = 1.057 liquid quarts = 10 deciliters  
1 deciliter (dcl) = 6 tbsp. +2 tsp. =3.38 US fluid oz.

**Dry Measure:** 1 pound = 16 ounces =453.59 grams  
(weight) 1 gram = 1.035 ounces  
1 kilogram =2.2046 pounds

**Equivalent Amounts:** 2 1/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar =450 grams

4 cups flour	=450 grams
3 1/2 cups whole wheat flour	=450 grams
4 1/2 cups confectioners sugar	=450 grams
2 1/4 cups granulated sugar	=450 grams
1 cup rice	=225 grams

**Temperatures** are measured either in Centigrade (C.) or Fahrenheit (F.)  
The formulas for conversion are:

F. to C. = Minus 32 - Multiply by 5 - Divide by 9  
C. to F. = Multiply 9- Divide by 5 - Add 32

"Normal" body temperature measured with an oral (mouth) thermometer is 37 degrees C. or 98.6 degrees F.

**For cooking:** Water boils at 100 degrees C. or 212 degrees F.

Milk is scalded at 51 degrees C. or 15 degrees F.

**Oven Temps:**

120 degrees C. =250 degrees F.

= very slow oven

150 degrees C. =300 degrees F.

= slow oven

180 degrees C. = approx. 350 degrees F.

= moderate oven

220 degrees C. = approx. 425 degrees F.

= hot oven

260 degrees C. = approx. 500 degrees F.

= very hot oven

**Air Temps:**

0 degrees F. = -17.8 degrees C.

15 degrees F. = 9.4 degrees C.

32degreesF. = 0 degrees C.

68 degrees F. = 20.0 degrees C.

85 degrees F. = 29.4 degrees C.

# LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

## THE AMERICAN FAMILY:

A very important and challenging part of your Rotary Youth Exchange experience will be sharing daily life with your American family. Your host family has volunteered to host you. They will not be paid or reimbursed by Rotary to open their home to you. They have agreed to accept you as another member of their family. Adapting to your new host family will be a cooperative effort as you and the family adjust to each other. We hope the following information will help you make your adjustment to your new family.

No two host families are exactly alike, so your host family will be unique in many ways. However, they will also share some of the same values and lifestyles common to all American families. As you get to know them and participate in family life, you will learn about the differences and similarities of families in the American society.

Most of the host families selected by Rotary to participate in this Program are not wealthy. They work hard to support themselves. Often, the mother of the family also works to provide additional income for the family. In addition, young people in the family may have part-time employment, after school and on weekends, to earn their own spending money. Most families will not have hired help, such as maids, housekeepers or cooks to take care of the housework and look after the children. You will find that all family members, including the father, help with the daily work of running the household. You will be asked to perform some assigned duties just like other members of the family. These duties could include keeping your room neat and clean, making your own bed and helping with the preparation and serving of daily meals. After your arrival you should discuss family household duties with your host parents and request that they assign tasks to you as they would to their own children.

The American family unit usually consists only of immediate family members. It is not common for grandparents or other relatives to live in the same household with parents and children. The family's relative may even be living in another part of the United States. Because family relatives may live great distances apart, these relatives do not usually play an important part in the daily life of the family. American families do spend time together with relatives on such occasions as birthdays, holidays and religious celebrations. However, socializing with relatives is not as significant as it may be in your country.

Host families are volunteers. They have opened their home to you so they can share the American culture with you. They also hope to learn about your culture and how it is different or similar to the American culture. This is not an exercise to determine which culture is better, or what is right or wrong. It is an opportunity to share, without criticism, each other's culture and customs. Try not to be critical if you find there are differences from your own country. Enjoy the opportunity you have to be observant and learn.

The adjustment to your host family requires good communications. If there is something that you do not understand, ask, it is the only way you will learn. Remember, your host family wants you to be a part of the family. They are not familiar with your culture or customs, so they will rely on you to adjust and ask questions if you don't understand. Be sensitive to your host family in regards to what you think about a custom that is different. You are entitled to your opinion but your host family lives there. You don't want to appear as whining or complaining.

## **AMERICAN PARENTS AND CHILDREN:**

American parents have a concern for the welfare of their children, even those of high school age. They expect to know where their children are and what time they will return home. Your host parents will want to know where you are going, whom you are going with and when you expect to return. If you wish to live in a happy family environment, you should discuss the rules of the family with your host parents.

You may find the rules in American families different from those in your country. Your consideration of these rules will make for a happy family relationship for both you and your host parents. Because you are an exchange student, you may find that the rules are strict in the beginning. As you show that you can accept the responsibilities of a young adult in the American society, your host parents will give you more freedom. They will still require compliance with the basic rules of the family.

American children and teenagers usually stay at home evenings during the school week, unless there is some school activity or special event. If you do go out during the school week, you will be asked to be home at an earlier hour than when you go out on the weekend. Your host parents will set a time by which they want you to be home. It is important that you return at the expected time. If you will be late, you should telephone your host parents and inform them of the reason you will be late and what time you will return.

As part of the host family, you should participate in all family activities. Before you make arrangements with friends for any activity, check with your host parents to determine if your plans would conflict with their plans. You will be told about Rotary functions that you must attend. Be sure to tell your host parents about these Rotary functions so their plans do not conflict with your Rotary commitments.

Try to get a ride home from other kids from your class or sport. Be sensitive to the family in asking them to drive you to all your social engagements. Rotary will coordinate driving responsibilities with the club or YEP Committee for all Rotary engagements.

## **THE AMERICAN RELIGION:**

Americans are active in their place of worship. The church, besides being a place of worship, is also the center of many social and community activities. There is a strong separation of church and Government in America. Churches receive their financial support from contributions of their members, not from funds received from the Government. You will probably want to join your host family and participate in the activities of their church. It will provide an excellent opportunity to make new friends and to involve you more fully in community activities. Most American families attend church on a weekly basis. It is not required that you attend church with your host family. However, it is part of the family life and your host family would appreciate your participation. If your religious beliefs differ from those of your host family, ask your host parents to make arrangements for you to attend a church that supports your beliefs.

## **THE AMERICAN PEOPLE:**

The people of the United States call themselves "American". Citizens of Canada, Central America and South America also consider themselves to be "American" because they live in North, Central or South America. When we refer to "American" in this paper about the American People, we are referring to those Americans that live in the United States of America.

Any statement about the American People must be very general in nature. As you will learn, there are differences and variations among Americans due to the diversity of regional, ethnic, religious and economic backgrounds. All Americans, except the American Indians, are descendants of people who came to the United

States from another country. These people came to the United States in search of individual independence, employment, or religious freedom. Many Americans will tell you that they are English, Irish, German, Swedish, Norwegian, Italian, Hungarian, etc. They may have been born in the United States, but are descendants of families that came from other countries. Because Americans are descendants of people from a variety of other countries, you will find some of these different cultures incorporated into the American culture.

The underlying philosophy of American culture is the emphasis on individual freedom. The laws of the United States are not intended to take freedom away from individuals, but to protect the freedoms that individuals enjoy. Individualism is encouraged. An individual has the right to do as he wishes as long as he doesn't infringe on the rights of others. Personal achievement or recognition is the result of individual effort. Americans do not attribute much significance to a person's ancestors, family heritage or inherited wealth.

The importance of individualism, many parts making up the whole, is shown by the independence of State and Local governments from the Federal government, and the independence of the individual while acknowledging his or her responsibilities to society. Americans acknowledge this responsibility to society by voluntary service and financial contributions to various charities and not-for-profit organizations for the betterment of society. It is not unusual for an American to participate, without pay, in a number of community service organizations.

Americans assume that an individual is largely in control of his own life and can achieve whatever goal he sets for himself, through determination and hard work. Individuals with similar goals may have to compete actively with one another, but competition is the foundation of our free enterprise economic system.

Personal relationships among Americans are informal and friendly, even on short acquaintance and with people of higher or lower social standing. Americans are by nature friendly. Because they have a friendly nature, they usually don't make just a few close friends, but many friends with few close relationships. Friendships will change periodically due to relocation caused by a change in employment or a move to another home or neighborhood.

Most Americans are hard working because they believe that their success or failure in achieving their goals is their personal responsibility. Social gatherings stress activity, conversation and discussion. Americans like to keep busy and value getting things done on time. The use of time is important and most Americans will go to great lengths to avoid wasting time.

Many Americans consider their religion to be important to their daily life and attend church services regularly each Saturday or Sunday. Religious freedom was what brought the first settlers to the United States and has been an important part of American life ever since. Many American families, friendships and social activities will center around the church, as well as employment and neighborhood considerations.

If your host family wants you to convert to their religion, contact your counselor for help in dealing with this situation

The high regard for individual freedom and competition in the American culture leads Americans to support the free enterprise economic system. Free enterprise allows individuals and businesses to compete in the marketplace with a minimum of government regulation. Because of this emphasis on the free enterprise system, individuals or businesses own most property in the United States. The government owns only that property reserved for public use, such as: parks, recreation areas, federal and state forests and the highway system.

Americans value progress, which they view as the increasing capacity of humans to produce material wealth and economic abundance. Americans believe that anyone can be successful through individual effort and

dedication. They also have a concern for those less fortunate and will contribute time and money to help those in need that cannot provide for themselves.

Americans are strongly future oriented. For this reason there is little emphasis on tradition or the past. While individual families may keep some traditions or customs from their ancestors, especially at holiday time (Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, etc.) society as a whole puts little emphasis on tradition or custom. Americans acknowledge that we can learn from the past, but also recognize the need for new ideas and technology to improve our society.

Americans place a great importance on being punctual. You should be on time for all appointments, including family meals. If you should be delayed, you should telephone with an explanation of why you will not be on time. Phone calls received should be returned in a timely manner.

## **BEING A TEENAGER IN THE U.S.A.**

Most American teenage friendships and social activities take place at the High School. You will want to spend some free time with your newfound friends and participate in after-school activities. You may also want some time to yourself for writing letters or attending to other personal matters. Your host family will also have their own commitments. They will be busy with social or business activities where they cannot include you. As you become better adjusted to your host family and they to you, it will become easier to set up a schedule that will allow everybody to participate in those activities that are most important to them.

Making friends with American high school students is often hard to do. They are noted for their "cliques" and their unwillingness to take new students into their groups and friendships. This situation happens all the time to our own students when a family moves and the student enters a new school. It is important for you to understand that this problem will usually exist for them also, and that there are accepted techniques to overcome the barriers and to make friends.

One certain way for you to have no trouble making friends is to be the school hero. Usually this means that if you are athletically inclined, you have a prominent position in one or more of the school's sports programs. While this is a great approach to making friends for one who has sports abilities, most of the exchange students need to find other ways to make friends.

Sometimes you can make a good beginning towards having friends by using the circle of friends of a host brother or sister as a base. Not that these students will always be the ones you wish to have for friends, but this base can many times be used for introductions to other students who can in turn become your friends.

In any event, you need to be the prime mover in developing friendships, and must be willing to begin the friendship. This means finding one or more excuses to get acquainted and then constantly being the one making the overtures of friendship until the goal is actually accomplished. Once a few such friendships are made, doors usually open up through the new friends existing relationships with other students at the school and in the community at large, then friendships are there to be made with much less effort than the original ones.

It is easy as an Exchange Student to gravitate to other Exchange Students. It is important to develop friendships with students from the United States to broaden your circle of friends. There are many clubs at schools including maybe an International Club or Interact where you can meet students. If your High School has an Interact you are required to join it. Interact is a high school club sponsored by the local Rotary Club and chartered by Rotary International.

## **AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS**

Your attendance and participation in High School is a requirement of the Rotary Youth Exchange Program. You should study and work to the best of your ability to achieve good grades. High School in America will be different from those in your home country. However, you should have no trouble adjusting to, and participating in, school life.

The following comments about the American High School system will be true in most areas of the United States. However, there will be some variations from school to school.

You will find out more about the High School you will attend once you arrive in your host community. Your host family or Rotary Youth Exchange counselor will help you with registration and course selection based on your interests and the curriculum of your school.

There have been many problems recently with violence and weapons in United States schools. New Jersey High School Officials take threats or promises of violence very seriously. In New Jersey there is a ZERO tolerance for these threats and even a joke can get you arrested and/or suspended from school. DON'T EVEN THINK OF JOKING ABOUT THIS.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION:**

Schools in most areas of the world place exclusive emphasis on academic study. American High Schools also consider academic study important, but also provide classes and courses of study in non-academic areas.

Students are encouraged to develop non-academic skills and talents as well as intellectual abilities. American High Schools will provide classes or activities in speech, drama, music, sports and student club activities.

Many after-school activities are provided for students. These include sports, student dances, concerts and other social activities. For this reason, the social life of most teenagers in America centers on activities at High School. You should participate in those activities that are of interest to you. Your participation is an excellent way to make friends with others who have similar interests, or to explore new interests.

You may find that you are more advanced in the academic areas of study than American students. You may become bored in those classes where they are teaching material that you have already learned. We suggest you talk with your school counselor about the likelihood of enrolling in some of the many other classes that are available in non-academic areas of study. Some of the subjects you could consider are typing, woodworking, music, speech, drama, automobile repair, cooking, computer science and many others.

## **TEACHERS:**

Teachers in American High Schools are usually approachable and friendly in their relationships with students. They expect respect, but are also willing to get to know their students socially and personally. If you have any difficulties in your school studies, you can approach most teachers for individual assistance or even advice on personal matters.

## **THE STUDENTS:**

School officials closely supervise American High School students. Their freedom to move about the school or leave the school building without special permission is restricted. As a Rotary Exchange student from another country, you may find it difficult to be supervised so closely. Keep in mind that this treatment is no different from that of your American classmates.

## **THE CLASSROOM:**

In most countries of the Rotary world, teachers usually lecture in class and the students spend their time studying, or even memorizing textbooks. In American High Schools, there is more emphasis on practical application of knowledge in the "real world".

Teachers will often engage their students in discussions; go on field trips with students, and use movies, computers and educational games in the classroom. You will have to become accustomed to participating actively in classroom activities and discussions, rather than just sitting, listening and taking notes.

Students in American High Schools will move from room to room in the school for their different classes. The teachers usually remain in their assigned room for the entire school day.

## **HOMEWORK & EXAMINATIONS:**

Most Rotary Exchange Students coming to America are accustomed to taking a major examination, given once or twice during the school year, for which they must study extensively. American High School students take shorter examination, called "quizzes" or "tests". These quizzes or tests are given more often, sometimes once each week. Because of the frequency of the tests, they do not cover a wide range of material. They are confined to material studied during the week or month of the test.

Most teachers in American High Schools will assign homework. The student must complete this homework in a certain length of time and return it to the teacher for grading. Other types of assignments such as reporting on a story or a book, or doing a term paper (a long essay based on the student's research of a specific subject) are common.

Grades for a course of study result from many factors, including test scores, homework and participation in class discussions. In the tests, homework and class discussions, you may be asked to defend an opinion rather than restate facts you have learned.

# GENERAL INFORMATION:

You may be the only exchange student in your High School. Therefore, you will be noticed immediately as someone different. You will find that you will make friends very quickly, but will have some difficulty making close, individual friends. American High School students tend to make friends quickly, but have very few close friends.

Participation in after-school activities with students that have similar interests to your interests will help make friends. These friends will introduce you to their friends, so very soon you will feel comfortable and accepted.

## INFORMALITY AMONG AMERICANS

The emphasis on individual identity, responsibility, and tolerance produces a considerable degree of informality in dress, relationships between people, and methods of communication.

This culture does not perceive brief costumes and public displays of affection as an indication of loose morals, although, in some situation, they may be viewed as exhibiting poor taste. A great deal of flexibility to express oneself is permitted as long as it does not infringe on the rights and comforts of others.

## DISTRICT 7470 RULES:

Attend all District Meetings! The students are required to be at each of the following meetings unless there is a serious health problem. Since we do not excuse the students from attending ANY of these meetings, no matter what conflict might arise, they should not be allowed to have any expectations to the contrary. The required meetings were sent to you with your Guarantee Form with exact dates. Follow the Calendar you received, as there are also some optional events. Some of these are:

- a. September - Orientations.
- b. October or November – Denville Country Dance overnight
- c. UN Day – A trip by Newton Rotary Club to attend Rotary International’s UN Day – not mandatory but all students usually want to go.
- d. November - Pocono Weekend.
- e. Feb. or March – Nutley Weekend
- f. April - Madison Weekend.
- g. May - District Assembly
- h. May - Walk for the World
- i. May - Rotary District 7470 Conference

# AMERICAN STORES AND SHOPPING

**Grocery Stores** sell all sorts of food such as fresh, frozen, and canned foods, plus fish, poultry, meat, fruit, vegetables and prepared dishes. They also sell staples such as flour, cereal, sugar, salt, and spices. Bakery goods, dairy products, toiletries, shampoo, paper products, toothpaste, toilet paper, paper towels, sanitary napkins, paper tissue, paper plates, paper cups, and many other products. Self-service is the rule in grocery stores, which means that you take a cart or basket, select the items you wish, and present them for payment at a cashier's counter.

**Co-ops (cooperatives) or Wholesale Outlets** are stores that sell items only slightly above wholesale cost and are operated collectively by community people or by a company. If you become a member, costs are even lower. In this area it would be BJ's or COSCO.

**Department Stores** sell a variety of things such as appliances, dishes, shoes, clothing, furniture, fabric, pots and pans, linens, towels, and toys. Hours of department stores downtown are usually from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; larger stores are open until 9 p.m. Monday and Thursday nights. Department stores in suburban shopping centers usually stay open until 10 p.m. Monday through Friday and until 6 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Discount stores offer lower prices, but are often hard to get to without a car. Department stores are also self-service.

**Drug Stores** are the only stores that are licensed to sell prescription pharmaceutical products. Doctor's prescriptions can be filled at a drug store or at the Health Service counters in department stores. Drug stores also have a large selection of cosmetics, soap, shampoo, toothpaste, periodicals, household medicines, greeting cards, gifts, photographic film and sundry items.

**Superstores** include Wal-Mart and Home Depot. They are large stores that sell items at less than retail prices. You can find many items for a good price.

**Malls** provide you with approximately 60 smaller stores and two to three large stores which can sell either shoes, clothes, electronics, sporting goods, jewelry and books. Most malls now have a food court which provides a wide variety of fast food to eat. Malls are usually open 10:00 am until 9:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11:00 am until 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Christmas hours are longer.

**Outlet Stores** are usually in a mall setting. The Outlet stores include Name Brands, i.e. Calvin Kline, Polo etc. They sell out of season, or over stocked items at discount prices. If you know prices, you can get real good deals. The best deals are at the end of the season.

**Sales Tax:** Remember that each State has a Sales Tax added to your purchases at the time you pay for your items at the check out counter. Since each State sets their own percentage of Sales Taxes, it will vary from State to State from 3% up to 8% added to your purchases. Some cities also have a sales tax added to the state tax, which can add more to the price. Some States add the Sales Tax to some foods and clothing while other States do not, so check with your family as to the taxes for your area. New Jersey Sales Tax in 2001 is 6%.

## A CAUTION TO ALL SHOPPERS

You may find methods of shopping very different from those you are used to at home. Generally merchandise is sold in a "self-service" manner, and clerks are not close at hand. It is very important when shopping in US stores, especially very large stores, to use a basket or a cart provided by the store for your use. *NEVER PUT A PIECE OF MERCHANDISE IN YOUR POCKET, YOUR PURSE, OR THE FOLD OF A NATIVE*

**COSTUME.** If you do, it may appear to an employee of the store that you intend to take it without paying for it. In the past, misunderstandings of such actions taken by foreign students have resulted in their having to appear in court on charges of "shoplifting".

Shoplifting and the breaking of any laws anywhere in the United States means that your exchange is immediately terminated and your hosting District will be notified that day by phone that you are already on the plane heading home, so they better be prepared to meet you. Don't embarrass yourself and your family by thinking you can get away with it. Just because you don't see a person in the area you are in at the store, you can be sure that there is a hidden camera taking your picture of the act, so the store can have you arrested.

# CONCEPTS OF UNITED STATES LAW

The basic purpose of laws in the United States, as elsewhere, is to regulate individual and collective conduct in order to insure a reasonable balance between personal freedom and the requirements of an orderly society. United States law is based on British common law and has grown over a long period of time into an enormous and necessarily complex system involving the United States Constitution, federal statutes, common law, state constitutions, state statutes, local ordinances, court decisions and various regulations issued pursuant to the laws. It is impossible to give a comprehensive description of concepts of United States law, but certain basic and important principles of special interest to international students can be discussed briefly.

## THE RULE OF LAW:

A basic principle is that of "the rule of law". It means that we are governed by laws, not by individuals, and that the law is supreme. The people can change the law only through proper legislative and judicial procedures. Once the law is established, it must be observed by all, including government officials from the President down through the average law enforcement officer. The principle of the rule of law protects us from arbitrary actions of government and law enforcement authorities, for they are all subject to the law and the law limits their authority.

The United States Constitution is the supreme law of the land. All other laws must be consistent with the Constitution. Those laws or actions of the legislative or executive branches of the government that are not consistent with the Constitution can be challenged in court and declared invalid or unconstitutional. In this way, statutes, ordinances, and regulations undergo a constant process of testing to be sure that they conform to the principles set forth in the Constitution.

## DUE PROCESS OF LAW AND EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW:

The 5th and 14th Amendments to the United States Constitution guarantee "due process" of law to all persons, including foreign students and other aliens in the United States. By definition, "due process" means fairness and substantial justice. "Due process" of law requires that before life, liberty, or property can be denied orderly procedures be followed in the enactment, administration, and enforcement of the laws.

The 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees to every person, aliens included, equal protection under the law. Equal protection under the law means that the law applies to everybody equally, regardless of age, sex, wealth, or race, and that no law may discriminate between persons or classes of persons for arbitrary or capricious reasons. However, there are laws that apply only to certain classes of people, such as aliens, and as long as there is a reasonable basis for these laws, they satisfy the requirements of fairness and justice. Since it has been determined through court cases that most United States laws relating to foreign students and other aliens have a reasonable basis, these laws may limit and modify basic rights and obligations. With these exceptions, foreign students and other aliens in the United States are subject to the same laws as are American citizens. They are also guaranteed the same protection under the laws and the same civil rights, as are American citizens.

## WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF TROUBLE:

Even though you may believe that you understand the law or that you are innocent of any alleged violation of the law, you should always seek advice on legal questions. A major development in American law has been the protection against self-incrimination. This protection is important because the law is at times so complex that the ordinary person does not fully understand the legal issues and may incriminate himself or herself

without knowing it.

A citizen defendant cannot refuse the services of an attorney without the advice of an attorney. The same reasoning applies to foreign students.

If the police arrest you, you should be aware of your rights. First, you are not required to answer questions EXCEPT to identify yourself and give your address. It is best to cooperate with the law enforcement officials; but protect your rights in the process.

You have right to know what charges you are accused of; the right to remain silent until you are questioned in the presence of your attorney; the right to an attorney (if you do not have one, the court will provide one for you); and the right to a hearing in court the day following your arrest, except Saturdays and Sundays. Remember that anything you say may be used against you in court. You are allowed two telephone calls (call the Youth Exchange Chairman, a friend or an attorney who can arrange bail for your release).

Never resist arrest, since you may be charged with resisting arrest even if other charges are dropped. Do not physically resist a search of your person or home, but if you do not agree to a search, say so. If the police say they have a search warrant, which is issued by a judge and give the police the right to search your home, ask to see it.

If questioned about your case by a police officer, answer only "I wish to see my attorney". The questions may sound unimportant, but you should not answer them unless you have consulted an attorney.

## **CIVIL LAW:**

Most of the above discussion relates to criminal law. You should also be aware of the existence of United States civil law - that body of laws governing relationships between individuals that does not involve criminal conduct, such as the fulfillment of contracts, payment of bills, business arrangements, and similar matters. Contracts may be either written or oral, and in either case they are enforceable by law. (An example of a contract entered into by many students is the lease for an apartment). If either party violates the conditions of a contract, the other party may bring suit in court to enforce the contract or to recover damages. Civil suit may also be initiated to force the payment of legitimate bills or financial obligations.

## **CONCLUSION**

At the end of the twelve months, the students and the host clubs participating in the Program will have gained and contributed a tremendous reservoir of goodwill and understanding. The students will have gained wholesome experiences of lasting value. We, the Rotarians, will have demonstrated that we as the parents and guardians, motivated by the ideal of service, deeply concerned about the quality of life, are in fact actively engaged in doing something concrete in our effort to assist the younger generation all over the world.

# SLANG TERMS AND IDIOMS

A lemon	A bad buy or purchase
At one's fingertips	Easily recalled
Awesome	great
Bar	Place where alcoholic beverages are served
Bar-B-Q (barbecue)	An outdoor cooking party, like a picnic. Also the word for a spicy sauce used with meat.
Beat around the bush	To avoid speaking directly
Beats me	I don't know either
Big shot	A supposedly important person or someone who thinks he/she is important.
Bounce let's leave	
Break the ice	Make a beginning
Buck	Dollar bill. Also a male deer
Cash	Currency, as opposed to checks and money orders
Change	Coins: penny = 1 cent nickel = 5 cents dime = 10 cents quarter = 25 cents half dollar = 50 cents  After you make a purchase, the money you get back is called the change.
Check out	To sign out a book from a library. Also to try to find out about something.
Chill (out)	hang out
Commuter	Someone who lives at home and uses some sort of transportation to get to campus or work.
Cop	Slang for policeman
Cram	To study hard the night before a test.
Cut class	Not go to a class at school
Date	To go out with someone. The word is also used for the person you go out with.
Dope	Illegal drugs; i.e., marijuana, hashish, grass, pot

Dorms	Dormitories, residence halls
Down in the dumps	Gloomy, morose, depressed
Down to earth	Practical, straightforward, simple (person)
Drop out a course	To withdraw from a class
Dumb	A derogatory term for a person, meaning 'stupid'
Far out	Something good, strange, or unusual
Feather in your cap	Praiseworthy accomplishment
Feel it in my bones	Feel or sense what is going to happen
Finals	The last exams in school
Flunk	To fail a course (grade "F")
Gas	Gasoline or petrol
Get off my back <sup>1</sup>	Leave me alone!
Give someone the cold shoulder...	Ignore him rudely
Go Dutch treat	Pay one's own way
Go fly a kite'	Go away!
Go jump in the lake'	Go away!
Go to pot	Deteriorate
Going steady	Going out with only one person
Goof-off	Lazy or idle person who sometimes does silly things.
Grass	Slang word for marijuana (also pot, dope, Mary Jane, weed)
Gym	Gymnasium or physical education building
Half-baked	Not well thought out. An immature judgment
Hassle	Troublesome, a nuisance
Have a bone to pick with someone.	Have cause to argue or disagree
Have a lot on the ball	To be capable, talented, or efficient
Have cold feet	To be nervous, uncertain

He put his foot in his mouth	He made an embarrassing blunder
Hi~	Hello. A greeting widely used.
Hold your horses	Be calm, be patient
Hot	good looking
ID	Identification
Jock	An athlete interested in all sports
Know the ropes	Be familiar with the details of any undertaking
Let one's hair down	Relax, behave informally
Let the cat out of the bag	Reveal a secret, thus ruining a surprise
Loose	Easy to get along with, informal, flexible. Also, a promiscuous person.
Make ends meet	Budget within one's income
Make no bones about it	Deal with it in a direct manner, speak openly
Make-up	To apologize after a fight. Do an assignment after it was due. Cosmetics a woman uses.
Male chauvinism	The attitude among some men of male supremacy
OK	Term for approval of something, meaning 'all right'
On a shoestring	Supported with very little money
Once in a blue moon	Seldom, infrequently
Out of it	Somebody whose mind is far away or preoccupied. Somebody not fitting into a certain group
Out of the question	Unthinkable, impossible
Over my dead body'	Not if I can stop it!
Park	A large grassy area for recreation and for picnics, sometimes near a beach.
Phat	cool, sweet, great
Phony	Something that is fake or not real. Someone who is insincere.
Piece of cake	An easy task
Piece of work	Unreal

Play second fiddle	Be second in importance
Psyched	Excited about something to come
Pull one's leg	Tease a person
Pull strings	Use influence
Quiz	A short test usually given with no warning.
Rain cats and dogs	Rain heavily
Rap	To talk or discuss. A type of music.
Run around with	Be friends with
Show	Cinema, movie, film or live theater. i.e. Broadway show
Skip a class	don't go to a class
Spill the beans	To reveal a secret, thus ruining a surprise
Split hairs	To make unnecessarily fine or petty distinctions.
Stag	A man who attends a party or dance without a partner
Stuffed shirt	Pompous, inflexible person
Sweet	nice
Take a hike!	Go away!
Take for granted	To assume a situation
Through the grapevine	Gossip passed to others
Under the weather	Sick, not feeling well
Whatever floats the boat	Whatever works best
What's up	what is going on?

# EXCHANGE STUDENT TIP SHEET

Things that you may find very different include: household habits, weather, social graces, humor, diet, school, transportation (cars and buses), radio, television, entertainment and house rules. Please be able to make adjustments to the many new situations you'll come across. The following is a quick run through of miscellaneous facts:

1. On the first day you arrive at a new home, sit down with your new host family and find out about the house rules and how your new parents want to be addressed. Will it be Mom & Dad, Mr. & Mrs. or some other form of address. We try to discourage it, but some people prefer their first names be used. Find out.
2. Get involved with your local Rotary Club. Go through the bulletin or list of Rotarians and find out "Who's who". It takes two to have an involvement. You may need to make the first move! The same is true at school. Get involved and take advantage of every opportunity. Your year will go by quickly.
3. Allow yourself a two-week settling in time. Remember, it is up to you to adjust to the family and NOT them to adjust to you.
4. You are an Ambassador! You don't criticize, condemn or complain. You observe and give honest appreciation.
5. Become genuinely interested in other people.
6. Be a good listener! Encourage other to talk about themselves.
7. Never be a judge! That's not your job.
8. Don't swear. You are a better person for not having to resort to anything like that.
9. Don't smoke. It is bad for your health. Remember if your Rotary application said non-smoker then you are a non-smoker.
10. Don't be afraid to ask questions. You never learn if you don't ask. It could be that you don't understand a word or phrase, or you are curious about something.
11. Find out the family's habits and follow them. Don't try to impose your habits upon them.
12. Keep your bedroom tidy at all times. Attempt to give the room some of your character with photos from home.
13. Don't wait to be asked to do something. Offer to help and make sure your offer comes first! Help whenever possible.
14. Be generous and thoughtful of others at all times. It will be returned many times. Never be selfish.
15. If you are not sure, ask and listen to the answer. Keep an open mind with a positive attitude.
16. Be loving and warm and show sincere appreciation.

17. Ensure that there is always good communication. Remember it takes two to communicate and sometimes you have to try harder.
18. At your age it can sometimes be hard for you to communicate with an adult, but please remember that people working with the exchange program really are there to help you. If you are unhappy with a situation or need help in any area, talk to an adult. It might be surprising to you that they will want to help, but they will get the problem resolved faster than you expect.
19. If you find that you are not getting results for your problem, get in contact IMMEDIATELY with your District Chairman at home. Let him know exactly what is wrong or bothering you. Don't wait until the situation gets out of hand. Put it in your monthly report or if it is urgent, e-mail him. Make sure you have talked to you club counselor and district chair in your host country before you call your chairman at home.
20. Know facts about your country, history, how government works and school system. People will be asking you questions all the time.
21. Things that you may find very different include household habits, weather, social graces, humor, diet, school, radio, television, transportation (cars and buses), entertainment, and house rules. Please be able to make adjustments to the many new situations you will come across.
22. Be sure to always thank your host family for special trips, your Host Club, invitations you may get. Always be polite with a Thank You.