

# **ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE DISTRICT 5520**

## **HOST FAMILY ORIENTATION MANUAL**

All host parents/guardians shall review with the Club President, YEO or Counselor Rotarian the Orientation presentation at <http://www.rye5520.org/> or shall review a document copy of this presentation in detail.

Before the Host Family Orientation a youth exchange Rotarian shall have completed in cooperation with the district compliance officer and the host family members:

- 1) Confidential background check for themselves and any household members over the age of 18 years,
- 2) Reference calls for each person over 18 yrs. who resides in the home,
- 3) A host family application,
- 4) A host family interview and inspection checklist.

Hosting a Youth Exchange student from another country can be a wonderful experience. It allows a host family to become familiar with another culture. Youth Exchange promises to enrich the lives of the student and every member of your family.

This manual serves as a general introduction and reference guide to the District 5520 Rotary Youth Exchange program and an overview of host family responsibilities. This guide will supplement the information you receive from the **Rotary Youth Exchange Officer (YEO)** and/or **Rotary Counselor** in the hosting club of your community. The Rotarian volunteers are there to support the student and to help you understand your role as a host parent. Please let them know your needs as this communication link is the most important in the process.

The YEO and counselor may be one person or may be separate roles in the local, hosting Rotary Club. The YEO is like the manager of student exchange within the club and the counselor is an additional club member who can provide the student extra support when needed. What is most important is that the student have someone of their same sex from the hosting club to communicate with.

### **INTRODUCTION**

**Long-term exchange** usually last just a bit longer than an academic year in the host country, during which the student lives with two to three host families and attends school. Rotary District 5520 and its regional clubs only handle the long term exchanges at this time. The students will arrive in either August or January, depending on their school schedule abroad, and depart about eleven months later. Most January arrivals are students from countries in the Southern Hemisphere.

Host families for this program can be Rotarians or non Rotarians. Typical host families come in all shapes and sizes and might include young children, older children, or no children at all. For non-Rotarian families, you will learn a great deal about Rotary.

**Rotary clubs** are service organizations that strive to improve the quality of life in their communities, promote high ethical standards in business, and foster international understanding and goodwill throughout the world. Membership represents a cross section of local business and professional leaders. Clubs carry out a variety of service activities, one of which is Youth Exchange.

For administrative purposes, clubs are grouped into geographical areas called **Rotary districts**. You are in District 5520. The administration of a Rotary Youth Exchange program is

carried out entirely at the club and district levels. **Rotary International** (RI) is the association of Rotary clubs throughout the world. While RI encourages clubs and districts to undertake Youth Exchange activities and offers support through the creation of exchange policies and publications, Rotary districts run their Youth Exchange programs independently of RI. Each year, Rotary districts worldwide arrange more than 8,000 international youth exchanges for secondary school students. A primary goal of the program is to foster world understanding through intercultural exchange.

The exchange student has a mirror structure of Rotarians supporting his/her family at home in the sponsoring club and district. These individuals can also be called upon to assist in large difficulties during exchange, although this is rarely required.

### **Student Selection**

Rotary Youth Exchange students are of secondary school age and generally accepted into the program if they are able to demonstrate an above-average academic record and involvement in extracurricular activities. It is standard practice for local Rotary clubs and districts to screen young people using detailed applications and interviews. This process helps ensure that only highly responsible and mature students are sent on an exchange. Program administrators in the student's home country generally assess an applicant's scholastic record, linguistic ability, and general adaptability, among other qualities. Disabled students are encouraged to apply for long term exchanges, although it is rare that a student with a disability participates.

### **Rules**

Rotary District 5520 and its clubs have specific rules for students to follow. Students accepted into an exchange sign and agree to abide by a list of program rules before their departure from home. While the student's host Rotary club will discuss all program rules with both you and the student, you should review Rotary International rules with the student to be sure that everyone has a clear understanding of what is expected.

- No driving of ANY vehicles, no obtaining a drivers license. Transportation should be by persons approved by the host family or by the Rotary YEO/counselor.
- No illegal use of drugs or alcohol,
- No violating the law,
- No working in any business as an employee or receiving a paycheck,
- Special permission is required for travel outside of the local area,
- Romantic involvement during the exchange is discouraged (although companionship with non-repeat dates is acceptable).

A violation of these rules can result in the student being sent home early.

All students entering District 5520 are non-smokers. Smoking is not permitted and all tobacco products cannot be used by the student, whether 18 years old or not. Health considerations are a primary concern and of course, for most of our inbound students it is not legal for them to purchase tobacco products or any type.

### **Rotary Club and District Responsibilities**

The sponsoring Rotary District and club in the student's home country will:

- Inform the host club or district of the student's travel itinerary and arrange outbound orientation.
- Maintain contact with the exchange student and the host district and club during the exchange.

Rotary District 5520 or the local, hosting Rotary club will:

- Screen all volunteers and host families before their participation in the program. The screening will include an application process, announced and unannounced home visits, and

one or more interviews conducted by Rotarians. You will be required to provide a background check authorization and references before being selected as a host.

- Meet the student on arrival.
- Arrange enrollment, and other educational matters with the local secondary school.
- Conduct inbound and other follow up orientations.
- Facilitate discussion of needs and expectations between you and the student, and organize some social and cultural functions for the student.
- Appoint a Rotarian YEO/counselor and arrange a monthly allowance or stipend for the student. This stipend is for school lunches, going to movies, etc.
- Maintain at least monthly contact with the student and host families during the exchange through the Rotarian YEO/counselor, who is not a member of the student's host family or their immediate social circle.
- Create a master list of host families and their contact information with dates of hosting, if known.
- Retain a copy of the student's medical insurance, passport, visa and airline travel itinerary.

### **Natural Parent Responsibilities and Money Issues**

The student will come to the U.S. with a credit card, calling card and/or other financial resources from his/her parents to support the student during the year. Some students may need a small savings account which a Rotarian can co-sign for if there is a need to deposit wired funds on a regular basis to the student. Some students have what they need with a cash/credit card that is issued in the bank of their home as a way to withdraw funds.

- Provide funds over and above the student's Rotary club stipend to take care of personal toiletries, clothing and other misc. expenses,
- Communicate with host family and hosting Rotary club,
- Provide letters as needed authorizing travel outside District 5520,
- Pay for the student/reimburse the host family or club for travel not otherwise covered by the host family or club (i.e. plane tickets, bus fare, hotel, meals while travelling, Rotary authorized exchange tour),
- Pay for a local cell phone, if it is determined the student should have one and the club or host family cannot provide one for free.

Anything the host family can do to facilitate opportunities for local bank transactions is helpful. The host parents should communicate, in advance when possible, about any reimbursement needs with the student's parents.

### **Host Family Responsibilities**

While exchange students tend to be academic achievers with more developed coping skills than many teenagers, they are vulnerable, living in an unfamiliar country, and often functioning in a nonnative language. You as a host have the most important responsibilities to make the exchange a success. Host families are to provide a safe, nonthreatening, respectful, and appropriate environment in which trust and friendship between you and the student can develop. To emphasize the host family's important role, Rotary International has adopted a Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth:

*Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouse, and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.*

Host families should maintain close contact with the host Rotary club so that any problems may be addressed and resolved quickly. The host family should correspond with the student's family by letter or email to create a relationship and reduce concerns of the student's natural parents. In addition, the exchange student should always have free access to his or her YEO/counselor to talk about any concerns or problems during the exchange.

### **PREPARING TO HOST**

Hosting a student can be extremely rewarding for all members of your family, and being a well prepared and involved host family will only enhance everyone's experience. Some anxiety is expected if you have never hosted an exchange student, but be sure you are comfortable with the idea before doing so. If you have serious reservations about hosting, feel that you cannot meet your obligations, or do not have adequate answers to your questions, you should not agree to host or you should investigate the details of hosting with a member of the District Youth Exchange Committee. Below are some insights on what to expect before and during the exchange.

#### **Preparing for the Exchange Student's Arrival**

While the exchange student's sponsor and host Rotary clubs will be taking care of most of the logistics of the exchange, there are some ways you can prepare for the student's arrival. If you are not familiar with your host student's country, do some general research on the Internet or at the library. The local Rotary club will provide you with the student application that includes a great deal of information about the student's life. As soon the club YEO/counselor has informed you that the time is appropriate, you should contact the exchange student and his or her parents. The easiest way to do this is to obtain the student's e-mail address from the Rotary YEO/counselor. You should extend a welcome to the student, including information about your family, i.e., how many members, their ages, hobbies, etc.; the type of clothing required for the climate if the student has not yet left home; the local community or school; and other considerations. In short, ask yourself what you would like to know about a new home in a foreign culture and supply that kind of information. ALL pre-arrival correspondence with the student should be copied to the YEO/counselor so that the club knows what has been accomplished and the incoming students concerns as well.

#### **Meeting Your Exchange Student and Making Introductions**

- If practical, the YEO, counselor and the first host family should form the welcoming party at the airport.
- The students parents should be notified of the student's safe arrival as soon as possible.

Please keep in mind that the student will likely be very tired upon arrival and need time to recover from jet lag, or fatigue, from adjusting to the duration of travel and time difference. In addition to airport greetings, after several days many host families organize informal welcoming parties for the newcomer. The purpose is to introduce the exchange student to family friends and people in the community with whom the student will have contact. If they aren't included in the first event, the student should be introduced to members of his or her peer group as soon as possible, his/her peers will comprise the majority of associations during the exchange. A list of "Sample Questions to Ask Your Host Family" for the students and host families to discuss early in the student's stay is included as an attachment.

#### **Orientation and Adaptation**

As stated above, exchange students will receive formal orientation from District Rotary Exchange before and/or after arrival in the host country. But no matter how thorough the

orientation, the student comes into the first host family as a stranger in a strange land, possibly encountering a strange language, a strange accent, or different use of words. The exchange may even be the student's first long trip away from home. One way to ensure that the exchange student adapts as smoothly as possible is to realize that you and the student will have misconceptions about each other's cultures. What you consider to be ill-mannered or unacceptable behavior may be the norm in the student's culture and vice versa. Please be aware that these misapprehensions can lead hosts to attribute inaccurate motives to the student's actions. You may look to your Rotary Club YEO/counselor and others in the Rotary network to assist you with these issues.

Another way to aid your student's adjustment is to share your culture with him or her as it exists in everyday life. This does not mean that you need to arrange elaborate entertainment. Simply make the student a part of your family with the opportunity to share in the same aspects of family life experienced by most teenage students. Treat the student as a member of your family and not as a guest. Also, treat the student as you would want your own child treated on an exchange. It is desirable to have the student address the host parents with an informal title, such as "mom" or "dad" or by another appropriate name, to encourage the student to be part of the family. Developing this sort of relationship with the student early on will help ensure a smooth and successful home stay.

In spite of these considerations, the host family may not be able to resolve the student's feelings of homesickness or adequately address difficulties the student may have. A key element of the student's orientation program should be an explanation of the network that is in place. This network includes the host country counselor, school counselors, district Youth Exchange officers, club members, and the student's own family. Be sure the student knows how to contact each of these people, and do not feel threatened if the student feels unable to discuss problems with you. A contact card of people the student can rely on will be provided early in the exchange by the YEO/counselor. This broad support network ensures that there is always someone the student can feel comfortable approaching if a concern or problem arises. Students should be able to contact their parents for support and guidance and it is important that the doors of communication regarding problems remain open with the local Rotary Club and District as well.

The student should be oriented to available religious services, household obligations, family discipline, the need to conform to family practices, and the shared responsibility of the home. Smoking, if it was presented in the student application and is authorized, should be done at time and locations agreed upon by the host family. Smokers in a non-smoking family should go outside to smoke and safely tidy up their trash.

The exchange travel rules must be followed and enforced by the host family and Rotary YEO/counselor. **THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT.** Due to insurance requirements and federal rules relating to student travel, it is mandatory that the Travel Policy attached to this Manual be adhered to. The student must carry his or her passport when traveling out of the state and should have it available when they will be traveling in an area with an immigration checkpoint (i.e. to White Sands and through check points in Southern New Mexico and El Paso region). Students cannot leave the US! Narrow exceptions apply for host families who have relatives in Mexico, but that will not be allowed without the specific involvement of the District chair. Host parents should maintain a file with a copy of the student's passport, visa, open ended travel itinerary for arrival and departure home, and medical insurance card as soon as the student arrives.

### **General Family Arrangements**

The length of stay with your family will probably have been determined before the student's arrival, although if not all the families are identified on arrival there may be transitions later on.

- The student should have his or her own bedroom or share a room with another young person of the same gender.

- The student must have his or her own bed and appropriate privacy to dress and bathe.
- A place should also be designated in the house that allows the student to study in privacy.
- In addition to providing room and board, host parents are expected to exercise general parental supervision, as would the student's own parents.
- Host parents' need to notify the Rotarian YEO/counselor if the student is encountering any exceptional problems such as illness, difficulty in adapting to the host family or school, anxieties about family matters or relationships at home, or serious homesickness.

Open communication with everyone involved is necessary in creating a positive atmosphere and the student should be encouraged to voice and address his or her concerns at any time. It is wise to avoid misunderstandings by discussing the following issues and household rules from the start:

- Student responsibilities for household tasks, such as cleaning his or her room and helping with meals, as expected with one's own children.
- Normal household routines: meal and retirement times, study hours, etc.
- Curfews
- House keys and access codes, a student must have open access to the host home
- Explanation of emergency telephone numbers and procedures
- Information about local transportation (maps are useful)
- Religious practices
- Reasonable use of telephone and computer

While appreciating that the student is to "fit in" to the home and be subject to normal family discipline, endeavor to understand the student. Do not spoil or extravagantly entertain the student, but where possible give the student every opportunity to see our country. Travelling with an exchange student is lots of fun!

Arrange for the student to regularly attend the services of his/her own denomination or have a Rotarian assist you in this effort, provided the student's parents have consented and such services are available. The student at no time must be expected to attend religious services against his/her wishes but they are welcome to share in your family religion activities. The student should be told early not to "join" any religious group while here as an exchange student. Recruiting into another religion has no place in the Rotary Exchange Program.

### **SOME PRIMARY ISSUES FACING EXCHANGE STUDENTS**

Although most exchange students are mature, they are still teenagers. Host families should consider this in dealing with the student during his or her stay. As the host family, you are the first point of contact for the student during the exchange. Should any serious problems occur, report them to the student's counselor immediately to discuss the situation and determine the best resolution. Voice any questions or concerns you may have — even seemingly insignificant ones — to the student's YEO/counselor or District Youth Exchange chair. While each exchange experience is unique, most students face certain issues at some point during an exchange, such as the following.

#### **A. Language Proficiency**

During their initial days together, students and host family members will become aware of any language problems that exist. Some students will have studied the host country's language before arrival, sometimes to a considerable extent. Others may need the support through an additional English class or tutoring for beginners. Be prepared for any slight misunderstandings

that may accompany communication with the student. Speak clearly and slowly and be patient. Make every effort to see that the student understands what is being said about house rules, geographical directions, and other matters. Keep in mind that the frustration of communicating in an unfamiliar language may lead an embarrassed student to indicate he or she has understood something when such is not the case. Conversely, hosts should be sure that they understand what the student is telling them, and they should not hesitate to ask for clarification. Be prepared to go over some issues several times. On occasion it may be necessary to seek help from someone fluent in the exchangee's native language, such as a teacher, interpreter, or visitor from the student's home country. Rotary can be an important link to these programs and individuals within your community.

### **B. Homesickness**

Language problems, if present, often coexist with a phenomenon that nearly all exchange students face sooner or later: homesickness. After the novelty and excitement of the early stages of an exchange wear off, the student may suddenly feel alone in a strange place. This is a normal reaction. Homesick students may consider many day-to-day problems overwhelming and look nostalgically toward home. Acute homesickness can be devastating. The best remedies may include contact with someone who speaks the student's native language and a full program of activities. A side trip to some point of interest or simply a social event can help, as well as encouraging the student to develop hobbies and join in other community functions. The student's Rotarian YEO/counselor or school counselor can help if the home sickness persists.

### **C. Medical Concerns**

You should be informed of any special medical needs the student may have, including medications, allergies, or prescription eyewear (glasses or contact lenses). The host Rotary club or district will have provided you the student's recent medical history in his or her application materials. Students will have a major medical insurance policy which has been arranged through the District 5520 or the student's home Rotary District.

- It will usually cover any unexpected medical expenses incurred by the student.
- This policy will not cover elective visits to the doctor or routine physicals for school.
- Hopefully the student will be able to pay for their own out of pocket costs because the student's parents are responsible for all costs of the doctor. They should reimburse host parents or Rotarians who pay the out of pocket and then settle all insurance issues remaining.
- Host parents should have a copy of this policy and any additional medical documentation while the student resides in your home, check with the Rotary club YEO/counselor and the student.
- Host parents should have a copy of the student's insurance card with them at all times and the student should carry one as well.

### **D. Dietary Issues**

Students may have dietary needs related to health, religion, or personal preference. Many foods in the host country may be new or seem strange to the student. Encourage students to try new dishes, but respect to their preferences and do not force foods upon them. If the dietary issues are health or religion based then it may be important to adjust the foods available to the student. If the dietary issue is personal preference then offer a wide variety of foods while not inconveniencing your own family customs and budget needs. A balance is important and the student is on exchange to learn to adjust as well.

### **E. School Issues**

District 5520 Rotary Youth Exchange and the State Department require that the exchangee attend school. While host Rotary clubs and districts make the necessary arrangements with the local secondary school, host parents should see that the student gets started on the right foot and attends regularly. The first host parents should participate in getting the student registered for

school after they have arrived, while asking for help as needed from the Rotary Club YEO/counselor. Visiting the school counselor with the exchange student to arrange the study program will likely be the first step.

Be aware that exchange students often feel obligated to assume an almost impossible academic load. Advise the student against taking too many classes while adjusting to the new school. Many exchange students receive no credit for their coursework in the U.S. school. The issue of course pass/fail credit is an important question to clarify with the student as they may need documents from the high school at the end of their exchange to take home.

The exchangee may also need your guidance to become acquainted with school procedures, particularly if they are accustomed to a radically different school system. School counselors and host brothers and sisters can help in this area of transition. Be sure the student knows the way to and from school and how to get lunch off school grounds if needed.

### **E. Changing Families**

Most long-term exchange students live with two to three different host families during the school year. This exposes the students to a variety of family life in the host country and allows them to better understand the culture as a whole. It is important that both the hosts and the exchange student realize at the outset the limited duration of each stay with a host family. A roster of host families should be drawn up by the YEO/counselor before the student arrives. This list will provide names, addresses, telephone numbers, and the dates planned for the student to remain with each host and will be circulated to the families, the school and the Rotary District Chair.

The first change of families will probably be the most upsetting for the student, as he or she will have established a good rapport with the family that aided in overcoming the initial culture shock. As a result, the exchange student should ideally be introduced to his or her next host family early in the exchange, unless that family is not identified. It is often a good idea to arrange for the new host family to pick up the exchangee at the previous family's home to ease the transition from one to another, and for the previous families to make occasional visits. If the student is having difficulty changing families, offer him/her words of sympathetic understanding, couched in terms of a broadening of opportunity. Guidance from the Rotarian counselor, an understanding teacher, or a representative of the individual's religion can help smooth the transition.

Even though student changes families the student will not change friends or schools. It is important that each host family understand and provide the usual amount of teenage interaction with his/her peers established previously in the exchange, especially where those teens may be siblings in the other home.

It is also important to remember that students create a broad spectrum of family members in the exchange process. Sharing the student as a member of a much larger family unit can also have distinct benefits for all families involved. Interactions between host families has the possibility of creating community for everyone, if interests between households are similar or socializing is convenient.

## **Visits from Abroad**

We strongly recommend that:

- Visits from parents and family be during Spring Break or thereafter and preferably not during school.
- No visits are permitted prior to January 31<sup>st</sup> for midyear arriving students and prior to July 31<sup>st</sup> for calendar year arriving students unless approved by the District Chair.
- Family visits should be communicated to the Club YEO and/or counselor so that the Rotary Club can host the parents for a meal as well.
- Visits from non-chaperoned friends/other teens are discouraged. This should be discussed with the YEO/counselor.

## **Exchange Student's Rotary Obligations**

Hosts are encouraged to help their exchangee meet Rotary obligations, which take precedence over other extracurricular activities. These obligations usually include:

- Attendance at Rotary luncheon at least once per month during school hours,
- Giving a speech at one of those meetings,
- Attending four mandatory orientation weekends, calendar can be found at [www.rye5520.org](http://www.rye5520.org) and will be provided by the YEO/counselor,
- Performing in a Rotary Convention student talent show.

The student's sharing of the exchange experience with the host club and at the district convention is an important feature of the exchange and contributes to the student's ambassadorial role. Be aware that the student will need time to adjust to the new culture and language before being required to speak at a Rotary function. It is a good idea for the student to attend Rotary club meetings early in the exchange as part of the familiarization process, so that he or she will feel comfortable speaking at these meetings later.

Students should not be permitted to decline speaking at Rotary meetings with the excuse that he or she is "not a public speaker." Audiences are interested in seeing the student and hearing his or her reactions to the culture, not the polished delivery of a speech. Non-Rotarian host families may want to consider participating with the student and they should ask if they can attend the Rotary meeting where the student speaks or performs.

## **Returning Home**

Travel arrangements for the return trip are in the hands of the natural parents and their travel agency and should be arranged no later than three months before the anticipated departure date. The student's parent has the responsibility to see that their student returns by the most direct route to his/her home country as designated by their open ended, return ticket. If there is a discussion about a student returning home early for ANY reason, such decisions cannot be made without the consent of the District 5520 Chair and detailed communication between the host family, hosting club, hosting district, sponsoring district, and family! Just as in ALL travel, the District Chair must be notified in writing of the itinerary of the student for return home.

## **SUMMARY**

The responsibility of hosting an exchange student can be summarized as follows:

- Meet your exchange student on arrival in your country, and make him or her feel at home as part of the family.
- Treat the student as you would wish a member of your family to be treated while living abroad.
- Ensure that the student is in a safe, respectful, and appropriate environment at all times.
- Involve the student in chores, responsibilities, and activities similar to those of your own family members.
- Monitor the student's performance at school.
- Help the student master your language.
- Encourage the student to meet other young people.
- Balance the student's outside commitments to allow him or her time to attend mandatory Rotary orientations.
- Be tolerant of differences and willing to change your own ideas.

The responsibility of hosting an exchange student is not complicated, but does require understanding, compassion, and patience. Your rewards from the program include expanded views, international understanding, and the development of long-term friendships, to name a few. Congratulations on your decision to enrich your life, while making a world of difference in the life of an exchange student.

## **Attachment 1**

### **Sample Questions to Ask Your Host Family**

1. What do I call you?
2. What am I expected to do daily other than make my bed, always keep my room tidy, and tidy the bathroom every time I use it?
3. What is the procedure for dirty clothes?
4. Where do I keep clothes until wash day?
5. Should I wash my own clothes and underclothes?
6. Should I iron my own clothes?
7. May I use the iron, washing machine, sewing machine at any time?
8. When is a convenient time for me to use the shower/bath (a.m. or p.m.)?
9. Where may I keep my toiletries?
10. May I use the family's bathroom toiletries (toothpaste, soap, etc.), or am I responsible for purchasing my own?
11. What time will meals be served?
12. What can I do to assist at mealtimes (help prepare meals, set the table, wash dishes, empty garbage)?
13. May I help myself to food and drink any time or should I ask first?
14. What areas of the house are strictly private (parents' bedroom, study/office)?
15. May I put pictures or posters in my room?
16. May I rearrange my bedroom?
17. What are your rules for me with regard to alcohol and smoking?
18. Where can I store my suitcases?
19. What time must I get up (on weekdays, on weekends)?
20. What time must I go to bed (on school nights, on weekends)?
21. What are the rules for going out at night and at what time must I be home? Can exceptions be made if I ask in advance?
22. May I have friends spend the night or visit during the day?
23. What are the rules about me using the telephone? Must I ask first?
24. May my friends call me?
25. May I call my friends?
26. May I make long-distance calls?
27. How do you want me to keep track the costs of my telephone calls?
28. What is the procedure for mailing letters? What address do I use for my incoming mail?
29. Do you have any dislikes, such as chewing gum, wearing a hat or curlers at the table, loud rock music, or smoking?
30. Do my host brothers or sisters have any dislikes?
31. What are the dates of your birthdays?
32. What are the transportation arrangements (car, bus, bike, walking, etc.)?
33. May I use the stereo, TV, computer, etc., at any time? Are there restrictions on computer and Internet use?
34. What are the rules about attending religious services?
35. Would you like me to phone home if I will be more than 30 minutes late?
36. When we go out as a family, should I pay for my own entrance fee, meals, etc.?
37. What arrangements should I make for school lunch?
38. Does the Rotary club pay my cost of travel to school?
39. Am I to attend Rotary club meetings? If yes, how will I get there?
40. What else can I do around the house (yard work, help clean, babysit)?
41. Please tell me how to interact with the house servants (where applicable).
42. Is there anything else you would like me to know?

## **Attachment 2**

### **Travel Policy of District 5520 Rotary Youth Exchange**

Inbound exchange students have limitations on their ability to travel. These limitations are in place for safety/liability reasons and for the purpose of insuring that the District Chairperson is aware of the inbound student's travel locations.

#### **A. Private airplanes and hot air balloons:**

Travel in private airplanes or hot air balloons is not permitted without District Chairperson approval and is strongly discouraged. Such travel is inherently dangerous and is not covered by insurance. Travel in private airplanes is specifically excluded from the CISI Bolduc medical insurance policy. The District will only allow students to travel by private aircraft or in hot air balloons if the student's natural parents sign a disclaimer of liability (a release) acknowledging that they will not hold Rotary responsible for the death or great bodily injury of their child and they obtain additional insurance coverage for the activity.

Travel in commercial airplanes is permitted, provided the student complies with the other requirements of paragraph B of the district's travel policy.

#### **B. Travel outside of District 5520:**

Students travelling outside of the boundaries of District 5520 (New Mexico and West Texas) must follow this procedure:

- 1) Travel requests should be done at least two weeks before the travel is to occur.
- 2) The hosting chaperone will send an email letter to the natural parents of the student, club counselor, YEO and District YE Chair outlining the:
  - Dates of travel
  - Locations and method of travel (plane tickets should NOT be purchased until after final approval is given).
  - Over night stay locations with address **and** phone number of each location.
- 3) If the hosting chaperone is not an approved Rotary volunteer or family with a complete background check, the background check may need to be done in the discretion of the YE Chair. The District YE Chair, Club counselor or YEO will send the background check application to the hosting chaperone, as needed.
- 4) The Club counselor or YEO will check the details of student travel by talking with the hosting chaperone and/or host family and confirm that the school has been informed of any missed days, as needed.
- 5) The Club counselor or YEO will send email approval to the District YE Chair.
- 6) The student and Club counselor or YEO will insure that the natural parents send the District YE Chair their written email approval for the travel.
- 7) The District YE Chair will approve the travel if all the above steps are timely and complete.

Travel without a chaperone is not usually approved, unless there is an approved adult at the other end of the plane flight or train stop to pick up the student and immediately confirm arrival.

## **Attachment 3**

### **Sexual Abuse/Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines for District 5520**

Rotary International is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of all youth program participants and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled within the following guidelines. The safety and well-being of young people must always be the first priority. Rotary District 5520 members and volunteers will follow these guidelines and the appropriate sections of the Rotary Code of Policies current as of the date of the allegation.

#### **Definitions**

**Sexual abuse.** Engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a young person or forcing or encouraging a young person to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts alone or with another person of any age, of the same or opposite sex. This includes nontouching offenses, such as indecent exposure or showing a young person sexual or pornographic material.

**Sexual harassment.** Sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is used by sexual predators to desensitize or groom their victims.

Some examples of sexual harassment include:

- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or spoken references to sexual conduct, talking about one's sex life in the presence of a young person, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or drawings
- Sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact such as brushing or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments

Who should determine if it is abuse or harassment?

Upon hearing allegations, adults receiving the report should not determine whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual abuse or sexual harassment. Instead, after ensuring the safety of the student, the adult should immediately report all allegations to the District Youth Protection Officer and/or District Governor if the Youth Protection officer is not available, who will advise the adult what further actions need to be taken.

#### **Allegation Reporting Guidelines**

Any adult to whom a Rotary youth exchange student reports an allegation of sexual abuse or harassment must follow these reporting guidelines:

1. Receive the report.
  - a. Listen attentively and stay calm. Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse or harassment. Be encouraging; do not express shock, horror, or disbelief. Do not ask questions but be supportive.

- b. Assure privacy but not confidentiality. Explain that you will have to help the student tell someone about the abuse/harassment in order to make it stop and ensure that it does not happen to others.
  - c. Reassure the exchange student that he or she did the right thing in telling you. Remember that your responsibility is to support the student.
  - d. Be nonjudgmental and reassure. Avoid criticizing anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It's especially important not to blame or criticize the exchange student. Emphasize that the situation was not his or her fault and that it was brave and mature for the student to report. Write down, as soon as possible, only the facts you were told in the student's words, not your impressions. Include the date and time it was reported.
2. Protect the exchange student.
- Ensure the safety and well-being of the exchange student by removing him or her from the situation immediately and preventing all contact with the alleged abuser or harasser. Reassure the student that this is being done for his or her safety and is not a punishment. Ensure that the student does not tell the report to multiple people to protect the integrity of the report and to prevent rumors.
3. Reporting allegations of abuse vs. harassment are different! The following procedure should be followed under all circumstances.
- a. **Sexual abuse**
- After consultation with the District 5520 Youth Protection Officer or District Governor (or in the case of an allegation against that person, after consulting with the Youth Exchange Placement Officer or DG Elect) report allegations of sexual abuse to appropriate authorities, child protection or law enforcement. If the activity described is sexual abuse, the District 5520 Youth Protection Officer or District Governor will advise the person to make a report to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services in Texas, whose hotline number is 1-800-252-5400. In New Mexico reports should be made to New Mexico State Police at 1-888-442-6677 or NM Child Protective Services at 1-800-797-3260.
- b. **Sexual harassment**
- Report allegations of sexual harassment to the District 5520 Youth Protection Officer, who is responsible for seeking the advice of appropriate agencies and interacting with them. If the allegation involves the conduct of the Youth Protection Officer, then contact the District Governor and/or District Youth Exchange Placement Officer.
5. Avoid gossip and blame.
- a. Don't tell anyone about the report other than those listed in this guideline and for those who need to know to protect the student, sharing the minimum information so that they may be helpful. Be careful to protect

the rights of both the victim and the accused during the investigation and do not confront or question either party.

- b. District 5520 will maintain the privacy (as distinct from confidentiality) of any accused person by limiting discussions only to those people listed in this document or who are required to know under Rotary International guidelines. The audience will be limited to the people listed in this document and those who need to immediately support the student.
6. Do not challenge the alleged offender.

In cases of sexual abuse, all contact and interrogation must be left entirely to law enforcement authorities. In cases of non criminal harassment, the Youth Protection Officer or District Governor is responsible for follow-through and will make appropriate decisions after the young person has been moved to a safe environment. The district governor may designate this task to a district youth protection officer or district review committee.

### **Follow-through Procedures**

Either the District Youth Exchange Chairman or District Youth Protection Officer will ensure that the following steps are taken immediately after a sexual abuse allegation is reported.

1. Confirm that the exchange student has been removed from the situation immediately and has no contact with the alleged sexual offender.
2. If law enforcement agencies will not investigate, the district youth protection officer or district review committee should decide what further action is required.
3. Ensure that the student receives immediate support services. Offer the exchange student an independent, non-Rotarian counselor to represent his or her interests. Ask social services or law enforcement to recommend someone who is not a Rotarian or in any way involved with the youth program.
4. Contact the student's parents or legal guardian.  
If the exchange student is away from home, the student and his or her parents should decide whether to stay in country or return home. If the exchange student stays in country, written authorization from the student's parents or legal guardian is required. If the student and the student's parents choose for the exchange student to return home, consult with police before making travel arrangements. If an investigation is pending, the police may not approve of the exchange student leaving the country.
5. Remove alleged abuser from all contact with any other young participants in Rotary programs and activities while investigations are conducted.
6. Cooperate with the police or legal investigation.
7. Inform the district governor of the allegation. Either the District Governor, District Youth Protection Officer or the Youth Exchange Chairman will inform Rotary International of the allegation within 72 hours and provide follow-up reports of steps taken and the status of investigations.

#### **Attachment 4**

##### **Department of State Regulations relevant to students and hosting:**

**§ 62.10 Program administration.** Sponsors are responsible for the effective administration of their exchange visitor programs. These responsibilities include: (a) *Selection of exchange visitors.* Sponsors shall provide a system to screen and select prospective exchange visitors to ensure that they are eligible for program participation, and that: (1) The program is suitable to the exchange visitor's background, needs, and experience; and (2) The exchange visitor possesses sufficient proficiency in the English language to participate in his or her program. (b) *Pre-arrival information.* Sponsors shall provide exchange visitors with pre-arrival materials including, but not limited to, information on: (1) The purpose of the Exchange Visitor Program; (2) Home-country physical presence requirement; (3) Travel and entry into the United States; (4) Housing; (5) Fees payable to the sponsor; (6) Other costs that the exchange visitor will likely incur (e.g., living expenses) while in the United States; (7) Health care and insurance; and (8) Other information which will assist exchange visitors to prepare for their stay in the United States. (c) *Orientation.* Sponsors shall offer appropriate orientation for all exchange visitors. Sponsors are encouraged to provide orientation for the exchange visitor's immediate family, especially those who are expected to be in the United States for more than one year. Orientation shall include, but not be limited to, information concerning: (1) Life and customs in the United States; (2) Local community resources (e.g., public transportation, medical centers, schools, libraries, recreation centers, and banks), to the extent possible; (3) Available health care, emergency assistance, and insurance coverage; (4) A description of the program in which the exchange visitor is participating; (5) Rules that the exchange visitors are required to follow under the sponsor's program; (6) Address of the sponsor and the name and telephone number of the responsible officer; and

##### **§ 62.10**

(7) Address and telephone number of the Exchange Visitor Program Services of the Department of State and a copy of the Exchange Visitor Program brochure outlining the regulations relevant to the exchange visitors. (e) *Monitoring of exchange visitors.* Sponsors shall monitor, through employees, officers, agents, or third parties, the exchange visitors participating in their programs. Sponsors shall: (1) Ensure that the activity in which the exchange visitor is engaged is consistent with the category and activity listed on the exchange visitor's Form DS-2019; (2) Monitor the progress and welfare of the exchange visitor to the extent appropriate for the category; and (3) Require the exchange visitor to keep the sponsor apprised of his or her address and telephone number, and maintain such information.

**§ 62.14 Insurance.** (a) Sponsors shall require each exchange visitor to have insurance in effect which covers the exchange visitor for sickness or accident during the period of time that an exchange visitor participates in the sponsor's exchange visitor program. Minimum coverage shall provide: (1) Medical benefits of at least \$50,000 per accident or illness; (2) Repatriation of remains in the amount of \$7,500; (3) Expenses associated with the medical evacuation of the exchange visitor to his or her home country in the amount of \$10,000; and (4) A deductible not to exceed \$500 per accident or illness. (b) An insurance policy secured to fulfill the requirements of this section: (1) May require a waiting period for pre-existing conditions which is reasonable as determined by current industry standards; (2) May include provision for co-insurance under the terms of which the exchange visitor may be required to pay up to 25% of the covered benefits per accident or illness; and (3) Shall not unreasonably exclude coverage for perils inherent to the activities of the exchange program in which the exchange visitor participates. (c) Any policy, plan, or contract secured to fill the above requirements must, at a minimum, be: (1) Underwritten by an insurance corporation having an A.M. Best rating of "A-" or above, an Insurance Solvency International, Ltd. (ISI) rating of "A-i" or above, a Standard & Poor's Claims-paying Ability rating of "A-" or above, a Weiss Research, Inc. rating of B+ or above, or such other rating as the Department of State may from time to time specify; or (2) Backed by the full faith

and credit of the government of the exchange visitor's home country; or (3) Part of a health benefits program offered on a group basis to employees or enrolled students by a designated sponsor; or (4) Offered through or underwritten by a federally qualified Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) or eligible Competitive Medical Plan (CMP) as determined by the Health Care Financing Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (d) Federal, state or local government agencies, state colleges and universities, and public community colleges may, if permitted by law, self-insure any or all of the above-required insurance coverage. (e) At the request of a non-governmental sponsor of an exchange visitor program, and upon a showing that such sponsor has funds readily available and under its control sufficient to meet the requirements of this section, the Department of State may permit the sponsor to self-insure or to accept full financial responsibility for such requirements. (f) The Department of State, in its sole discretion, may condition its approval of self-insurance or the acceptance of full financial responsibility by the non-governmental sponsor by requiring such sponsor to secure a payment bond in favor of the Department of State guaranteeing the sponsor's obligations hereunder. (g) An accompanying spouse or dependent of an exchange visitor is required to be covered by insurance in the amounts set forth in paragraph (a) of this section. Sponsors shall inform exchange visitors of this requirement, in writing, in advance of the exchange visitor's arrival in the United States. (h) An exchange visitor who willfully fails to maintain the insurance coverage set forth above while a participant in an exchange visitor program or who makes a material misrepresentation to the sponsor concerning such coverage shall be deemed to be in violation of these regulations and shall be subject to termination as a participant. (i) A sponsor shall terminate an exchange visitor's participation in its program if the sponsor determines that the exchange visitor or any accompanying spouse or dependent willfully fails to remain in compliance with this section. [58 FR 15196, Mar. 19, 1993, as amended at 59 FR 34761, July 7, 1994. Redesignated at 64 FR 54539, Oct. 7, 1999]

**§ 62.15 Annual reports.** Sponsors shall submit an annual report to the Department of State. An illustrative form of such report may be found at Appendix D to this part. Such report shall be filed on an academic or calendar year basis, as directed by the Department of State, and shall contain the following: (a) *Program report and evaluation.* A brief summary of the activities in which exchange visitors were engaged, including an evaluation of program effectiveness; (b) *Reciprocity.* A description of the nature and extent of reciprocity occurring in the sponsor's exchange visitor program during the reporting year; (c) *Cross-cultural activities.* A summary of the cross-cultural activities provided for its exchange visitors during the reporting year; (d) *Proof of insurance.* Certification of compliance with insurance coverage requirements set forth in § 62.14. (e) *Form DS-2019 usage.* A report of Form DS-2019 usage during the reporting year setting forth the following information: (1) The total number of blank Forms DS-2019 received from the Department of State during the reporting year; (2) The total number of Forms DS-2019 voided or destroyed by the sponsor during the reporting year and the document numbers of such forms; (3) The total number of Forms DS-2019 issued to potential exchange visitors that were returned to the sponsor or not used for entry into the United States; and (4) The total number and document identification number sequence of all blank Forms DS-2019 in the possession of the sponsor on the date of the report. (f) *Program participation.* A numerical count, by category, of all exchange visitors participating in the sponsor's program for the reporting year.

Attachment 5

Attachment 5



United States Department of State

*Assistant Secretary for  
Educational and Cultural Affairs*

Washington, DC 20522

Dear American Host Family,

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

Secondary School Student programs have been a part of U.S. public diplomacy efforts since 1949. Approximately 30,000 secondary school students from around the world participate in this program each year. The good will of American host families in opening their homes to these young international visitors is essential to the success of this program. Thank you!

The health, safety and well-being of the young people who participate in this program are, collectively, our highest priority. A host family has many responsibilities, the most important of which is the care and well-being of a young person from a foreign country for an academic semester or academic year. The foreign student is a guest in your home and in our country and you may be the first "real Americans" this young person encounters. How you interact with this student will create a powerful image about our country and its people.

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

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick A. Ruth".

Rick A. Ruth  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Private Sector Exchange, Acting