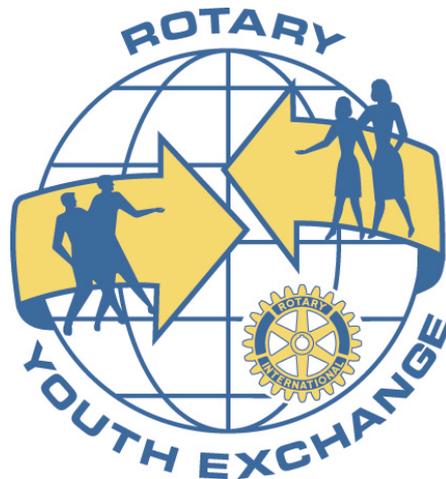




**ROTARY** District 9810  
Victoria, Australia



# **YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM HOST FAMILY GUIDE**

*District 9810 Youth Exchange Committee*

As always we welcome suggestions, criticisms (constructive) or any other comment from Rotary Clubs, Student Counselors, Host Family's, Exchange Students and those who use this handbook

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## **FOREWORD**

Rotary's Youth Exchange Program is a tremendous opportunity for secondary school age students to travel abroad to further their education in an entirely different environment to their own. Rotary hopes that the impact of this experience for the participants will not only have an immeasurable impact on international relations but also will stimulate those in the program to become better citizens and, as such, help prepare them for participation as leaders of their communities and play a significant role in the shaping of tomorrow's world.

When your Rotary Club agreed to host an overseas student as part of its commitment to the Rotary Youth Exchange Program the Club was required to appoint a counsellor for the student provide more than one host family. The student is a young person in a foreign country without their parents or their siblings, in new surroundings and most significantly, often having to communicate in a new language. It can be tough!

The host family/s are most important in the student's year. What is required is for the student to feel included in the family. The student should be helped to settle in quickly, feel at home, participate fully in the life of the club and form a good relationship and friendship with the family included the extended family members whenever possible.

There will be times when there may be a difference of opinion or a misunderstanding of something. Quite often this will be caused by a different cultural expectation, a difference in interpretation of a few words. All of the countries, which we exchange with, have both subtle and obvious differences in language, gestures, greetings and personal feelings for the same question or occurrence. When you have not had to experience another culture it is both necessary and important that everyone understands the need for patience and acceptance of these differences certainly in the first, second or third instances.

The following information is offered to yourself as advice and guidelines as to what is required to ensure a successful exchange experience for everyone. Some is written as it was given to the student in a similar set of guidelines. It is to be read in conjunction with the documentation and requirements of RI Accreditation and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA), which approves the Victorian Rotary Districts as a single entity Student Exchange Organisation (SEO) and which Rotary District 9810 must adhere.

This handbook is designed to offer some guidance to your self as a host family and mentor to an inbound student. Rotary recognises we are all human beings with shortcomings. None of us are perfect or infallible and this handbook hopefully will assist in preparing students, parents, and Rotary clubs for their participation in the program and to overcome some of the pitfalls experienced on the journey.

These guidelines are the product of many years of experience in youth exchange at all levels. The only exception to this 'guideline philosophy' is that students are expected to adhere to the specific set of rules approved by Rotary International, which have worldwide application. Both students and parents acknowledge adherence to these rules when they sign the 'Terms and Conditions of Exchange' document.

The District Youth Exchange Committee is always available to offer you both advice and assistance if you require this during the exchange period, which covers a period of close to two years.

The program is an extremely rewarding experience for all who participate in it whether a student, Rotary Club, host family, counselor, host community or at district level.

As one host family you should all be fully aware of this vital role that you have not only in the success of the exchange for the student but also for your club and Rotary.

### ***The Objectives of the Youth Exchange Program are:***

- **To further international goodwill and understanding** by enabling students to study at first hand some of the culture and accomplishments of people in lands other than their own;
- **To enable students to advance their education** by studying for a year in an environment, entirely different, to their own and by possibly undertaking study of courses and subjects not normally available to them in secondary schools of their own country;
- **To broaden the student's own outlook** by learning to live with and meet people of other cultures, creeds and colours, and by having to cope with day to day problems in an environment completely different to the one they have experienced at home;
- **To act as ambassadors** for their own country by addressing Rotary clubs, schools, community organisations and youth groups in their host country and by imparting as much knowledge as they can of their own country and its culture to the people they meet during their time abroad; and
- **To study and observe** all facets of life and culture in the country where they are hosted so that on return to their home country they can pass on the knowledge they have gained by addressing Rotary clubs, schools, youth groups and community organisations.

### **Rotary and Youth Exchange in Australia and District 9810**

Whilst the concept of Rotary clubs arranging for students to travel to another country and have others reciprocate this experience first occurred in 1926 the first organised district-to-district student exchange was in 1958. That was an exchange between a district in the USA and one in Australia. Since then the Rotary youth exchange program has become the largest student exchange program and the most respected. Rotary clubs in nearly 80 countries sponsor annually more than 8,000 students. Some are for short duration special interest purposes but the majority are for a full academic year.

The Youth Exchange Committee is responsible for the administration of the program. The exchange itself is the responsibility of the club – both the sponsor and the hosting club. Within the district administrative structure, Youth Exchange is a part of the Youth Service Committee, which looks after all Rotary programs associated with youth.

Your inbound student's application has been received from a nominated country for an exchange placement and is in agreement between District 9810 and that country. Administratively that may mean it was received from a multi district organising committee such as in Germany or Denmark or from other countries where the exchange is between specific districts such as in France and Brazil where these arrangements have been in place for many years.

Part of the application is the Guarantee Form, which is what is required to be completed by the host club before the student can apply for the student visa and makes their travel plans. That is the guarantee of a satisfactory hosting arrangement and enrolment in a secondary school.

## The Role of the District Youth Exchange Committee

- ✚ Rotary Youth Exchange is an exchange of students between one Rotary club and another in different countries.
- ✚ Conduct and administration of the Exchange Program is the responsibility of each participating Rotary district under the authority of the respective District Governor.
- ✚ All Rotary districts participating in the Youth Exchange Program agree to comply with Rotary International guidelines. This responsibility is delegated in District 9780 to the District Youth Exchange Committee.
- ✚ To assure a complete understanding of the district's rules, regulations, and guidelines, the District 9810 Committee provides a comprehensive orientation to our Inbound Students shortly after their arrival.
- ✚ The Youth Exchange Committee establishes and maintains communications with the Inbound Students both before their arrival and during their year here, and also with the Outbound Students we are sending overseas.

*The District 9810 Youth Exchange Committee is a valuable resource for both you and the Exchange student, and its members are familiar with the conduct of the Exchange Program both here and in the country your student is from. Feel welcome to contact any member of the District 9810 Committee anytime you have a question or need help with a problem.*

## The Role of the Host Rotary Club

The local Rotary club provides another level of support to you, the Host family, the student, and the Exchange Program.

- ✚ Rotary clubs will appoint a Student Counsellor. This person serves primarily as an advisor and advocate for the student, but should certainly also be in contact with the host family on a regular basis, and be available to answer questions or direct host parents to the appropriate resource when needed.
- ✚ The exchange student should be encouraged to attend the weekly Rotary meetings and be involved in the hosting club's Rotary events.
- ✚ The hosting club provides the exchange student an allowance of \$120 per month. This is to be used for incidental personal expenses, entertainment, etc. Through the Rotary-provided allowance and parental resources, exchange students are expected to be financially self-supporting in terms of personal expenses, clothing, entertainment, and travel when not part of a host family event.

## The Role of the Host Family

The operative word here is **Family**, and we ask you to help your exchange student become a part of your family during the period that he or she lives with you. This means treating this young person as you would your own son or daughter, not as a guest, and exercising all of the **parental responsibilities and authorities** you would for your own child.

**Establish a clear understanding of expectations** soon after your student arrives. Discuss the *First Night Questions* – which your student will have with them.

- ✚ **Be prepared to help your student recover from homesickness.** This can take many forms, from simply general sadness to wishing to stay in his or her room alone. It is perfectly normal for exchange students to have bad days and experience homesickness. If you are sensitive to this, you will be able to reassure your student that their reactions are perfectly normal. Help them to keep busy and involved.

- ✚ **Encourage your student to get involved.** Rotary, school extracurricular activities, sports, community activities, church groups, and family activities may be new and unfamiliar to your student, and will likely be very 'different' from those activities he or she was involved in back home. If you sense that your student is bored and reluctant to participate in available activities, it may simply be because no one has asked him or her to join in.
- ✚ **Understand 'culture shock' and help your student learn our culture.** Sometimes it is difficult for a student to understand their feelings as a result of differences from our culture to the ones they have known from birth.
- ✚ **School Attendance.** In District 9810 exchange students must attend school at all times and maintain satisfactory class results. Host parents, please treat your exchange student as you would your own child regarding school activities and if you have any problems what-so-ever with your exchange student not attending school/school activities, please speak with their Counselor or Country Coordinator immediately.
- ✚ **Schoolwork.** As a host parent, you should discuss schoolwork with your exchange student, your student's teachers, and school officials if academic or social problems are becoming apparent. Please attend parent-teacher interview sessions at the student's school. The student's counselor may do this.

***Host families need to know that exchange student's experience phases of elation, anxiety and depression.***

***Please support your exchange student through any challenging times that they will experience.***

## **Moving to a New Host Family**

Ideally all host families and the dates the student is expected to move should be well planned and known to:

All Host Families	The student's school
The Rotary club	The counselor
The country coordinator	The YE Secretary

## **When a Student Moves Host Family**

Whenever the exchange student changes host families the Moving Host Family form must be completed and sent to The YEP Secretary and the student's Country Coordinator. See *Appendices*



## Host Family Responsibilities Communication With The Student

- + Establish a clear understanding of expectations soon after your student arrives. Your student will have some questions to ask you by ensuring that you and your student address the following questions which your student may have:
  - *Would you prefer that I call you by your first name or by another name?*
  - *I will make my bed, keep my room tidy at all times and clean the bathroom after I use it. What else should I do regularly?*
  - *What are normal meal times? The normal daily routine for the household? Discuss any dietary requirements that you may have and work out suitable alternatives.*
  - *Do I have a permanent job at meal times – lay or clear the table, wash or dry the dishes, empty the rubbish?*
  - *May I help myself to food and drink (within moderation) or should I ask first?*
  - *What are the arrangements for school lunches?*
  - *What are the laundry arrangements? Where should I put my dirty clothes? Should I do my own washing and ironing?*
  - *Where can I keep my toiletries? May I use family soap, shampoo or toothpaste?*
  - *When is the most convenient time for me to use the bathroom? Are there any water restrictions?*
  - *What areas of the house are private?*
  - *Do you have any dislikes that I should avoid?*
  - *What times should I go to bed and rise in the morning? Is this different for weekends?*
  - *May I use the stereo, TV, DVD, computer, sewing machine or workshop tools?*
  - *Can I go out during the week? At weekends? Under what conditions?*
  - *What are the responsibilities of house employees? (if there are any) How should I address them?*
  - *May I have my own pictures or posters in my bedroom?*
  - *Where should I store my luggage?*
  - *If I have a problem getting home, I will phone you. If I am going to be late I will phone you within 30 minutes. Is that acceptable?*
  - *May I invite friends around during the day, to stay the night or for a weekend?*
  - *What are your expectations of me if I use the home phone?*
  - *What postal address should I use for incoming mail?*
  - *Should I use public transport to and from school, to the city, for outings at night and during the day?*
  - *When and how are birthdays of host family members celebrated?*
  - *Are there any other special or festive days you observe?*
  - *If I have a problem, how would you like me to handle it?*
- + Explain to your student that he/she is a **member of the family** and not a guest while staying with you. He/she is expected to do chores, accept duties and participate in family activities along with everyone else. He/she is **not on vacation or a visitor**, but is here to participate in the culture of Australia.

- + Explain to your student that he/she is expected to attend Rotary meetings regularly (most clubs meet every week). Organise transport with other Rotarians if you are not able to take him/her.
- + Please treat your student as you would your own child regarding school activities and if you have any problems with your Exchange student not attending school/school activities, please speak with the *Counsellor* or *Country Coordinator* immediately.
- + Discuss schoolwork with your student, your student's teachers, and school officials if academic or social problems are becoming apparent. Please attend parent-teacher interview sessions at the student's school.
- + Encourage your student to get involved in Rotary activities, school extra-curricular activities, sport, community activities and family activities. However, be aware that these may be new and unfamiliar to your student, and could also be very 'different' from those activities he or she was involved in back home. If you sense that your student is bored and reluctant to participate in available activities, it may simply be because **no one has asked him or her to join in.**
- + Assist your student to get to know as many club members as possible.
- + Help your student become acquainted with other Host families he/she is scheduled to stay with so that the transition will be easier when the time comes. If you are not the first Host family, understand that your student and earlier Host families may want to maintain contact as well. Students will generally stay with four families for 3-4 months each.
- + Try to learn as much as you can of the customs of the student's home country. Too much freedom may be bad for a student who comes from a restrictive society. Likewise, too much restriction may be bad for a student who comes from a more lenient society. Often you will just have to play this by ear and do the best you can. For the most part, these students are good, reasonably mature, level headed representatives of their countries and can be trusted — but they are also just teenagers!
- + Make sure you remember your student's birthday. It is often around this time that students feel really homesick and miss their families.
- + Explain to your student that it would be in their interest to attend any special opportunities, trips, cultural or social events that you or other Rotarians may ask them to, in order for them to make the most of their exchange.
- + From time to time ask your student if he/she is writing to his/her family and also sending in monthly reports to his/her Rotary District and Sponsor Club.
- + Do not hesitate to ask for help from your student's Counsellor, local Rotary club, or members of the District Youth Exchange Committee if you have questions, concerns, or issues of any kind.

## Single Parent Host Family

If a Rotary Exchange student is to be hosted in a single parent host family, only the same gender is permissible.

## One Host Parent Goes Away

If one host parent is to go away from home for a period of time e.g. a weekend/business trip/holiday and the exchange student is of the opposite gender to the remaining host parent and there are no siblings living in the home at that time, host parents should discuss accommodation arrangements with the Counsellor and student.

## Being the First Host Family

- ✚ While being 'first' often provides the greatest challenges for dealing with things like language difficulties and cultural differences, it also provides the opportunity to form a lasting emotional bond with the student that can continue after the student moves on to subsequent host families.
- ✚ The first host family will have a huge impact on the student and how he or she copes in, what is, the most challenging period of their exchange
- ✚ Once your student has moved to the next host family, maintain contact without undermining the development of relationships with the next family. Inviting your student to share special family events, like birthdays, will reinforce the relationship you developed earlier, and will usually be welcomed by the current host family, just as you welcomed others' invitations to the student when part of your family.

## Being the Second/Third Host Family

- ✚ By this time the student has usually overcome homesickness, begun to understand the language, has hopefully settled into school and made new friends.
- ✚ This is often a time when students prove they are typical teenagers and may try to push the boundaries – just like our own teenagers sometimes do. Do not be frightened to say "NO" to your exchange student.
- ✚ Check and confirm departure date with the country coordinator about February.

## Being the Final Host Family

- ✚ Being the host family at the conclusion of the exchange year could involve dealing with many of the same emotions the student had upon arrival, but this time caused by the realisation that the 'familiar' is now **our** culture, and the 'unknown' involves **returning home**.
- ✚ A sign of a successful exchange is the student's reluctance to go home, and we wouldn't want it any other way!

### ***The following points are important for the final host family:***

- ✚ You will need to help your student prepare to go home.
- ✚ Confirm the departure date with the Country Coordinator.
- ✚ Make sure, through the Country Coordinator, that return dates have been confirmed and that the reservations have been booked.
- ✚ Check well in advance with the Counsellor that the student's passport and tickets will be available when required.
- ✚ Help the student with packing and luggage.
- ✚ Students may need to send possessions home via surface mail to ensure they meet airline weight requirements.
- ✚ Ensure the student has finalised any financial obligations with anyone – please note that students are told they must never borrow money, but we need to make sure all financial obligations have been finalised.

- ✚ Ensure the Counsellor and the student (joint signatories) have withdrawn the \$400 emergency money, closed off the bank account and the full balance of the account refunded to the student.
- ✚ If the student has been provided with a 'loan' mobile phone, make sure it is returned to the owner and there are no outstanding costs.
- ✚ Make sure appropriate arrangements have been made regarding school uniforms, books, calculators - i.e. they may need to be returned to the second-hand shop at school or given back to the Rotary club for recycling. If the student wishes to take them home they need to pay for them.
- ✚ The Rotary club should plan a farewell event involving all Host families, the student's Counsellor and Club members.
- ✚ Allow the student time in their final days of exchange to say goodbye to the many friends they have made during the past year.

## **Additional Information for Host Parents**

### **✚ Tips for your student to stay safe**

*Your student will have these tips in their Student Handbook, but it would be good for you to go over these tips with your student and encourage them to ask about anything they are not sure of:*

- If you have a problem or are worried about something, always tell an adult you trust about it, such as your teacher, Counselor or current or recent host parents. NEVER suffer in silence!
- Pack your own suitcase and never carry items abroad for others.
- Carry the telephone numbers for the emergency services in Australia and keep them handy.
- Inform host family where you are going and what time you will be home – don't change your plans at the last minute as this can cause confusion.
- Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten you or anyone in your group and tell someone responsible.
- If you are out at night in the centre of town, stay in places with street lights – 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 go to a shop or place where you will be seen by lots of people to ask for directions.
- If someone you don't know talks to you, just walk away.
- Have the details of your accommodation on you, whether it's your host family's address and telephone number or hotel or campsite details.
- Keep enough money to make a telephone call.
- Keep your money hidden in an inside pocket, bum bag, concealed money belt or something similar – choose whichever is comfortable for you.
- Arrange for someone to pick you up at night unless you can take public transport where you are amongst a sizeable group of people.
- Make sure you know the person who is coming to pick you up. Never get into a car unless it is with this arranged person.

- If you are on a bus and someone makes you feel unsafe, 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.
- Always look and behave confidently.

## Working with Children Check Card

*The Working with Children Act 2005* requires that people who work or volunteer in certain child-related work, apply for and pass, a WWC Check. It aims to strike a balance between protecting children who are under 18 years of age, promoting volunteering and safeguarding the rights of individuals.

All people over the age of 18 years resident in the host family must have a WWCC.

As of 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008, all volunteers who work with children must apply for a Victorian Government 'Working with Children Check' which is an obligation under the *Working with Children Act 2005*. [www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren)

## Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC)

- Students are covered with Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC). This provides the same coverage for the students as basic Medicare.
- Students are provided with their OSHC Card but must register their arrival date in Australia by contacting the provider. Check with the YE Secretary for this information.
- Emergency ambulance costs are covered under the (OSHC) policy.
- There is no bulk billing, and students must pay for medical visits and then claim back the refund from either the OSHC provider. Any shortfall is then claimable on their personal travel insurance.
- In the event of an emergency requiring immediate attention, treat the student as you would your own child.
- Contact the District Committee as soon as possible.
- Inform doctors/hospital staff that the child is an Exchange student.



## Medical Insurance

- The cost of any medical treatment is the responsibility of the student and his/her natural parents. Host parents are not expected to pay any medical expenses. Students should have the financial ability to pay for any medical expenses at the time provided, and will then claim them back from their insurance provider.
- However, as Host parents, you are asked to make arrangements for medical treatment when necessary, as you would your own child.
- Whilst it is important to respect the privacy of your Exchange student, common sense should prevail as to who is made aware of medical conditions. Serious illnesses or injuries must be made known to the Counselor, Country Coordinator and Youth Exchange Chairman immediately.

## **Rotary's Insurance Package**

Prior to leaving their home country all inbound students must have an insurance policy compliant with Rotary International. Their Country Coordinator in District 9810 will have checked this prior to the student's arrival in Australia.

Rotary Youth Exchange Australia's Travel Insurance covers students from Germany, Switzerland and Brazil. That may cover students from other countries or a Policy purchased in their home country. Check with the YE secretary if you are unsure.

All students accepted into the Youth Exchange Program must have insurance cover that is compliant with Rotary International and which covers the risks of:

- Personal accident, injury and/or death
- Funeral expenses
- Return of body remains
- Travel
- Loss of personal belongings
- Personal liability
- Medical insurance
- Hospitalization
- Terrorism

Note that there is \$250 excess relating to loss/theft/damage to personal belongings, baggage/business property and electronic equipment and also personal liability.

**Rotary's insurance policy** is specific - it is not a policy supplementary to any other policy.

- It provides 12 months coverage - it begins from the time the student left their home to the time they return to it at the end of the exchange.
- Apart from Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC), which is an Australian government requirement, the student does not need to take out any further insurance.

### **Policy exclusions**

Like most insurance policies, there are several *exclusions* you should be aware of.

#### **The policy will NOT cover**

- Some pre-existing conditions
- Professional sports
- Suicide or attempted suicide
- Riot or civil commotion
- Racing a motor propelled vehicle
- Flying in any aircraft, except as a fare-paying passenger on a scheduled airline. (**Note:** *This exclusion may vary depending on the policy – ensure this is checked prior to a student flying **on anything other** than as a fare paying passenger on a scheduled airline)*)

The student (and host family) should fully understand how their insurance policy works and should know how to make a claim.

### **Whilst in Australia the student should:**

- Ensure their host family and Counselor are aware of their insurance policy;
- Give a copy of their insurance policy to their host family and Counselor
- Carry their Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) card; and
- Carry their travel and accident insurance card.

## **Important Rules For Your Student**

*Your student will already have knowledge of these rules as they are outlined in the Student Handbook. However it is important for the Host parents to regularly discuss and reinforce these rules, if necessary:*

### **General**

- Outline the club's rules regarding the exchange, and what is expected of the student throughout the year – gently but firmly.
- Establish a caring, friendly relationship with your student.
- Be aware of district rules and make sure that the student is also aware of and understands them.
- Ensure that the student understands that he/she is under the Host District's authority while on exchange and must abide by the rules and conditions of exchange.

### **Abuse Or Harassment**

- It is important to emphasise to your student that abuse or harassment must not be tolerated. He/she should talk to you, their Counsellor and/or the Host Parents or other trusted adults if they encounter any form of abuse or harassment whilst on their exchange.

### **School**

- Reiterate with your student that school enrolment is as a **full-time student** and the expectation is to attend classes and take part in all normal school activities.

### **Alcohol**

- Underage drinking of alcoholic beverages is expressly forbidden. Even if students are of a legal age, they should refrain from drinking alcohol at public gatherings. If the host family offers a student an alcoholic drink, it is permissible to accept it under their supervision in their home.

### **Drugs**

- With the exception of prescribed medication, use of any drugs is not permitted. Use of illegal drugs would result in immediate repatriation (if not imprisonment!).

### **Driving**

- The student is not authorized to operate a motorized vehicle of any kind or participate in driver education programs. This will make the student's insurance cover void.

### **Travel**

- Unauthorised travel is forbidden. If the student wants to travel outside their district and depending on the travel destination, prior permission must be gained from their Host Parents, yourself, Country Coordinator or Chairman and/or their biological parents/guardians.

## Dating

- The student is discouraged from forming a steady and serious romantic attachment, as the focus becomes the relationship and this would distract the student from having a comprehensive exchange.

## Use Of Home Telephone And Internet

- Ensure that the student establishes the rules of communication with the host families at the outset of each stay. Tying up phone lines, Internet usage, payment of the costs, when and how, etc. should be discussed and agreed upon in the first few days within each new home.
- The student must pay for any costs incurred by the student. The students responsible for any telephone, computer costs, or Internet charges they incur, and Host Parents should decide in advance, how the student is to pay for such usage when it is permitted. It is a privilege, not a right, for the student to use the home computer. Host parents must make sure there is a mutual understanding of this usage.

## Mobile Phone

- If a student does not wish to use their own mobile phone and wants to purchase an Australian one, please ensure that they know that they are expected to pay for it themselves. In the first weeks Counsellors may help the student purchase a phone if required.

- ***Ensure that your student puts these contact numbers in their phone memory***

<b>POLICE EMERGENCIES ONLY .....</b>	<b>000</b>
<b>GSM SPECIAL EMERGENCY SERVICE (MOBILES).....</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>RAPE CRISIS CENTRE .....</b>	<b>1800 424 017</b>
<b>LIFELINE .....</b>	<b>131 114</b>
<b>CRISIS CARE CENTRE .....</b>	<b>1800 000 599</b>
<b>CHILD PROTECTION CRISIS LINE.....</b>	<b>131 278</b>
<b>KIDS HELP LINE .....</b>	<b>1800 551 800</b>

## Smoking

- Smoking is discouraged or not permitted in most homes and public places.

## Student Allowance

- The hosting club provides the exchange student an allowance of \$120 per month. This is to be used for incidental personal expenses, entertainment, etc. Through the allowance provided by Rotary and parental resources, exchange students are expected to be financially self-supporting in terms of personal expenses, clothing, entertainment, and travel when not part of a host family event.

## Reports/Letters

- Make sure that the student sends their required reports to their respective Rotary district back home
- Keeps in touch with their sponsoring club. This contact is important, especially when the student returns home.

## Family Visits

- You may need to reiterate with your student that visits by parents/guardians, siblings or friends are discouraged early in the period of exchange and toward the end of the exchange. Such visits, if they are to be arranged, may only take place with the Host Club and District's consent and within their guidelines.

## Travel Insurance

- Ensure that your student has travel insurance that meets the minimum guidelines recommended by Rotary International for Youth Exchange Students.

## Return Home

- Ensure that your student is aware that he/she must return home directly by a route mutually agreeable to their Host District and their parents/guardians. The date of this will be advised by the District Travel Coordinator and will be preferably the first weekend in July.

## The Role of the Exchange Student

Above all else, we expect the Inbound students to be involved in their new family, involved in their school, involved in the community in which they now live, and involved in Rotary. To do this successfully, most exchange students must do two things:

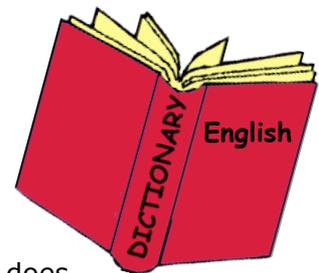
- ✚ Learn to communicate in English
- ✚ Learn to adapt.

Your job as Host parents is to ensure the student's participation and assist them in adapting. Remember, their culture is likely quite different and learning to 'fit in' and get comfortable in Australia can be a challenge – please be patient!

## Learning English

Most students arrive with some understanding of the English language, and some can speak and understand our language well, having studied English for several years in school. For some, considerable effort will be needed on their part to understand the English we  *speak*, which is often different than the English they were  *taught* in school.

- ✚ The student must practice, by engaging in real conversation. Reading and writing our language is necessary to develop true proficiency.
- ✚ Some host families label objects around the house, which can be a fun activity.
- ✚ You can help by asking questions that require more than "yes" or "no" answers, having patience when communications are not clear, and consciously speaking slowly and clearly, with frequent checks for understanding.
- ✚ Most students will have a dictionary close at hand. If the student does not understand something, just repeating it slower and louder **does not** help them to understand.
- ✚ Think of other words, other phrases, complete sentences and non-truncated words to use and try to minimise slang so the student understands.



**Exchange students often 'pretend' to understand because they believe they are 'expected' to understand – again, please be patient with them.**

## Learning to Adapt

- + The Host family will need to encourage and help the student to adapt by being willing to:
  - Try new things.
  - Do things differently.
  - Accept that our cultural differences are neither 'better nor worse' simply **different**.
- + The Host family also needs to adapt and sometimes after the initial excitement wears off, hosted students can be irritating to their host brothers and sisters and host brothers and sisters can be irritating to the hosted student. Host parents need to deal with a situation such as this with mutual care, sensitivity and guidance to all concerned.

***Please remember .....***

***The Exchange student is a child in a new country with a new family.***

## The Role of the Student Counselor

*The following is intended to present Host families with the responsibilities that the Counsellor has towards the inbound student. This should then assist to provide a clearer picture of their duties. However, Host parents are often expected to collaborate with the Counsellor for various things and are also encouraged to contact the Counsellor whenever they need help with their student.*

### Before The First Host Family The Counselor Will:

- + Enrol the student in school and will assist in selecting a course of study for the student.
- + Set up a bank account for the student's personal use.
- + Assist the student to set up an, 'emergency money' account with a balance of \$400 requiring two signatures - that of the Counsellor and that of the student. It must be replenished by the student's parents/guardians if it is depleted. Unused funds at the end of the exchange will be returned to the student.

### General Information:

- + The Counsellor will arrange for the student to make presentations about his/her country and the experience of being an Exchange student, to various community groups, e.g. Rotary clubs, school assemblies, senior citizens, etc.
- + The Counsellor will learn what interests your student has and what outside interests/contacts the club members have. He/she will then set up various experiences for your student in concurrence with the Host families. Examples could be:
  - A weekend on an operating farm
  - A symphony or concert
  - A sporting event
  - Museums, art galleries
  - Visits to historic sites
  - Visit to another State or National Capital
  - Visit to a court in session
  - State or country agricultural shows
  - Camping or fishing trip

## School

- ✚ The Rotary club should make the decision as to which school the student attends in close consultation with the Counsellor who will then liaise with the school.



## School Expenses

- ✚ No school fees are to be incurred by the Host families. The Club will not put the exchange student into a private school unless school fees have been waived.
- ✚ If students insist on having new uniforms they may be asked to purchase the articles themselves. The same applies to schoolbooks, where second hand books should be purchased or borrowed whenever possible. Most schools will assist wherever they can. Be careful that demands to have everything new are not coming from the student. In conjunction with the student's Counsellor, check this with the school.
- ✚ Transport costs to and from school are the responsibility of the student. Sometimes clubs choose to assist with travel expenses to and from school. That can be by sharing with the student the cost of a yearly student concession ticket. That then provides the student with seven day per week travel when required. Host parents should never incur travel expenses.

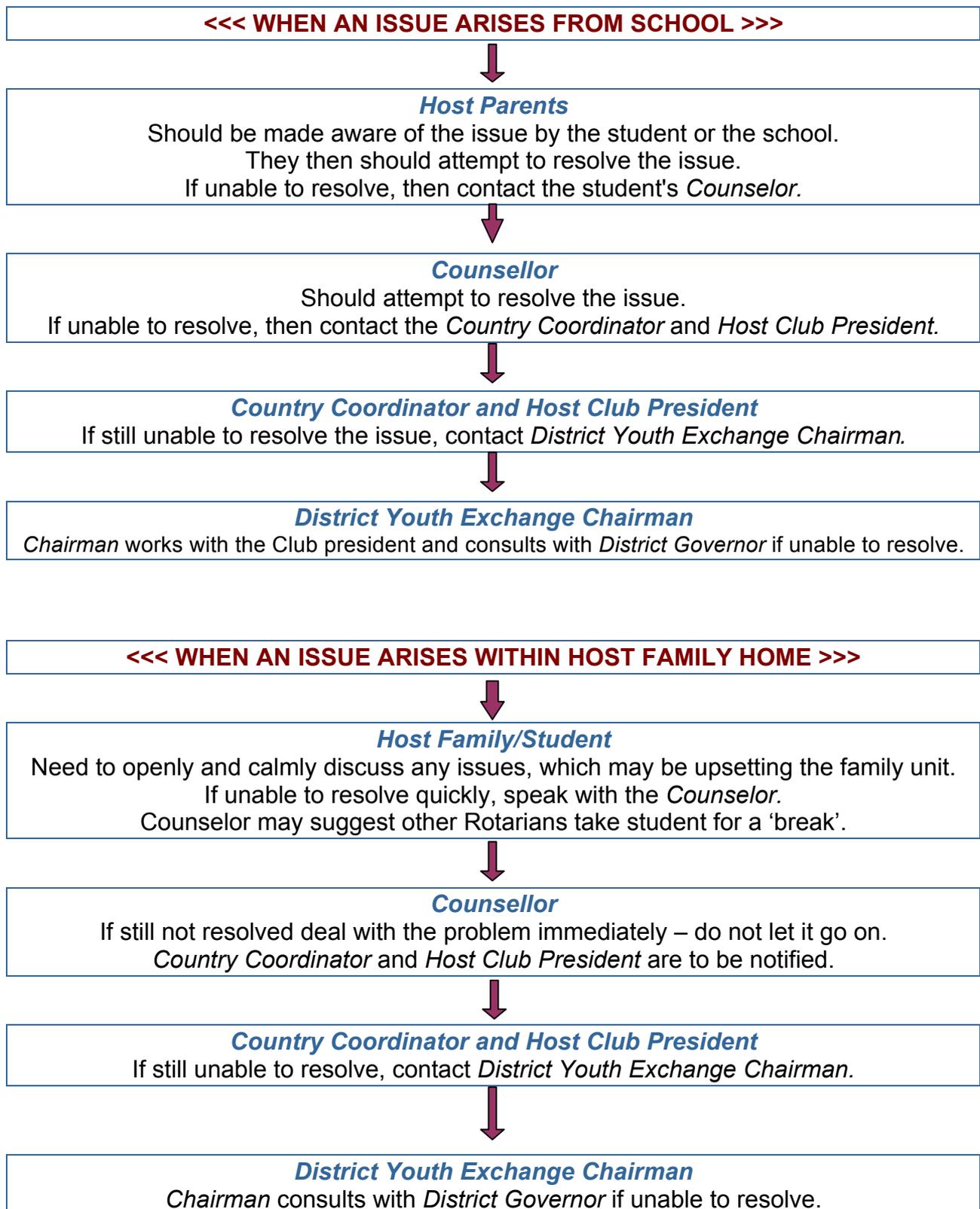
## Administrative Procedures:

Please understand that many of the following points are listed **only so that you can check** to be sure that procedures have been followed, **not because it's up to you to do all these things:**

- ✚ The Counsellor should act as the student's legal guardian for signing and receiving all official documents - including school enrolment, subject selection, school reports, and the student's compulsory "emergency" fund.
- ✚ The Counsellor should have a duplicate copy of the student's application in his/her your possession. This can be obtained from the club's Youth/International director or, if need be, from the student's Country Coordinator.
- ✚ Whenever the student changes homes, details of the new Host family and their contact information must be coordinated with the Counsellor who will forward the information to the Country Coordinator. This is critical. The District Committee must have accurate, up-to-date information as to how to contact the students/host families at all times.
- ✚ The Counsellor will make sure that the student receives the monthly allowance from the club on arrival and at the same time each month.
- ✚ The Counsellor will check with the school occasionally to see how the student is doing and discuss with the Host families any issues that need to be attended to



## General Support Structure To Assist Host Families



During the entire resolution process, counterparts in the student's home country are often informed of the situation. The District Youth Exchange Committee works very hard to ensure fair and proper resolution.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

### **Introduction**

*"Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. Rotarians, Rotarian's spouses and partner, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse"*

### **Procedures**

The District has developed a procedure to deal with complaints and grievances, which may occur from time to time with students, and other parties involved in the exchange.

*See Appendices for this Grievance and Problem Solving Flowchart*

Aims of the Grievance Procedure:

- That exchange students, their parents and/or guardians know they have the same rights to fair and equitable access to a grievance process as local students and their parents.
- That the Youth Exchange Director has the general responsibility for the efficient organisation, management and administration of the exchange program.
- That exchange students know where complaints should be directed - to the relevant supervisor, be it school coordinator or Rotary Club Counselor or Director and that an attempt will be made to gain a resolution at the first level.
- That where a resolution cannot be resolved at the first level the student knows the next level to seek and so on until resolution has occurred.
- That host families, Rotary Club counselor or Director and school principals are aware of the first contact person should a conflict arise in the home or at school, and the next level should it become necessary

The Grievance Policy was formulated with the following principles in mind:

- Basis for statement, refer attached Grievance Procedure flow chart.
- Right of fair and equitable access to grievance procedure.
- Categories of grievances: (may include but not be restricted to): e.g.
  - Financial
  - Professional standards
  - Discrimination / harassment
  - Misconduct (staff/student)
- Procedures: who to address the complaint to:
  - Host family, Rotary Club Counsellor or Director, relevant school coordinator or principal / Rotary District Youth Exchange Committee, etc.
- Local resolution wherever possible.

- Procedures: e.g.
  - Meeting (include access to translation/interpreter services).
  - Investigation.
  - Referral to appropriate supervisor/principal / coordinator.
  - Conciliation / dismissal of complaint / action.
  - Resolution / decision / acknowledgement of outcome.
- Who is ultimately responsible for resolving the conflict?

The Flow Chart at the end of this Guide effectively illustrates the procedure. It applies to Students who wish to address a problem, either minor or major, and will continue until resolution.



It also effectively illustrates the procedure that will occur if a student has a disciplinary or behavior problem causing concern with Host families or Clubs. Students need to be aware that they will be counseled on such issues at Club level and given the opportunity to rectify their behavior unless it has been a blatant breach of the rules requiring immediate repatriation.



Normally, counseling on poor conduct or disciplinary issues will provide up to three opportunities to rectify behavior and then a formal warning will be given by the District Chairman. If remedial action does not follow within the parameters laid down in that warning, repatriation will inevitably occur.

## Student Action - Abuse or Harassment

The following steps and guidelines outline what you should do if you feel that you are subject to harassment or abuse from anyone involved in the program. This includes Rotarians and Host families (including all members of their families), other Volunteers, adults or indeed other students (exchange or school).

By way of definition, harassment is *"any unwanted physical or verbal conduct that offends or humiliates a student. Harassment includes sexual harassment, but can take the form of repeated comments or gestures about a student's social background, home country, language, culture, personal appearance or other characteristics"*.

Note, however, that counseling, warnings, restrictions etc. resulting from inappropriate conduct or attitudes by the student are not normally considered "harassment" unless done in a way that unnecessarily embarrasses or belittles a student.

Be sensitive to the fact that there can be much scope for misunderstanding in cross-cultural situations. What might be acceptable conduct in one country or social situation for one individual may be offensive to another. Customs, gestures and etiquette may differ greatly amongst different cultures.

However, whether intended or accidental, harassment is not something you should tolerate. Remember, if it feels wrong, it is probably wrong!"

If you feel that you have been subject to harassment, please take the following steps:

**Step 1.**        **If you can**, make the person harassing you aware that the behavior is unwelcome to you. Make it clear that the behavior is to stop. The word "No" is a powerful word when used clearly and firmly. In most cases, harassment can be resolved at this early stage.

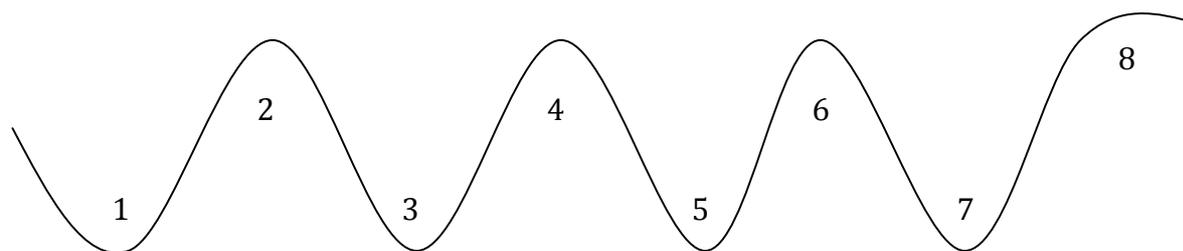
However, if the person does not stop harassing you, speak first with the Rotarian(s) immediately responsible for you. In most cases this will be your Counselor but could also be your Host parent, the Club Youth Exchange Officer or the Club President. Explain to them the facts and your feelings as clearly as you can.

**Step 2.**        **If this does not resolve the matter**, or if any of the above are involved and/or you do not feel able or comfortable to discuss this with your Club Rotarians, contact your District Committee Country Coordinator or any other member of the District YEP Committee. You will also be given contact number of other members of the District as well as agencies outside Rotary. Do not forget that you can also contact your Sponsor Club or District Committee if the issues cannot be resolved locally as noted. Irrespective of who may be involved in the harassment (or abuse if it is that serious an issue), your concerns **will** be taken seriously.

**Step 3.**        **If the matter is still not resolved satisfactorily** or you have difficulty in contacting the appropriate District officers, express your concerns directly to the District Governor.

Nothing limits your rights to express your complaint to whomever you wish. However the steps described above are matched to the process your Rotary Club and District Committee has in place to deal with any harassment complaint. Every effort will be made to resolve your complaint in a confidential, timely and sensitive manner.

## The Exchange Cycle



### **1. Application Anxiety**

### **2. Selection/Arrival Fascination**

*Elation  
Expectation*

### **3. Initial Culture Shock: 1-6 Months**

*Novelty wears off*

*Characteristics:*

*Sleeping Habits  
Disorientation  
Language difficulties  
Fatigue (Mental/Physical)  
Eating*

### **4. Surface Adjustments**

*After initial "down"*

*Settle in:*

*Language improves  
Navigate culture  
Friends  
Social Life*

### **5. Mental Isolation**

*Frustration increases  
New sense of isolation  
Boredom  
Lack of motivation  
Unresolved problems  
Language problems*

### **6. Integration/Acceptance**

*Begin to examine society  
Accept surroundings/self*

### **7. Return Anxiety**

*Preparation for departure  
Realise changes  
Desire to stay  
Results:  
*Confusion/Pain  
Breaking of bonds  
No promise of renewal in future**

### **8. Shock/Reintegration**

*Contrast of old and new  
Family/friends  
Difficulty to accept change  
Not the center of attention  
Others not interested in experience  
Reorientation*

All exchange students experience phases of elation, anxiety and depression. You will experience one or more of these phases near the time of application processing. Various phases will then continue even after you return to Australia. It is important that you anticipate this and calmly accept and deal with it.

The best method to resolve each occurrence is for you to keep busy and remember that all the exchange students before you, with you and who follow you, will experience similar circumstances.

Your host families will be aware that you will experience these phases and will not be alarmed. They should be ready to help you work your way out of the down cycles.

The time necessary to work through each phase is not predictable and will depend on yourself and the circumstances.

**So, once again we can quote the saying:**

**'Nothing is better or worse – just different'**

## **CULTURE STRESS**

### **Honeymoon Stage**

Think of the first stage of cultural shock as the honeymoon stage. This occurs in the first few days of you arriving in your host country.

#### **Symptoms of honeymoon stage:**

- Excitement and euphoria
- General anticipation of everything that you are about to experience
- Everything and everyone you encounter is new and many times exciting
- You'll probably be eager to learn the language spoken in your host country

During the honeymoon stage you will be poised to take on the challenges of living broad.

### **Frustration Stage**

After the honeymoon stage your initial excitement may wane. You also may start to feel frustration; this is the onset of the frustration stage. Frustration can occur for various reasons.

#### **Symptoms of the frustration stage:**

- Some of your initial excitement dissipates
- Feelings of anxiety, anger and homesickness creep in
- You might reject your new environment and begin to have a lack of interest in your new surroundings
- You'll become frustrated with trying to speak a foreign language

#### **How to handle the frustration stage**

- Don't blame the host country or its people for your feelings. Your anxiety and frustration happens to millions of people who study, work or travel abroad.
- Remember, you're in a new environment and getting accustomed takes time. How you handle this frustration that determines how you to grow from your experience abroad.
- Don't be negative; you'll only prolong the feelings of frustration.
- Stay positive. Think about the experience you're having living abroad and learning about new people, food, and culture.
- Try keeping a journal chronicling your experiences.

### **Understanding Stage**

The understanding stage arrives when you develop a more balanced view of your experience abroad.

#### **Characteristics of the understanding stage**

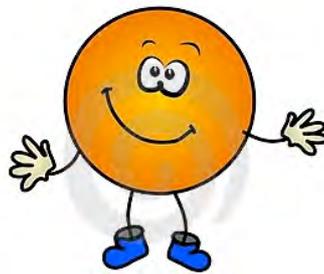
- You become more familiar with the culture, people, food and language of your host country
- You will have made friends
- You become less homesick
- You'll be more comfortable with speaking and listening to the language spoken in your host country
- You become more comfortable and relaxed in your new environment
- You better handle the situations you previously found frustrating

## **Acclimation Stage**

During the acclimation stage you will begin to feel like you really belong in your new environment.

### **Characteristics of the acclimation stage**

- You'll be able to compare the good and bad of your host country with the good and bad of your home country
- You feel less like a foreigner and more like your host country is your second home
- You laugh about things that frustrated you at earlier stages of cultural shock
- Once you reach the acclimation, you'll have the satisfaction of knowing that you can live successfully in two cultures; this is a huge milestone.



## **BEING AN EXCHANGE STUDENT**

- Is fantastic
- Is meeting hundreds of wonderful people
- Is giving speeches and writing letters
- Is seeing a new country and experiencing new things
- Is being homesick and at times, miserable
- Is getting tired
- Is being an ambassador
- Is personal growth

## **THE SUCCESSFUL EXCHANGE STUDENT**

- Is flexible and adaptable and wants to learn and have new experiences
- Is knowledgeable and well read
- Is open to challenge and change
- Is sensitive, loyal and trustworthy
- Is involved
- Recognizes "Different" from good, bad, wrong, etc.
- Communicates with family, Rotary, school, friends
- Is introspective

## Three Inbound Students After An Exchange

"... I think the key to my successful year was that I had very low expectations of what is going to happen in this year. I was just going to take everything as it comes. Through that every trip, weekend or invitation was like a bonus, something very special."

"... Living away from home in a foreign culture at a young age is a transformative and challenging experience, one that I will never forget."

"... I would never have thought that the whole club would get involved in my exchange. This just shows me again what a vibrant and active club you are. I will miss you so much."

"... I want to continue to be involved in Rotary Youth Exchange to help future students to have a life-changing experience like only Rotary Youth Exchange can offer, so that they too can open their hearts and minds to others around the world."

###\*\*###

"... You may think you didn't do much for me, but I can tell you right now that every single person that I met during my adventure in the huge Island gave me something! Maybe you are part of the one, who just smiled at me or said hello to me once, maybe you helped me during my bad days or made me laugh during the good ones, maybe you made me discover something new, maybe you talked to me and listened to me, and then made my English get better... Whatever you did for me, I won't forget it! Because you did it, my year in Australia is unique and magic for ever! So... Thank you!"

###\*\*###

"... I'd been homesick and happy at the same time. Incredibly lonely yet surrounded by people who took interest in me and my foreign-ness right away."

"... I had spent so much of my time trying to keep those at home happy and informed that I had forgotten to experience my life here. I had forgotten the purpose of my exchange; I had forgotten that I was an Aussie in training, not just a tourist. It was then that I jumped full heartedly into my exchange. I began to feel like I had made those friends and I could start to see the changes. Australia was no longer just Australia. It was becoming a part of me."

"... I speak to you today with gratitude in my heart and tears in my eyes, praying that this is as hard for you as it is for me and thanking you for who I am, 17 years old on the outside and close to 27 on the inside, someone who used to think that the world was a big place. I now realize how small it truly is."

###\*\*###



# Rotary District 9810 'Moving Host Family' Form

**Host Rotary Club**

---

Date of move to New Family

---

**Exchange Student details:**

Name

---

Country of origin

---

Mobile number

---

Email address

---

School

---

**Host Family details:**

Home address

---

Home phone number

---

Father's name

---

Working With Children Check card number

---

Father's mobile number

---

Father's email address

---

Mother's name

---

Mother's mobile number

---

Working With Children Check card number

---

Mother's email address

---

**Others over 18 year of age living at home**

Name

---

Working With Children Check card number

---

Name

---

Working With Children Check card number

---

Name

---

Working With Children Check card number

---

Please email this form to the **Country Coordinator and YEP Chairman and YEP Secretary** prior to the move taking place, or within 3 days of the move.



# District 9810 Rotary Youth Exchange Approval for Student to Travel

*Submit this request at least one week prior to travel*



Student Name; \_\_\_\_\_ Host Club; \_\_\_\_\_

Counsellor's Name; \_\_\_\_\_

Home/mobile 'phone; \_\_\_\_\_ Email; \_\_\_\_\_

Host Club's Approval YES - NO

Host Parent's Approval YES - NO

Natural Parent's Approval (where applicable) YES - NO

School's Approval (where applicable) YES - NO

District Committee Approval (where applicable) YES - NO

Details of travel to be approved;

Travelling with; \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile phone; \_\_\_\_\_

Travelling to; \_\_\_\_\_ Period of travel; \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for travel; \_\_\_\_\_

Where staying; \_\_\_\_\_

Contact name; \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone; \_\_\_\_\_

Signed; \_\_\_\_\_

*(Club President)*

Approved by; \_\_\_\_\_ Date; \_\_\_\_\_

*(District Committee)*

**As part of the duty of care to the student and the hosting Rotary Club the following D9810 Rules for Travel must be observed. These are;**

**TRAVEL WITHIN VICTORIA:**

- (a) Students are to obtain the permission of their host parents and counsellor.
- (b) The counsellor is to record sufficient details to allow immediate contact if necessary.
- (c) Where the travel exceeds two days the District Committee is to be advised prior to commencement.

**TRAVEL OUTSIDE VICTORIA:**

- (a) Additionally, the counsellor must obtain the permission of the student's natural parents in writing and their host parents. School approval must be given if travel will occur during the school term.
- (b) An itinerary of the trip including names and telephone contact numbers is to be provided prior to the travel. The District Committee must approve this travel.

**TRAVEL OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND:**

Travel outside Australia and New Zealand will not be permitted.

**BACKPACKING AND HITCHHIKING:**

These modes of travel are expressly forbidden.

**Approval is required one week prior to travel whenever possible, by completing this Travel Request Form. Unaccompanied travel will not generally be approved. Travel will not automatically be approved.**

HOST FAMILY SCHEDULE - Subject to change

Name; Barbara COSTA		Radebe	Comments
	Arrives -	6/08/12	Arrival TBA
Week 1		13/08/12	
Week 2		20/08/12	
Week 3		27/08/12	O'tation Day, August 26th
Week 4		3/09/12	
Week 5		10/09/12	
Week 6		17/09/12	
Week 7		24/09/12	
Week 8		1/10/12	
Week 9		8/10/12	
Week 10		15/10/12	
Week 11		22/10/12	O'tation Day, October 21st
Week 12		29/10/12	
Week 13		5/11/12	
Week 14		12/11/12	
Week 15		19/11/12	
Week 16		26/11/12	
Week 17		3/12/12	O'tation Day December 1st
Week 18		10/12/12	
Week 19		17/12/12	
Week 20		24/12/12	
Week 21		31/12/12	
Week 22		7/01/13	
Week 23		14/01/13	
Week 24		21/01/13	<i>Outbound students depart 17th</i>
Week 25		28/01/13	
Week 26		4/02/13	
Week 27		11/02/13	
Week 28		18/02/13	
Week 29		25/02/13	
Week 30		4/03/13	
Week 31		11/03/13	
Week 32		18/03/13	District Conference 15th - 17th
Week 33		25/03/13	Safari TBC
Week 34		1/04/13	
Week 35		8/04/13	
Week 36		15/04/13	
Week 37		22/04/13	
Week 38		29/04/13	
Week 39		6/05/13	
Week 40		13/05/13	
Week 41		20/05/13	
Week 42		27/05/13	
Week 43		3/06/13	
Week 44		10/06/13	
Week 45		17/06/13	
Week 46		24/06/13	
Week 47		1/07/13	
Week 48		8/07/13	Returns Home Date TBC
Week 49		15/07/13	
Week 50			

# GRIEVANCE AND PROBLEM SOLVING FLOWCHART

