

Rotary District 7410
Youth Exchange Program
Northeastern Pennsylvania USA

Handbook

for

Host Families And Host Clubs



**WELCOME TO DISTRICT 7410
ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

What is Youth Exchange?

Rotary Youth Exchange is a country-to-country exchange of high-school age young people, between the ages of 16 to 18½ years old at the time of arrival in the hosting country, for a cultural and educational experience for both the student and those serving as hosts. The duration of the exchange is 10-12 months, and generally follows the school year as defined by the Exchange student's home country.

What is Rotary?

Rotary International, as the sponsoring organization of this program, is an international volunteer organization comprised of Rotarians around the world dedicated to improving their community, both locally and worldwide, through service to others. A more comprehensive description of Rotary can be found in Appendix A of this Information Book. However, one term used throughout this Book warrants explanation here: **District** is the geographic organization of a number of local Rotary clubs for purposes of governance and support. District 7410 is comprised of 45 clubs and covers a large part of Northeastern Pennsylvania, from Wellsboro to the west, the New York state line to the north, the New York/New Jersey state lines on the east, and Lehigh to the south.

Objectives of The Program

- o **To further international goodwill and understanding** by enabling students to study first hand some of the problems and accomplishments of people in lands other than their own.
- o **To enable students to advance their education** by studying for a year in an environment entirely different from their own, and undertaking the study of courses and subjects not normally available to them in their own country.
- o **To give students opportunities to broaden their outlook** by learning to live with and meet people of different cultures, creeds, and colors and by having to cope with day-to-day problems in an environment completely different from the one they have experienced at home.
- o **To have students act as ambassadors** for their own country by addressing Rotary Clubs, community organizations and youth groups in their host country; by imparting as much knowledge as they can of their own country, its attributes and its problems to the people they meet during their year abroad.
- o **To provide sufficient time to study and observe another country's culture** so that upon returning home students can pass on the knowledge they have gained by addressing Rotary clubs and other organizations and assimilate the positive aspects into their everyday living.

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DG Paul Muczynski, 2008/09
 DGE Ted Silver, 2009/10
 DGN Robert Wehe, 2010/2011

Unless Stated Otherwise, All Telephone Numbers Listed are Within US Area 570
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ROTARY DISTRICT 7410 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Reviewed and updated Aug 2008

Aug 3 2008	Returning Students Picnic	Returning Students	Camp Lackawanna	Noon
Sept 7 2008	Orientation for Adults, Student Protection Training Mandatory for Rotarians involved in YEP		Keystone College	1 P
Sep 13-14 2008	ROTEX Training		Camp	
Sep 13-14 2008	Landed Student Orientation	Landed, ROTEX	Camp Lackawanna	9 A
Oct TBA	Executive Committee Meeting		TBA	
Oct 17-19 2008	District Conference		Lehigh Valley Holiday Inn	
Nov 9 2008	District Interviews		Tunkhannock High	12 N
Dec 16 2008	Holiday Dinner		Keystone College	
Jan 24, 25 2009	Mandatory Outbound Orientation #1 A weekend full of learning and helpful topics	Outbound, Landed, ROTEX	Camp Lackawanna	9 A
Feb TBA	Ski Weekend Landed students only, hosted by Tunkhannock Rotary Club	Landed	TBD	
March 14,15 2009	Mandatory Outbound Orientation #2	Outbound, Landed, ROTEX	Camp Lackawanna	9 A
Jun 14 2009	Final Outbound Orientation	Outbound	Pavilion Camp Lackawanna	12 N
TBA	Executive Committee Meeting Meeting dates will be announced. Meets Quarterly			

DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. All students will be advised before listed events.

DISTRICT 7410 YOUTH EXCHANGE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**Kathleen Farrell Kurosky, Chairman**

46 Chenango Street, Montrose PA 18801

Phone 570-278-3063 (voice), 434-2265 (fax), kkurosky@epix.net

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EMERGENCY AND PROBLEM POLICY

All emergency and problem incidents are to be reported IMMEDIATELY, either by the host Club Chair or by the Host Family, to the District Chairman. If the District Chair cannot be reached immediately, then the District Vice Chair shall be notified. If neither the District Chair nor the District Vice Chair is immediately available, then any of the other members of the Executive Committee, listed on Page 5 of the Handbook, shall be immediately notified. Such notification shall occur at the time of the incident, regardless of the time (day or night).

The District Chair or the qualified substitute will immediately notify the District Governor to advise and consult the Governor about what steps are being taken to eliminate or abate the problem.

An incident is defined as a problem of health or injury, a problem of welfare, a problem of well-being (including grades at school), a problem of rule-breaking (especially Rule #11) and anything else as deemed either by hosts or Club Chair, both major and minor.

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District 7410
www.7410youth.org



Student Protection Policy

Approved as Policy on May 24, 2006

District 7410

Northeastern Pennsylvania

Student Protection Policy

Policy Framework

1. Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth

District 7410 is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and any other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.

2. Definitions

Volunteer: Any adult involved with Rotary Youth Exchange activities that has direct interactions with students. This includes, but is not limited to, club and district Youth Exchange officers and committee members, Rotarian counselors, Rotarians and non-Rotarians, their spouses and partners that host students for activities or outings or who might drive students to events or functions, host parents, and other adult residents of the host home (including siblings and other family members). In general, background checks need not be conducted for adults who will have only casual or occasional group interactions with Youth Exchange students. This may include, for example, Rotarians present at a club meeting attended by Youth Exchange students.

Student: Youth involved with Rotary Youth Exchange, regardless of whether they are of the age of majority.

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse refers to engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a student, or forcing or encouraging a student to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts, alone or with another person of any age of the same sex or the opposite sex.

Additional examples of sexual abuse could include, but are not limited to:

Non-touching offenses

Indecent exposure

Exposing a student to sexual or pornographic material

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment refers to 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 a technique used by sexual predators to desensitize or "groom" their victims.

Examples of sexual harassment could include, but are not limited to:

Sexual advances

Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, and comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess

Verbal abuse of a sexual nature

Displaying 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

3. Incorporation of District Youth Exchange Program and Liability Insurance

District 7410 is not currently incorporated, but will apply for membership in ESSEX, the Eastern States Student Exchange Program, Inc., or will incorporate during 2006-'07.

4. Volunteer Selection and Screening

The District 7410 will maintain a volunteer selection and screening process. The following screening steps must be completed prior to participation in Youth Exchange activities. (A sample of District 7410 Host Family/*Youth Volunteer Affidavit* form can be found in *Appendix G*.)

District 7410 will maintain all records of criminal background checks, waivers, and screening for adults working with minors for a period of ten years.

All volunteers interested in participating in a District Youth Exchange program must:

Complete a District 7410 *Host Family/Youth Volunteer Affidavit* form and authorize the district to conduct a criminal background check (subject to local laws and practices). In general, background checks need not be conducted for adults who will have only casual or occasional group interactions with Youth Exchange students. This may include, for example, Rotarians present at a club meeting attended by Youth Exchange students.

Undergo personal interviews.

Provide a list of references for the district to check.

Meet RI and district eligibility requirements for working with students. RI requires that any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment be prohibited from working with youth in a Rotary context. If an individual is accused of sexual abuse or harassment, and the investigation into the claim is inconclusive, then, for the safety of youth participants and the protection of the accused, additional safeguards must be put in place to assure the protection of any youth with whom the individual may have future conduct. A person later cleared of charges may apply to be reinstated to participate in youth programs. Reinstatement is not a right, and no guarantee is made that he or she will be reinstated to his or her former position.

Understand and comply with RI and district guidelines for the Youth Exchange program.

Host families must meet the following selection and screening requirements, in addition to those listed above.

Host families must undergo a comprehensive interview that determines their suitability for hosting exchange students. This should include:

- Demonstrated commitment to the safety and security of students
- Motivation for hosting a student is consistent with Rotary ideals of international understanding and cultural exchange
- Financial ability to provide adequate accommodations (room and board) for the student

- Aptitude for providing appropriate supervision and parental responsibility that ensures the student's well being
- Host families must complete a written application.
- Home visits must be conducted for each family and should include both announced and unannounced visits, both prior to and during the placement. Home visits must be conducted annually, even for repeat host families
- All adult residents of the host home must meet the selection and screening guidelines. This includes adult children of the host family and other members of the extended family that reside in the home either on a full- or part-time basis.

Rotarian counselors must meet the criteria for *All Volunteers*, as well as the following:

Counselors must not be a member of the student's host family.

Counselors should not be close friends or relatives to other volunteers involved with a particular student (i.e. school principal, host family, etc.).

Counselors must be trained in responding to any problems or concerns which may arise during the exchange, which may include instances of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harassment.

5. Student Selection and Screening *All students* interested in participating in programs of District 7410 must:

- Complete a written application and be interviewed for their suitability for participation in the Youth Exchange program.
- Attend and participate in all district orientation and training sessions.

All parents or legal guardians of students interested in participating in the programs of District 7410 must be interviewed to determine the student's suitability for participation in the Youth Exchange program.

6. Training

District 7410 will provide student protection training to all Youth Exchange program participants. *Responsibility for assuring that appropriate training is conducted at all levels is assigned to the Youth Exchange Chairperson and the Student Protection Officer.*

District 7410 will:

Adapt the Abuse and Harassment Prevention Training Manual available in late 2005.

Maintain a calendar for training and define the frequency of training required for each volunteer position, including descriptions of who is to participate, when training should occur, and how training will be conducted. (Please see Appendix B)

Conduct specialized training sessions for the following Youth Exchange program participants:

- District Governor
- District Youth Exchange committee members
- Club Youth Exchange committee members
- $\frac{3}{4}$ Rotarian counselors

- Host families – host family training will be provided by each club YEO, and monitored by District 7410 Youth Exchange Chairperson.
- Students (outbound and inbound)
- Parents and legal guardians of students
- Establish guidelines to ensure that all those required to be trained have participated.
- Maintain records of participation to ensure compliance.
- Assure that volunteers have been trained within the prior three years.
- A district student protection officer can assume training responsibilities.

7. Allegation Reporting Guidelines

District 7410 is committed to protecting the safety and well being of Youth Exchange students and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled in accord with the *Youth Exchange Student Sexual Abuse and Harassment Reporting Guidelines*, found in *Appendix H*

8. Investigation Guidelines

District 7410 takes all allegations of abuse or harassment seriously and will investigate each allegation thoroughly. District 7410 will cooperate with all law enforcement, child protective services, and legal investigations and will only conduct their own independent investigations such that it does not interfere with other investigations.

9. Other District Responsibilities

District 7410:

- Have procedures for reporting, investigating, and proper handling of non-criminal offenses or historic cases that law enforcement will not investigate.
- Requires that all inbound Youth Exchange students maintain insurance at the following levels Maximum lifetime benefit \$500,000; Accidental death \$10,000; medical evacuation \$50,000.
- Provides each student with a list of local services in the district (rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services, etc.)
- Will complete a student data request form for all participating Youth Exchange students and return it to RI one month before the beginning of the exchange.
- Will provide each student a District 7410 Phone Contact Card for reporting questionable occurrences and will report any indicated occurrences to Pennsylvania Child Line 1-800-932-0313 immediately.
- Will follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites and usage of the Rotary Marks.
- May appoint an independent lawyer, therapist or counselor to represent any alleged victim in cases of sexual abuse or harassment.
- Will report all criminal allegations to RI within 72 hours.
- Will report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to RI within 72 hours.
- Evaluate and review this policy and accompanying procedures on a regular basis.

10. Club Compliance

District 7410 will monitor and ensure that all participating clubs within the district comply with RI guidelines for student protection. All clubs that wish to apply to the district for certification must provide the district with a copy of the following for review and approval:

Copies of all materials produced in the club to promote and support the Youth Exchange program, including, but not limited to, promotional materials and brochures, applications, policies, Web site links, etc.

List of services in the area (rape and suicide crisis hotline, alcohol and drug awareness programs for teenagers, proper law enforcement agencies, community services, private services)

Club student protection training program

Participating clubs must agree to:

Complete and return a signed compliance statement that the club is operating their program in accordance with District 7410 and RI policy.

Conduct reference checks and, if needed, criminal background checks, and for all volunteers involved with the program, including, but not limited to adult full-time residents of host home, counselor, club chair, and all Rotarians and their spouses or partners with direct unsupervised contact.

All volunteers must complete and sign the *District 7410 Host Family/Youth Exchange Volunteer Affidavit* found in *Appendix G*. In general, background checks need not be conducted for adults who will have only casual or occasional group interactions with Youth Exchange students. This may include, for example, Rotarians present at a club meeting attended by Youth Exchange students.

Develop a comprehensive system for host family selection and screening that includes announced and unannounced home visits and interviews both prior to and during the placement.

Conduct follow-up evaluations of both students and host families.

Follow the *Youth Exchange Student Protection Sexual Abuse and Harassment Reporting Guidelines* found in *Appendix H*.

Report all cases of sexual abuse or harassment to the District Student Protection Officer and the leadership of the district and the club immediately. District Leadership will report to the appropriate law enforcement authorities immediately. In Pennsylvania this is accomplished by contacting Pennsylvania Child Line at 1-800-932-0313.

Prohibit direct placement of students outside of the District Youth Exchange program structure (e.g. "backdoor exchanges").

Set procedures for removal of a student from the host family (criteria for moving a student and back-up temporary housing available in advance).

Develop contingency plans for hosting that include pre-screened and available back-up families

Ensure that all hosting is voluntary. Parents of outbound students and club members must not be required to host students.

Ensure that long-term exchange students have multiple host families.

Provide each student with a comprehensive local services list.

Ensure that the host counselor is trained in responding to any problems or concerns that may arise during the exchange, including the prevention of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse or harassment.

Provide mandatory training on student protection for host families, outbound students, inbound students, and their parents or legal guardians.

Provide the names and contact information of at least three people to contact for assistance with any issues or problems to all Youth Exchange students. These people must include both males and females, not related to each other, and individuals independent of the host family and club counselor.

Follow RI guidelines for Youth Exchange Web sites and usage of the Rotary Marks (available in late 2005).

Report all serious incidents (accidents, crimes, early returns, death) involving Youth Exchange students to the District Student Protection Officer immediately.

Conduct interviews of all applicants and applicants' parents or legal guardians.

For long-term exchanges, three successive host families are preferable.

District 7410 Youth Exchange Chairperson

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District 7410 Student Protection Officer

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Post Report Procedures
For use by Rotarian Counselors and District Youth Exchange Chairs

The student's Rotarian counselor and the District Youth Exchange Chair are responsible for ensuring that the following steps are taken following an abuse allegation report. Unless otherwise specified, these steps must be taken immediately following the report.

1. The adult to whom the student reports the abuse should follow the *Allegation Reporting Guidelines*.
2. Confirm that the student has been removed from the situation immediately and all contact with alleged abuser or harasser.
3. Contact appropriate law enforcement agency immediately (if not already done). If law enforcement agency will not investigate, club or District Youth Exchange Chair should coordinate the investigation into the allegations.
4. Ensure the student receives immediate support services.
5. Offer the student an independent, non-Rotarian counselor to represent the interests of the student. Ask social services or law enforcement to recommend someone who is not a Rotarian or in any way involved with the Youth Exchange program.
6. Contact the student's parents. If the student is away from home, provide the student with the option of either staying in the country or returning home.
7. Remove the alleged abuser or harasser from all contact with the specific student and other youth while investigations are conducted.
8. Cooperate with police or legal investigations.
9. The student's Rotarian Counselor should inform the District Youth Exchange Chair and District Governor of the allegation. Either the District Governor or the District Youth Exchange Chair must inform Rotary International of the allegation within 72 hours, and provide follow-up reports of steps taken and the outcome of all investigations and resulting actions.

Hosting

Congratulations! You are about to become a new parent, probably not for the first time, but this time your new child will already be a teenager upon arrival, may not speak English fluently, and will certainly have cultural traits that are different from yours.

By agreeing to be a host family for a Rotary Exchange student, you have agreed to assume parental responsibility for this young ambassador from another country, to provide shelter and sustenance, guidance and counsel, and love and support to the child of strangers who may live thousands of miles from you.

The following pages are designed to make your student's stay with your family more enjoyable for everyone. It is also our hope that the information compiled in this booklet will give you the information you need to be a successful host and enable you to sidestep problems which could occur due to the lack of understanding of the scope and purpose of our program.

The Local Rotary Club's Role

The local club provides a level of support to you, the student and the exchange program.

- Responsible for the foreign student during the student's year in the United States.
- Arranges to have suitable host families to care for, house and feed their students.
- Assigns a Club Youth Exchange Officer to administer the program.
- Assigns a **Rotarian Counselor** for each student. The counselor serves primarily as an advisor and advocate for the student but should certainly be in contact with the host family on a regular basis.
- Pays all normal and customary educational expenses for the students.
- Provides a monthly stipend for the student (no less than \$50.00 per month).
- Require their students to attend club meetings and special functions, whenever possible

The Host Family's Role

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.

- Treat this young person as you would your own son or daughter, not as a guest.
- 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. Appendix B is a listing of **First Night Questions** that we provide to both students and host parents that cover most of the topics that will help define those expectations.
- Remember that they are teenagers and will probably behave just like teenagers. Some may ask to help, but most must be 'asked' to help.
- 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.
- Encourage your student to **get involved**. 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.
- Understand "culture shock", and help your student learn our culture.
- Never be afraid to say "NO" loud and clear, when necessary! Teenagers from around the world shares the same knack for 'testing' to see where their limits are. The sooner these limits are understood, the less likely problems are to occur.

- **Good communication is essential.** When a problem does arise, and it will, try to first talk it out. If you encounter a problem which cannot be resolved, contact the Youth Exchange Chairperson of your local Rotary Club.

The District Committee Role

The District 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.

- Responsible for the overall operation of the program, final selection and assignment of the outgoing student candidates going overseas, and providing training and instruction for all outbound and inbound students, YEP officers and host families.
- The District Committee also provides liaison between districts to provide all necessary travel arrangements and documents.

The Exchange Student's Role

Above all else, we expect the inbound students to be involved: involved in your family, involved in school, involved in the community in which you live, and involved in Rotary.

- **Learning English** All 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. But for most, 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. 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.
- **Learning to Adapt** being willing to try new things, do things differently, recognize the cultural basis for the environment they are used to, and accepting that our cultural differences are neither “better or worse”, simply “different”.
- **Participation and Compliance with our Rules** All inbound exchange students, and their parents, agreed to comply with the rules, regulations, and guidelines that are part of the Rotary Youth Exchange application. These are common sense conditions that are intended to insure their safety, comply with the standards of the international organizations monitoring exchange programs, and assure that their conduct does not impose a burden on the families who open their homes to these students -- you Host Parents. **The Program Rules & Conditions of Exchange and The District 7410 Rules for Exchange Students** are located in Appendix C of this handbook for your information.

A summary of the more important rules are listed below:

1. **Driving:** Exchange students are **not** permitted to operate motor vehicles, including motorcycles, boats, or any other powered device requiring an operators license as a condition of the medical and accident insurance. Under no circumstances may they take a Driver Education course.
2. **Drinking and Drugs:** We expect all exchange students to comply with our laws, including those applying to possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances.
3. **Smoking:** Smoking is not permitted to smoke while here on exchange.
4. **School Attendance:** This is an educational exchange, and students are **required to attend school regularly**, and maintain satisfactory class work. As the host parent, you are responsible for determining the appropriateness of any school **absence requested by the student**, as you would for your own children. You should know, and comply with, the attendance requirements (and absence notification requirements) for the school your student is attending.
5. **Travel:** Travel for the exchange student as part of your family, or with school or church groups, is highly encouraged and will provide the student with opportunities to learn about the host country. However, **independent travel, or travel without adult supervision** should be given the same level of parental control you would impose on your own children of that age.

Additionally, Rotarians at both the host club and district committee need to know where Exchange students are in the event of an emergency. The **Travel Policy for District 7410** is located in Appendix D, and will be reviewed in detail with your exchange student. **Compliance with this policy is a condition of the exchange.** We ask that you be familiar with this policy, and enforce it with your student. *Please know that we will always support the host parents when you say NO to travel by your student that YOU are not in agreement with the student.*

6. Visits by the student's parents, family, and friends: Program rules prohibit any visitors from the student's home country during the first 8-9 months of the exchange year, and specifically at any time that will interfere with school or that will cause an inconvenience to the host family. Furthermore, visits by family or friends during the traditional Christmas, New Year, and Easter holiday periods are expressly forbidden. Any such visits planned by the student or his/her parents should be fully acceptable to you, the host parents, and should be discussed with the appropriate Rotarians before being finalized.
7. **Use of telephone and Internet:** Students who frequently communicate with family and friends "back home" by telephone or e-mail often delay their own adjustments and adaptation to the exchange, and extend, rather than reduce, feelings of homesickness. It is beneficial to establish rules for computer use. Of course, the student is responsible for any costs incurred for telephone or Internet charges, and host parents should decide, in advance, how the student will pay for such usage when it is permitted.

Other Information Needed By Host Parents

INSURANCE

All inbound exchange students must have a medical/accidental injury policy that meets Rotary's requirements. Each student will have an insurance card. Please make a copy of this card and keep it in case of emergency. The District has an insurance coordinator who you can consult if you have questions or problems with claims. See the Executive Committee page for the current Insurance Coordinator.

The cost of any medical treatment is the responsibility of the student and his/her natural parents, and the insurance provides for either payment or reimbursement of a portion of those expenses (usually after a nominal deductible has been met).

However, as host parents, you are asked to make arrangements for medical treatment when necessary, as well as to determine when medical treatment is called for. Your student may be reluctant to discuss medical problems initially, and their own culture, or medical system at home, may be quite different than that which we have, so you may need to patiently ask questions and offer suggestions when you observe conditions that may be medically-based. Many Rotary clubs have arrangements with local medical-services providers (often a member of the Rotary club), and you should be apprised of these arrangements by the Rotary YEO or Club Counselor before a medical problem arises. **Please consult the insurance website for a list of local physicians who accept the CMI insurance** <http://www.cmi-insurance.com/RYE.html>

It is always advisable to inform the host Rotary club of any medical treatment or medical problems that have occurred so that information is made available to subsequent host families. Serious illnesses or injuries should be made known to the District YE Chair as soon as possible.

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, since he or she will remain part of your community for the balance of the exchange year.

When the time comes for the student to move on, be prepared for the emotions that come with separation and fear of something new, both for the student and you. It will help to make this transition go smoothly if the student has met the new family, perhaps first in your home, and then later for a visit in the next host family home, to provide opportunities to become familiar with the family and surroundings.

Once your student has moved, 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.

When it is finally time for your student to return home to his or her own family, they will be leaving

not one but several **families** that they will consider “home” for the rest of their lives.

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 realization that the “familiar” is now *our* culture, and the “unknown” involves *returning home*. Understand that the exchange student **must** return home at the conclusion of the exchange year (generally within 30 days of high school completion, or the conclusion of a USA Tour, if applicable) as a condition of the exchange program. **A sign of a successful exchange is the student’s reluctance to go home, and we wouldn’t want it any other way.**

You may need to help your student prepare mentally for this departure, in addition to the many physical aids that will be needed.

- **Start by selecting an actual departure date** that everyone involved agrees with (including the student’s parents),
- Assist the student with packing and luggage
- Help the student wrap up any financial obligations with you and others, especially regarding long-distance telephone charges. Discuss with the student and the Rotary Club Counselor the return of the student’s emergency fund.
- Involve the prior host families, and the host Rotary club, in planning a farewell event before the student departs. And allow sufficient flexibility in your schedule during the final few days to provide your student with the opportunity to say goodbye to the many friends made during the past year.

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

Whenever the exchange student changes host families, the new family name, address, phone numbers, and e-mail must be reported to the District Inbound/Landed Student Coordinator. The regulations of the US State Department require address changes to be filed within ten days – failure to do so can result in the deportation of the student

Finally, while much of this booklet addresses rules, regulations, and “dealing with problems”, we want you to know that being a host parent is also a lot of fun and full of rewards. You will get to know, and love, someone from another country, another culture, and another part of the world. You will have the opportunity to watch, and help shape, the development and maturity of a young person. You will have opportunities to learn of another culture yourself, and in the process of sharing our culture and our country with this student, gain knowledge and understanding for you and your family. And at the end of the exchange, you will have added to your family a son or daughter who may live in a “foreign” country the rest of their life, but will always be a part of **your** family.

The Successful Host Family

What Does It Take? Heart, Mind, Laughter

A **HEART** large enough to share a portion with a young student from another land for a long period or maybe for **LIFE**.

A **MIND** open to the different life and culture the student will bring, open to accepting the student's differences, not only the similarities.

A share of **LAUGHTER** and **GAIETY** to shrink the problems which may come up and to strengthen the bonds of communication.

Just as there is no 'perfect' exchange student, there is no 'perfect' host family. Each young person who comes to us from abroad is an individual; each U.S. family is different. But, just as there are criteria which make it more likely that a student will be a 'good' exchange student, there are criteria which make a family more likely to provide an enjoyable and beneficial experience for the student.

NEEDED:

- 1.) **Warmth**--an easy affection within the family and respect for all members by all members.
- 2.) **Breadth of interests**--a real curiosity about things outside the home. Not necessarily busy or intellectual, for many students fit into a more quiet and simple atmosphere.
- 3.) **Flexibility**--the family must be secure and confident enough to be able to adapt their rules to make room for individuals.
- 4.) **Humor**--a laugh often brings perspective to a problem that is assuming undue proportions.
- 5.) **Patience**--You will not understand the student in your home all the time. They will be accustomed to a certain way of doing things just as you are.

SPECIFIC AREAS TO THINK ABOUT:

- 1.) **Motivation**--The family must be realistic about why they want a foreign student living in their home. Not because they think it is something they should do, not as a solution to a domestic problem, not out of desire for prestige or social acceptance, but rather out of desire for a learning experience.
- 2.) **Health**--If there is a serious emotional or physical problem, the extra drain of adjusting to a student could make for a difficult situation.
- 3.) **Family Income**--There are expenses involved in hosting an exchange student, such as school lunches, higher food costs, more laundry, additional costs on family outings, etc.

There must be no qualms about these. (IRS does allow a monthly deduction--check with your accountant, but hardly worth the bother.)

- 4.) **Room arrangements**--The student should, at least, have a bed of the student's own. If it is necessary to share a room, it should be with a child of similar age who would share similar hours.
- 5.) **Transportation**--An exchange student may not drive any motor vehicle so the family must be willing to see that the student gets to the various activities. Attendance at Rotary Club meeting is strongly encouraged. The Host Club should be contacted for transportation to Rotary Club functions. Carpooling is suggested whenever possible.
- 6.) **Religion**--Difference in religion is rarely a problem, but the family must be prepared to respect beliefs of others and not expect participation in their religious life. District 7410 suggests that students attend religious services with their host families if the family desires.

SPECIAL PROBLEMS AREAS:

- 1.) The rigid family!! Success is less likely if the family has fixed ideas about household routing, recreation, cleanliness, or the habits of others.
- 2.) The too busy parent!! It is vital that the parents have some time to spend with the new family member. Some of the busiest parents have the most time, but they must not become nervous or tense when they are very busy.
- 3.) Too busy or traveling family!! Hosting an exchange student requires time to properly exchange cultural information and the family that does not have time to get to know the exchange student may have serious problems.
- 4.) Insecure teenager!! The exchange student could be too much competition for a host brother or sister to handle and certainly does not provide a solution to the problem.
- 5.) The 'Closed Corporation'!! A very close-knit family which does everything together may make it difficult for an outsider to fit in.

It is important that the student go directly to the first host family upon arrival. Students frequently form such a strong attachment to the family they join upon arrival that a second adjustment during the first few weeks is extremely difficult for them to handle. A family member should be available at home most of the time until school begins, but this is not absolutely necessary. The first weeks in a strange country with a strange family are difficult enough and must not be compounded by long periods of being alone.

Every year some student placements do not work out and the student must move to another family ahead of schedule. When this happens, it is usually a question of compatibility and should not be a judgment on either the family or the student. This change should not cause any sense of embarrassment or feeling of failure on the part of the family involved.

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Rotary's Responsibility

Winter Orientation	District Funded
District Conference	Club Funded
Fall Orientation	District Funded
Holiday Dinner	Club Funded

Student's Responsibility

All student activities listed on the events calendar are those sanctioned by District 7410 and carry no financial obligation to the hosted student, with the notable exception of the summer U.S. bus trip. Students are welcome, but are not required, to participate in these trip events.

Medical Insurance Premium; and all medical costs and deductions not covered by insurance. Exchange students have a Health Insurance Policy that is valid in the US. They should carry their insurance card with them at all times. It is a good idea to make a copy of this card and keep it in case the student misplaces their card.

Clothing

Phone Calls, including local area toll calls

Gifts and Souvenirs

Summer Bus Tour or Alternative Activity, if offered

Optional Travel Expenses, trips, etc.

Host families are not expected to be a lending agency to keep the student in spending money. Each student is required to maintain a bank account of at least \$300.00. It is the students' natural parents who are required to replenish this account when it falls below the required limit.

Host Family's Responsibility

School Lunch. The family may elect to provide a bag lunch or lunch money. Some school districts provide free lunches to exchange students.

Room and Board for the student. A private bedroom is recommended, but certainly not required.

Normal family activity expenses. (i.e.: movie tickets, etc.)

Toiletries, but not make-up, hairspray, cologne, etc.

T here may be a possible tax deduction for hosting. Check with your accountant

APPENDICES

Appendix A	<i>What is Rotary?</i>
Appendix B	<i>First Night Questionnaire</i>
Appendix C	<i>District 7410 Rules for Students</i>
Appendix D	<i>Travel Policies</i>
Appendix E	<i>CMI Insurance</i>
Appendix F	<i>Miscellaneous (Yup, It's Love)</i>
Appendix G	<i>Culture Shock by Dennis White</i>
Appendix H	<i>Sexual Abuse and Harassment Reporting Process</i>

APPENDIX A

What is Rotary?

The History of Rotary

Rotary was born on February 23, 1905 in Chicago, Illinois, the world's first and most international service club. The founder of Rotary was attorney Paul P. Harris (1868-1947), who gathered with three others to discuss his idea of a group of businessmen from different professions getting together periodically to become better acquainted. They decided to limit membership to one representative of each profession and to rotate the meeting site among each member's place of business, to acquaint each other with their various vocations and to promote business. The rotation of meeting places is the source of the name "Rotary".

Club membership grew rapidly. The second Rotary Club was founded in San Francisco in 1908. When clubs were formed in Canada and Great Britain, in 1912, Rotary became an international organization.

Since 1905, the ideas of Paul Harris and his friends have become ideals which have been accepted by people of practically all nationalities, and of many political and religious beliefs. Today there are Rotary Clubs in Austria and American Samoa, in Brazil and Brunei, in Italy and India, in Scotland and South Africa - in some 170 countries. The universal acceptance of Rotary principles has been so great that there are now more than 28,000 Rotary clubs, with a membership of over 1.2 million men and women.

Rotary Motto and Themes

Rotary International has adopted as its motto, "Service Above Self". A second theme of Rotary is "He profits most who serves best". Additionally, each year, the Rotary International President coins a theme for that Rotary year.

Rotarians throughout the world quote the Four Way Test of the things we think, say or do:

1. Is it the TRUTH?
2. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
3. Will it build GOODWILL and BETTER?
FRIENDSHIPS?
4. Will it be BENEFICIAL to all concerned?

The Rotary Foundation

In 1917, the Rotary Foundation was born. The Rotary Foundation is a philanthropic trust promoting further understanding and friendly relations between peoples of different nations. The Foundation sponsors the largest scholarship program in the world and is supported purely by voluntary contributions from Rotary Clubs and Rotarians.

The Rotary Foundation has eight working programs and a budget of approximately \$45-\$50 million (US) each year. These programs include Ambassadorial Scholarships, Rotary Volunteers, The 3H program (for Health, Hunger and Humanity), Rotary Peace Conferences, World Community Service, Special Grants, and two others that you may encounter during your exchange: Group Study Exchange, and Polio-Plus.

Group Study Exchange involves paired districts in different countries sending teams of 4 or 5 business or professional men and women for a 4 week period of study and discussion with their counterparts in the other country. Polio-Plus is Rotary's plan to eliminate polio from the world.

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire for First Night with a New Host Family

The following questions which should be asked of the Host family by the student. (May have to be initiated by the Host Family)

1.	What do I call you?
2.	What am I expected to do daily other than make my bed keep my room tidy, and clean the bathroom every time I use it?
3.	What is the procedure about dirty clothes?
4.	Where do I keep clothes until wash day?
5.	Should I wash my own underclothes?
6.	Should I iron my 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 times 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 at 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? (Forbidden in District 7410)
18.	Where can I store my suitcase?
19.	What time should 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 of the costs of my telephone calls?
28.	What is the procedure for mailing letters? What address do I use for my incoming mail? Do not ask your host family to provide stamps. Remember overseas postal rates are different than domestic rates.
29.	Do you have any dislikes, such as chewing gum, wearing a hat or curlers at the table, loud rock music?
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, baby-sit)?
41.	Please tell me how to interact with the house servants (where applicable).
42.	Is there anything else you would like me to know?

These are just sample questions. Remember, if in doubt...ask! Good Communication between the entire family and the exchange student is the secret to a successful exchange

Rotary International District 7410 Rules for Rotary Youth Exchange Students

There are 13 rules in 2 groups of importance Group One:

- 1.) Exchange students are **forbidden** to operate motor vehicles. (This includes all motorized watercraft, snowmobiles, motorcycles, minibikes, mopeds, three wheelers, four wheelers, aircraft, and lawn mowers. Anything that uses motor power!)
- 2.) Exchange students are **forbidden** to use drugs except under medical supervision.
- 3.) Exchange students are **forbidden** to drink any alcoholic beverages.
- 4.) Exchange students who arrive in District 7410 with a pre-diagnosed illness and/or prescription drugs without proper notification to the District and subsequent approval by the District shall be returned home immediately.

Breaking any one of the above rules in group one (just once) will subject the exchange student to immediate expulsion from the exchange program. This means the exchange student goes home!!

Group Two: Rules of Good Conduct and Behavior

- 5.) Social Activities such as dating ARE allowed. Serious involvement is not allowed. Sex involvement is not allowed. Sex involvement becomes a Group One violation! This rule is for the exchange student's own benefit. If the exchange student becomes seriously involved with someone, the exchange student's social world becomes very limited. Needless to say, sexual involvement leads to all kinds of consequences.
- 6.) Exchange students must maintain passing grades in school (An average of "C" or 75, hopefully higher, is expected.) If the student is having difficulties with schoolwork, ask for help. Exchange students may be absent from school only for Rotary events or with host parents' permission (illness included here). Quarterly grades given by your school must be communicated to the District Chair each quarter in a timely manner.
- 7.) Exchange students are forbidden to have jobs or employment. They have no Social Security number which is required in the United States for employment. Also, exchange students are in the United States with a J- 1 visa which does not allow employment. Occasional babysitting, washing windows, etc. is okay.
- 8.) Exchange students are only permitted to travel with host families, on school trips, and Rotary activities. **All** trips outside District 7410 will be allowed **ONLY** with the permission of the Club YEP Chairperson and the District Chairperson, and **ONLY** if the student has written permission from the natural parents at home. Exchange students must ask host parents for permission to travel, also. This is common courtesy and for their own safety. There may be a need to contact the student.
- 9.) Exchange students must participate in **ALL** mandatory District 7410 Youth Exchange activities listed on the 'Calendar of Events'.
- 10.) Exchange students are expected to accept speaking and/or social engagements that are

arranged by the host family, Rotary club, school or other social functions. It is recommended that each exchange student have **at least** three speaking engagements during their exchange year.

- 11.) Exchange students **must** conduct themselves in a proper manner at **all times**.
- 12.) Smoking, along with the use of other tobacco products, is not allowed in District 7410.
- 13.) Only American English is to be spoken at all Exchange Student functions, including District Conferences, Orientations, Holiday Dinners, etc.

Serious or repeated violations of the rules in group two will also result in the Exchange Student's expulsion from Rotary YEP. Students will have to sign a "Warning Slip" on Group 2 Violations; three violations resulting in three signatures means **THE STUDENT WILL GO HOME!!!**

TRAVEL POLICIES

This is a cultural and educational exchange, NOT a travel exchange. Exchange students should have no expectations of being a tourist. The Host Rotary club and Host Families are under no obligation to provide or permit it. However, some travel through the generosity of, and with, the Host club, individual Rotarians and Host Families is encouraged. **Under no circumstances shall students make their own travel arrangements and then expect the Host club and Host Family to agree. Inbound Exchange students must comply with this policy, and Host Families are asked to enforce it. Violations of this policy may be grounds for terminating the Exchange, and returning the student to his or her home country immediately.**

The reason for these rules is simple. The Rotary District 7410 Youth Exchange Committee, Host Rotary club and Host Parents are responsible for students while in this country. We must know where students can be reached in case of emergency or a message from home.

In summary, so there is no misunderstanding:

THERE WILL BE NO TRAVEL ALLOWED THAT HAS NOT BEEN APPROVED BY YOUR HOST PARENTS, CLUB COUNSELOR, AND THE DISTRICT 7410 YOUTH EXCHANGE COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THESE RULES.

We are not trying to prevent you from traveling or to reduce your fun. However, Rotary is responsible for your safety and therefore must know where you are at all times.

If the student has family or friends from abroad who want to visit them, please notify the District Chair and the Club Chair no less than four weeks in advance. The same thing is true for foreign family friends, girl or boy friends. The District Chair, the Club Chair, as well as the host family, all have the right to say "NO". Visiting by the natural parents is discouraged until the end of the exchange.

If the student wants to travel with his or her natural family, there is a special form requiring signatures in advance by the family. This form is available from the District Chair. The student **cannot** travel alone to meet his or her family. There is an exception to this rule. If the student is at the end of the program and wants to travel with his or her family and return home with the family, then the student can withdraw from the program. At that time District 7410 is no longer responsible.

Appendix E

<http://www.cmi-insurance.com/>

Claim Instructions

Please refer to the Description of Coverage for the Plan under which you are insured for the explanation of Benefits, Covered Expenses, Limitations, and Exclusions.

There are three ways claims may be treated by medical providers:

- I. You may be billed for services by the health care providers instead of paying for the services immediately. You may pay the bills and then submit a claim to the Claims Administrator for reimbursement. Or, you may submit the bills and a claim form to the Administrator and authorize payment of medical benefits directly to the provider.
2. You may be asked to pay for the medical services when they are provided. This is called fee-for-service health care. After you pay for the health care provider, you can then file a claim for reimbursement of the covered expenses with the Claims Administrator.
3. The health care provider may accept the insurance and claim form and will file the claim on your behalf.

Under all three of the above, it is extremely important that the claim form be completed fully as to the nature of the accident or illness and that the Insured Person sign the authorization to release information as well as the assignment of benefits if you want payment to go directly to the provider. The Insured Person must complete the claim form, do not assume that a provider is doing this for you. The most common cause for late claim processing is lack of receipt of the claim information and claim form.

All claims (original medical bills, completed claim form, and original receipt for prescription charges, if applicable) should be submitted to:

Administrative Concepts, Inc. (ACI) Within the US & Canada: 1-888-293-9229 994 Old Eagle School Road, Suite 1005

Outside the USA & Canada: 1-610-293-9229 Wayne, PA 19087-1802 Fax: 1-610-293-9299

www.visit-aci.com

ACI should be contacted with any questions concerning claims processing.

ACI may be contacted via their web site for specific questions as to the status of your claim submission. Claim forms and links to ACI for claim status and information are also provided at the claim section of www.cmi-insurance.com.

It is the Insured Person's responsibility to make sure that the original bills, etc., with a completed claim form, are submitted to Administrative Concepts, Inc. Do not assume that the provider will do this for you. An important feature of the insurance plan is the inclusion of Assistance Services provided by Europ Assistance USA. EA USA is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and you are encouraged to call them for any and all medical emergencies. They may be reached toll-free at 1-800-546-6349 or from overseas call direct or collect to 1-202-659-7785 or using the numbers listed on the Description of Coverage. ***Europ Assistance USA must be involved in any Emergency Medical Evacuation, Emergency Reunion or Repatriation of Remains procedures.*** In addition, EA USA may be of assistance in locating medical providers in the area of the world the Insured Person will be visiting.

APPENDIX F

YEP, It's Love I am a woman who lives in a shoe
Who has been asked to speak for I knew what to
do When into my home I included new faces
Of Youth Exchange students from all cultures and races.

When at first this task was
contemplated I had many excuses to
which I related.

"We have too little room, our bathrooms are
few I have enough laundry, what's this I must
do?"

Girl Scouts keep me busy, Cub Scouts try my wits
The Rainbow Girls need me for more chocolate
chips. P.T.A. has been calling, there's a bake sale to
host How can I do more, when I'm doing my most?

My arm slightly twisted, I was convinced of this
game And into our home a Danish girl came.
The first weekend was frightening, this girl was so
sad She cried for her homeland, for her own Mom
and Dad.

The year was rewarding, the problems were
few We now had four children, with
somebody new.
Our most difficult task was to put Lotte on that
plane But we knew in our hearts that her love
would remain.

Time had gone by so quickly, our family had gained,
We had new understanding, the world wouldn't be the
same. Our horizons were broadened, selfishness took a
back seat Our hearts and our home, indeed, had a new
treat!

TV news had new meaning and now when we hear Of
what's happening in Denmark we perk up our ear. For
in this special country which was so far away We have
a very special love, that is there to stay.

The world has become a much smaller place because
People aren't strangers when you remember their face.
This was just the beginning about ten years before And
now in our home we have had so many more.

We've learned to love Japanese, Chileans and Dutch, The
Swedish and Finnish have taught us so much. Brazilians
have given loads of love without measure, New Zealand
and Belgium have provided great pleasure.

Philippines, Mexico, France and Norway
Have taught new understanding and brightened our day.
Switzerland, Germany and Colombia, too,
Now know that we love them, along with Peru.

Australians have taught us to say G'Day Mate (G'dei mite)
And Denmark, to me, is why we had this good fate. For is
so many years ago I had not given in
And allowed in my family a challenge within.

We'd never have known the great pleasures we've faced
Of melting the world into a much smaller place. The
friendships are lasting, the feelings are real The spirits
have grown, we have a new zeal.

So if I may urge you to do a small part,
Please open your homes, along with your hearts.
The space isn't important, it's the love that you need
The rest will come naturally, if you just take heed.

The Rotary Youth Exchange Experience:**Culture Shock**

By Dennis White, Ph.D.

Most of us are familiar with the term "culture shock". We may think of it as the temporary disorientation that comes from being exposed to a different language, different customs, food, etc. What we don't often realize is that it is usually a rather profound reaction to fairly significant other differences; in the way people view the world, in the way they think and what they value. Tourists often experience culture shock at a superficial level. People who actually live in another culture can experience culture shock as an on-going reaction and adaptation to basic differences. Rotary Youth Exchange Students, living and studying in a different culture, living in the homes of host families, often experience significant culture shock, sometimes on a continuous basis, throughout their stay abroad.

Most exchange students in year-long programs go through a fairly identifiable progression of adjustment to culture shock, although each student's experience is unique. It must be emphasized that while culture shock can be very uncomfortable, there is nothing wrong with it, or with the person experiencing it. It is also quite common for students to have a very positive and rewarding experience, despite having on-going adjustment problems with culture shock. Many would argue that the most rewarding exchanges come only when there is a pronounced experience of culture shock.

Culture shock usually involves at least four stages. It is quite common for these stages to repeat themselves as students become more and more successfully immersed in the host culture. These stages are:

1. **Excitement and Enthusiasm.** This is the feeling of excitement and enthusiasm that accompanies travel to a new place, seeing and doing so many new and different things, and meeting new people. It is most prominent at the beginning of the exchange year, but can repeat itself as students continue to have new experiences, like changing host families, meeting new students, or continued travel. Sometimes it can be the excitement that comes from developing a new skill or increased understanding of the host culture.

2. **Irritability.** This is the stage most readily associated with culture shock and occurs when the initial excitement wears off and real differences become evident. These are differences that go beyond food and language, and they are often indescribable to the person experiencing them. No matter how understanding and accepting the student may try to be, there will be many times when they just don't like or understand why their host culture is the way it is, and they can't seem to make the feeling go away. Irritability can come at any time that a student is confronted with differences they may not have experienced or perceived previously.

3. **Adaptation.** This is the longest, most difficult and most rewarding stage. This is when students learn to accept that they will have to adapt if they are going to be successful in their host culture. They work at adapting to customs and habits that they may not understand, and may not like. Sometimes even when they try very hard, they have difficulty, because so much of this adaptation depends on learning the native language. They know they are adjusting when they begin to think and speak using idiomatic expressions (expressions that have meaning beyond a literal translation). They know they are adjusting when they notice that they are doing things without thinking, and these are the very things they never thought they could become comfortable with. An example would be when someone from a very formal culture becomes comfortable standing very close to other people, frequently touching them and being touched, during a conversation. Adaptation is a continuous process, and it requires added attention as some of these newly discovered differences become apparent to the student.

4. **Biculturalism.** This stage comes very near the end of the stay, or sometimes doesn't really emerge until the student's returns to their native countries. This is when they realize that they have become competent in another culture, and can see the world and function from another, very different point of view. When this stage emerges toward the end of the exchange year, it all seems very unfair to the student. Just as they are getting to experience the benefits of really knowing how to function well in their host culture, they have to go back home.

In **Table 1** below, a model of a typical year of adaptation and adjustment to culture shock is pictured. The bold line that waves up and down represents the high and low feelings that students experience as they go through the various stages of adjustment to culture shock.

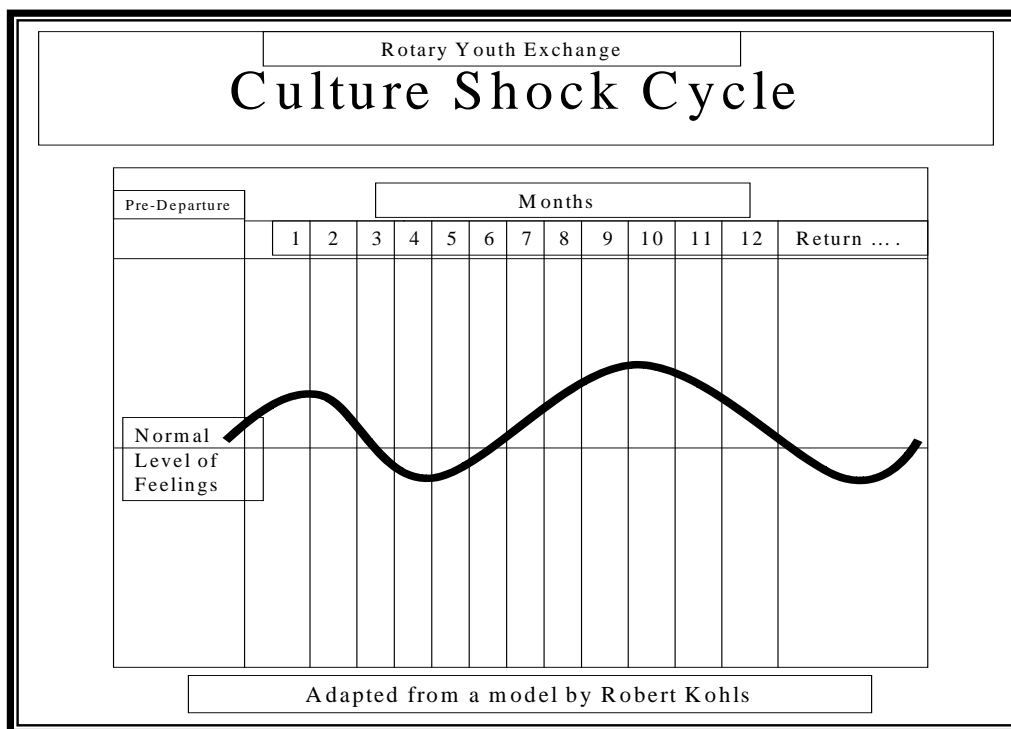


Table 1.

The first few months, including the period just before departure, coincide with the initial excitement stage. This peaks when the excitement wears off, or what is sometimes referred to as the time when the “honeymoon” is over. This is when reality sets in. This is when differences beyond superficial ones emerge, and irritability sets in, often verily quickly. At times, however, this irritability can come fairly slowly, but it is almost inevitable as the confrontation of one’s own ethnocentrism occurs.

The lowest point typically comes at about four months, or near the middle of December, for students who start their exchange in August. For Christian students, this also coincides with what is probably the first Christmas they have spent away from their families. As a result, there is a sort of double negative of culture shock and homesickness.

Following the irritability stage is the much longer stage of gradual adjustment and adaptation where the student really learns the cultural tools necessary to function competently in the host country. This stage can actually involve the recycling of prior stages, with deeper and deeper understanding following periods of confusion, frustration and irritation.

The final stage, shown as coming around the time of returning home, can involve another plunge into a period of feeling low. If the student is not already sad at the prospect of returning home, “just when it’s getting good”, they will almost inevitably feel sad shortly after they return, when they go through a “reverse culture shock”. This phenomenon is less well understood, and less often anticipated, but just as common as initial culture shock. The degree to which students go through reverse culture shock is a rough measure of the success of their immersion in the host culture, and not a sign that something is wrong. Only after experiencing reverse culture shock can students really appreciate the extent to which they have changed, and, as a result, the extent to which they have become truly bicultural.

The journey through culture shock has also been described as moving from **Ethnocentrism** to **Ethnorelativism**. All cultures are ethnocentric. They teach their members that their way is the right, natural and preferred way of doing things. When someone is exposed to another culture, with different values, behaviors and beliefs, there is a tendency to respond with defensiveness, labeling one's own practices as right and the other culture as wrong, silly or even stupid. Ethnorelativism is the awareness that develops as one realizes there are other valid ways of dealing with the world – whether we agree with them or not. When the exchange student gets through the initial denial (which is what happens in the irritability stage) they can begin to develop the skills necessary to adapt and be competent in the new culture. They then develop an ethnorelative world view. Their thinking may follow this progression:

1. I don't like the way they do this – it's stupid.
2. But they seem to be doing o.k. doing it this way.
3. If I want to survive here, I'd better learn to do it this way.
4. Now that I can do it this way, it doesn't seem so bad, even though I may still prefer to do it my way.

Developing the competence to succeed in another culture – that is – going through the process of culture shock, may be better understood by analyzing the process of developing competence at anything. Essentially, we go through four stages:

1. Unconscious Incompetence. This is a stage when we not only don't know how to do something; we don't even know that we don't know how to do it. We are ignorant. Most of us think we know the proper way to greet someone. For example, when we go to another culture where greetings are done quite differently, we may just breeze along doing it our way, not even knowing that what we are doing may be perceived as rude or insulting.
2. Conscious Incompetence. In this stage we may be aware that we are doing something wrong, but we just may not have the skills yet to do it properly. We may know that another culture spends more time in greetings inquiring about one's relatives, but if we are not skilled at the language, we may have trouble doing it, even if we want to.
3. Conscious Competence. In this stage we have developed the necessary skills to do what is necessary, but we still have to consciously remind ourselves to do it. We may think it is a waste of time to stop and discuss the well-being of all of our family members when we greet a friend, but we know how to, and more importantly, we know it is important to do so in this culture in order to appear "civilized" and polite.
4. Unconscious Competence. In this stage we have become so skilled at the new cultural behavior that we do it without thinking. We may find that it becomes very natural to stop and chat with friends as we greet them, inquiring about the mutual health of both families, as if it is the most natural thing in the world to do.

When exchange students get to this point – unconscious competence, they have gotten to the bicultural stage of adjustment to culture shock. They have developed an effective ethnorelative world view. So one can see that culture shock is not a problem to avoid. Instead, it is a necessary discomfort that one must go through to really experience the rich and varied joys of intercultural living.

(note: Additional articles by Dr. White on related topics include "The Middle Stage of culture Shock" and "So You Think You're Home Now". Both may be obtained by contacting Dr. White.)

About the author:

Dr. Dennis White is a Psychologist, a former U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer and a member of the Rotary Club of Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, USA. He makes training presentations for Rotary Youth Exchange Programs and other intercultural training programs in many locations.

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Rotary Youth Exchange Program
District 7410
www.7410youth.org



Sexual Abuse and Harassment Reporting Process

1. The first adult to whom a report of criminal action such as abuse is made is mandated to arrange and maintain the safety of the student.
2. Said adult (the club Youth Exchange Chair, Rotary counselor or other official), should immediately contact Pat Ehrenzeller, Child Protection Officer for Rotary District 7410 at 570-836-3131 (w) or 570-836-5877/7257 (h).
3. After arrangements have been made for the safety of the student, and Child Protection Officer contacted, the adult should contact the District Chairperson, Kate Farrell Kurosky at 570-434-2501 x 548 (w) or 570-278-3063 (h).
4. If the Child Protection Officer cannot be contacted, the District Chairperson should be contacted immediately.
5. If the Child Protection Officer or District Chairperson cannot be contacted, the adult should contact (Past as of 7/1/06) District Governor Melanie Tek at 570-857-0290.
6. The District Youth Exchange Chairperson, Student Protection Officer, or (Past) District Governor, Melanie Tek, will contact Pennsylvania Child Line 1-800-932-0313.
7. The District Youth Exchange Chairperson will contact RI within 72 hours.

Kathleen Farrell Kurosky
Chairperson

Phone: 570-278-3063
Fax: 570-434-2265
Email: kkurosky@mvsd.net,
kkurosky@epix.net

Ten Commandments for an Exchange Student to Complete a Successful Exchange

- 1.) Adapt or Fail
- 2.) Ask or Be Ignorant.
- 3.) Smile Every Chance You Get.
- 4.) Be Lively and Active.
- 5.) Give 100% of Yourself and Expect Nothing in Return.
- 6.) Be Punctual.
- 7.) Be Considerate of Your Hosts.
- 8.) Maintain a Neat Appearance and Keep your Surroundings Orderly.
- 9.) Plan Ahead
- 10.) Strive to Earn the Respect of Others.





*Building World Understanding
and Peace
One Student at a Time!*



District 7410 Rotary Clubs are always looking for qualified exchange student applicants to represent them in other countries.

If you or someone within your school district is interested in becoming a Rotary International Youth Exchange student, please contact your high school guidance counselor, a member of your local Rotary Club or the District 7410 Chairman. (Name and number at the front of this manual)