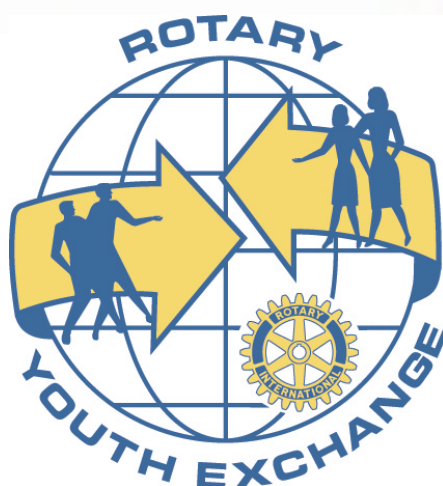




ROTARY District 9810
Victoria, Australia



YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM OUTBOUND STUDENT GUIDE

District 9810 Youth Exchange Committee

As always, we welcome suggestions, criticisms (constructive) or any other comment from Rotary Clubs, Student Counselors, Host Families, Exchange Students and those that use this handbook.

Table of Contents	Page
Forward	2
Rotary International	3
The Objectives of the Youth Exchange Program	4
Rotary and Youth Exchange in Australia and District 9810	5
Before Departure	6
Whilst on Exchange – Some Words of Wisdom	7
Take Note – On Your Return	8
The Role of Your Sponsor Club Counselor – In Australia	9
Your Role as an Exchange Student	10 - 11
The Role of Your Host Club Counselor – In Your Host Country	12 - 14
The Role of Your Host Families	15 - 16
Culture Stress and Shock	17 - 20
The Exchange Cycle	21
Coping with Homesickness	22 - 23
Visitors from Home	24
Your Education Whilst of Exchange	24
Your Safety Whilst on Exchange	25 - 27
Gifts	28
Your Rotary Blazer	29
What does Exchange Cost?	29
Travel, Tickets and Baggage Allowance	30 - 31
Security	31 - 32
Rotary Escorts	32
Travel Tips	33
Managing Your Money	34
Rotary Allowance	35
Other Money Matters You Should Know About	35
Rotary Tours	36
Air Travel and Your Health	36
Health and Medical issues	37
Insurance – Health and Travel	38 - 39
How to use Your ACE Assistance Card	40
Communication and Reporting	41
Your Monthly Report	41
Email Addresses, Blogging, Facebook and MySpace	42
Returning Home to Australia	43
Debriefing	44
Stay Involved – Compulsory and Recommended Events	44
Rotary Conference	44

Rules and Conditions of Exchange	45 - 48
Duty of Care – Risk Management	49 - 50
First Night Questions to Ask your Host Family	51 - 53
The Ten Commandments of Being an Exchange Student	54 - 55
Being Responsible In Using Your Smartphone Data	55

Appendices	
<i>Grievance Procedure Flow Chart</i>	
<i>Monthly Report Form</i>	

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.

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.

This handbook is designed to offer some guidance to all participants. 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, host families 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 wishes you well as you now formally embark on your Rotary Youth Exchange Journey.

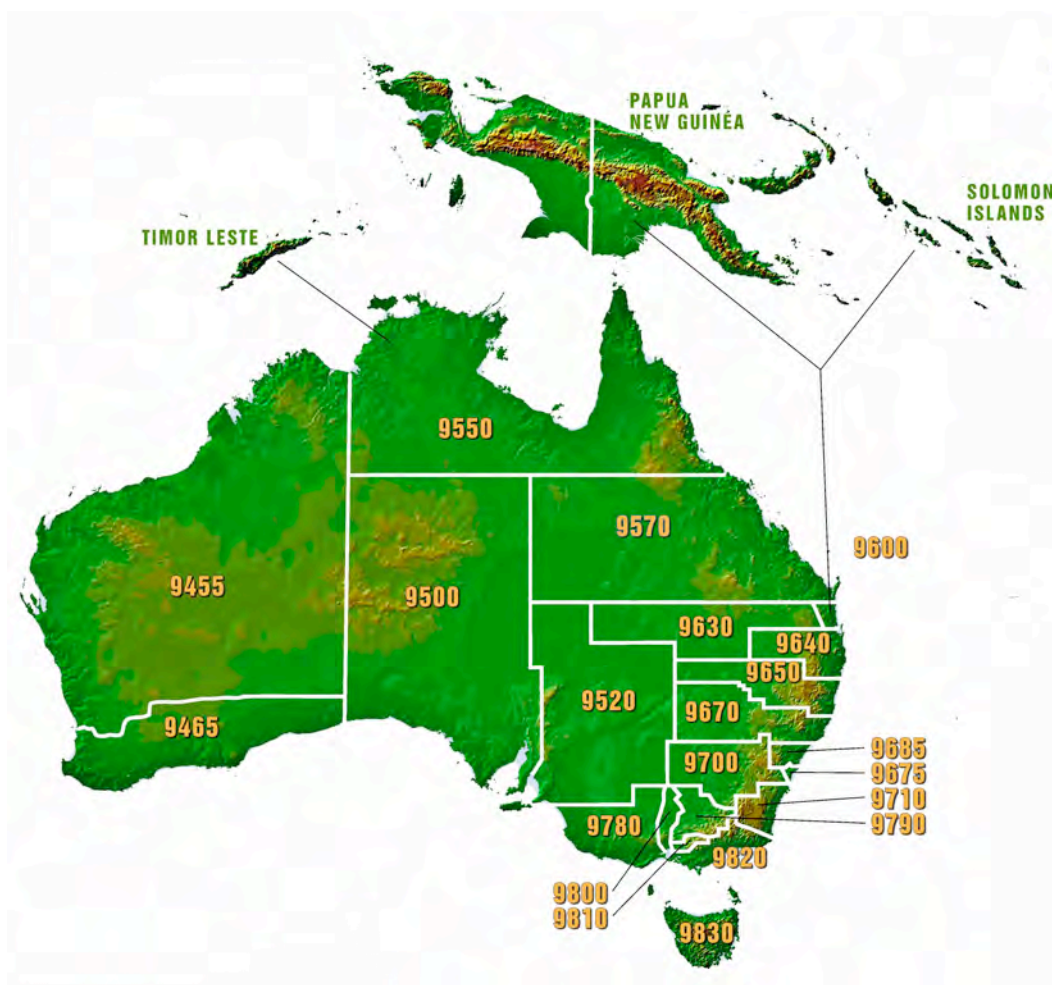
Rotary International

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. There are now currently more than more than 34,100 clubs covering 210 countries worldwide totaling over 1.2 million Rotarians. The Rotary Club of Melbourne was the first Australian Rotary Club chartered in 1921.

Administratively Rotary is made up of around 530 districts worldwide. Some districts are multi national covering all or part of one or more countries. Districts vary in size geographically and usually consist of 50 – 100 Rotary clubs.

There are currently 21 Rotary Districts in Australia and the Australia-wide membership exceeds 52,000 spread over around 1,450 Clubs. Two Australian districts are multi national and include clubs in the Solomon Islands, PNG and Timor Leste (East Timor) and include students from those countries in their exchange program. **District 9810** geographically is the smallest Australian district. The map shows the variation in size of Australian districts.



The principle motto of Rotary is "**Service Above Self**"

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

- First** The development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service;
- Second** High ethical standards in business and professions; the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations; and the dignifying by each Rotarian of his or her occupation as an opportunity to serve society;
- Third** The application of the ideal of service by every Rotarian to his personal, business, and community life; and
- Fourth** The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

These are expressed as the "**Five Avenues of Service**" – Club, Vocational, Community International Service and New Generations. Youth Exchange is a program of the fifth avenue of service, New Generations.

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 is for a full academic year.

Rotary Youth Exchange is an official activity of District 9810. The program is administered by the District Youth Exchange Committee, which reports to the District Governor through the District Youth Services or New Generations Chairman.

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 application has been sent to a nominated country as your exchange placement and agreement between District 9810 and that country. Administratively that may mean to a multi district organising committee such as in Germany or Denmark or other countries where your final placement will be to any district club within these countries. Or in other countries the exchange is between specific districts where sometimes these arrangements have been in place for many years.

Part of the application is the Guarantee Form, which is what is required and must be completed by your host club before you can apply for your student visa. That is the guarantee of your hosting arrangement and enrolment in a secondary school. When that is returned, congratulations you are an exchange student. This may not occur before November or later. Have patience.

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

Before Departure: The months before

- Make sure you have a current passport with at least 18 months time left on it;
- At least one parent needs to have a current passport whilst you are on exchange;
- You must meet all requests and deadlines;
- Get to know your sponsor Rotary club, its members and the work they do in your community;
- Leave plenty of time to learn some of the language of your host country if the national language is not English;
- Learn something of the culture of your host country;
- Communicate with your host Rotary club and your first host family;
- Prepare your presentation(s) to be given to your host Rotary club whilst you are on exchange;
- Watch SBS TV or the World Movie channel to get used to hearing the language of your host country – the picture usually tells the story so you don't have to know the language, and there are the subtitles!
- Make sure you have any immunisations required; and
- Practice budgeting, looking after your own finances and living within your means.

Before Departure: The week before

- Ensure you have the details regarding checked baggage allowance, size and weight of cabin baggage, departure date and time, meeting point and time on day of departure;
- Go through your checklist – several times;
- Be prepared for arrival in a very different climate and pack accordingly;
- Get farewells out of the way several days before departure;
- Try and get as much rest as possible in the days before departure;
- Make sure you have copied your insurance information and left it with your parents; and
- Make sure a copy of your passport and any other official documents are left with your parents.



Departure: Be on time

Do NOT pack ticket, passport or money in your checked baggage – all will be needed during your journey. Carry them with you at all times;

- Make sure your baggage is NOT overweight;
- Carry an amount of cash (suggest \$200) in the currency of the country to be visited;
- **Do NOT, under any circumstances,** carry items on or off the plane for anyone;
- **Do NOT, under any circumstances,** offer to carry or pack any item in your checked luggage for anyone else;
- Be correctly, yet comfortably, dressed – wear your blazer; and
- Be prepared– the impact of what you're about to embark on may suddenly hit you.



Whilst on Exchange

- Accept all decisions of your host Rotary club and your host families and counselors;
- Be adaptable – become part of the host family;
- Use the host language and participate in and experience the culture of the country;
- Be careful when crossing the road; remember in many countries vehicles drive on the right-hand side of the road.
- Be prepared for *culture shock* and know how to deal with it – see appendices
- Present talks to your host club about Australia, your community and yourself;
- Participate, be busy and get involved in your:
 - School
 - Host family
 - Host club
 - New community;
- Make friends with students from your host country, don't only make friends with exchange students;
- Attend local Rotary meetings, particularly those of your host club;
- Dress appropriately for all occasions especially more 'formal' ones;
- Never plan without asking – ask your host family and your host club before committing to anything;
- Make sure your monthly reports are emailed to your country coordinator before the end of each month and a copy of your email letter – to your sponsor club and counselor;
- Be prepared for the unexpected;
- Observe, adjust and adapt to the host country's culture and laws; and
- Talk through any problems with your host club counselor or host family.



Some words of wisdom

- Enjoy yourself – but remember to be humble and respectful.
- The more you put in, the more you will get out of the exchange.
- A year on exchange has its ups and downs – it's how you deal with them that make it worthwhile. If you bounce back quickly and easily and let go of your problems, you'll have a great year.
- Keep a positive attitude. Developing successful relationships with host families, classmates and Rotarians, as a foreigner, requires effort but it is likely to result in life-long friendships. Adjusting your attitude to those around you can be summed up in a simple sentence.
KEEP A POSITIVE ATTITUDE.



Take Note – Hosts will tire quickly of you if you;

Don't make an effort to become part of the family. You might not realize that if you by doing any of the following either because of tiredness, a dispute with a host sibling or just being inconsiderate or not thinking will cause problems that could have you sent home.

- Stay in your room and do not make an effort to be a part of the family;
- Continually play loud music and shut yourself off from others;
- Over-use the internet;
- Do not show appreciation for the efforts of your host family e.g. outings, special meals;
- Constantly complain; and don't get involved in school/community activities.



On Return

Your exchange doesn't end when you leave your host country and return home to Australia at the conclusion of the exchange.

- Make sure you contact your host club/families to again thank them and to let every one know that you have arrived home safely;
- Be prepared for changes when you return home;
- Compulsory attendance is required at the de-brief meeting on your return (late January/early February – dates to be confirmed);
- Compulsory attendance at District Conference is required (dates TBC)
- Be prepared to give presentations or talks on your year's experience; and
- Continue to maintain contact with District Youth Exchange. Be involved.

As a participant in the Youth Exchange Program, you will be representing your:

- **Country** • **State** • **Community** • **Sponsor club** • **Family** • **Rotary Club**

"If it is to be – it is up to me"



The Role of your Sponsor Club Counselor – in Australia

Your sponsor club counselor serves as liaison between yourself, your family, your sponsor Rotary club and the District 9810 Youth Exchange Committee. The role of your counselor is pivotal to the thorough preparation of yourself and, ultimately, your future success as a Rotary Youth Exchange Student.

- In the state of Victoria, it is now law that all volunteers who work with children should hold a **'Working with Children Check' card**, an obligation under the Working with Children Act 2005. This includes all District 9810 Youth Exchange Committee members, **your sponsor counselor** and the host families of inbound students.
- Your counselor should have received a copy of their handbook ('Handbook for Counselors of Outbound Exchange Students').
- It is your counselor's responsibility to organise transport so you are able to get to the compulsory orientations for all exchange students. These vary as the duration and venue and notification will be sent to all students and counselors.



Typically the dates (TBC) of the Compulsory Orientations are;

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| ○ June | Assessment and information of selected applicants |
| ○ July | District interview & placement of selected applicants |
| ○ August | Orientation day |
| ○ October | Orientation day |
| ○ December | Final preparation day |
| ○ February | Debriefing meeting, after you return home |

After you have been accepted into the Program

- As soon as you have been advised of your selection into the District 9810 Youth Exchange Program your counselor will arrange to take you to your Rotary club to enable you to formally introduce yourself to club members and to thank the club for sponsoring you on the amazing journey that is about to unfold.
- You will have been provided with this student handbook. Please spend some time going through this handbook with your counselor and ensure that you and your parents/guardians have a full understanding of your responsibilities.
- Your counselor will assist you with all facets of your preparation, including a country and personal PowerPoint presentation that can be used by you in your host country.
- If possible make your country and personal PowerPoint presentation at school and to other service clubs or appropriate community groups in your area. Not only is this a great opportunity for you to refine your presentation and gain confidence it is a fantastic way to promote the Rotary Youth Exchange Program across the district.
- Your counselor will book you into your sponsor club's program prior to your departure to make your country and personal PowerPoint presentation. At this time your sponsor club president may present you with your youth exchange blazer. Your parents/guardians will be invited to attend this meeting as well.

Before you go on exchange

- As soon as information becomes available regarding your host country, Rotary club and host families, make contact with them.
- Ensure you add your sponsor club counselor to your 'group email' list so that he/she receives all the news from your host destination. It is vital that you maintain and document regular contact with your sponsor club counselor.
- Your sponsor club counselor will ensure you have a supply of Rotary club banners (if clubs have banners) to take with you on exchange. You will be able to present these to your host club president and to other clubs you may visit whilst on exchange.
- Please remember your obligation to Rotary. You must forward a report by the end of each month to your country coordinator. Make a 'large' note in your diary to attend to this each month.



Whilst you are on exchange

- Regularly keep in contact with your sponsor club counselor.
- Report any problems, which are causing you, concern as soon as possible to your sponsor club counselor. If you feel something needs addressing and you haven't been able to resolve it in your host country, don't wait until the end of the month when you do your monthly report to report your concerns.
- Your counselor will keep in contact with your family while you are on exchange.
- Confirm your return flight arrival time with your counselor and advise him/her of any changes to flight details as he/she is most likely intending to be at the airport to welcome you home.

When you return home from exchange

- Upon your return home, your counselor will arrange for you to be the guest speaker at your sponsor club where you will have the opportunity to share your experiences of your year abroad. Your family will be invited to attend this meeting. You may present, to the club president, any Rotary banners that you have received while on exchange.
- Your counselor will assist you to settle back into your home environment. Adjusting back into your home can be as difficult as when you first went away.
- Make sure you know the date of the District Debriefing to be held in early February. We will notify you and your parents as soon as the date has been confirmed. This is a **compulsory** camp and you must attend.
- It is **compulsory** for you to attend the District Conference. Make sure you are aware of the dates/place for the conference. We will notify you and your parents as soon as the dates and venue have been confirmed.
- Talk to your counselor about travel arrangements to and from the District conference. You are a guest of your sponsor Rotary club.

Your Role as an Exchange Student in your Host Country

Above all else, you will be expected to be involved: involved in your new family, involved in your new school, involved in the community in which you now live, and involved in Rotary. To do this successfully you must do at least two things:

- 1 learn to communicate in the language of your new country; and**
- 2 learn to adapt.**

Your host counselor will ensure your participation and assist you in adapting. Remember, the new culture is likely quite different, and learning to 'fit in' and get comfortable in your new country can be a challenge – we understand this!

Learning the language of your new country

You will possibly arrive with little understanding of the language of your host country, and considerable effort will be needed on your part to understand and be understood.

- You must practice by engaging in real conversation.
- Reading, and writing the language is necessary to develop true proficiency.
- Some host families will label objects around the house, which can be a fun activity – perhaps encourage them to do so if they have not already.
- You can help yourself 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.
- Have a dictionary close at hand at all times.
- Think of other words, other phrases, complete sentences and non-truncated words to use so you are better understood.
- Do not 'pretend' to understand because you believe you are 'expected' to understand. You may be agreeing to something that you don't understand the consequences of. Ask for an explanation or translation.



Learning to Adapt

Learning to adapt means being willing to try new things, do things differently, recognize the cultural basis for the environment you are used to, and accepting that cultural differences are neither, 'better' or 'worse', simply 'different'. Do not criticise your host country and culture, also do not criticise Australia and our culture. The key word is '**different**', not 'better' or 'worse'.



**Remember – None of us are
'better' or 'worse' – simply 'different'**

The Role of Your Host Club Counselor – in Your Host Country

- The role of your host Counsellor is very important and cannot be overstated. Your counselor will help you to settle in quickly, help you feel at home, encourage you to participate fully in the life of the club and will form a good relationship and friendship with you.
- You should feel comfortable discussing **any** matter with your counselor particularly in times of need and stress. Your counselor should be your support person, being very aware that you are a young person alone in a strange country with no family support – your counselor is there to help fill the gap!
- It is important to establish a good rapport as quickly as possible. Your counselor is effectively your guardian, friend and confidante.
- You may be invited to spend a few days with your counselor either before or during the first few weeks. This helps form the bond that is really essential between your counselor and yourself. This arrangement is not always the case though, and you may go directly to your first host family.

It is important that your counselor be:

- A person who has a rapport with young people and is committed to your well-being and happiness, who is also a person able to see that you abide by the Rotary rules;
- Of the same sex as yourself, or alternatively the counsellor's partner is happy to also be involved in caring for and getting to know you;
- Not a member of one of your host families or close to a family to the degree that he/she would be unable to be impartial if a situation arises between you and your host family;
- Prepared to greet you on arrival and organise your settling in at school and setting up your bank accounts;
- Able to give the time and commitment to talk with you at least every second week and sees that you are involved with the host Rotary club;
- Prepared to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure you are protected and treated kindly and fairly; and be
- Prepared to see you obey the rules and are fulfilling your obligations as a family member, school member, and you are involved in Rotary activities.

First contact

Your counselor should:

- Make contact with you by e-mail prior to your departure from Australia and provide some details about him/herself and family, as well as the club, the city or town and the immediate surroundings. If you haven't had contact from your counselor and already have his/her contact details, you should instigate the first contact. Your Country Coordinator can assist you with this if you wish;
- Give appropriate information to assist in your final preparations before departure; and
- Confirm that you will be staying with your counselor for the first week after your arrival before moving to your first host family.



Welcome

Your counselor should:

- Be at the airport for your arrival dependent on location and make you feel as welcome as possible;
- Ensure you give a quick call to your parents to advise of your safe arrival; and
- Be aware that you may feel strange and a little homesick and help you with this.

Flight Arrivals

Welcome



Amy



Bank Account, Passport and Air tickets

Your counselor should:

- Help you set up your emergency money account requiring two signatures – those of your counselor and yourself.
- If this emergency money is used during the year it is your parents in your home country who should always top it up.
- Organise safekeeping of your passport and return airline tickets in a place where they will be safe but accessible if/when needed.
- You **may** need your passport if you travel to another country, especially on the Euro Tour in Europe. Ensure your counselor is not away or un-contactable when you require your passport to travel.

School

- The decision as to which school you attend will be made jointly by your counselor and your host parents – this decision will have been made well before your arrival in your host country.



The Rotary club or host families will incur no school fees. You will not be put into a private school unless school fees have been waived or your parents in your home country are willing to pay the fees.

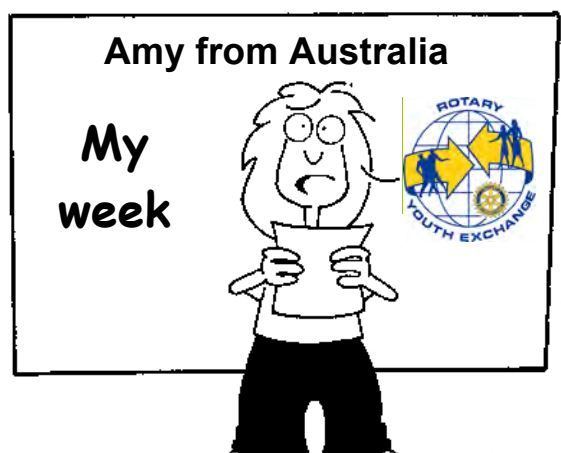
School related expenses vary from country to country. In many countries school students do not wear school uniforms. If they do in your host country, then most schools will assist wherever they can with the supply of second hand uniforms and books.

- You will most likely be responsible to pay any public transport costs to and from school.
- To get definitive answers on these and other questions see – *'First Night Questions to ask your host family'* – see appendices.



At Rotary

- Your counselor should inform you about your host Rotary District, host club and its objectives, and also the projects and fundraising activities in which the club is involved.
- You should be made aware of the structure of the Rotary club and the names of its office bearers. If this doesn't happen, ensure you ask to be made aware of them.
- Please also be aware that not all Rotary clubs conduct their meetings in the same way as does your sponsor club in Australia, and that some do not have the same level of interaction.
- You should have a close relationship with your counselor, and should be taken to Rotary meetings when appropriate. Where some clubs are holding breakfast/lunchtime meetings, these meetings may be difficult for you to attend all the time.
- At every meeting you attend you should ask to give a report to the club as to your activities during your week.



- Your Counsellor should assist you to build a rapport with all Rotarians in the club and encourage Rotarians to invite you to their home for a meal/outing/weekend.
- Your Counselor should ensure that you are receiving your monthly allowance of around AU\$100 – paid in local currency. This amount will vary in some countries.

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***Remember – Always speak the absolute truth to your Counselors, both sponsor club and host club. You need their trust and their guidance throughout your year on exchange.***



## The Role of your Host Family

Most Rotary clubs will have three or four families planned. The 3 reasons for this:

1. To give you an opportunity to experience several different family lifestyles;
  2. To give more than one family the opportunity to know you; and
  3. To spread the cost of supporting you.
- If you have developed a good bond, it is sometimes difficult to change host families.
  - Every family is different and one may be more 'comfortable' for you than others.
  - Try not to make comparisons and take time to get to know your second, third and forth families.
  - Be respectful when you speak about your families to others. Gossip travels quickly and it is easy to cause hurt feelings.
  - Try to appreciate whatever your host families do for you.

The operative word here is *family*, and they are asked to help you become a part of their family during the period that you live with them. This means treating you as they would their own son or daughter, not as a guest, and exercising all the parental responsibilities and authorities they would for their own child.

## Your host family will:

- **Establish an understanding of expectations** soon after you arrive in their home .
- **Discuss the *First Night Questions*** with you, which are included in the appendices.
- **Be prepared to help you recover from homesickness.** Your homesickness can take many forms, from simply general sadness to wishing to stay in your room alone. It is perfectly normal that you will have bad days and experience homesickness. If host parents are sensitive to this, they will be able to reassure you that your reactions are perfectly normal.
- **Encourage you to get involved.** Rotary, school extracurricular activities, sports, community activities, church groups, and family activities may be new and unfamiliar to you, and will likely be very 'different' from those activities you were involved in back in Australia.
- **Understand 'culture shock' and help you learn about their culture.** Sometimes it is difficult for you to understand your host parent's feelings and for your host parents to understand yours as a result of differences between cultures.
- **Monitor your school attendance.** You must attend school at all times and maintain satisfactory class results. Host parents will treat you as they would their own child regarding school activities and if host parents have any problems what-so-ever with you not attending school/school activities, they will speak with you and/or your counselor about it immediately.
- **Monitor your schoolwork.** Host parents should discuss your schoolwork with you, your teachers, and school officials if any academic or social problems are becoming apparent. Host parents are encouraged to attend parent-teacher interview sessions at your school.

## Host Families come in all shapes and sizes

Host families will represent the diversity of the culture of your host country.

They will be of varied economic, religious and racial backgrounds and no doubt include:

- Working parents
- Multi generational families
- Couples without children
- Couples with many children
- Singles and single parents
- Melded families
- Adoptive parents
- Empty-nesters
- Retired couples

Some will live in mansions, some on vast properties; some in cramped city apartments and some will have family pets that share the home.



However – whoever or whatever your host families are, they will treat you as part of their family and expect that you fit in with their lifestyle. If you accept each family for who and what they are and embrace their style of living, you will enjoy the time spent with them. If you complain and compare, you will be miserable and bitter.



## If One of Your Host Parents Goes Away

If one host parent is going away from home for a period of time e.g. a weekend/business trip/holiday and you are of the opposite gender to the remaining host parent and there are no siblings living in the home at that time, you must request that your host parents (and/or your counsellor) arrange to accommodate you with another family for that duration.

## CULTURE - STRESS AND SHOCK

Travelling overseas is a stretching, educating, exciting, experience. Plenty of people do it and survive the experience with some good stories to share with their friends and family. Most of them do it by travelling on airlines that maintain clean toilets, have staff speaking English and serve Western food. They stay at hotels with standards of cleanliness to which they are accustomed --running water, electricity, and people who can communicate. Each day they foray out and see the sights, and return safely each night. And most of them do it for just a limited period of time.

On the other hand you, as students, are going to live and study in another country, living in their homes, coping with their food, language and styles of life. It will be a great experience, but it will make more demands on you than just being a tourist. You may well experience what has come to be known as **culture shock**, although it would be better to call it **culture stress**, for very few people actually get to the shock stage where the body shuts down and refuses to cope.

Your parents, relatives, teachers, peers, media, and the systems of our society have worked hard to instill in you a way of looking at the world and a system of values. You most probably believe in being individualistic, on time, well educated, you like a wide variety of food and would complain if Mum served you the same food every night. You expect people to tell you to your face if they have a problem with you. You do not feel it threatening to be away from you family for a period of time. This is your worldview.

When you first go overseas you will notice that there are some important differences in the new setting. Language is a very obvious one, even if they use English, but you may find that your host families have different expectations. They may expect you to not just try but to like different foods, or to behave in different ways, to address them in different ways, and have a different sense of time. When you first arrive, you will enjoy noticing these differences and being glad about those aspects that are similar to your own life. In fact, life is in Technicolor. It is a good time to take your photographs, to write long letters home and make extensive diary entries. We call this the **honeymoon period**. It is the period of initial contact.

However, this does not last forever. You gradually come to realise that you do not really understand that they are doing, or why they expect you to do things the way they do. You find yourself colliding with their ideas. It is obvious that they are finding you rude or uncouth, and you do not know what you have done; or they don't see your jokes, even when you explain them. They expect you to understand what to do when you talk to the school principal, or where to walk on the footpath and what to wear for certain occasions. And they don't think to explain and sometimes they can't explain it. This inevitably produces in you a sense of confusion, uncertainty, and a longing for home and friends. This can be best described as **cultural stress**.

It is due to you not knowing, understanding, and certainly not sharing, their worldview. They are looking on life with different spectacles and they are most probably confused about your attitudes, likes and dislikes. As this stress grows, you will find that you react to the stress and your efficiency is reduced. You will start to react emotionally, and even physically. The way you react may depend on your personality and the way you have learnt to cope with life at home. But it may surprise you too. It may affect your study, your sociability and your sleep patterns.

You may find that you start to think that everything about your new country and its people is not as good as at home. You may even find that you want to write home and ask them to send you things to restore your sense of worth and rightness. You may find yourself wanting to withdraw into your room to avoid the confusion and minimise the discomfort, or not wanting to get out of bed in the morning. This is what we might call **flight**. It is a natural response to stress, but is not always the most appropriate way to deal with the situation. And certainly on the long run, it will not help you to gain the understanding of the culture you need. Others of you may find that you become angry, frustrated and hostile, and even start to blame other people for your pain and uncertainty. This we may call **fight**. You may even

do things that later you will find difficult to understand that you could actually have done them. Tempers are much more easily lost tears come readily.

As this confusion intensifies, you may well find yourself wanting to reject all these differences. The people are stupid, their post offices are hopeless, and their food is terrible. Everybody is out to rip you off and cheat you. You may find yourself whining and being very critical about everything. Certainly when you get with other foreigners, you may well have a gripe session. This is only a stage, but it does happen with most of us. It is not the final stage by any means, and hopefully, it will not last too long for you. But it is painful and confusing.

The next stage is **readjustment**. You grow in your understanding of the worldview of other people. You come to appreciate that they enjoy different foods, different music, have different family relationships, and do special things at different times of the year. You find yourself able to do things their way without really thinking about it. The more you can do this, the less stress you will experience. Life becomes more enjoyable and easier to live.

Language is a very big key to this so if they do not speak English, learn their language as quickly as you can. Force yourself to go to where you have to use it - where they can't speak English! And even if English is spoken, learn the way they speak it and modify your vowel sounds and change your vocabulary. Keep asking questions about what they do under certain circumstances. How do they talk to their grandparents, celebrate a birthday. Try and find out about relationships, who are insiders and whom do they see as outsiders, about things they consider sensible and what is nonsense.

It is always very informative to ask your hosts what they think Australians do that is stupid! If they will tell you, you have gained an important lesson on our worldview. But perhaps that is something to find out towards the end of your visit, not when you are feeling stressed by culture stress. Also you can explore what are their routines, and how do they handle interruptions; you need to know what their rules are and what happens to those who break them. As you do this, you will come to appreciate their worldview and fit in well. Once you get home, you will be able to explain your host culture to those who enquire, and also it will help you to be a good advocate for Australia.

This does not mean that you will have to accept their view on everything and throw away your own values, behavior and beliefs. But it will help if you can appreciate the differences and be able to explain to others when you get home how they view life. Once you can do that, you have got to the stage of being **bi-cultural** – able to function well in two cultures. But it does take time and some effort, but is worth it.

***May you sail through the stress of living in another culture?  
And quickly reach and enjoy the bi-cultural stage.***



## Your lifestyle is about to change

- It is likely that what you experience next year will be very different from what it is now and, most likely it will also impact upon you when you return. In fact, for some, the experience may have a lasting impact;
- Some of the differences you experience you will like, others you will find irritating, some may be unbearable, but all experiences challenge and prepare you to cope with 'life';
- Always consider things to be 'different' and don't be judgmental that something is 'better' or 'worse' than what you are used to – **it is just different!**
- Don't depart Australia believing the stereotypes about the country to which you are going. They will be false;
- Depending on your host country you should expect differences in all, or some, of the following:



- Language
- Climate
- Food
- Sport
- Gender roles
- Dress and appearance
- Religion and religious observance
- Social
- School

## How to cope with culture shock

- Be open minded
- Observe
- Adjust and adapt
- Participate
- Ask questions
- Be patient



## Remain Positive

There are three skills critical to be effective in an overseas experience, they are:

- The ability to manage psychological stress
- The ability to communicate effectively
- The ability to establish interpersonal relationships

Cross-cultural experience is stressful and cultural 'fatigue' does occur: in fact it is argued that it is only with this fatigue that you are receptive to understanding and accepting cultural differences. When that happens, you may surprise yourself with your own negative behaviours. You must manage those feeling and keep them under control

You should realise that the subconscious 'values' and 'assumptions' which guide our thinking and actions are unmistakably 'Australian' and understanding the basis of our own culture is a starting point for understanding another culture – see appendices for interesting reading on Australia, our country and our culture.

## 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

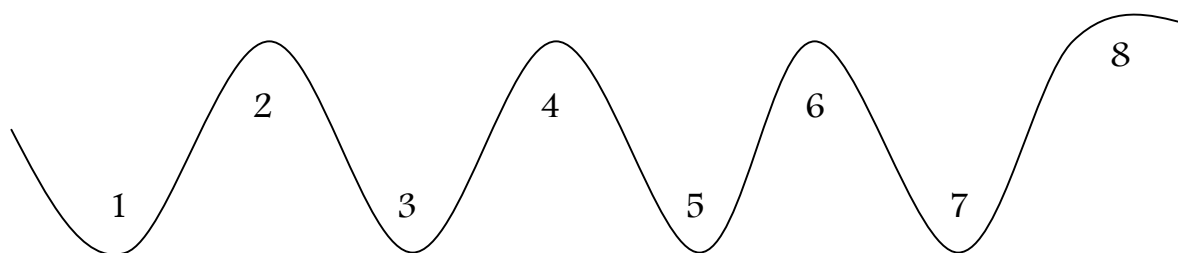
## Acclimation Stage

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.

## 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'**



## Coping with Homesickness and Stress

Many of our exchange students may come from a small country town and will be hosted in a large city just as often as those from large centres of population will be hosted in smaller centres. No matter what the size of your host community, things will be different the moment you arrive.

It is strange to arrive in a foreign airport and not know what you are looking for upon arrival. But you can be assured that upon reaching your final destination there will be people to meet you who are genuinely very pleased you have arrived safely and are now amongst them.



Very few students avoid homesickness. It may appear as soon as one week after your arrival or several weeks after the settling in period has passed.

You may:

- Miss little things from home which you had normally taken for granted;
- Be continuously hearing and seeing a strange language;
- Be frustrated by an inability to communicate;
- Be overpowered by the 'culture shock'.

No matter who you are, you will all experience homesickness at some stage during the exchange but it will be different for all. Each individual will have his or her own way of coping with homesickness when it occurs. Don't 'bottle it up', to do so will lead to stress.

## Some ideas about dealing with homesickness

- Recognise the symptoms:
  - Feeling miserable,
  - Irritability over little things that wouldn't normally annoy you,
  - Always thinking, and saying, things were done better at home,
  - Feeling insular: the security of familiar surrounds,
  - Physical discomfort.
- Talk and share the problem with your host counselor and host family;
- Keep active and busy;
- Stress and homesickness are related, for stress can occur as a result of not being able to cope with the feeling of homesickness that may overcome you. Stress can begin the moment you are selected to go on the exchange. You may begin to feel it between now and your departure in January.

One of the aims of our orientation camps is to prepare you for the exchange so that you will feel confident in handling your new environment in order that you get the most out of the exchange free of worry and anxiety.

Dealing with stress begins **NOW**.

At the orientation events:

- Introduce yourself to all Rotarians and parents who are also attending these;
- Sit with different people at meal times;
- Break away from your comfort zone.

These are some of the things you will have to do whilst on exchange. Practice building confidence in your new environment and take the initiative to speak to people – don't sit back and wait for them to speak to you.

## Who else may feel stress and how can you help them deal with it?

### Parents

- Keep them informed;
- Solve small problems yourself – it may surprise them;
- Discuss bigger issues which may arise;
- Know your 'code' word with your parents;
- Don't forget parents/family birthdays and special occasions at home;
- Occasionally send photo's home.



### Host Parents

- Become part of their family;
- Ask their advice and seek their guidance;
- Keep them informed;
- Discuss problems with them;
- Build a rapport with your family (including host brothers and sisters);
- Share the household chores;
- Respect family rules at all times;
- Take an interest in what they tell you.

### Host Brothers and Sisters

- Get to know their friends;
- Spend time with them;
- Involve them in your activities if possible;
- Remember their birthdays;
- Be interested in what they do.



### Sponsor District and Club (in Australia)

- Send reports regularly – official and unofficial;
- Stay in contact with your counselor;
- Send your report (part **a** and part **b**) by the end of each month to your country coordinator.

### Host Club

- Attend meetings as often as possible;
- Make your presentation to the club as soon as possible;
- Involve yourself in their activities;
- Talk to your host counselor;
- Introduce yourself to members –some clubs may be significantly larger than your sponsor Club.

~~~~~



We understand at times whilst you are on exchange that you may feel sad, lonely, homesick or unhappy about a situation.

Your host counselor, host family, host Rotary club and host district will do everything they can to help you get through any difficult times you have.

Remember – when you have a problem - what everyone will notice is not so much what the problem is, but how you respond to it and how you deal with it.

Visitors from home



- Visitors from Australia should be discouraged. You will want to experience the host country without the added worry of entertaining family and friends from home.
- Not only may it be inconvenient and an added expense for hosts, but also it can be very disruptive for you.
- Visits within the first 9 months are not allowed. If your parents insist on visiting, you must obtain permission from your host club and host district and the visit is to be at a time that suits your host family and club.
- They should not visit you during special holiday times such as Christmas or your birthday, and must not expect you or your host parents to act as tour guides nor should they expect to take you on holidays with them.
- Some host districts may not permit family visits. That is their prerogative.

Remember

Your parents must not disrupt your school, or your Rotary or host family commitments.

Your Education whilst on Exchange

- It is a condition of participation in the Youth Exchange Program that you attend school for the year of your exchange;
- It is not intended, nor is it permitted, for you to work or attend a post secondary school or institution;
- Your host club counselor will have arranged at a suitable nearby school your school enrolment. The selection of individual subjects is a joint matter between yourself, your host counselor and the school at which you will be enrolled;
- Should any special educational needs be required, these should be made known to the host club well in advance of your arrival. Your parents will be required to meet any costs incurred in these special requests;
- Confirm with your host club any matters such as cost of textbooks and school excursions. Depending on the host country and host club, parents may have to contribute in part or in full to the costs incurred in these matters;
- Choose your subjects carefully as some may assist you on your return;
- Once you are settled into your new school you could be asked to give lessons on Australia and, perhaps, run some English classes. Be prepared;
- See in the appendices 'A Short History of Australia' and other articles that will help you increase your knowledge of Australia.
- Be part of your new school as a whole. Join in and participate;
- If you encounter any sort of problem whilst away, talk to your host counselor or a school staff member. Most, if not all, schools will have a staff member who will be your form/home or pastoral care tutor.

Your Safety whilst on Exchange

Risk is inherent in virtually all aspects of society and a Youth Exchange program *may*, by its nature, have more inherent risks than youth programs 'closer to home'. Rotary's goal of developing world citizens by exposing you to other cultures brings with it some risk. But ever since its earliest days, programs for youth have been a central focus of Rotary.

- You are of an age where you are vulnerable. Differences in culture, language, education and judicial systems and the fact you are so far from home, all contribute to your vulnerability. Our role as Rotarians is to protect and guide you and to safeguard your welfare to the best of our ability.
- As an exchange student, you need to recognise abuse when it occurs. Indeed, all involved in youth exchange have to be able to do that. Accordingly, your best protection, if you as exchange students need it, is your sponsor club and/or host club counselor. They are there to look after your wellbeing during the period of the exchange. They will be your mentor, friend and confidante – somebody to turn to for advice, guidance, help and counsel. While you are in your host country you must feel confident enough to talk through problems and issues with your host club counselor or another member of your host club.
- Rotary takes the issue of duty of care very seriously. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure the risk of harm is removed and that you feel safe and confident when in our care. As Rotarians we rely on the cooperation of our fellow Rotarians in the countries we exchange with, and trust they will also take all such reasonable steps. The RI Code of Conduct binds us all. Perfection and the total removal of all elements of harm are not, and cannot, be expected but all will be done within our power to reduce and eliminate the risks. As Rotarians we should be applying the highest of professional, ethical and moral standards in all our dealings.

Accordingly, we seek to achieve our policy through:

- Educating you about safety issues and measures through appropriate training sessions to assist with prevention and elimination of possible dangers;
- Advising you on how to deal with and disclose abuse;
- Educating Rotarians and other participants in youth exchange through appropriate training sessions to assist in the prevention and elimination of possible dangers;
- Encouraging a spirit of community and cooperation to promote awareness of the issue of harassment and abuse;
- Making clear to all Rotarians, potential Rotarians and other volunteers the standards and codes of behaviour which are required to uphold these standards;
- Publicising Rotary International's standing as an organisation with an attitude of zero tolerance towards harassment and abuse;
- Appropriate screening of all those involved in youth exchange activities;
- Fulfilling all requirements as laid down by government and other regulatory bodies including Rotary International;
- Implementation of appropriate reporting procedures upon disclosure of abuse;

- District 9810 has adopted a very extensive **Student Protection Policy** written by Rotary Youth Exchange Australia and accepted by Rotary International. Likewise, Rotary International has adopted a set of guidelines as a part of their **Rotary Code of Policies** to be followed by all Clubs and Districts, worldwide, engaged in youth exchange.
- Rotary District 9810 has a Zero Tolerance Policy to abuse and harassment, which means that we consider even one incident of abuse or harassment to be unacceptable, and we commit to treating every incident as a serious matter.
- See **"Tips for Staying Safe"**, ensure you read these through and fully understand them.



Remember – If it doesn't feel right, it isn't right.

Top Ten Online Safety Tips

1. **Keep** personal information to a minimum – don't use your full date of birth.
2. **Don't** put your mobile phone number on your profile.
3. **Keep** identifying information about your private life, including your school, to a minimum.
4. **Keep** your password private.
5. **Use** a generic and non-identifying email address.
6. **Lock** your profile and photo albums – don't let people you don't know have access to your photos.
7. **Think** before posting photos.
8. **Always** get the permission of others before putting their photos online.
9. **Check** your profile regularly to check what others have posted or written on your profile.
10. **Report** abuse, harassment, bullying or inappropriate content to the website and if necessary your school or police.

**If you download any offensive material, expect to be sent home.
This is the 5th 'D'**

Tips to Stay Safe

- If you have a problem or are worried about something, always tell an adult you trust about it, such as your teacher, counsellor or current or recent host parents. NEVER suffer in silence!
- Pack your own suitcase and never carry items abroad for others. Take care that you do not unwittingly or wittingly act as a drug courier for someone else given that some countries impose death penalties for drug offences.
- Before you go on exchange find out how to use a public phone in your new country. Carry the telephone numbers for the emergency services and keep them handy.
- Ask your first host parents to send you their address written in that language and the script of their country. Organise this before you go on exchange and take it with you.
- Follow the instructions of your leader, teacher and other supervisors, including those at the venue of the visit (unless those instructions constitute a crime or are contrary to Rotary regulations).
- Tell someone 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 are going to or travelling through an impoverished country, do not carry handbags, cameras, or wear jewellery of any kind, even cheap earrings. Watches, necklaces and earrings may be grabbed and pulled away, causing injuries.
- 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.

Gifts

- Why take gifts?
- Who should you take gifts for?

The best gift you can take costs nothing and is easy to pack: a smile coupled with politeness, courtesy, manners and respect.

That said, there are a number of considerations to be borne in mind when considering what gifts to take:

- Weight, cost and packaging;
- There is no way of telling how many gifts you will need;
- The choice available is vast;
- Consider excess luggage: forwarding early to your first host family or club counselor;
- Consider having something small for an immediate gift on arrival for your first host family and host club president;
- If you are the first representative of your sponsor Rotary club to your host Rotary Club you should have a club banner, if your club has them, ready to present at the conclusion of your address to them.
- Take a few banners from your club and/or district.

Sources of gifts

- Make your own e.g. laminate stamps, or gum leaves;
- Buy 'Australiana' ribbon from craft stores and make ribbon pins;
- Stick pins depicting Australia are a great collector's item;
- Purchase 'Australiana' gifts from souvenir shops;
- Cheaper alternatives include \$2 shops or markets (e.g. the Victoria Market in Melbourne – if you show your Youth Exchange card you **may** get a further discount);
- Download images of Australia from "Google image" or elsewhere and laminate.



Rotary Youth Exchange Blazers

Today, many Rotary Exchange students can be recognised by their Rotary Youth Exchange blazer.

- The color of the blazer usually depends on which country or region the exchange student is from but they can vary from navy blue, pale blue, maroon or dark green. **In District 9810 our blazers are dark green.**
- A Rotary tradition is that students cover their blazers in pins and patches they have traded with other students or bought in places they have visited as evidence of their exchange.
- It is popular for the students to take a collection of pins and trade them with other students.
- All Rotary Youth Exchange Students get a Rotary Blazer. It starts out without any pins but when you get back home after a year it will likely be full of pins and weight many kilograms!
- You will be measured for your blazer, which will then be delivered to you and presented to you by your sponsor club.
- Wear your blazer with pride, at departure, arrival and all formal Rotary occasions.



What does your Exchange Cost?

Actual costs vary depending on the country of exchange and your personal budget.

- A 'global fee' is payable by you/your parents to the District Committee which covers the formal parts of your exchange including return travel to your exchange location, comprehensive insurance, your attendance at training days, blazer, student cards and assistance in obtaining visas.
- The 'global fee' and the payment time-line will be discussed with your parents at the District Interview.
- You will receive a monthly allowance from your host Rotary club of approximately \$100, but your family should be prepared for additional day-to-day living expenses and personal items such as clothing and footwear.
- You/your parents are also required to pay for Rotary organised tours (voluntary but most exchange students undertake them), or other travel opportunities that might become available to you in the host country and some schooling expenses (as determined by the host club).
- Your parents are also responsible for providing an emergency fund of approximately \$400, which is set by the host district. If this is used during the year for any purpose the fund needs to be replenished. This is redeemable at the end of your exchange.

TRAVEL

District 9810 has appointed a qualified, licensed and accredited travel agent who will handle all your travel arrangements and look after much of the formal requirements such as visas.

Terra Australis Tours Pty Ltd
PO BOX 713
Newcastle NSW 2300

Tel: 02 4002 8792
Fax: 02 4927 5141
Contact: Susan Rynberk



Passports

If you do not already have an Australian passport you should make immediate arrangements to obtain one.

Should you have an existing passport for another country, please contact Terra Australis or the Rotary travel coordinator for advice.

At least one parent must have a current passport with at least 18 months travel time available on it.

Visas

- Terra Australis will send you visa application forms and instructions;
- Please ensure all visa application forms are fully and properly completed and returned **with your passport** to Terra Australis. Mail all documents by registered mail,
- You must meet all deadlines asked of you; and

If you are going on exchange to the United States, a personal interview is required at the US Consulate and you must make the booking. You can only attend the interview after you receive the J-1 visa document from the United States Department of State.

Final Travel Arrangements

A representative of Terra Australis will visit an orientation morning and go through all travel arrangements with you and your parents. Your passports will be returned to you and other paperwork i.e. visa, tickets, travel guides, and a Student pocket book of travel information and tips will be distributed.

Ticketing

- Tickets (E Tickets) will be issued to you electronically;
- This is valid for twelve months from the date of travel. As such, it is needed for your return journey. When issued the return date shown will be less than twelve months. The actual return date will be confirmed and advised to you during the year.
- Keep a photocopy and an electronic copy of your tickets (and your passport's front page and the page with the visa) at home with your parents and the same with you whilst you are away;
- Your host club counselor may look after your passport for you, although you may need ready access to this for travel and other reasons;
- You will be advised by your country coordinator of your date of departure, which is usually mid January.

Baggage allowance

The country you are travelling to will determine the baggage allowance. The following allowances may vary between airlines or may change during the year. So always check before you pack, as excess baggage is very expensive if you can take excess baggage with you.

For travel to USA and Canada

- 2 pieces of baggage;
- The sum of the three dimensions (length + width + height) of the total of both bags must not exceed 270 cm (106") with the largest not exceeding 158 cm (62");
- No single item of baggage can weigh more than 30 kg.

For travel to Brazil

- 2 pieces of baggage;
- No more than 20 kg per item.

For travel to all other destinations

- A maximum allowance of 20 kg.

Cabin baggage allowance for all destinations

Including USA/Canada/South America:

- 1 piece not exceeding 5 kg;
- Sum of dimensions not exceeding 100 cm.
- Your baggage allowance may help you determine whether you send, by surface mail, and several weeks before you depart, any 'bulky' items or clothing not immediately required upon arrival, e.g. summer clothes for a winter climate.



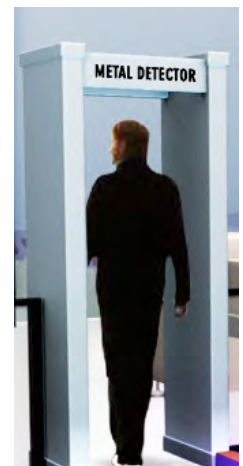
Remember

Excess baggage is very costly.

*Don't just hope it won't be noticed or presume that if you smile nicely they will let it through – **They won't!***

Security – upon departure and at all Airports

- Stick pins in jackets **could** be confiscated, but most seem to be able to get through;
- Ensure that your cabin baggage contains no sharp objects e.g. scissors in a personal amenities bag;
- Never leave your bags unattended;
- Never carry another person's baggage;
- If you are travelling on a domestic flight out of Melbourne to connect with your international flight, your family and friends will be able to farewell you from the departure lounge. Note that they will have to go through a security gate and be subject to a security check. Remind them not to have sharps or other restricted items in their pockets or bags.



Security – when travelling

- When you are travelling keep with you, *at all times*, your three most valuable items:

Passport

Airline ticket

Money (cash / credit card)

- We highly recommend you purchase a money belt or small pouch to wear around your neck and under your clothes. This will keep your valuables, tickets and passport safe and readily available at all times.
- Do not place your valuable items into your blazer pocket as you run the risk of those items falling out when you take off your blazer and stow it in the overhead luggage compartment.

Rules for Taking Liquids onto International and Domestic Flights

- Liquids are only allowed in carry-on baggage if they are in containers up to 100ml in capacity and these containers fit comfortably in a one-litre, re-sealable transparent plastic bag.
- Having carry-on liquids organised in the plastic bag before arriving at the security screening point will minimise delays and disruption.
- Passengers are only allowed one one-litre bag.
- The bags can be purchased at most supermarkets and measure approximately 20cm by 20cm.
- You will not be able to take drinks in cans, bottles or plastic containers onto the aircraft.



Documents whilst away

You should make several sets of photocopies of your:

- Passport (main page and student visa),
- Airline ticket, and
- Insurance details (E wallet).

These should be held by your:

- Parents at home,
- Host family (you should take them with you when you change host families),
- Host club counselor.

Rotary Escorts

Escorts *may* be provided as follows:

- **Europe** Fully escorted to Bangkok or an Asian hub, then to London or Copenhagen or Frankfurt or Paris or an European hub and then assisted with connecting flights to final destinations.
- **North America** Fully escorted to Los Angeles and assisted with connecting flights to final destinations.
- **South America** Fully escorted to Sao Paulo and assisted with onward connections.

As escorts are arranged with other Australian Rotary districts, these arrangements may vary and you will be advised of final escort arrangements and contacted by the tour leader before departure to finalise airport arrangements.

Your return flight

- The ticket you use to fly to your host country is a *return* ticket. In other words you will need it in order to return home. Your counselor will keep it in a secure place and return it to you before your departure.
- Although the ticket is valid for 12 months from the date of first travel, to facilitate ticketing, an earlier fictitious date appears on your ticket. This is **not** your return date, which will be booked by Terra Australis and advised to you usually in November.
- Your return date will, in all likelihood, be between 5 – 15 January – **Please do not ask to return early, you have agreed on a 12 month exchange.**
- You should contact the airlines involved in your return travel at least one month prior to your return and advise them of a phone contact during the last two weeks of your stay in your host country.

Travel Tips



- Confirm/reconfirm your bookings 72 hours prior to departure;
- Carry a reasonable amount of cash (suggest \$200) in the currency of the country to be visited;
- Take care of your personal possessions at all times;
- Carry your passport, ticket and money with you at all times. Don't ever put them on the seat beside you, even for an instant;
- **Do NOT, under any circumstances**, carry items on or off the plane for anyone;
- **Do NOT, under any circumstances**, offer to carry or pack any item in your checked luggage for anyone else;
- **Do NOT pack your passport in your suitcase;**
- Your cabin baggage should contain a spare set of clothes (at least underwear);
- Allow for warm clothing for the northern hemisphere upon arrival;
- Don't take too much with you in your cabin baggage (remember the allowance);
- Adhere to the checked baggage limits – excess baggage charges are very high;
- Arrive at the airport in plenty of time – 3 hours prior to departure is recommended;
- Wear neat/casual clothes. Wear your Rotary blazer for departure and for arrival.

To travel is a privilege not a right

- One of the aims of the exchange is to live in another country and experience another culture for twelve months;
- The exchange is not meant to be a holiday, although there will be opportunities to see a lot of the host country and, perhaps, neighbouring countries. Most countries organise a 'tour' for approximately three weeks. The cost of this is the responsibility of you or your parents.

Remember

- Spending as much time as you can in tourist locations gives you the sites but doesn't immerse you in the culture of the host country;
- All travel costs money;
- If your host parents wish to take you on a weekend away, consider it a bonus and show your appreciation;



Managing Your Money

Overseas Bank Accounts

- You should maintain a bank account in your host country. The type of account used depends on the advice received from your club counselor;
- Upon arrival, your club counselor will assist you in opening your account;
- The host club will provide you with a monthly allowance; many clubs will deposit this directly into your account;
- Verify with your counselor when you will receive your allowance i.e. 1st meeting of each month;
- If you do not receive your allowance speak to your counselor;
- You are required to have an '**emergency account**' opened in your host country by your counselor. This is jointly signed by yourself and the counselor to operate.
 - This should be kept at a level, as set by the host district, but generally around AU\$400, and should be kept at that level by your parents topping it up if the funds are accessed to meet any emergencies;
 - It is not meant to be another source of funds for you to access on a day-to-day basis and to this end the 'emergency account' should have your host club counselor as a co-signatory to operate the account;
 - This account will be closed off and the money given back to you before you return home;
 - Don't forget to have enough money on arrival to set up your emergency fund.
- Prior to departure you and your parents need to come to a mutual agreement about money and how to budget:
 - Your parents may decide that you must live on agreed periodical allowance, or
 - Your parents may agree to put in an extra amount when and if required.
 - **Never borrow money** – If you have financial problems, speak with your counselor who will assist you to budget appropriately.



Transferring funds overseas

- In addition to the option of Internet banking, your parents may deposit money into your Australian bank account or make a payment into a Visa account. Funds can then be withdrawn in your host country by your self-using your debit or credit card. A debit card is recommended as then you can only spend what you have available;

Check with your own bank whether it has a reciprocal bank in your host country.

Please note that if you are under 16 years of age you cannot have a credit card.



Rotary Allowance

Allowances paid by host clubs will be around AU\$100 per month, paid in local currency;

- Don't be afraid to politely ask your club counselor for your pocket money or allowance:
 - Find out from them how it is to be paid;
 - Although it is a monthly allowance some host clubs may pay it fortnightly;
 - In some clubs the payment may be made directly to you at a meeting, whilst in others it could be deposited into your bank account.
 - When you go out with your host family, usually the host family pays as you are treated like any other member of their family.
 - This is not always the case though and may even vary from one host family to the next;
 - It is considered good manners for you to offer to pay, albeit occasionally;
 - When going out with friends or on your own, you pay for yourself;
 - Sometimes the host Rotary club or individual Rotarians will subsidise your expenses, but this is the exception, not the rule.

Other money matters you should know about

- Parents should have the authority and access to operate on your everyday bank account and any other personal matters during your year away;
- Photocopy your documents, including your bank details and insurance, and keep them in a safe place but where your parents and host family know about in case they have to access them in an emergency;
- Don't buy things you don't really need;



- The hidden cost of exchange is **POSTAGE**, both ways. One student's comment: "When postage costs were more than the cost of the contents, I realised how expensive it was".

- Think about how you're going to make and pay for telephone calls home. Reverse charge may be the

best option as in some countries overseas phone call costs are very expensive. It is cheaper to ring from Australia, so you might want to make a very quick call home and then your parents can call you back using a phone card for a few cents per minute. Unlike Australia most phone calls are timed;



Skype or similar communication needs to be controlled, as an overuse will cause problems from time to time.

- Discuss money matters with your parents before you go and avoid awkward requests for extra funds;
- Stop buying clothes, CDs and going out too often **NOW**. You will be thankful for every cent you saved and curse every cent you spent.
- You should practice budgeting, looking after your own finances and living within your means – **NEVER BORROW MONEY**.



Remember – To allow you to go on exchange, your family has made a significant financial commitment. Do not pressure them for too much money whilst you are away. **You can never have enough money.** Live within your means – learn to budget and stick with it.

Practice budgeting now!

Rotary Tours

- The Rotary tours are not compulsory, but highly recommended.
- The Rotary Tour is the second largest single payment requirement for your year away on exchange;
- Though not compulsory, it is a great opportunity for you and other exchange students to get together on an organised tour. It may be a Euro, West Coast USA, Amazon, or other depending on your country of exchange.
- Your self or your parents pay it for these and any other private travel.



Health and Medical Issues - Air Travel and Your Health

Due to the altered atmosphere in the aircraft cabin, you are more likely to suffer from dehydration. This increases the risk of you suffering from **jet lag** and **DVT**.

- **Jet lag** is a condition where a combination of factors contributes to your feeling unwell after arrival at your destination.
 - It is often worse after long periods of travel and crossing a number of time-zones;
 - To reduce its impact, it is a good idea to change your watch to the time of your destination. Then try to time your meals and sleep to coincide with the new time-zone;
 - Remember to avoid dehydration by drinking lots of water.
- **Deep Vein Thrombosis**, or DVT, is a condition where a blood clot forms in the deep veins, usually in the calves.
 - Details of suggested exercises are provided in the in-flight magazines and by a video program to help improve blood flow and should be performed regularly;
 - Getting out of your seat and moving around the cabin is useful too;
 - When safety measures and instructions are being demonstrated on the aircraft – **LISTEN!**



Remember

It is important to be comfortable while travelling, so wear loose, comfortable clothing and pack a change of underwear and a toiletries bag.

Health and Medical Issues - Disease Prevention

- Certain countries have high risks associated with some diseases/illnesses e.g. Malaria. Check with your doctor for detailed specific advice on these matters.



Most countries are free of rabies, but others are not:

- Be careful around dogs, cats and monkeys in those countries where rabies is still a problem;
 - Do not allow animals to lick you and if bitten seek prompt medical attention.
 - Eating uncooked meat and fish can cause some illness and disease;
 - Raw, pickled and spicy foods may cause discomfort;
- Before your departure, ensure all your immunizations are up to date including hepatitis and tetanus and that they are valid for one year;
 - Do not hide any continuing or severe illness especially abdominal pain:
 - Advise your host parents of any health problems or issues as they arise.

Periods

Girls travelling overseas – you may experience a change in your menstrual cycle. Stress and weight change can alter the timing of your periods. This is a common occurrence and although it can be inconvenient, should not cause concern.

Health Insurance

- At any moment from your departure until your return to Australia you are as likely to suffer illness or incur injury as if you were at home;
- It is a requirement to have **comprehensive insurance, which is compliant with Rotary International and valid medical, and hospital insurance.**
- You are fully covered by insurance for health, medical and hospitalisation from your time of departure until your return; You do not need to take out any extra insurance.

Pre-existing Conditions

- Take a supply of medications you may need:
- They should be sealed and accompanied by a copy of the prescription and a letter from your doctor indicating the need.
- Do not rely on your host country to have the exact same medication.
- If you wear glasses or contact lenses, it is a good idea to take a copy of the optical prescription with you in case they are lost or broken whilst on exchange:
 - You may even take an old pair of glasses to help whilst a new pair is made;
 - Likewise if you wear contact lenses.
- Some pre-existing conditions may have an effect on your insurance policy:
 - You are required to advise your Insurance provider of any pre-existing conditions you have

Insurance

Rotary's Insurance Policy

All students accepted into the Youth Exchange Program must be provided with the Rotary insurance package, 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
-
- The Rotary Youth Exchange Australia insurance policy covers amounts significantly in excess of RI minimum levels and is among the most extensive student exchange policies available anywhere in the world;
 - Rotary is the insured under a travel insurance policy that may be accessed by the nominated Youth Exchange Student (you). The travel insurance policy is underwritten by the insurer, ACE Insurance Limited (ACE) and arranged through Aon Risk Services Australia Ltd (Aon).
 - The policy provides 12 months coverage – it begins from the time you leave your home to the time you return to it at the end of the exchange period.
 - Access to your cover automatically ends from the time you no longer meet the insured person definition (e.g. You are no longer nominated as a Rotary Youth Exchange student or you return to Australia after completing the exchange program)

Fit to Travel Letter

- Whether or not you have a significant medical problem or condition before you depart, a letter from your doctor stating that you are fit to travel is required

Policy exclusions

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

The policy does NOT cover the following – check your policy for complete list

- Professional sports
- Suicide or attempted suicide
- Riot or civil commotion
- Racing a motor propelled vehicle
- Travelling in an aircraft unlicensed to carry passengers.



Policy Excess

A policy excess of \$250 applies to the following claims:

- Baggage
- Electronic equipment
- Personal liability

The insurance E Wallet contains:

- The insurance E Wallet will be emailed to you as soon as it is received from the insurance provider. This will be after January 1st.
- The 'Insurance Policy' which includes your name;
- An explanation and instruction on how to make a claim;
- The Insurance Policy number;
- A Claim Form – this is in a computer writeable format; and
- An ACE Assistance Card.

Before you leave

- Familiarise yourself with the contents of the E Wallet;
- Be aware of the exclusions on pre-existing conditions and report any to AON;
- Have a complete medical and dental check up – especially in relation to wisdom teeth;
- Check personal items you wish to take and remember Rotary only recommends Inexpensive jewelry, watches, cameras, clothing etc.;
- Ensure you have listed on the policy any additional items high in value i.e. musical instruments, lap tops, camera equipment – remember, the higher the value, the higher the risk;
- Ensure your parents have a copy of the insurance E Wallet.

Remember to make a claim you must fill in and forward the claim form, with your receipts, to

***AON Risk Services
Level 6, 175 Eagle Street,
Brisbane, Qld. 4000***

Do not send this claim form to Ace Insurance



Whilst away

- Carry your ACE Assistance Card with you at **all times**;
- Ensure your host family and/or your host club counselor is aware of the contents of the E Wallet and how to use the card.



How to use your ACE Assistance Card

For assistance:

- Contact the local telephone operator in your host country and ask for a reverse charge call to ACE Assistance on **+61 2 8907 5995**
 - **24 hour telephone access 365 days of the year**
- Say: "I am a Rotary Exchange Student";
- State your name and contact details [your phone number]; and
- State the nature of the problem.

When to use the card

- In any **emergency** situation;
- Whenever authorisation for payment is required e.g. for hospital or medical costs;
- For urgent legal advice;

Do not use the card for general inquiries. Full details of the policy and how to use the card are contained in the insurance E Wallet, which will be distributed to prior to your departure.

Remember to make a claim you must fill in and forward the claim form, with your receipts, to

*AON Risk Services
Level 6, 175 Eagle Street,
Brisbane, Qld. 4000*

Do not send this claim form to Ace Insurance

Communicating and Reporting

The importance of communication Your Monthly Report

During your exchange, you will be required to complete a report, each and every month. The report is confidential and is important for knowledge on how your exchange is going.

The report must consist of:

- **(a) The email letter** should tell us about the progress of your exchange and allows you to inform us of anything you feel is important for us to know. We would also like to hear of your experiences, challenges and successes. Aim at writing **at least** half an A4 page of text. This will cover a two-month period and is sent to your country coordinator and YEP Chairman before the last day of the nominated months of March, May, July, September and November.
- **(b) The Report Form** requires that you give us specific detail every second month. A template of this form will be emailed to you and we suggest that you keep a master copy, which you can make a copy. We ask that you send a short email letter to your country coordinator and YEP Chairman before the last day of the nominated months of February, April, June, August, October and December.
- The Monthly Report Form requires that you give us specific detail – see appendices 'Youth Exchange Monthly Report Form'.
- If a **serious** issue arises that you need to tell us about, don't wait until the end of the month when you send your monthly report. If you have not been able to resolve the issue with your host counselor, host family or Rotary club then you must make immediate contact with your country coordinator, your sponsor counselor or the Youth Exchange District Chairman and we will respond and act immediately.

In District 9810 it is a mandatory requirement of your exchange that these reports (both **a** and **b**) be completed and forwarded to YEP Chairman and your Country Coordinator **before the end of each nominated month**, commencing February.

Remember – Make diary entries now to ensure you don't forget each Month

Keeping in Touch



Once your year of exchange has commenced there will be many people interested in knowing and hearing about your experiences whilst away and the progress of the exchange – both the good and the bad! They include your **family**, your **sponsor club**, and your **counselor**, the members of District 9810 **Youth Exchange Committee** and your **friends** back home.

Of course, in the ever-changing world of communication, it's now so easy through the Internet and e-mail. It's important to keep open the lines of communication with your home, community and especially your friends, as it will help you 'settle back in' when you return from your exchange.

Email addresses

- Today many people have email addresses that are quirky and fun. These are fine to use amongst your friends and peers but when it comes to being an ambassador for Rotary, your country and your community then your email address should reflect an appropriate and professional image. With that in mind, if there is any doubt about the appropriateness of your address i.e. littlemisshugsgalore@bigpond.com we will be insisting that you set up a new address that is more suitable for a Rotary Exchange Student. Also have one which is easy to read and write.
- When setting up an email account, it is most helpful to include your name in the address as it makes it easier for people to identify you immediately.

Computer and Internet

The use of the computer at your host family's home or at school is a privilege during your exchange year.



- Discuss with your host family and/or teacher what the guidelines are for using the computer and what the guidelines are for using the internet.
- For some families and schools, they are charged for the time spent on the internet so be sure you understand any time limit.
- It is most important that you check your emails regularly as your country coordinators will use email communication to keep you informed.

A word of caution about blogging

Blogs are popular and they are a convenient way to communicate without leaving anyone out. These give you an opportunity to be creative in content and presentation.

- You need to remember that the Internet is also a convenient way for perpetrators to find you. It is an international advertisement that can help anyone find out what your name is, what you look like and where you live.
- When/if you use a weblog, take precautions by using a reputable provider, use all available security features, and avoid posting personal details.
- Even with all of these precautions, you are never 100% secure from hackers.

Facebook and MySpace

You should think very seriously about what you post on Facebook or MySpace or similar sites because the consequences could be dire.

- Anyone 'in the know' can view these social networking sites and see your profile and things you have posted. What seems an innocent form of 'having fun' and 'keeping in touch' with friends could become a tool used against you.
- Don't be afraid to join Facebook or MySpace or similar sites, but don't put anything on the Web that you wouldn't want someone to find immediately or on several years time, i.e. future education providers or employers.
- Remember that what you put on or allow to be put on these sites is a personal reflection of your self. It could be funny at the time but what about tomorrow or in several years?
- All we are trying to do is to convince you to be sensible about the use of these tools.

Returning Home to Australia

Rotarians believe that the future of our world is in the hands of our young students.

You are tomorrow's leaders

- Your year will fly by (although it may not seem so at the beginning).
- When you return, you will have a wealth of experiences and a new language and culture to share with Australia.
- Please talk about the positive things you have learned to your family, your friends at school, and your sponsor Rotary club.
- We believe that the more we send our young ambassadors abroad, the greater the opportunities we will have to foster understanding between our Australian culture and other people around the world.
- Your success will be our best advertisement.
- Through you and other Rotary students, we seek to make peace around the globe and you have now become an important factor in helping us to achieve those goals.



It May Be Hard To Come Back Home

- It is only a short year – make the most of it
- Everyone will spoil you
- In many ways you will be on your own and very independent
- You will make so many new friends – it will be hard to leave them
- You will have strong ties to your host families
- Possibly you will be torn between leaving your new home and returning to your family
- Once you begin your return flight it feels a lot better
- Try not to show your natural family how you are missing your host families
- There will be a difficult re-adjustment period once you return home
- You could experience a feeling a loss; a 'let down', a homesickness in reverse, "nobody understands me, nobody loves me, I just want to go *home*"
- It is important to make a determined effort to return to study, and again get involved, to pick up the strands of you life
- **Become an active 'Rotex' – and stay involved with Youth Exchange**

Compulsory Debriefing After Return Home – February – date to be confirmed

Re-adjusting to your home culture after a year abroad will probably be just as difficult as it was to adjust to your host country when you first arrived overseas.

The reasons for this are two-fold:

- 1.** Your home, family, friends and culture here in Australia have not stood still during your absence. Some things have changed while you have been away.
- 2.** You will have grown up and changed your perspectives for many things.
 - What you will experience in this situation is re-entry shock.
 - After an initial euphoria, both you and your family should anticipate a re-adjustment period in which you may feel uncomfortable with each other.
 - Your friends may appear indifferent to you and perhaps even jealous of your experiences. You might find that you no longer have the same things in common anymore. Things may not be the way you remembered them and your attitude towards some aspects of your Australian culture may now have changed.
 - It is important to recognise the symptoms of re-entry shock and how you can best cope.
 - You have a group of peers among the other returned exchange students in District 9810. Reconnect with them and build a support network for yourself.

Stay Involved - Compulsory and Highly Recommended Events

- There will be ongoing opportunities for you to come along to the Youth Exchange orientation events to share your experiences and knowledge of your host country, and to help the new outbound students select their country for exchange. You may also be an understanding ear to an inbound student who is experiencing some of the culture shock and homesickness emotion that you experienced on exchange.

Rotary Conference – Usually March – April - date and location to be confirmed

One of the compulsory commitments to District 9810 on your return from exchange is your attendance at the District Conference.

- The inbound students will have put together a presentation that is always a highlight of the conference – all recently returned students will take part in this. It is a promotion to all clubs of the opportunities their participation in YE give to students.
- Conference accommodation will be arranged by your sponsoring club and may be shared with an inbound students or a recently returned student. You will be the responsibility of your Club during your attendance at conference.
- Rotary Exchange Students are very much on show during the conference and your role as an ambassador continues to be vital. Your blazer is worn at all times during the conference, unless advised otherwise.
- At this time of the Rotary year, Rotary Clubs are often in the process of deciding whether or not they will join, remain or depart from the Youth Exchange Program for the coming Rotary year. How they see Exchange students behaving and presented could impact on their decision-making. Please ensure your presentation your behaviour is exemplary at all times.



Program Rules and Conditions of Exchange

Following is **a copy** of the Rules and Conditions that all outbound students, together with your parents, must sign at the December orientation, prior to your departure from Australia.

District 9810 Rules and Conditions of Exchange

In your application for the Rotary Youth Exchange Program, you signed an agreement to follow the rules and conditions, which were set out in the application form. These rules apply in every Rotary District all over the world. Rotary International recommends that Districts adapt the rules to suit local conditions. The agreement, which follows, contains the rules and conditions for Youth Exchange in District 9810, which has been established for your safety and wellbeing. Violation of any of these rules may result in dismissal from the program and your immediate return home, at your own expense. You and your parents are asked to sign this agreement to acknowledge your commitment for a full twelve months to the Youth Exchange Program to your sponsor Rotary Club and District 9810, to your host District, host Rotary Club and host families.

Please read these rules very carefully, and sign them only if you agree to follow them. If you are not prepared to sign this agreement, and abide by the rules, you should immediately withdraw your application from consideration by Rotary District 9810.

The fundamental purpose of the Youth Exchange Program is the promotion of international understanding, goodwill, peace and experiencing and absorbing different cultures and languages. It is thus expected that you will be an ambassador for your own family, Rotary and Australia. In order to do so you should be friendly, interested and adjust to and be involved in the way of life of your host country, and maintain high standards of dress, grooming, behavior and personal hygiene at all times. Rotary commitments take precedence over any of your personal plans.

Agreement

1, _____ agree that I shall abide
Student's name

by the following rules and conditions of my exchange.

1. **Rotary District 9810** has established rules and conditions for my safety and wellbeing while I am a participant in the Youth Exchange Program. Violation of any of these rules may result in my dismissal from the program and my immediate return home, at my own expense.
2. **Ambassador**
 - I will serve as an Ambassador for my family, my Sponsoring Rotary Club, Rotary International and Australia.
 - I will be friendly, and show interest in the way of life of my host country, and adjust to and be involved in the activities of my Host Family, my Host Club, Host District, and my School
 - I will maintain a high standard of dress, grooming, behavior and personal hygiene at all times.
 - I agree that Rotary commitments take precedence over other activities.
3. **Laws of the Country** – I will obey the laws of the country of my exchange.

4. **Drugs** – I will not use illicit drugs, I understand that use of **any** illegal drugs will result in my **immediate** return home
5. **Drinking** – I will not drink any alcohol. I understand that the consumption of any alcohol is forbidden whilst I am on exchange.
6. **Driving** – I will not operate any motorised vehicle including, but not limited to cars, motorbikes, trail bikes, tractors, boats, jet skis and other motorised watercraft.
7. **Dating** – I will not form a steady and serious romantic attachment. I understand that sexual activities will result in my immediate return home.
8. **Disfigurement** – I agree that I will not radically change the colour, style or cut of my hair, or have any part of my body pierced or tattooed during my exchange year.
9. **Debts** – I will not borrow money or run up any debts whilst I am on exchange and I understand that I am required to pay bills promptly. This includes telephone and Internet charges.
10. **Stealing/Theft** – I understand that stealing is prohibited and illegal and that there are no exceptions.
11. **Unauthorised Travel** – I will not travel outside the area of my Rotary District unless I have had those travel plans approved by my Host Club Counselor. I agree to abide by the travel rules of my host District.
12. **Insurance Cover** –
 - I will be fully covered by health, medical accident, and travel insurance acceptable to my host District.
 - The arrangements for this will have been finalised before I depart from Australia.
 - I understand that I am not allowed to participate in dangerous activities such as hang-gliding, parachute-jumping, skydiving, and bungee jumping and I will not travel in a motorised or non-motorised glider or ultra-light plane.
13. **School Attendance** –
 - I agree to attend school every day of the school calendar and make an honest attempt to succeed.
 - I understand that school is the basis of my exchange visa.
 - I will take part in all normal school activities, including exams, as a full-time student at a school arranged by my Host Rotary Club.
14. **Smoking** – I understand that I am not permitted to smoke at any time whilst on exchange.
15. **Host family** – I will respect the members of my host families, and the wishes of my host parents;
 - Not act as a guest, but make genuine effort to become an integral part of the host family; and assume duties and responsibilities normal for a student of my age or for children in the family;
 - Adapt to the family: I understand that the family is not expected to adapt to me; and
 - Keep my room tidy.
16. **Language** – I understand that I must make every effort to learn the language of my host country.

17. Rotary Events –

- I will attend regular Rotary meetings, Rotary sponsored and host family events and show an interest in these activities.
- I will volunteer to be involved without waiting to be asked.
- I acknowledge that a lack of interest on my part is detrimental to my exchange and can have a negative impact on future exchanges.

18. Friends – I will choose my friends carefully and take the advice of host families, Counselors and school personnel in choosing these friends.

19. Telephone and Computer – I will pay any telephone and computer costs incurred by me and I understand that it is a privilege, not a right, for me to use a home computer.

20. Use of Mobile Phones – If I wish to have a mobile phone I understand that I am to purchase and pay for it myself and that it is not the responsibility of my host family or Rotary Club.

21. Trip/Event – If I am offered the opportunity to go on a trip or to an event, I understand that my financial contribution and responsibilities must be clearly understood before I accept the offer.

22. Financial Support –

- I acknowledge that I must have sufficient support to assure my well-being during my exchange.
- I will arrange the equivalent of A\$400 to be paid into a bank account as an "emergency" fund. If this fund is used, my parents or guardians will replenish it. I understand that any unused funds still remaining at the end of the exchange year will be returned to me before I return to Australia.
- I will arrange for all fees required by my host District to be paid immediately I arrive in my host country.
- I understand that I will be paid a monthly allowance equivalent to A\$100 by my host Rotary Club.

23. Work – I understand that I am not permitted to do any paid full-time, part-time or casual work while I am on exchange, as required by my visa.

24. Early Return – I understand the exchange is for one year and I must complete the full year of exchange before returning home. Requests from students to return home earlier than the stipulated date will not be granted.

25. Students being Repatriated – If I am repatriated home early by the District Governor or Chairman of my host district, I understand that costs relative to my early return home are the sole responsibility of my natural parents/guardians and must be paid to my host district immediately.

26. Language, Extra Curricular, Tours – I understand that all costs relating to language courses, extra tuition and tours (i.e. Euro Tour, Amazon, East Coast USA), must be paid for by my parents.

27. Authority – I understand that

- I am under the care of my YEP host district's authority while I am an exchange student;
- My natural parents/guardians are not permitted to authorise any extra activities directly to me;
- My host Rotary Club and District Youth Exchange Officers must authorise such activities; and
- If I have relatives in my host country, they will have no authority over me while I am in the program.

28. Parental Visits –

- I acknowledge that visits by my parents and friends from Australia are discouraged.
- I acknowledge that my parents or friends should not visit me in the first six months, the last month, during the school term, nor at Christmas or New Year and they should not expect to spend more than 10 days with me.
- I acknowledge that I must attend all compulsory District activities, regardless of whether my parents are visiting or not. I will not be permitted to travel with them and I will not be permitted to return home before my exchange is complete.
- I will not expect my host family to accommodate my family or friends.

29. Compulsory Events – I understand that I must attend the following compulsory events:

- **Youth Exchange Orientations:** Dates and venues to be advised, subject to change
 - June (Selection Camp)
 - July interview
 - August
 - October
 - November/December
- **The Rotary conference:** In the year you return – Date and location to be advised

30. Return – I will return home directly by a route mutually agreeable to District 9810 and my natural parents/guardians

Please complete and sign each of these four pages, where shown.

We, the exchange student and his/her parents or guardians, agree that we have read and understand the Program Rules and Conditions of Exchange as outlined above and agree to abide by these Rules and Conditions of Exchange whilst *(insert student's name)*

_____ is an exchange student in the

Rotary District 9810, Australia Youth Exchange Program:

Student signature:.....

Parent signature:.....

Parent signature:.....

Duty of Care - Risk Management

Risk is inherent in virtually all aspects of society and a Youth Exchange program *may*, by its nature, have more inherent risks than youth programs 'closer to home'. Rotary's goal of developing world citizens by exposing exchange students to other cultures brings with it some risks. But ever since its earliest days, programs for youth have been a central focus of Rotary.

Rotary Policy Rotary International, in line with its objective to provide the best student exchange program has developed a worldwide Certification process for all participating clubs and the necessary infrastructure of the program. As part of its working with youth policy, the Board of Rotary International has made the following statement as a Code of Conduct

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

Further, District Governors of Australia's 23 Rotary districts adopted the following charter in November 2002:

Charter for Child Protection

- All children have the right to live free from harassment, intimidation and abuse.
- Rotarians commit to a rejection of this type of behaviour.
- Breaking the silence on this issue is a responsible approach to this matter.
- Allegations by children regarding breeches of this issue will be responded to promptly and sensitively.
- Relevant legislation will be adhered to by Rotary Clubs and District Committees when planning and carrying out activities involving children.
- Appropriate "Risk Assessment" and reporting procedures are to be established including appropriate training programs.
- Rotary's Youth Programs should be conducted in a professional manner, sensitive to all relevant issues.
- A 'child' is a person under the age of eighteen years.
- This Charter shall apply to all relevant programs of Rotary where Rotarians are involved in a 'person in authority' role.
- This Charter should be applied to GSE, Rotoract and like programs.
- Rotary International also fully supports the aims and objectives of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This guarantees a child's right to protection and good and basic levels of care.
- The principles and philosophy of the Convention should be carried over into all activities with which Rotarians engage with young people and are bound to implement all necessary measures to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all children and youth. Australia is a signatory to this UN Convention.
- The District 9810 Youth Exchange Committee is fully committed to adopting and fulfilling the principles and practices as laid down in the RI Code of Conduct for Working with Youth, the RI Guidelines on the prevention of abuse and harassment of young people, the Charter for Child Protection and the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child.
- All young persons involved in District 9810 Youth Exchange have the right to feel safe and comfortable whilst they are a part of that activity and the District, participating Clubs and Rotarians are committed to achieving and implementing this policy.
- A Youth Exchange program may find it difficult, if not impossible, to eliminate *all* threats of harm to students.

- Duty of care is an all embracing term. It has become more publicised in the community over the past few years with increased litigation involving sexual and child abuse cases. It is a subject from which Rotary, the District and sponsor and host Clubs cannot retreat. The truth is abuse occurs in many forms in society. Rotary is a microcosm of society and, as such, abuse can occur within Rotary without anybody knowing about it.
- Our exchange students, both inbound and outbound, are of an age where they are vulnerable. Differences in culture, language, education and judicial systems and the fact they are so far from home, all contribute to their vulnerability. Our role as Rotarians is to protect and guide those in our care and to safeguard their welfare to the best of our ability.
- As an exchange student, you need to recognise abuse when it occurs. Indeed, ALL involved in youth exchange have to be able to do that. Accordingly, your best protection, if you as exchange students need it, is your Club Counselor. They are there to look after your wellbeing during the period of the exchange. They will be your mentor, friend and confidante - somebody to turn to for advice, guidance, help and counsel. As a student you must feel confident enough to talk through problems and issues with your Counselor or another member of your host Club. You should, officially or unofficially, have two Counselors, one of each gender. In many cases, it may be a husband and wife team or it may be a member of each gender from the host Club.
- The introduction of Certification is another positive step taken by Rotary International to ensure the safety of exchange students.
- Rotary takes the issue of duty of care and dealing with youth very seriously. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure the risk of harm is removed and that youth feel safe and confident when in our care. As Rotarians we rely on the cooperation of our fellow Rotarians in the countries we exchange with, and trust they will also take all such reasonable steps. We are all bound by this RI Code of Conduct. Perfection and the total removal of all elements of harm are not, and cannot, be expected but all will be done within our power to reduce and eliminate the risks. As Rotarians we should be applying the highest of professional, ethical and moral standards in all our dealings.
- Accordingly, we seek to achieve our policy through:
 - Education of students about safety issues and measures through appropriate training sessions to assist with prevention and elimination of possible dangers;
 - Advising students on how to deal with and disclose abuse;
 - Education of Rotarians and other participants in youth exchange through appropriate training sessions to assist in the prevention and elimination of possible dangers;
 - Encouraging a spirit of community and cooperation to promote awareness of the issue of harassment and abuse;
 - Making clear to all Rotarians, potential Rotarians and other volunteers the standards and codes of behavior which are required to uphold these standards;
 - Publicising Rotary International's standing as an organisation with an attitude of zero tolerance towards harassment and abuse;
 - Appropriate screening of all those involved in youth exchange activities;
 - Fulfilling all requirements as laid down by government and other regulatory bodies including Rotary International;
 - Implementation of appropriate reporting procedures upon disclosure of abuse;
 - District 9810 has adopted a very extensive Student Protection Policy written by Rotary Youth Exchange Australia. Likewise, Rotary International has adopted a set of guidelines as a part of their *Rotary Code of Policies* to be followed by all Clubs and Districts, worldwide, engaged in youth exchange.

First Night Questions to ask your Host Family

- 1** What do I call you? Mum, Dad or use your first names?
- 2** What else am I expected to do in and about the house each day other than:
 - Make my bed
 - Keep my room tidy
 - Clean the bathroom after use?

Bedroom

- 3** Do I need to purchase any coat hangers or are there enough for my use?
- 4** Where do I clean my shoes?
- 5** Am I permitted to put up pictures, posters etc. in my bedroom? If so, how and are there any restrictions on what I may put up?
- 6** Where can I store my suitcases etc.?
(make sure you ask permission for rearranging or changing anything)

Bathroom

- 7** What is the most convenient time for me to use the shower/bath?
- 8** Where may I keep my personal bathroom toiletries?
- 9** May I use the family soap, shampoo, toothpaste etc. or where can I purchase my own?

Meals/Kitchen

- 10** What are the meal times?
- 11** What can I do to assist at meal times:
 - Set the table
 - Clean away after the meal
 - Help with the washing up
 - Pack the dishwasher
 - Dry the dishes
 - Put away the dishes
 - Empty the garbage bin?
- 12** At other times, may I help myself to food and drink (non-alcoholic) at any time?
- 13** What are the arrangements for lunch at school? If I take my lunch, do I make it or do you?
- 14** If I buy lunch, who pays?
- 15** Are you aware of my special dietary requirements?
- 16** Are you aware I'm vegetarian?

Laundry/washing

- 17** What do I do with my dirty clothes until washing?
- 18** Should I wash my own underwear?
- 19** Do I need to do my own ironing?
- 20** May I use the washing machine or iron at any time and do I need to ask first?

Household rules/lifestyle

- 21** Are there any areas of the house strictly private e.g. office/study?
- 22** Is it permissible for me to use any household tools/equipment e.g. sewing machine, workshop tools?
- 23** What time do I need to be out of bed:
 - On school mornings,
 - On weekends,
 - During holidays?
- 24** What time is bedtime and "lights out"?
- 25** What are the rules for me going out;
 - At night,
 - During the week,
 - During the weekend?
- 26** What time should I be home at night? (special occasions by special arrangements)
- 27** How often may I go out during the week? Should I phone if I am going to be late home? If so, after how long 10,15 or 20 minutes?
- 28** May I have friends visit during the day? or to stay overnight? (Opposite sex should not visit if parents are not present).
- 29** May I use the TV and sound system at any time? How loud should the sound system be?

Internet/Telephone and Mail

- 30** What are the rules about the use of the internet/telephone/computer?
- 31** Must I ask first to use the computer or telephone?
- 32** How long am I allowed to use the computer for? (No more than one hour?)
- 33** Do you object to me using MySpace and/or FaceBook?
- 34** What are the rules regarding the making of local calls?
- 35** What are the rules for the making of overseas calls? Should I reverse charge calls or keep a log of the calls made? [A student must pay for all overseas calls made]
- 36** What is the procedure for mailing letters?
- 37** What address do I use for my incoming mail?

Schools and Transport

- 38** What is the method by which I get to and from school?
- 39** What forms of public transport are available to me?
- 40** Does Rotary pay for me to get to and from school or do I?
- 41** My understanding is Rotary pays for my schoolbooks and uniform, is this correct? I understand that my school uniforms and books may be second-hand but if I insist on new books and uniforms then my parents or myself have to pay for these items.

Likes and Dislikes

- 42** Do you, as Host Parents, have any dislikes e.g. chewing gum, inappropriate dress at meal times, music being played too loudly?
- 43** Is there anything you would like me NOT to do?
- 44** What likes and dislikes do my host brothers/sisters have?

Family

- 45 What dates are the birthdays of my Host Parents and my Host brothers and sisters?
- 46 What special days are celebrated? (Fathers Day/Mothers Day)
- 47 Do you attend church and am I expected to attend with you?
- 48 If we go out as a family, who pays for such things as entrance fees, tickets, meals
- 49 If applicable - Please tell me how to interact with the house staff?
- 50 If something is wrong, would you please make sure you speak to me about it and if I am feeling uncomfortable about something may I speak to you about it?
- 51 Do you know who my counselor is?
- 52 Can you give me the contact details of my counselor?
- 53 Will I be meeting regularly with my counselor?
- 54 Is there anything else you would like me to know?

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## ***Remember to say,***

*"Thank you for having me in your home".*

## **A Smile**

It costs nothing, but creates much.

It enriches those who receive, without impoverishing those who give.

It happens in a flash and the memory of it lasts forever.

None are so rich they can get along without it and none so poor but are richer for its benefits.

It creates happiness in the home, fosters goodwill in a business, and is the countersign of friends.

It is rest to the weary, daylight to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad, and nature's best antidote for trouble.

Yet it cannot be bought, begged, borrowed, or stolen, for it is something that is no earthly good to anybody till it is given away!

If someone is too tired to give you a smile, leave one of yours. For, nobody needs a smile so much as those who have none to give.



## **The Ten Commandants of Being an Exchange Student**

### **1. Take the initiative in adapting to your host family**

- Find out and willingly conform to family rules and customs.
- Volunteer to help around the house and garden; keep on volunteering, even in the face of rejection, until it is clear that your assistance is not wanted or appropriate.
- At least try any strange food. Rejection of meals prepared by the host mother can become a very sensitive issue.
- Unfailingly carry out your responsibilities for maintaining your own room, and whatever other duties may be assigned to you. Your goal should be to create as little extra work as possible for others (usually your host mother).
- Say "thank you" whenever someone does something for you. Appreciation goes a long way to softening the impact of the workload your presence in the household inevitably creates.
- Express interest in your host family, the town and its history, and any local "sights".

### **2. Be a serious student (you are a student, not a tourist)**

- Take school seriously. Do your homework. Participate in class as much as possible.
- Remember that you are an extra burden on your teachers. Express appreciation for their understanding and assistance.
- Join appropriate school activities, clubs, and groups.
- Try to imprint yourself in the collective school memory as having made a positive contribution through your presence.

### **3. Establish good relations with your host Rotary Club**

- Meet and cultivate your Rotary Counselor. He/she can open doors for you, solve problems, and contribute to enriching your exchange experience.
- Attend as many Rotary meetings and functions as possible or allowed.
- Respond positively to invitations to speak to your host Rotary Clubs and other organizations.
- Respond positively to invitations from Rotarians.
- Make clear your appreciation of their sponsorship.

### **4. Understand and appreciate the host country's culture and values**

- Learn before you go as much as possible (geography, history, political system, educational system, cultural artifacts and achievements).
- Question your hosts on these subjects.
- Learn the language, and work as hard as necessary to do so.
- Enthusiastically view whatever they want to proudly show you.
- Fit in gracefully to adult as well as peer social situations.

### **5. Reflect and communicate your country's culture and values**

- Learn before you go (as in 4 above).
- Answer all questions to the extent you can. Be honest, but not confrontational. Acknowledge deficiencies, but put them in perspective in relation to what has been done, is being done, and what it is possible to hope to achieve.
- Show pride in your country, but don't be prideful.

### **6. Don't try to convert the natives!**

- Be a "Good Will" Ambassador. The exchange of ideas and knowledge is encouraged, but your role is not to change their minds or practices (religion, capitalism, social practices, etc.).

**7. Don't make unfavorable comparisons between your country and the host country**

- Things are merely different ... not better or worse.

**8. Practice the utmost courtesy to everyone**

- Always ask permission where appropriate; don't assume you have it (host family, Rotary, school).
- Say "Thank You" and write "Thank You" notes.
- Adopt host country social practices.

**9. Be happy with your lot as a Rotary Exchange Ambassador**

- Don't envy exchange students, who may be better housed, or more entertained, etc.
- Be glad of your own unique experience and the opportunities it presents.
- Limit your association with other exchange students.

**10. Say an enthusiastic "Yes" to invitations and opportunities to go places and do things.**

- Within, of course, Rotary and host family rules and with necessary permissions.

## **Responsible Use Of Your Smartphone Data:**

**Use free Wi-Fi wherever possible-** Why, spend money at all if you somewhere near a Wi-Fi hotspot? The beauty of the smartphone is its ability to connect to a wireless access point. In some countries, they are hard to find, but these days some major fast food outlets & coffee chains have areas where free Wi-Fi available to their customers, as well as in some other public areas. So if you can find a free Wi-Fi hotspot, connect and enjoy cost-free email & Internet browsing!

**Avoid image-heavy websites-** Images use a lot of data: the larger the image, the more data used to download & display it. Avoid image-heavy websites such as some news sites, video streaming sites and so forth.

**Be careful of navigation apps/sites-** Google Maps and other similar mapping services require a lot of data, with more data being used the more you are zoomed in. As data is constantly being streamed on these services, it is always recommended to use free Wi-Fi when streaming Google Maps or similar services while overseas.

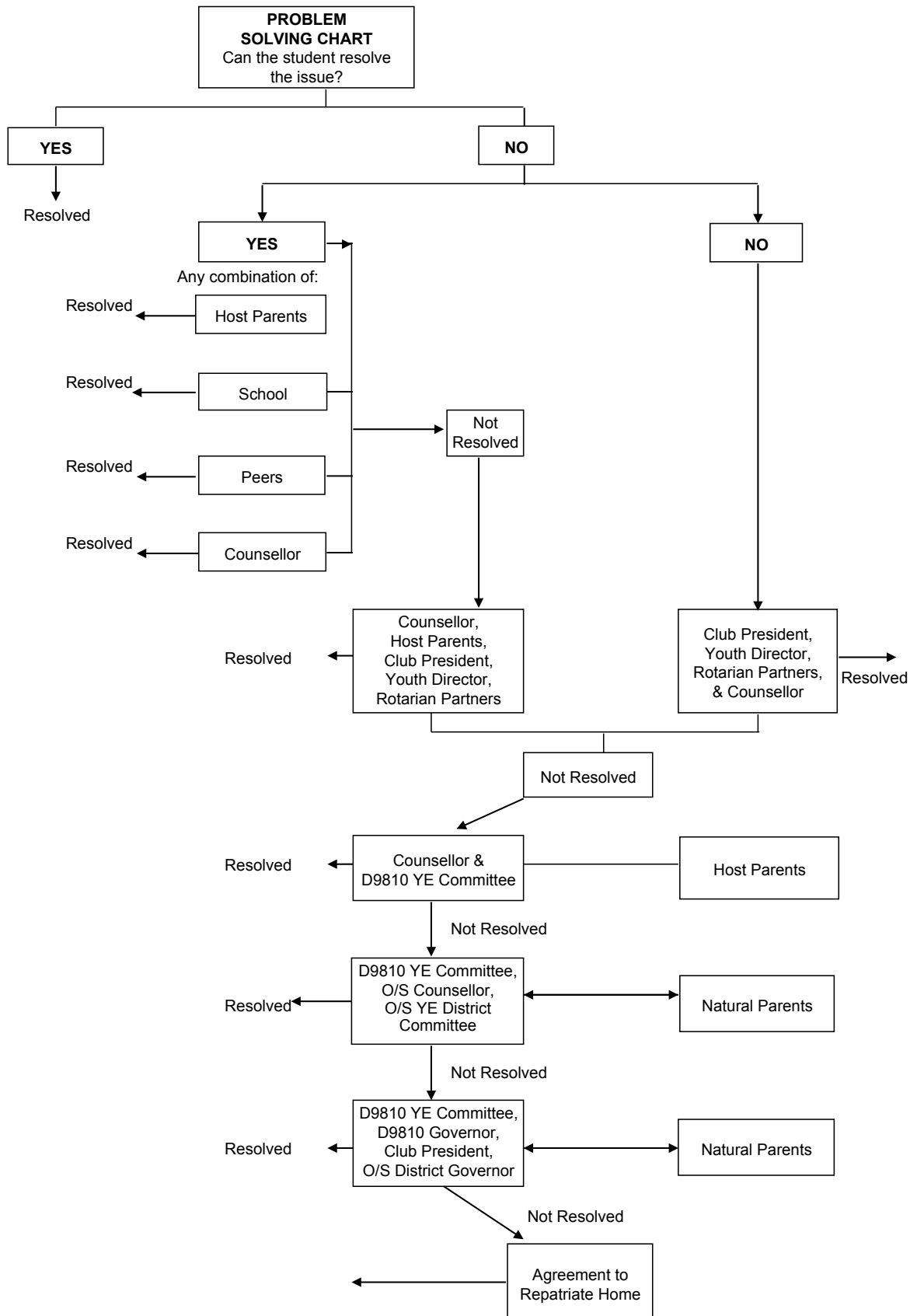
**Change your emails from "Push" to "Fetch" –** If your emails are set to "push", then this means they will be downloaded & sent to your phone automatically. If set to manually "fetch", you will then only download emails as you choose.

**Download certified data compressor apps -** Data compressing applications may be available for purchase or free download from the Apple App Store. These apps work in the background, and intercept incoming data before sending it to the device. Settings can be adjusted in the apps to compress the data, greatly reducing download sizes and the bill as a result. The best apps of these kinds also have a data monitoring system, allowing you to measure data usage in real time.

**Change the settings on Android devices-** Android lovers need not fear; you have complete control of the way that apps sync to the internet. You can manually turn on or off automatic synching for all applications, and we recommend turning them all off until you need them. Android users may also be able to download free data monitoring apps from the Android Market.

**DO NOT HAVE YOUR PHONE ON GLOBAL ROAMING FROM AUSTRALIA – OR ANYWHERE ELSE. IT WILL COST YOU MORE THAN YOU CAN BELIEVE**

## GRIEVANCE AND PROBLEM SOLVING FLOWCHART







# Rotary District 9810 Outbound Exchange Student Report

To be emailed **BEFORE** the last day of reporting month to your **Country Coordinator** and **YEP Chairman**

|                                        |  |
|----------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Rotary Exchange Student Name</b>    |  |
| <b>Host Club, District and Country</b> |  |
| <b>Report for the Period ending</b>    |  |

|                     |  |                      |  |
|---------------------|--|----------------------|--|
| <b>Host Club</b>    |  | <b>Sponsor Club:</b> |  |
| Counselor           |  | Counselor            |  |
| Telephone – Private |  | Telephone – Private  |  |
| - Mobile            |  | - Mobile             |  |
| - Email             |  | - Email              |  |

|                     |  |                          |                        |
|---------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Host Family:</b> |  | <b>Next Host Family:</b> | <b>Date of change:</b> |
| Name:               |  | Name:                    |                        |
| Address:            |  | Address:                 |                        |
|                     |  |                          |                        |
|                     |  |                          |                        |
| Telephone – Private |  | Telephone – Private      |                        |
| - Mobile            |  | - Mobile                 |                        |
| - Email             |  | - Email                  |                        |

## Information required since your last Monthly Report

Please **CHECK** either the Yes or No box and enter any relevant comments where shown

| During this past Month – have you; |                                                     | Yes | No | Comments please<br>(Use an additional page if necessary) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----|----|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                                  | Contacted your parents?                             |     |    |                                                          |
| 2                                  | Contacted your sponsor club?                        |     |    |                                                          |
| 3                                  | Contacted your sponsor club counselor?              |     |    |                                                          |
| 4                                  | Met with your host club counselor?                  |     |    |                                                          |
| 5                                  | Experienced any difficulties with your host family? |     |    |                                                          |
| 6                                  | Experienced any difficulties with your school?      |     |    |                                                          |
| 7                                  | Attended any Rotary club meetings?                  |     |    |                                                          |
| 8                                  | Performed any public speaking engagements?          |     |    |                                                          |
| 9                                  | Participated in any sporting or social activities?  |     |    |                                                          |
| 10                                 | Had any illness, accident or injury?                |     |    |                                                          |
| 11                                 | Felt unsafe at <b>any time</b> ?                    |     |    |                                                          |
| 12                                 | Felt homesick?                                      |     |    |                                                          |
| 13                                 | Had any visits from your family?                    |     |    |                                                          |
| 14                                 | Travelled out of District 9810?                     |     |    |                                                          |
| 15                                 | Had any financial problems?                         |     |    |                                                          |
| 16                                 | Attended school every school day?                   |     |    |                                                          |
| 17                                 | Planned to travel during next month?                |     |    |                                                          |
| 18                                 | Planned to travel for the month after next?         |     |    |                                                          |
| 19                                 | Had any problems?                                   |     |    |                                                          |