



ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

D. 9790

*YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM  
2011/2012*

**GUIDELINES FOR HOST FAMILIES**

Updated August 2011

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Hosting a youth exchange student from another country is a rewarding experience for all concerned: the student themselves, the host family, their relatives, friends and their neighbours. It is often said that the next best thing to being an exchange student is to be a host family. Being host to an exchange student opens up a new culture for the host family. For the first host family, they will be the first contact with the student's new cultural experience. As a host family, you also get the opportunity to share the hopes, dreams and ambitions of the exchange student as well as having the opportunity to be a part of their personal growth and development. Host families play a vital role in ensuring the health and happiness of the exchange student and the ultimate success of the exchange.

This guide for host families provides an overview of the role of the host family and their responsibilities in hosting an exchange student. It should be read in conjunction with other publications whilst full information can be provided by the host Rotary Club. Host families are also welcome to attend the District Orientation sessions to learn more in detail about the Youth Exchange Program.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Sponsor Club or District**

1. Select and prepare the student for exchange
2. Advise the Host Club of travel details
3. Maintain contact with the student and the Host Club and/or District for the duration of the exchange
4. De-brief and assist the student on return after the period of exchange.

### **Host Club or District**

1. Appoint a Rotarian to be the Counsellor for the student who shall act as guardian to the student during the year of exchange. This is the person with whom you, as host families, should communicate with should the need arise during the time you are the host family.
2. Source, screen and select all host families prior to their participation in the program. This shall involve a background check on the host family and all members of the family residing at home who are over the age of 18, a visit to the host family home and a briefing of the host family. Background checks may involve references, a check of those references and a police probity check as required by law. (Note: laws in NSW and Victoria differ in the way the suitability of host families are checked and guaranteed.)

#### **In Victoria:**

It is mandatory that all Host families undergo a Working With Children check and receive a Working With Children card with photographic ID. This also applies to any member of the household who is over the age of 18. A record of the Working With Children numbers should be collected and retained by the Club in Club records.

#### **In NSW:**

Host families must complete a Working With Children Check. This involves the completion of an Application Declaration and Consent form, a Volunteer Declaration, and provision of 100 point identity calculation. The Application and Declaration Consent should be kept on file by the Host Club, ensuring confidentiality.

### Procedure for requesting a Background Check (NSW):

- a. The Club International Director or a nominated member should visit the prospective host family and interview the family. The members of the host family over the age of 18 and living at the address also need to complete the Application Declaration and Consent Form.
- b. Club keeps a record of who signed the ADC and forward it to the Youth Exchange Committee.
- c. The Youth Exchange Committee completes the Working With Children request (spreadsheet) and email to the DET Liaison Officer. He will forward the requests to the Employment Screening Unit on your behalf and will advise of the results.

The full requirements of the process can be explained to Clubs by members of the District Youth Exchange Committee. The required forms for NSW are all available from the Youth Exchange Committee.

3. Meet the student upon their arrival at the airport
4. Arrange enrolment at school, subjects selected, books and the extent of fees to be paid. This should be commenced before the student's arrival in the country.
5. Conduct an inbound orientation session at which expectations and rules are explained
6. Organise a welcoming function or functions for the student to assist their settling in
7. Maintain contact with the host family during the course of the exchange and assist with the change from one host family to the next.

First and foremost, Youth Exchange is an exchange between Rotary Clubs. It is the District role to facilitate the administration of the exchange whilst the day-to-day aspects are the responsibilities of the Sponsor and Host Clubs.

Ideally, a Club Counsellor should *not* be a host parent or a member of the host family's immediate circle of friends. In cases where the Club Counsellor is also a host parent, the student must have an alternative 'counsellor' to whom they can turn to in the case of a problem arising with the host family.

As a host family, you should not hesitate to contact the Club Counsellor for guidance or assistance should the need arise.

### **Host Parents**

Whilst most exchange students may be 'academic achievers', they are still teenagers and will not be exempt from experiencing the range of problems and issues young people of that age face. As exchange students, though, they *may* be more able to cope with those issues but, as exchange students in a different environment and culture, they will also face a range of problems not normally faced by young people of that age.

Host families are required to understand and follow the Rotary International *Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth* which is to be found at the end of this Guide.

The success of an exchange will often be determined by the nature of the hosting carried out by the host family. There are a number of desirable characteristics of good host families. These have been identified by the Child-Safe Unit of the Avon and Somerset Constabulary (UK) as

- Welcoming and hospitable
- Open minded and accepting
- Willing to promote cultural exchange
- A mother and/or father figure
- Prepared to take responsibility for student's care and welfare.

A host family should, therefore, be genuinely interested in young people, especially those from another culture, and be willing to accept responsibility for their welfare during their stay.

## **SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOST FAMILIES**

As Host parents, you have agreed to take on a number of responsibilities:

- To treat the student as 'one of the family' and not as an honoured guest, looking after the welfare of the student and offering help and guidance when sought;
- To (preferably) provide a room of their own but, where not possible, to share with someone of the same sex and similar age;
- To provide all meals;
- To include the student in all family activities;
- To explain to the student what is required of them whilst hosted in the family home (use the First Night Questionnaire);
- To monitor all aspects of the exchange including school progress and how leisure time is spent and recognize and resolve any problems which may be identified;
- To maintain good communication and understanding with the hosted student and the Host Club Counsellor.

To ensure a successful exchange, it is vital that open and good communication and understanding between the host family and the student is maintained.

### **Preparing for the student's arrival**

Having agreed to become Host parents, you should immediately prepare yourself to host the inbound exchange student. In making the decision, you should have discussed the implications of hosting with other members of the family living at home, especially those who may be of a similar age to the hosted student. Learn as much as you can about the student you will host, their background, interests, likes and dislikes etc. This is obviously easier for those families who will be hosts three months or more after the student has arrived in the District and the Host Club. Initial Host parents should begin to communicate with the inbound student as soon as possible and include the natural parents of the student in your communications.

### **Meeting the Inbound student**

Upon arrival, the inbound student should be met at the airport by members of the Host Club and the first Host family. After a few days, all Host families should meet the student and an informal welcome arranged for the student at which young people of a similar age should be invited. The Host family and the Host Club Counsellor will be important players in initially determining the circle of friends the Inbound student

may develop within their peer group. The student may be suffering from an overwhelming feeling at the time so it is important to be warm, welcoming, helpful and friendly during this time and offer as much advice, guidance and support as the newly arrived inbound student gains in confidence.

### **Settling In**

Within the first 48 hours, it is recommended that Rotary's "First Night Questionnaire" be discussed between the student, the Host family and the Club Counsellor. This should be done at the commencement of each period with a Host family. Most students will be familiar with the "Questionnaire". A copy of the modified District 9790 "First Night Questionnaire" is attached to this Guide. Host parents should allow for language difficulties in the discussions but the Host family and the student must ensure there are no misunderstandings regarding the rules and expectations of the home stay.

### **Orientation**

Students arriving in District 9790 will have been e mailed a copy of the District 9790 Inbound Student handbook. This provides some background to Australia and our District as well as our expectations of them and our rules. Just because they have been emailed a copy does not mean they will have read it let alone understood it. Shortly after arrival in the District, all Inbound students will attend an Orientation Weekend (usually the second weekend in August) at which they will receive a copy of the Handbook and will have an orientation session. Those arriving in January will also receive a copy and an introductory session at the Rebound Day early February.

## **COMMON PROBLEMS**

Open communication between all three parties to an exchange - the student, the Host family and the Club Counsellor - should ensure that an exchange proceeds well. That does not mean that problems will arise from time to time. The most common problems experienced during a home stay have been identified as:

- ***Curfews.*** The same rules that apply to members of your family should also apply to the hosted student. It may be appropriate to check with other host families so that there is some uniformity in the rules between families and an agreed sensible time. Curfew time should be explained at the beginning of the home stay.
- ***Damage.*** Check with your insurance company as there may be policy implications for visitors to your house and damage they may cause. Any damage caused to valuables in your home or to the house itself should be brought to the attention of the Club Counsellor. If damage is not covered by your home insurance do not attempt to get compensation or reimbursement for the damage directly from the student.
- ***Drinking.*** This is one of Rotary's '4-D' rules 'don't drink.' Many students who come on exchange will come from a culture where the consumption of alcohol by people under the age of 18 is different to our own. The legal drinking age in Australia is 18. This should be made clear to your hosted student. However, there may be certain family or Rotary sponsored occasions where the consumption of alcohol (e.g. wine) is permitted in moderation. In such instances, it must always be in moderation and under adult supervision.  
Teenage binge drinking or drinking to excess to get drunk is NOT acceptable and any instances of this should be brought to the attention of the Club Counsellor.
- ***Drugs.*** This is another of Rotary's '4-D' rules 'don't do drugs'. You should be aware of all prescribed medication the student may be required to take. Rotary's exchange students have been advised to bring a letter from their doctor or parent/guardian explaining the medication and dose. It may be that further prescriptions will need to be filled whilst the student is in your care. The student should be responsible for the cost of these.

Should host parents be aware of the student taking any illegal drugs, the Club Counsellor must be informed immediately. It may be necessary to inform the appropriate authorities and such occurrences will, in all likelihood, lead to the student being returned home.

- **Food.** For some students, the change in food may initially be a problem - but probably one of taste only. It is expected hosted students will have the same meals as you and the rest of the family. Students should be encouraged to try new styles of food but foods should not be forced on them. Some students may have special dietary requirements (e.g. vegetarian). This will have been identified on their Application Papers and they should have been made known to you before the student's arrival in your home.
- **Getting lost.** Initial Host families should consider providing the student with a map, explain the public transport system and provide them with a list of emergency contacts telephone numbers.
- **Homesickness.** Most Inbound students will feel homesick at some stage and it is perfectly normal for them to do so. It is your job as host families to help them through these periods. It may be necessary to involve the Club Counsellor. Sometimes homesickness may be difficult to spot but in most instances the mood of the student will indicate that something is wrong. A student who spends a lot of time alone may well be giving a signal that all is not well. Exchange students who remain involved and busy in their host schools and communities are likely to suffer less from homesickness than those that don't. Homesickness can occur at any time and may be triggered by events such as family birthdays, Christmas and receiving e mails from friends at home.
- **Host family relationships.** Jealousy between hosted students and other children in the family can be a problem in home stays. The jealousy is likely to come from your own children who may see that they are being ignored whilst the hosted student receives all the attention. Any decision taken to act as a Host family should involve your children in the discussion.
- **Insurance.** Your hosted student should have comprehensive travel insurance which meets the minimum requirements of District 9790. The District Inbound Coordinator should have checked this either before their arrival or upon arrival. It is a condition of Youth Exchange that students have insurance. You should become familiar with how to use the hosted student's insurance policy

as you may have to assist them in making a claim. You should also be aware of exclusions in the student's insurance as they may determine what recreational and leisure activities you arrange for the student, e.g. flying in a light aircraft. Ensure your own home insurance policy is current.

- **Keys.** As the student is a member of your family, the rules on the house key should apply to them as it does to your own children. If there are no children living at home, discuss the availability of a key with the student.
- **Money.** Apart from providing food, lodging and some transport, host families are not expected to suffer any financial burden whilst hosting a student. Inbound students will be provided with a monthly allowance from their Host Rotary Club (at least \$120). This will not be sufficient for their monthly expenditure, so they should also have access to their own funds through a bank or other financial institution. Any additional funds the student may need must come from their natural parents. Hosted students should not borrow money from host families.
- **Religion.** This is a purely personal matter for the student and Host parents should not attempt to impose their religious observances and practices on a hosted student. It is, though, acceptable for the student to be invited to religious services especially at Christmas and/or Easter. Likewise, Host families must respect the student's own religious observance and assist them to practice his or her religion during their stay.
- **Romantic involvement.** Students are advised not to become too romantically involved during the period of their exchange as it can detract from the experience of being an exchange student if they become too involved with the one person. Host parents who suspect a student to be too romantically involved or engaging in promiscuous behaviour should discuss the matter with the student and bring it to the attention of the Club Counsellor.
- **Telephone & Internet Use.** Use and misuse of the telephone and the internet are the two biggest problems encountered in Youth Exchange. International calls can be expensive and there are no free local calls in Australia. It is best to establish the ground rules for the use of the telephone and the internet from the outset. Exchange students can spend too much time on the internet, often chatting to other exchange students, and so remove themselves from the host family and their host community. Some exchange students will have a

mobile phone. This is quite acceptable but they should be made aware of the cost in using it.

- **Theft.** Any item of the student lost or suspected of being stolen should be reported to the police immediately. Host parents should also make the student crime prevention aware (e.g. locking house windows and securing personal property). Likewise, should any member of the host family suspect the hosted student to have committed a crime, the Host Club Counsellor should be informed immediately.
  
- **Visitors.** Hosted students should be informed under what circumstances they are allowed to invite visitors to the host family home. This could be raised at the same time as the availability of house keys is discussed.

Many problems in an exchange begin with a misunderstanding. These are best avoided by being open and discussing the expectations and household rules from the start.

## **SOME ISSUES FACING EXCHANGE STUDENTS**

All exchange students are teenagers and no matter what their country of origin, they will face a range of issues common to all youth. Host families are the first contact for students during their stay. Should any serious problems occur you should raise them with the Club Counsellor. You should have a *24 hour* contact number for that person. If not, ask for one.

### **1. Schooling:**

First and foremost Youth Exchange is an educational experience. It is a condition of their visa that exchange students attend secondary school on a full time basis. The Club Counsellor will have enrolled the student into the host school and made arrangements regarding subjects, books and uniform. As host parents, your role is to monitor the day-to-day progress of the student. Make sure the student knows how to get to and from school and what the arrangements are for lunches. It may take some time to adjust to the new school - procedures and subjects could be radically different - and the student will invariably need your guidance through the settling in period.

### **2. Language proficiency:**

For some exchange students this can be a considerable problem. Host parents will need to be able to identify whether the lack of language proficiency is having a lasting problem. This is most likely to occur early in the exchange and as the students master their command of English, it will become less of a problem. Initially there may be misunderstandings but it is important the student understands your rules and expectations from the beginning. Be patient but also speak slowly and clearly. The student should not feel embarrassed by the lack of language proficiency no matter how frustrated they may feel in communicating in an unfamiliar language.

### **3. Changing Host families:**

Many students become well settled with a particular Host family and moving from them to another can be a difficult occurrence. This is especially the case if the first Host family has done their job well and settled the student into school, the community and helped them overcome the initial culture shock. It is

important to introduce the student to all their Host families early in the exchange and to explain when the change will take place. There should be opportunities for the student to get to know the new Host family before the change takes place. Rotary students should be aware that they will change families two or three times but this knowledge does not always prepare them for the actual change.

#### **4. Medical:**

All Inbound exchange students will have Overseas Student Health Cover (OSHC) and appropriate health card issued by Medibank Private. Host parents should know how to use this card and may need to assist the student with how it works. The student should inform you of any allergies they may suffer from and any special medications or prescriptions they have. The Application Papers for the student held by the Host Club will contain a medical report. Host parents should add the student to their ambulance cover.

#### **5. Rotary obligations**

The student has an obligation to the Host Club and District 9790 and all endeavours should be made in assisting the student to meet them. These will involve Club or District meetings or attendance at other Rotary functions. An exchange student is expected to share their experiences and culture as widely as possible and will involve attendance at a variety of events and will include speech making. Host families need to be aware of these obligations when planning family events which involve the student should be made with this in mind.

## ENSURING THE STUDENT'S WELFARE AND SAFETY

The greatest responsibility to fall upon a Host family is to ensure the welfare and safety of the hosted student. Some of the ways in which these responsibilities are carried out have been raised in previous sections.

The exchange student's welfare refers to any matters of a personal nature, many of which have been raised in previous sections. They may range from such issues as homesickness, meals, comfort and privacy to emergency contact information, travel arrangements and knowing where the student is whilst they are in your care.

Matters of safety refer to basic information being provided to the student to ensure their safety. For example, voltages may differ on electrical appliances between the student's home country and our own. Explain how to safely operate the home heating system. If the host family has a fire escape plan, it should be explained to the student.

Above all else, though, host families should be ever vigilant for signs of *child abuse* and do all in their power to guard against us. It is often said that parents are unwilling to allow their children to visit a complete stranger in the next street but are prepared to allow their children to be cared for by complete strangers on the other side of the world.

Young people can be abused in a number of ways which are mainly categorized into four categories:

- **Physical** - where young people are subjected to ill-treatment and physical injury through bullying, assault and other forms of direct physical contact.
- **Emotional** - where young people are emotionally neglected or ignored, whether by design or accident, subject to continued personal, racial, sexual or religious abuse (usually verbal) or are continually exposed to domestic violence. This may also involve instances of harassment. ALL abuse involves some form of emotional ill-treatment.
- **Sexual** - where young people are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in *any* form of sexual behaviour from provocative acts such as leaving pornographic material around to actual physical sexual abuse.

- **Neglect** - where children are constantly neglected or there is a failure to protect the student from exposure to any form of danger which affects their welfare and safety. Neglect also refers to failing to meet the young person's basic needs of food and accommodation.

*Rotary's first priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of young people placed in their care.*

It is a fact that not all students will report instances of abuse to anyone and many will suffer in silence for long periods of time. They may feel they are responsible for the abuse, they may feel they will be blamed and punished for what has happened, they may have faced threats of violence and intimidation from the abuser and they may have bribed to remain quiet.

For exchange students, these problems can be compounded by language inadequacies preventing open communication, not understanding the laws and customs of the host country, not being able to find an adult whom they can confide in and trust, being unable to communicate what has happened to their parents either through embarrassment or distance and suffering from the belief that once they go home it will all go away.

## **HOW TO RECOGNIZE IF A YOUNG PERSON HAS BEEN ABUSED**

The evidence of child abuse can manifest itself in many ways.

The UK based *Child-Safe* identify them as:

- Unexplained or untreated bruising or injuries
- Suffering continual stomach pains or other physical ailments without any medical explanation
- Aggressive or withdrawn behaviour and refusal to talk about the injuries
- Unexpected fear of an adult and flinching when touched or comforted
- Sexually explicit behaviour and language
- Bed wetting
- Unaccounted sources of money
- Becoming quiet and withdrawn
- Fear of going home to parents or carers or of them being contacted, or fear of going out, on trips or to lessons
- Changes over time in manner and appearance, such as losing weight, becoming dirty or disheveled, being constantly tired or hungry
- Telling you about being asked to "keep a secret" or dropping other hints or clues about the abuse
- Shows particular signs of being uncomfortable in the presence of particular adults (usually male) in your extended family, amongst the leaders, organisers or members of the organization or teachers.

On occasions, the visible signs of abuse may not be openly apparent. Accordingly, host families must be ever alert or vigilant and if they suspect anything is wrong, something must be done about it. Your first responsibility is to the welfare of the student. Bring you concerns to the attention of the Club Counsellor.

Rotary has in place guidelines for the reporting of any sexual abuse or harassment. The guidelines have been designed to assist host parents and other adults who find themselves in the situation of being the person to whom an instance of sexual abuse or harassment has been reported. In the first instance, do not try to deal with the situation on your own.

## **GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING ABUSE OR HARASSMENT**

### ***Report from the Student:***

1. *Listen attentively and stay calm.* Listen, be encouraging, do not express shock, horror or disbelief and reinforce to the student they have done the right thing as it takes a lot of courage to report abuse.
2. *Assure privacy but not confidentiality.* Explain to the student that you will have to tell someone else about the allegation or report if it is to be stopped from happening again.
3. *Get the facts but do not interrogate.* Ask questions of the student to establish what happened and by whom. Avoid asking 'why' questions. Establish the facts only and not the reasons.
4. *Be non-judgmental and reassure the student.* Do not be critical of the student, of anything that has happened or of anybody involved. Reassure the student that they have done the right thing in telling you in difficult circumstances.
5. *Record.* Keep a written record of the conversation with the student as soon as possible after the report has been made. Date and time your conversation. Record only what has been told to you.

### ***Protect the Student***

Ensure the well-being and safety of the student by removing them from the situation immediately so as to prevent further abuse and any contact between the student and the alleged perpetrator of the abuse or harassment. Reinforce that this is not as a punishment but is for their safety and protection.

### ***Avoid Gossip and Blame***

Do not tell anyone of the report other than those required by the guidelines - namely, the Club Counsellor or a member of the District Youth Exchange Committee make the report to them IMMEDIATELY.

**Upon receiving the report**, the Club Counsellor shall advise the District Committee (Chairman or member) who will take immediate steps to report the matter to the appropriate law enforcement authorities for a full investigation. They shall also report the matter to Rotary International within 72 hours.

Under no circumstances are you, as host parents, to contact or challenge the alleged offender. This is purely a responsibility of the law enforcement authorities. Where *non-criminal* harassment is the alleged offence, the District Committee Chairman and the District Governor (or his/her appointee) may constitute the investigating team. In this situation, the student must be first moved from the situation before such an investigation occurs.

## **CONCLUSION**

In all instances, your Club Counsellor is always there to help, whatever the problem. You may seek more information from him or her about any aspect of your role and responsibilities as Host families. It is very important that an atmosphere of trust be developed by all involved in hosting a Rotary Youth Exchange student: between the student, the Host Club, the Host Club Counsellor and the Host families.

### **Statement of Conduct for Working with Youth**

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

*Adapted by the RI Board of Directors, November, 2002*

## **FIRST NIGHT WITH YOUR HOST FAMILY QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. What do I call you? Mum, Dad or use of first names?
2. What am I expected to do in and about the house **daily** other than:
  - ✓ Make by bed
  - ✓ Keep my room tidy
  - ✓ Cleaning 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. May I rearrange my bedroom?
7. Where can I store my suitcases etc.?
8. Will this be a personal space which I can call my own?

### **Bathroom**

9. What is the most convenient time for me to use the shower/bath?
10. Where may I keep my personal bathroom toiletries?
11. May I use the family soap, shampoo, toothpaste etc.?

### **Meals/Kitchen**

12. What are the meal times?
13. 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?
14. At other times, may I help myself to food and drink (non-alcoholic) at any time?
15. Is it permissible for me to join you in having a wine or drink at dinner with you?
16. What are the arrangements for lunch at school?  
If I take my lunch, do I make it or do you?  
If I buy lunch, who pays?
17. If the student has any special dietary requirements, they should be mentioned now.

### **Laundry/washing/cleaning**

18. What do I do with my dirty clothes until washing?
19. Should I wash my own underwear?
20. Do I need to do my own ironing?

21. May I use the washing machine or iron at any time and do I need to ask first?
22. Do you wish me to clean my room / change bed linen? When is convenient?

### **Household rules/lifestyle**

23. Are there any areas of the house strictly private e.g. bar, office/study?
24. Is it permissible for me to use any household tools/equipment e.g. sewing machine, workshop tools?
25. What are your rules for me about alcohol?
26. What times do I need to be out of bed
  - on school mornings?
  - on weekends?
  - during holidays?
27. What time is bedtime and “lights out”?
28. What are the rules for me going out at night
  - during the week?
  - during the weekend?
29. What time should I be home at night? (special occasions by special arrangements)
30. 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, 20 minutes?
31. May I have friends visit during the day? To stay overnight?  
(Opposite sex should not visit if host parents are not present).
32. May I use the TV and sound system at any time?  
How loud should the sound system be?

### **Telephone, internet and mail**

33. What are the rules about the use of the telephone?  
Must I ask first to use the telephone?
34. What are the rules regarding the making of local calls?
35. What are the rules for the making of overseas calls?  
Should I keep a log of the calls made?  
[A student should pay for all overseas calls made]
36. What are the rules about the use of the computer and internet?
37. Do you have skype, or unlimited download time?
38. What is the procedure for mailing letters?
39. What address do I use for my incoming mail?

### **Schools and Transport**

40. What is the method by which I get to and from school?
41. What forms of public transport are available to me?

### **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. If we go out as a family, who pays such things as entrance fees, tickets, meals etc.?  
[47. - if applicable - Please tell me how to interact with the house servants?]
48. Is there anything else you would like me to know?

## **D 9790 YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM TRAVEL POLICY**

All inbound students to District 9790 and their Host Clubs are required to adhere to and implement the following *travel policy*. The policy is divided into the following sections:

1. travel within District 9790;
2. travel to ‘neighbouring areas’ including Melbourne;
3. overnight travel outside the District;
4. school excursions;
5. travel outside Australia;
6. the District ‘Rock-to-Reef’ walkabout

As Youth Exchange is first and foremost an educational exchange, any travel undertaken by an Inbound student can be undertaken during school holiday periods, weekends and public holidays. When a student applies for travel outside these periods and any absence from school will occur, the student must begin with the approval of the Host School principal to be absent from school.

### **1. Travel within District 9790**

Day trips: Any local area travel within the District may be taken at any time with the approval of the host parents.

Overnight trips: Any travel within the District involving an overnight stay must be approved by the host parents. The name and contact details of the host for the overnight stay must be completed by the student and verified or checked by the host parents.

### **2. Travel to ‘neighbouring areas’ including Melbourne**

Day trips: Students in District 9790 may make travel to neighbouring areas including Melbourne with the approval of Host parents. Such travel may be undertaken independently using public transport or with an approved individual using private means of transport.

Overnight trips: Any travel to ‘neighbouring areas’ involving an overnight stay must be approved by the host parents *and* the Club Counsellor. ‘Neighbouring areas’ include places such as Echuca, Bendigo, Canberra and the Snowy Mountains and Melbourne. The name and contact details of the host for the overnight stay must be completed by the student, verified by the host parents and notified to the Club Counsellor.

### **3. Overnight travel outside District 9790**

Any travel requiring an overnight stay or longer outside D 9790 (except that referred to in 2 above) must be approved by:

- host parents
- Club Counsellor
- District Youth Exchange Committee (Country Coordinator or Chairman)

In all instances of such travel, a detailed itinerary must be submitted with the travel request including contact details for the duration of the period you will be travelling. Travel under this section shall apply in such instances as holiday periods with host families or other Rotarians – e.g. travel interstate or to holiday destinations. Travel with families other than Rotary families should also have the approval of the student’s natural parents. Unaccompanied and independent travel is not permitted.

4. **School excursions**

Formal curriculum based school excursions, including those involving an overnight stay, may be undertaken with the approval of host parents. Students should notify their Club Counsellors if they are participating in school excursions involving an overnight stay or longer.

5. **Travel outside Australia**

Under the District by laws travel by exchange students from District 9790 outside the Commonwealth of Australia is not permitted.

6. **Outback Safari / Capital City Safari**

During the course of your exchange, a three week Outback Safari experience will be held. This will partly be in school holiday time and partly in school term time. There will also be a 5 day Capital City Safari. Students are not required to seek permission to participate in this although students are expected to notify their host parents of its happening, leaving them with an itinerary, as well as notifying their Club Counsellor and school. Students will be required to complete a permission form which includes the approval of their natural parents.

**General:**

All requests for travel must be made **well in advance** of the planned travel happening.

Seek permission from your Host Club before making plans – **official Rotary events take precedence over other travel plans.**

If in doubt, ask for clarification.

Adopted by the D 9790 Youth Exchange Committee November 2005

## Grievance Procedure for Youth Exchange Students

### Aims of a Grievance Procedure:

- That Rotary youth exchange students, their parents and/or guardians know they have the same rights to fair and equitable access to a grievance procedure process as local students and their parents
- That the District Youth Exchange Chair has the general responsibility for the efficient organisation, management and administration of the exchange program
- That the exchange students know where their complaints, problems or grievances should be directed and that an attempt will be made to resolve the issue when it is first raised
- That where a resolution cannot be reached the first time the student knows the next level to seek a resolution until such time as it is reached
- That Host families, Club Counsellors, District Youth Exchange officials and School principals are aware of the first contact person should a conflict or grievance arise in the home or the School and the next level should it become necessary.

### Formulating a Grievance Policy:

1. As a basis for settlement of a grievance or problem, refer to the *Grievance Procedure Flow Chart*
2. The student shall have the right to a fair and equitable access to a grievance procedure
3. Categories of grievances include, but are not restricted to:
  - Financial
  - Professional standards of care
  - Discrimination
  - Abuse and harassment (note: sexual abuse and harassment have strict protocols which must be followed)
  - Misconduct

4. Procedures as to whom to address the complaint or seek a resolution to a problem or grievance, e.g.
  - Host family
  - Rotary Club Counsellor or YEO
  - School principal or other relevant school official or Coordinator
  - Rotary District YE Country Coordinator or Chair
5. Grievances and/or problems should be resolved locally wherever possible
6. Procedures for the resolution of a grievance should include, where necessary:
  - Meeting (including access to translation and/or interpreter services)
  - Investigation
  - Referral to appropriate individual
  - Conciliation / arbitration
  - Resolution
  - Communication and explanation of decision and acknowledgement of outcome
7. Who is ultimately responsible for resolving the conflict.

Refer to the *Grievance Procedure Flow Chart* which follows

## Grievance Procedure Flowchart

