

Hosting an International Student

Culture:

- ❑ There are differences between cultures and that experience is part of the exchange.
- ❑ Most German teens are quite familiar with technology.
- ❑ German teens typically walk, ride a bike, or use public transportation to go about town even at night.
- ❑ German teens regularly make plans with their friends.
- ❑ Fewer German families have pets than their American friends.
- ❑ Many German families are multi-generational.
- ❑ The smoking age in Germany is 18.
- ❑ The drinking age for alcohol in Germany is 16.
- ❑ German teens can become a licensed driver at age 18.

Host Family:

- ❑ Early communication with your exchange student is very important. You may learn their preferences, health issues, expectations.
- ❑ Sister City makes every effort to match you with an International student who shares some of the same interest as you.
- ❑ Offer a warm hospitable environment for the student. Spend time as a family sharing the things you love to do, the things you like to see and experience, and introduce them to your friends and family.

Housing:

- ❑ The international student should be given their own separate bed. Fresh bed linens and warm blankets should be available.
- ❑ Bathrooms should be shared with no more than four family members. Provide fresh towels and wash cloths. Bathrooms should be very clean.
- ❑ Offer the use of your washing machine and dryer for guest use. Let students know in advance of packing for the trip that laundry may be done during trip to reduce the amount of extra clothing needed.
- ❑ Provide a hair dryer.
- ❑ Allow student to use your computer to email family. If you have SKYPE and the student's family has SKYPE they can make internet calls at no charge.
- ❑ Past experience has shown that students who call home frequently suffer from home-sickness more often than those students who do not call home often. If students choose to bring an International cell phone they should be courteous and limit their calls to times other than meals and planned activities.

Pets:

- ❑ Let your exchange student know the types of pets living in your home.

Meals:

- ❑ Provide meals for your exchange student just as you would for your family.
- ❑ Provide food for a bagged lunch for school and outings.
- ❑ Americans have many different types of fast food and restaurants that exchange students enjoy trying.
- ❑ If you choose to offer your student money for meals when they are on outings a modest amount is sufficient.

Trips:

- ❑ Sister City may offer to provide educational trips such as historic sites which some Americans may attend. The American host families are responsible for their own expenses.
- ❑ There may be optional tours, entertainment, activities, and transportation which Americans are welcome to attend. The American host families are responsible for their own expenses.
- ❑ It is not mandatory that your exchange student attend all optional tours, entertainment, but it is encouraged that host families and exchange students attend special gatherings with Sister City Membership.

Money:

- ❑ Host families may want to pay for their guest's expenses. Exchange students have been informed to bring money for the optional tours, entertainment, activities, and transportation.
- ❑ Exchange students have been informed to bring American cash with them. The banks in Lynchburg do not exchange foreign currency. If the need should arise to exchange currency for a student we will try to locate a local business person interested in buying Euros. It is not guaranteed we can make this happen.
- ❑ Most international teens enjoy shopping here in America. They find the prices to be reasonable and the shopping plentiful. The students have been informed to bring money for their shopping.

Transportation:

- ❑ The exchange students will be arriving in the Roanoke or Lynchburg airport. Host families will be responsible to greet them and take home.
- ❑ The host is responsible to provide transportation to and from school.
- ❑ The host is responsible to provide transportation or car-pool for exchange students to meet for trips, activities, and gatherings and be picked up afterward.

Faith/Religion:

- ❑ Many American families attend church on a regular basis and it is important to discuss with your exchange student their feelings toward church attendance.
- ❑ If your exchange student chooses not to attend church, please make other arrangements for them at that time.

Additional Information:

- ❑ Student exchanges expose your entire family to another culture and allow for making lifelong friends with someone you would never have met otherwise.
- ❑ Many of our host students later go to be a guest exchange student in the following exchange.