

ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE



**THE OPPORTUNITY
OF A LIFETIME**

2018 STUDENT GUIDE



**EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS WITH
A YEAR ON ROTARY EXCHANGE**



www.rotaryyouthexchange.net.au

ABOUT ROTARY

Rotary is a worldwide organization of more than 1.2 million business, professional, and community leaders. Members of Rotary clubs, known as Rotarians, provide humanitarian service, encourage high ethical standards in all vocations, and help build goodwill and peace in the world.

Rotary International has its headquarters in Evanston, Illinois, USA, which is a suburb just north of Chicago. Rotary is the world's oldest service organisation and was founded in 1905 by Paul Harris, a Chicago attorney. He wanted to encourage the fellowship among his business acquaintances that he had experienced during his boyhood growing up in a small, mid-western American town.

In 2016, there are more than 33,000 Rotary clubs in over 200 countries and geographical areas around the world. Clubs are non-political, non-religious, and open to individuals from all cultures, races, and creeds.

As signified by the motto 'Service Above Self', Rotary's main objective is service — in the community, in the workplace, and throughout the world. Rotarians plan projects to feed the hungry, fight disease, combat illiteracy, assist the handicapped and the elderly, work with young people, fund scholarships, and provide relief to disaster victims. Through this shared commitment, Rotarians develop a feeling of fellowship that extends beyond their Clubs, communities and countries, to encompass the Rotary world.

Most Rotary clubs meet weekly so that members may discuss and then implement their club's service goals and projects, develop networks with other community minded individuals, and enjoy each other's fellowship and camaraderie.

What it means to be a Rotarian

Being a Rotarian involves making a strong commitment of time and energy. Members are expected to maintain good attendance records at their weekly meetings and they may "make up" a missed meeting by attending the meeting of any other Rotary club worldwide.

In addition to attending meetings, Rotarians are expected to participate actively in their club's projects. Further commitments of time and energy are made when a Rotarian agrees to serve as a club president or district governor. Rotary's top volunteer leader, the President of Rotary International, gives a full year of service in order to ensure the success of Rotary and its global service activities. Ask any Rotarian, and they will tell you that the rewards invariably surpass the level of effort and commitment required of them by their Rotary undertakings. To become a Rotarian is to join an organisation whose members make an important difference in the quality of life of individuals, in both their local communities and around the world.

Objectives of Rotary

The object of Rotary is to encourage and foster the ideal 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 of each Rotarian's occupation as an opportunity to service society.
- THIRD:** The application of the ideal of service in each Rotarian's personal, business, and community life.
- FOURTH:** The advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through the world fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

THE FOUR WAY TEST

Of the things we think, say or do:

- 1. Is it the truth?**
- 2. Is it fair to all concerned?**
- 3. Will it build goodwill and better friendships?**
- 4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?**

THE 6 Ds

No DRINKING

No DRIVING

No DATING

No DRUGS

No DISFIGUREMENT/BODY MODIFICATION

No DOWNLOADING

THE 6 BEs

BE FIRST – take the initiative

BE CURIOUS – ask questions and seek to understand

BE PURPOSEFUL – have goals and pursue them

BE GRATEFUL – express appreciation often

BE OF SERVICE – give of yourself

BE HERE NOW – keep your heart and mind in the present place and time

About Your Exchange

General Information

The period of exchange is 50-52 weeks. Each student must attend school during their exchange year. It is important that you are aware that credits for your study in other countries cannot be assured. Rotary cannot be held responsible for matters concerning the recognition of international academic studies that you may undertake while overseas. While in some circumstances students may be able to transfer credits, this is the decision of the home school administration, which is outside the control of Rotary.

Students may attend Secondary High School only and not University or any other tertiary educational institution.

Students should make every effort to participate in school activities, projects, and to complete set homework.

Although school authorities ultimately decide whether a student must write exams and tests, we very much encourage students to do so.

Tours and trips are highly recommended for school holidays, but a student may not be absent from school for more than their host country's required attendance. Students need to have permission from the School authorities, Host parents, overseas Club Counsellor, and their overseas Rotary Country Coordinator in order to travel within school time.

Travel

Students will travel to their international destination together wherever possible. Flight tickets will therefore be arranged by Terra Australia to coordinate the arrangements.

Students should undertake no travel outside the immediate area of the community in which the Host Rotary Club is located **without** the consent of the host parents, Host Club Counsellor, Rotary Club, and District Country Coordinator.

From time to time, you may receive invitations to go on trips with a family other than your host family. Before accepting the offer, you must obtain permission from your host family, and your host Rotary Club through your Club Counsellor. You may not go on a trip with anyone who is not approved by Rotary.

Students may not travel on any flight other than a scheduled flight, or a recognized airline. Permission from natural parents must be obtained for light aircraft flight.

Hitch-hiking is not allowed at any time, under any circumstances.

If you wish to take a trip and you may miss more than two days of school, you must first:

- Obtain permission from the School Principal;
- Obtain permission from your Host Parents and Club Counsellor;
- Obtain approval from your overseas District Country Coordinator.

Private trips are not allowed. You will see the country on tours arranged by Rotary. Do not organise your own trips. You are not tourists.

You may not travel alone or in small groups unless accompanied by a chaperone, or with permission of your Country Coordinators and your District Committee.

Students may not phone or write directly to any other Rotary Club and ask to be hosted while on a tour or trip or privately.

Romance

Students should avoid romantic attachments. You may have friends of the opposite sex, but we strongly advise against "going steady" or having strong romantic attachments. This could impede your ability to accept the opportunities offered to you during your exchange year and lessen the value of your exchange experience. Instead, you may end up spending too much time with just one person and miss out on making lots of wonderful life-long friends.

Choose your friends slowly and wisely, as you will have many social opportunities. You do not have to accept the first invitation.

Sexual relationships are not allowed. Such an involvement may mean an early end to your stay and a premature flight home.

Drugs

You are not permitted to use illegal drugs. Of course you may use medication that your treating medical practitioner has prescribed for you.

The illegal use of drugs occurs in all countries. You must appreciate that if you are found guilty of, or require treatment for drug abuse, you may face court action and your exchange will be terminated.

Alcohol

The illegal drinking of alcoholic beverages is expressly forbidden. Students who are of legal age should also refrain from consuming alcohol. If your host family offers you an alcoholic drink, it is permissible to accept it under their supervision in the home.

Driving

You are not permitted to OWN OR DRIVE A MOTOR VEHICLE, MOTORISED VESSEL OR BOAT, even if you have already got your driver's license in Australia.

This applies to all exchange students and is enforced to minimise the risk of Personal Injury insurance claims or court action.

This includes all motorised vehicles, such as jet skis, snow mobiles, and dune buggies. For the same reasons you should avoid risky activities such as hang gliding, bungee jumping, and powerboats.

In general, if you need a license to drive it - you can't.

Emergency Fund

Parents are to provide the student with an amount of AUD \$500.00. This is to be used for emergencies. The student should arrange for their Club Counsellor to open a joint signatory account (in some countries this is not possible) and the Counsellor should be consulted when an emergency arises. If the fund is used during the year, it must be topped up by the parents to the \$500.00 limit.

Allowance

Your Host Club will give you a monthly allowance of around U.S. \$100.00, for spending money and incidentals. Although your host family is expected to treat you as they would their own children, don't take advantage of this. To supplement your budget, extra pocket money should be supplied by your natural parents.

Laws of the Country

You must obey the laws of your host country. Ignorance of the law is no defence. If you are arrested, you must return home at your own expense as soon as you are released by authorities.

Learning the Language

You should make every effort to learn the language of your assigned country whilst on exchange. Now that you have finished your school exams, put some effort into learning some basic words and phrases. Phrase books, CDs, and lessons are a very good idea. A basic understanding of the local language will be appreciated by your hosts and will very much assist you in 'settling in' on arrival overseas.

Smoking

Smoking is discouraged. If you state in your application that you do not smoke, you will be held to that position throughout your exchange. Your acceptance and host family placement is based on your signed statement.

Working

You may not work and earn money. Baby sitting or other casual jobs are acceptable, and you may accept a nominal payment for this if offered.

School Costs

Your host club is not responsible for school fees, school uniforms, or any other expenses. However, your host club may see fit to assist.

Politics

You are not to get involved in active party politics. You may ask and listen, but should not express strong opinions.

Rotary Meetings

You must try to attend as many meetings of your host Rotary Club as possible - ask your Club Counsellor or host parents to take you. The club will inform you of their expectations concerning your attendance at Rotary meetings.

If a Rotary function clashes with your personal arrangements, the Rotary Function must take preference. You are expected to help at all Rotary projects and functions.

It is **compulsory** for you to attend all orientations, and the annual District Conference. These functions take preference over all other functions. It is your responsibility to make sure that you do not have a personal, school, or club activity on at the same time.

Rotary District functions take precedence over all activities and are compulsory.

Presentations

You will be expected to give at least **two** presentations to your host Rotary Club, one early in your stay and one at the end.

In addition, you may also be expected to address other Rotary Clubs, other organizations, and your school. Never refuse to give a talk without good reason.

Host families

Hosting of students is the responsibility of the Host Rotary Club. Your hosts are responsible for your social and physical well-being. You are to respect their wishes and requests. Our society may be more formal or informal than theirs, and some guidance and restrictions are to be expected. You must adapt to your host family's way of life - compromise will be needed BUT you have to make it. Your aim is to become an integral part of your host family, assuming duties and responsibilities normal to a young person of your age in their country.

In case of difficulties with your host family, the following steps should be taken:

- Talk to your Club Counsellor, or Club President - then if no solution to your problem is found, talk to
- The Host District Country Coordinator - then if no solution is still found, talk to
- Your Australian District 9685 Coordinator.

It is not a good idea to tell your parents first of your problems - we have the contacts and the expertise to help solve your problems.

Respect the religious beliefs of your hosts, and behave with particular decorum on their religious day and festivals.

NOTES

Preparing for Your Exchange

Documents

Ensure that all documents are in order:

- Passport and visa (passport must be valid for at least six months after completion of exchange);
- Airline tickets (provided by the travel agent within a few weeks of travel);
- Vaccination certificate (if required for your destination);
- Insurance papers (provided by Youth Exchange Program);
- Monthly report forms and other Youth Exchange stationery;
- Business cards and name badge (provided by Youth Exchange Program);
- Parent consent letter, as appropriate, for additional activities;
- Make two photocopies of all these documents (keep one in a safe place and leave the other with your parents).

Things to Do Before You Leave

- Email your host family and/or club counsellor to introduce yourself, send personal photographs etc. and advise them of your arrival details;
- Study up on your host country: its language, culture, geography, history, and politics;
- Learn some basic and fun 'facts' about Australia;
- Think about setting up an online blog for ease of communication with friends and family;
- Purchase small gifts for host families and children (establish who they are before you leave);
- Purchase Australian pins and souvenirs for other exchange students and friends;
- Prepare a "brag book" or electronic journal of home and family photographs;
- Organise finances, passbook, Visa/Mastercard etc. Consider taking two credit/debit cards kept separately in case of theft or loss;
- Ensure that emergency fund (as required by host country) is immediately available;
- Prepare address book of friends, family, Rotary Club members, and District Counsellor;
- Prepare presentation of your family, your home town, and Australia for showing to your host club (consider use of photographs, video, posters, PowerPoint);
- Visit your sponsor club for their presentation of your blazer and ask for some of their club banners for giving to your host club and other clubs you visit overseas;
- Take a personal diary (large enough to record all your experiences and thoughts);
- Take a good quality camera;
- Take minimal clothes. Clothes suitable for the area you're visiting would be best purchased there;
- Talk with inbound and rebound students to discover any special points about your host country.

Planning Your Exchange

Although the last year may have seemed to take forever, your next year will "fly". As your exchange progresses, time will pass more and more quickly. It is important that you make the most of every opportunity to enhance your exchange.

There are some simple guidelines that will help ensure that you have a great exchange:

- Learn the language- The less that you understand the language, the more isolated you will be. But be patient, it does not happen overnight and at the end of the exchange you will be amazed at how much you have met the challenge of learning a new language.
- Set yourself some goals. Set some priorities for those goals, but always remember that your exchange will always profit by putting your host family, your Rotary Club, and your new friends before yourself.
- Be patient and flexible with your goals. As you mature through your exchange, your goals will change. Also, you cannot control when opportunities will arise to allow you to fulfill your goals.
- Keep working on your goals. Do not waste time. You are in a different country with new families and friends. You cannot take advantage of these wonderful opportunities stuck in your room, glued to your computer or phone, watching television or playing video games.
- Share your goals with others. If people do not know what you are hoping to achieve, they cannot help you achieve them.
- You are responsible for your exchange. You are the one that is going to determine the success of your exchange - go for it! When there is a 'set back', do not brood and blame others. Remember your goals and keep on going.

Report Writing and Communication

All of us travel many roads; some are crooked, some are bumpy, and some lead us to a dead end. But occasionally, either by plan or by accident, we find a smooth road that leads straight ahead. Exchange students will find that they are on such a road today, and by fulfilling your commitments to the program, you will find the journey smoother and more enjoyable.

During the next 12 months, you will have many varied experiences meeting new people, experiencing a new culture in a new country, *and whilst we may be just a little envious, we do want to share your experience!* The best way for us all to share in your journey is through your regular reports. Your reports are an important part of your exchange program as they will keep your coordinators informed of your living arrangements and future activities between reports. These need to be completed and forwarded to your district coordinator in Australia no later than **the first of EACH month**. They can be sent through the website www.rotaryyouthexchange.net.au by clicking on to your Coordinator's name at the bottom of the report form, or e-mail (please check with your district coordinator as to their preference). There is no need for anyone to view your report other than yourself and your District Coordinators, but with your approval, they can be forwarded to your sponsor club via your Club Counsellor in Australia.

Your written reports should be regarded as an opportunity to further your *"journey of exchange"* rather than a *"must do" exercise*.

District Coordinators are able to assist in solving problems, conquering obstacles, and helping you to achieve your exchange year goals. We understand that sometimes you wander in circles, find life aimless and boring, and are plagued with a little home sickness from time to time. But coordinators also have the ability to help you get back your "spark for life". For anyone to be able to help you with a particular need, it is important for you to firstly convey that need. Who better to help than your District Coordinator? You'll find that once you have made communication with the right person you'll start achieving more. You can e-mail, include your concern in your next report, or ring the coordinators direct (reverse charges are acceptable).

However, to make this happen, we need you to communicate with us! Please

YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK

Starts with you

- Your ability to communicate;
- Your ability to mix and fit in with others.

HOST PARENTS

- Finding out the family rules and home rules - go through the “first night questions” with EACH family;
- Getting to know them well;
- You are not a guest, you are a member of the family;
- You must fit into the life of your host family, not your host family around you!

CLUB COUNSELLOR

- He/she is your main contact for your club;
- If you have problems with your host family, club or school, you should consult with your Club Counsellor;
- Your Counsellor will help you with:
 - Banking (setting up accounts);
 - School;
 - Rotary orientation;
 - Paying you your monthly allowance;
- Sometimes you may not be able to get on with your Club Counsellor, so get to know your Host Club President and Youth Director;
- Over the period of your exchange make friends with all members of your host club. In the event of not being able to relate to your Club Counsellor, Club President or Youth Director, a member of your club may/will be able to assist you;
- Your school principal, year coordinator or teacher may also be able to assist you.

DISTRICT COUNTRY COORDINATOR.

- Find out who your District Country Coordinator is - try to get to know them;
- They will be able to assist you.

DISTRICT 9685 COORDINATOR

If you feel there is something only your District 9685 Coordinator should know, put it on a separate page of your monthly report. If it is important, email or ring reverse charge to them and they will assist you.

IT IS IMPORANT TO NOTE THAT WE HAVE NOT INCLUDED YOUR PARENTS IN THE ABOVE ADVICE - If you go directly to your parents, the message **we** will get is second hand and emotional. Your parents will come to us, your home District Coordinator, and give us the emotional message as they understood it from you.

We are not trying to keep your parents out of the communication chain, but rather keep it direct and short. Your District 9685 Coordinators know with whom and where to start communication.

Further, when we speak to your parents, we can tell them a problem has arisen and how we resolved it. In this manner we do not cause your parents any undue mental anguish.

IN SUMMARY - YOUR SUPPORT CHAIN IS:

YOU

YOUR HOST PARENTS

YOUR CLUB COUNSELLOR

YOUR HOST DISTRICT COORDINATORS (overseas)

YOUR DISTRICT 9685 COUNTRY COORDINATORS

ALL REQUIRE YOUR ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE CLEARLY, DIRECTLY AND TIMELY

Settling in with your Host Families

On average, past experience suggests that you may have one 'super' family, two 'average families' and one 'busy' family. Your frame of mind, adaptability, and effort (not theirs) will determine how good, mediocre, or lousy your stay will be. If you end up with a strict host family after a very lax and liberal one, adapt mentally to the change and don't dwell on returning to the old family.

Don't compare host families, especially to other members of the Rotary Club, or other exchange students. Comments have a way of coming back later.

Buy a small treat for your family: something simple, like a box of chocolates, to share around.

Do use the words 'please' and 'thank you', and don't treat the home like a motel.

FIRST NIGHT QUESTIONS

The Family

What should I call you? (host parents/grandparents)

Where are host pets allowed in the house?

In the kitchen

Are meals at set times?

Can I help prepare / cook meals / bake?

Can I help with table setting / clearing / cleaning up?

Can I help myself in-between meals to snacks / fruit without asking?

In the bathroom

What is the best time for me to use the bathroom?

Can I shower / bath every day?

Can I use the family toiletries?

Where can I keep my own personal bathroom accessories?

Where can I hang my towel?

Is there a time limit for using the bathroom?

Girl talk only:

Where can I buy my personal items?

How can I dispose of these items?

In the bedroom

Do I clean my room i.e. vacuum, dust etc.?

Do I make my bed and keep my room tidy?

What is the procedure for changing sheets / towels?

Can I hang things on the bedroom walls?

Can I rearrange the furniture in my room?

Laundry and clothing

Where can I put my dirty clothes 'til wash day?

What are the arrangements for washing and drying?

Can I hang out the washing / bring it in from the clothesline?

Do I do my own ironing?

Around the home

Do I have a key to the house?

Where can I store my luggage?

What areas of the home are private and out of bounds?

What happens with rubbish?

Can I use your entertainment system and choose what TV programs to watch?

What jobs can I do around the home / garden to help?

What time should I get up on weekends and holiday times?

Do you have pets / animals I can help to take care of?

Telephone / Internet / Computer

Do I pay for any telephone calls I make / should I keep a log?

Can my friends call me?

Does it matter if I stay on the phone for a long time?

Can I use your computer for school / email / internet?

Can I download photos / do you have a CD / DVD burner?

Do you have a limit for email / internet usage?

Can I connect my laptop / mobile phone with your internet?

Mail

What is the procedure for posting mail?

Where is the Post Office?

Where will I find mail that has arrived for me?

Family outings

If we go out as a family, should I pay my own entrance fees / meals etc.?

First Aid / Medication

What do I do if I feel unwell or hurt myself?

If I have medication, do you need to know why?

If I have medication, where should I keep it?

I have these allergies ...

Going to school

Where do I get my school uniform from?

Must I always wear a uniform to school?

What time do I get up to go to school?

How do I travel to and from school – walk / bicycle / car / bus / train?

Can I apply for a student concession card?

What is the procedure for school lunch?

Should I do homework / assignments?

What time should I go to bed for school days?

Do I pay for my stationery items / text books / excursions etc.?

Rotary

How often will I attend Rotary meetings?

How will I go to Rotary meetings?

Friends / visiting / going out

Can I have friends come to visit?

Where can I entertain my friends?

What arrangements do I make with you if I am going to be out with my friends
i.e. how much notice / meals / transport / times / places?

If I am going to be late, what should I do?

Musical instruments

I play a musical instrument. Where and when can I practice?

Can I join a musical group to play my instrument?

Sport and other activities after school

How can I be involved in sport and other activities?

What happens with meals / transport when I am doing my activities?

Family likes and dislikes

What things does the family like?

I like ...

What things don't the family like?

Religion

What religious observances should I know about?

My religious observances are ...

How can I practice my faith?

Notes:

- If there is a maid in the household, what is the protocol for dealing with this situation? Morally and ethically, you might be against the idea of low paid help in the home, but it is a reality in such countries as Brazil - where such jobs are often the only income for a poor family. So work out what you do and what the maid does around the house, don't try to do her work for her - she will only get upset.
- Cooking - please learn the basics before you leave Australia. You might have to fend for yourself on the odd occasion, and it always comes in handy later on in life. Learn to cook something Australian (pavlova perhaps) and offer to cook a meal for your host family, but be prepared to search for and pay for ingredients - they are not always readily available.
- You might have to work out what your host parents, brothers and sisters like/dislike by discreet observation.

Your Sponsor Club

Remember your sponsor club back home, after all without them ***where would you be today?***

Your sponsor club is interested in how your exchange is going, so **please keep them informed by sending emails or postcards on a regular basis** to keep them up to date with what is happening during your exchange.

Try to think outside of the box. With modern technology these days you may be able to hold a "computer link up evening", linking both your host and sponsor clubs. Talk to both of your counsellors to facilitate this, and why not also invite your district coordinators from both countries, if language permits?

Before you leave, ask your Club Counsellor if there are any special occasions happening during the year whilst you are away. Perhaps they will be holding their 1000th dinner meeting etc. Make a diary note and send a special message. Ask when they are holding their Club Changeover Dinner in late June or early July, and send a special report (and photos) to be included.

When your exchange is completed, you will need to do a presentation to the club. *This is definitely a time to brag!* Include photos, personal photos of your friends, host families, and host club members – these are always of interest. Demonstrate your ability to speak the language of the country you attended - this will impress them. Suggest that the local school be contacted and any students, parents or teachers who may be interested in the exchange program be encouraged to attend this evening, (this is also an excellent way to promote your club within the community and to spread the word on exchange).

Upon your return, show the club members you are keen to be involved by assisting to keep the exchange program active, volunteering to help the next exchange student by talking to them privately on what to expect on their exchange.

Remember: it's important for you to be involved with your sponsor club before, during and after your exchange!

Host Club

Your Host Rotary Club plays a very important role in your exchange - **they give you a monthly allowance!** To collect your allowance, you will need to attend their meetings (remember to always take your Rotary Smile). Even if you don't speak the same language, a smile will always be appreciated. Do your best to get to know the members ASAP. When you attend the meetings, try to sit next to someone different each time to show them that you are interested in them and that you do appreciate the fact that **they selected you as their exchange student.**

You may be asked to perform certain duties at the meetings. *Don't stress; they are not too strenuous!* You may be required to:

Assist at the registration area. What a great opportunity to get to know the members of your host club. Make the most of it by learning the names of the members and greeting them with their badge. People are always impressed by the fact that you have remembered their name! It's ok to cheat! If you are unsure of their name, simply ask the Rotarian on duty.

Assist the Sergeant at Arms. Most clubs have a fun session at the end of their meetings. For example, they will take the "mickey" out of their members for silly things they have done or not done during the meeting or between meetings. For this privilege, they will have to pay a 'fine' and it could be your responsibility to collect the fines money (again, it will be easier once you know the members by name).

Don't Be Shy - Get Involved! Your host club will often call for volunteers for various club activities such as cooking on the BBQ, collecting funds at a fundraising event or a letterbox drop. Show your willingness to be involved by volunteering! Talk to your club members and ask them if you can give a 5-minute talk at each meeting to keep them up to date with what's been happening in your life.

Contribute to the Club Bulletin. Each club prints and distributes a bulletin on a regular basis to keep the members informed of important club functions and activities. Often it is not only the members who read them, but also other members of their families or fellow work colleagues. Ask if you can submit a wish list to be included in the bulletin. Keep the list to approx. 10 activities you would like to do and make the list varied by including low cost items such as having dinner at their home, attending a local sporting game etc. Also include activities you might like to attend with their children/teenagers. As an activity is completed, add a new one. It is to your benefit to write a report to inform the members of your activities. After all, they are interested in how you are spending your time in their community and it will give them something to talk to you about. They say a picture tells a thousand words. so also try to include photos.

Tips on how to stay safe

If you have a problem or are worried about something, always tell someone you trust about it, like your teacher, counsellor, or host parents - don't suffer in silence!

Always 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.

While away, ensure that you have a mobile phone **with credit** on you at all times. Carry the telephone numbers for your host family, club counsellor, and club president with you always. Also write down and place in your phone the emergency services in that country.

Have your first host parents 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.

Always follow the instructions of your leader, teacher, and other supervisors, including those at the venue of the visit.

Always 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, follow your plan - or 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.

Always have details of your accommodation on you, whether it's your host family's address and telephone number, or hotel or campsite details.

Keep your money hidden in an inside pocket, bum bag, money belt, or something similar – choose whichever is comfortable for you.

Always arrange for someone to pick you up - never go home alone.

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 or train 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.

Rotary International Youth Exchange Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines (DI3)

Introduction

The most powerful force in the promotion of international understanding and peace is exposure to different cultures. Youth Exchange provides thousands of young people with the opportunity to meet people from other lands and to experience their cultures.

A Youth Exchange student will spend a year, or perhaps just an extended period of time, living with a host family in a country other than their own. Rotarians, their families, and non-Rotarian volunteers are expected to use their best efforts to safeguard the welfare of and prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse or harassment of every student with whom they come into contact.

Rotary International is committed to protecting the safety and wellbeing of Youth Exchange students and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled within the following guidelines. **The safety and well-being of students should always be the first priority.**

Definitions

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

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

- non-touching offences;
- indecent exposure;
- exposing a child to sexual or pornographic material.

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment refers to sexual advances, requests for sexual favours or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse, and is a technique used by sexual predators to desensitize or groom their victims.

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

- sexual advances;
- sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, and comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
- displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures or drawings; and
- sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact such as brushing or touching, obscene language or gestures and suggestive or insulting comments.

Is it abuse or is it harassment?

Whether the alleged conduct amounts to sexual abuse or sexual harassment is not to be determined by the adult to whom allegations are made. After ensuring the safety of the student, all allegations should be immediately reported **to the police**.

Allegation Reporting Guidelines

For use by all adults to whom a student reports an incident of abuse or harassment

Any adult to whom a student reports an incident of sexual abuse or harassment is responsible for following these **Allegation Reporting Guidelines**.

1. Report from Student

- Listen attentively and stay calm.** Acknowledge that it takes a lot of courage to report abuse. It is appropriate to listen and be encouraging. Do not express shock, horror or disbelief.
- Assure privacy but not confidentiality.** Explain that you will have to tell someone about the abuse/harassment to make it stop, and to ensure that it doesn't happen to other students.
- Get the facts, but don't interrogate.** Ask the student questions that establish what was done and who did it. Reassure the student that she/he did the right thing in telling you. Avoid asking 'why' questions. Remember your responsibility is to present the student's story to the proper authorities.
- Be non-judgmental and reassure the student.** Do not be critical of anything that has happened or anyone who may be involved. It is especially important not to blame or criticise the student. Assure the student that the situation was not their fault and that they were brave and mature to come to you.
- Record.** Keep a written record of the conversation with the student as soon after the report as you can, including the date and time of the conversation. Use the student's words, and record only what has been told to you.

2. *Protect the Student*

- a. Ensure the safety and well-being of the student. Remove the student from the situation
- b. immediately and all contact with alleged abuser or harasser. Reassure the student that this is
- c. for his or her own safety and is not a punishment.

3. *Report to Appropriate Law Enforcement Authorities*

- a. Immediately report all cases of sexual abuse and harassment to the police. In Australian capital cities contact the "Police Response Call Centre". In country areas contact the local police.
- b. If the police wish to interview the student or arrange for a forensic medical examination, accompany the student
- c. As soon as possible advise the student's Club counsellor of the accusation unless the counsellor is involved in the accusation; then contact the District Protection Officer or a member of the District Protection Committee.
- d. The student's Club counsellor if advised of an allegation should advise the District Protection Officer or a member of the District Protection Committee.

4. *Avoid gossip and blame.*

Do not tell anyone about the report other than those required by the guidelines. Care must be taken to protect the rights of both the victim and the accused during the investigation.

5. *Do not challenge the alleged offender.*

The adult to whom the student reports must not contact the alleged offender. In cases of abuse, interrogation must be left entirely to law enforcement authorities. *In cases of non-criminal harassment, the District Protection Officer or Committee and District Governor are responsible for investigating, with the assistance of the District Youth Exchange Chair and the Club counsellor as needed, and will be in contact with the alleged offender after the student has been moved to a safe environment.*

6. *Follow-up*

After reporting allegations to the Rotarian counsellor or District Youth Exchange Chair, follow up to make sure steps are being taken to address the situation.

Post Report Procedures

For Use by Rotarian Counsellors, District Protection Officer or Committee and District Youth Exchange Chairs

The student's Rotarian counsellor and the District Protection Office or Committee are responsible for ensuring that the following steps are taken following an abuse allegation report. Unless otherwise specified, these steps must be taken immediately following the report.

- a. **The adult to whom the student reports the abuse should follow the *Allegation Reporting Guidelines*.**
- b. Confirm that the student has been removed from the situation immediately and all contact with alleged abuser or harasser.
- c. Contact the police immediately (if not already done). If law enforcement agency **will not** investigate, the District Protection Officer or Committee with the assistance of the Club should coordinate an independent investigation into the allegations.
- d. Ensure the student receives immediate support services.
- e. Offer the student an independent, non-Rotarian counsellor to represent the interests of the student. Ask social services or the police to recommend someone who is not a Rotarian or in any way involved with the Youth Exchange program.
- f. Contact student's parents. If away from home, provide student with the option of either staying in the country or returning home.
- g. Remove alleged abuser or harasser from all contact with specific student and other youth while investigations are conducted.
- h. Cooperate with police or legal investigation.
- i. The student's Rotarian Counsellor should inform the District Protection Officer or Committee member. The District Protection Officer or committee must then inform the District Youth Exchange Chair and District Governor of the allegation. Either the District Governor or the District Protection Officer must inform Rotary International of the allegation via John Tucker the manager of the Parramatta Office (phone 02 9635 3537). This **must be done within 72 hours**. Provide follow-up reports of steps taken and the outcome of all investigations and resulting actions.

Post Allegation Report Guidelines

Responding to the needs of the student:

There will need to be a cohesive and managed team approach to supporting the student after an allegation report. The student is likely to feel embarrassed, confused, and may become withdrawn and appear to be avoiding members of the host family or Club. After a report of harassment or abuse, students may or may not want to remain on their exchange. If they do, they may or may not want to continue their relationship with their hosting Rotary Club, depending on the circumstances. In some cases, a student may wish to remain in the country, but change to a different host Club.

It may be difficult for Club members and host families to understand how the student is feeling, but it would be helpful for the student to know that the Club remains a support for them. Club members and host families may experience ambiguity toward their roles and may feel unclear regarding their boundaries. However, they need to do whatever is necessary to reassure the student of their support at all times.

Appropriate response for addressing issues within the Rotary Club for allegations made against Rotarians or non-Rotarian volunteers

When addressing an allegation of abuse or harassment, the most important concern is the safety of children and young people. Club members should not speculate, make editorial comments, or offer personal opinions that could potentially hinder any police or criminal investigations. Club members should be cautioned about speculating or commenting on the matter during the investigations. Comments made about alleged victims in support of alleged abusers do not support our statement of conduct or Rotary ideals. Comments made against an alleged abuser could lead to a slander or libel claim filed against Rotarians or Clubs by the alleged abuser.

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.

Adopted by the RI Board of Directors, November 2002

Sexual Harassment and Assistance Contact List

If at any time you feel concerned about your personal safety, regarding sexual harassment, you must speak with someone immediately. Below is a list of the appropriate people that you can contact.

1. Host parents
2. Club Counsellor
3. Host Club President
4. Child Protection Officer in your host Rotary Club
5. Host District Country Coordinator
6. Home District Coordinator
7. Host District Chairman
8. Host District Governor
9. School Counsellor

In addition, there are some other contact details that you might require:

1. Local Medical Centre
2. Dentist
3. Mental Health
4. Police

Anything that you speak about to these people will be taken very seriously and in confidence. Please be assured that your complaints will be acted on immediately.

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