

Rotary Youth Exchange Manual

Hershey Rotary Club Inbound Reference Guide: Coordination of Student's Arrival and Integration

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This manual is meant to serve as a reference guide for host families and for Rotary Chapter Youth Exchange Program committee members who are coordinating the arrival and integration for Inbound exchange students in order to insure a successful transition.

Prior to Arrival

As soon as the Inbound student is identified, Chapter President, New Generations Lane Director, *first host family* and/or Chapter Youth Exchange Program Officer or Counselor Coordinator should get in contact with the student, preferably by email. This can serve as a way of welcoming the student, determining details relative to arrival plans, answering questions or concerns from his/her family members, etc. All email with the Inbound student and the parents ought to be shared with the Chapter President, Lane Director, first host family and Chapter Youth Exchange Program Coordinator to assure coordination among all responsible parties.

Counselor Identification

Identify who the Counselor will be for each host student after the club has been assigned an Inbound student, and preferably no later than June of the incoming year. Insure all Counselors have completed background checks and have passed the Department of State training (test) prior to viewing the Inbound application and having contact with the Inbound student.

Information to Insure the Student Brings with them

The family of the Inbound student needs to have unambiguous information about the immunizations necessary to enroll in U.S. schools. Many countries immunize for tuberculosis with BCG, which means that the Inbound student will test positive by the Mantoux skin test; therefore, the student will need an official statement that a chest X-ray is negative for tuberculous lesions.

The policy on required health insurance for Inbound students must be unambiguous. If the policy has not been paid before the Inbound student enters the U.S., a plan for paying the health insurance fee on a U.S. bank account should be developed and all key person involved in the Youth Exchange Program notified of the plan.

For **Hershey Club**, send a copy of the initial information packet from District to the school district office (note the high school, the administration office – currently Kelly Renaud) to have them evaluate medical records and shot needs. Communicate any needs back to the Inbound student.

For **Hershey Club**, prior to arrival insure that arrival date is known, and ask questions such as:

- 1) Are they bringing a phone
- 2) Are they bringing a computer
- 3) Insure they are bringing \$500 in emergency cash to deposit with the club
- 4) Will they have a credit card with them/access to cash other than the rotary provided stipend (allowance)
- 5) Clarify any allergies to animals that might affect host family selection
- 6) Determine if the school year will “count” for them when they return to their home country to aid in course selection

Arrival Day

The Inbound student should be met by someone who has previously established contact with the Inbound student and the family, ideally the first host family. The Inbound student is likely to have had an arduous trip and be tired, but this is counter balanced by the excitement of the trip. The first 24 hours ought to be for rest,

relaxation and adjustment to the new environment. Make sure student lets his/her family know that he/she has arrived safely.

For **Hershey Club**, Counselor, first host family, and any members of the Youth Exchange committee might come to the airport to greet the student.

First Few Days

Expect the student to be very overwhelmed with their new surroundings. Language barriers may be pretty significant, and the time spent in trying to communicate can be draining./tiring for the first few days. Typically, the student will become pretty dependent on their first host parents initially, looking to them to provide guidance, help with interpretation, etc. Make sure to allow enough downtime in the initial few days and try not to over-schedule. Getting familiar with surroundings is the first priority.

For **Hershey Club**, student will typically spend the first few days with their Counselor, then move to the first host family. This is flexible depending on timing and situation as to length of stay. During this time, go for a tour of town, see the school, go to Hershey Park, meet Rotarians (come to a meeting), meet other students, discuss the rules and policies, sign up for sports teams, get any medical clearances/shots needed, open a bank account and safe deposit box. Also make sure student has a working cell phone. Extra safe deposit box key should go to Susan or Kirk. Banking address should be the Counselor.

Get copies of any paperwork needed from the student (passport, visa, airline return ticket).

School Registration

Actual process will differ by club.

For **Hershey Club**: Enrollment in the Township of Derry (Hershey) High School consists of two distinct step which will probably require two or three visits to the school. The first step is actual enrollment in the Administration Office of the school (Kelly Renaud current contact). You will need a copy of the Inbound student's visa and passport, documentation that all required immunizations have been administered, results of the Mantoux skin test for tuberculosis, and a physician's certification that the chest X-ray is free of signs of disease if the skin test is positive. You will need to know the address and phone number of the home school and family information such as home address of the parents and names of the family members. Counselor and first host parent should go jointly to office (contact Kelly in advance), take all of the paperwork that you receive with you – prior transcripts, medical records, the application for the Youth Exchange Program, passport and visa. After registering, the next step is scheduling of classes based on the academic placement of the Inbound student. Prior to this, review Hershey classes with student to pre-select. It's easiest for the student, first host parent and/Counselor to do this together – get an appointment with the assigned guidance Counselor to discuss the correct placement and to draft a preliminary class schedule. It is advisable to set up an appointment with the Hershey High School guidance Counselor in order to register for classes approximately one week prior to the start of school if arrival date allows. Call in advance for an appointment.

Medical Records/Clearances

The parents should have paid for plan B of the Youth Exchange Program health insurance before the student embarks for the U.S. If the student/parents are having problems paying online, the parents should contact their country's credit card company and let them know that an overseas transaction will occur thus allowing the transaction to be completed.

The Inbound student will need a certified immunization record, especially for hepatitis B. The Inbound student will also need documentation of immunization for chickenpox or of childhood disease. If the immunizations are not complete, it will be necessary to complete them prior to school registration.

Opening a Bank Account

This will differ by club.

For **Hershey Club** – As club does banking at Northwest Savings, for 2012-2013 we will use them. Inbound Youth Exchange Students do not need a social security number but will need to have a copy of the passport and visa. The student will list the Counselor address as the permanent address. The account should be opened in the student's name, with Counselor as cosigner (since they are – address of record will probably be the first host family but could be the club address if preferable . If host family is used the address may need to be changed as residence changes. The student may not be familiar with ATMs and need to be coached through the initials withdrawals. The student needs to be reminded that there is a fee of \$1 to \$2 to use ATMs

at other locations. Open a safe deposit box as well for the passport/visa and any other things (extra money? Credit card?). Make sure student has access (one key) and Counselor or YE chair have the other.

The initial deposit will be the first monthly check from Rotary and any funds the student brings with them. It may be necessary to explain the monthly statements as they arrive, or make sure the student keeps track of deposits/withdrawals if they have little experience with that.

Monthly Check from Rotary/Paying for Expenses

For **Hershey Club** = The club gives incoming students a stipend (allowance) of \$100 per month for expenses. This amount won't cover everything, but should be enough to cover entertainment, school supplies, essentials, etc. Typically the student will have some money or a credit card from their home family which can be used for major expenses – shopping, major purchases, major trips, etc. It would be a good idea for the first host family to make sure they understand the financial “situation” of the student (how much money they have brought, what they expect to pay for themselves, etc). Typically the host family would not be expected to pay an “extreme” amount, but would cover normal grocery purchases, small incidental expenses (toothpaste, aspirin, etc) , payment for cost when student is eating with them in a restaurant or attending an event with the family; however, if student is doing things on their own or with friends, this may come out of the Rotary funds or their own money. Always a sticky point and tough one to discuss.

Medical Insurance

The student's parent should advise the Club and the host families of basic health insurance plans that provide care outside the home country. In addition, the student's family is expected to enroll in plan B of the Youth Exchange health insurance plan.

Lunch Expenses – School

For **Hershey Club** - The club will make funds available for deposit into the Derry Township “SNAP” account which the student can use for lunches. Checks are to be requested by either host parent or committee member. Checks need to be made out to Derry Township School District, and the initial deposit (suggested amount \$100) should be requested prior to the first day of classes from the club treasurer. If available, take check with you to registration and give it to the school. If not, have student take the check to the cafeteria at lunchtime to be deposited with his/her name and student number. It sometimes takes a day or two for the computer system to “see” the funds; in the interim, have the student pay cash for lunch or take their lunch.. As funds get depleted, the student can check the balance and when required a new check can be requested. Any funds left over at the end of the school year can be reapplied for future exchange students (remind the school to check when next accounts are set up).

Attendance at Luncheon Rotary Meetings

If the student's schedule allows, they should be encouraged to attend luncheon Rotary Club meetings. However, if a key class is going to be missed (critical to success for the year or to required credits for graduation in home school) then it might be advisable to attend on a periodic basis. If student will be attending, at the beginning of the year the first set of host parents should send a note to the school principal (can be dropped off at the office) indicating that typically the student will be leaving the school on Mondays (**Hershey Club**) at 11:45 for meetings. Then, each Monday morning that the student intends to go to the meeting, they should stop in the office on their way in to school to sign the in/out book indicating that they will be leaving. When they leave, they record the time in the book; when they return, they stop in the office for a class to get back to class.

Typically the host parent (if a Rotarian) or Counselor/YE chair will either pick student up and return them to school, or they should arrange transportation each week. The Youth Exchange Committee members can be available to help with this if they are “cleared”. If host parent is NOT a Rotarian, the committee should make advanced arrangements for transportation. The student will go to the meeting, lunch will be covered by the club, the student will be introduced each week as a guest, and then they should be returned to school.

Attendance at other Rotary Events (Dinners, Outings)

The student should be encouraged to attend special events, and transported by the host family (if a Rotarian) or committee member. Any costs are paid by the club for his/her attendance.

Attendance at District Youth Exchange Functions

The District 7390 Youth Exchange Committee schedules activities during the year for all Inbound exchange students from all clubs in the district. Attendance at these is MANDATORY – any family/school events should be planned around these. Schedule should be provided to host families in advance. If dates conflict with host family travel, students will need to stay in town with a Rotarian to insure attendance at the YE event.

These activities include a meeting in early September for orientation of students and host parents (all host parents identified for the year are invited to attend) where information is shared with both students and parents. Within a week or two of the September Inbound Orientation, the Inbounds will be attending a Gettysburg overnight. The Counselor or a designated committee transportation Rotarian is to ensure that the Inbound student has transportation to each District YE mandatory event. If needed, transportation can be provided to/from by the club/committee. Most of these events are hosted by one of the clubs in the District – at some, hotel accommodations for Inbound students are made; at others, the students stay with local club members.

Attendance at School Functions

The Youth Exchange Student is to be afforded reasonable opportunities to attend and participate in school functions, being mindful of certain scheduled mandatory Rotary programs. Participation in school functions is an important part of the Exchange Student's experience, but not to the detriment of academic requirements. The host parent will exercise reasonable and prudent oversight of attendance at school functions, and may consult with Club leadership to gain insights into past practices.

Dress Codes

For **Hershey Club** –school dress codes seem to be different in foreign countries than in Hershey – for instance, spaghetti strap shirts , exposed areas, etc. aren't allowed at Hershey High. Make sure that the policy/dress code is reviewed (should be provided in student handbook) and that student understands – some clothing brought with them may be inappropriate.

Ethics/School Rules

Youth Exchange Students have been carefully evaluated by the Rotary District in their home country, and the selected students are felt to be intelligent, well-adjusted, and representative of the ethical ideals of Rotary. Nevertheless, national norms for personal conduct do vary, and an important aspect of the Youth Exchange Program is to gain a mutual understanding of cultural differences and social norms.

The Exchange Student is to be afforded the opportunities to practice their religious conviction and to attend regular devotional services. Exchange Students may want to have the opportunity to explore other religious perspectives, and this should be facilitated as is consistent with other obligations of the student and the host family.

For **Hershey Club** - School rules will largely be learned from peers, Counselors and teachers. The Hershey High School Student/Parent Handbook can be found on the school web site at http://www.hershey.k12.pa.us/the_schools/high_school/publications/#.

Absence from School

The Youth Exchange Student is expected to maintain an exemplary attendance record, with absences only for illness and approved travel to participate in educationally worthwhile activities. A student is not permitted to miss more than three school days on any one trip, and not more than ten school days during the year for personal travel.

Driving

Inbound students are not allowed to drive in the U.S.

Driving/Going Out with Friends

The Youth Exchange Student is to be afforded reasonable opportunities to make friends and to relax outside of school activities. The host parent will exercise reasonable and prudent oversight of outside social activities, and may consult with Club leadership to gain insights into past practices. The host parents will be concerned about the safety of the student, and will monitor travel by cars driven by other students. One on one dating is discouraged, however attendance at dances (ie prom, homecoming) should be ok if part of a group.

Travel with Host Family/Others

The offices of the Rotary Club and the District are to be advised in advance of any overnight travel plans so that there are several sources for information should there be a need for an urgent contact with the student. The Rotary District must approve travel that involves missed school, travel without a host family member, or travel outside the District. Since these requests require approval by the host parents, the Rotary Club Youth Exchange Chair and the District Youth Exchange Chair, the request must be submitted at least 20 days in advance. Travel outside the USA requires special justification and the appropriate multi-entry visa. Processing requests for travel outside the USA requires at least 40 days. All information is available on the District website on travel notification and approval.

Forms/Reporting

The Counselor should insure that students know of ongoing reporting requirements (monthly reports, information needed by Melissa Bruck, responses on attendance to District, etc). It is the responsibility of the student to do these! Counselors must update the Inbound Tracking sheet (info to YE chair) each month after communication with host parents/students.

Counselor Tips

Be an additional advocate and sounding board for the student. Remind them of the rules, support decisions of the host parents, discuss any issues as they occur, provide additional support to the family during transition and as problems arise, and coach/teach them about life in the US. Reinforce the District policies, and the club expectations. Be a good role model for them! Be available to them, check in with them often (monthly checkin is mandatory). Take them out for food, invite them to your home, communicate with their parents, etc. If host parents are not routinely checking grades/progress with teachers, do it yourself. Encourage attendance at club events, and help them build relationships within the club.

Above all – you will get as much as you give in this relationship and build a unique friendship with your Exchange Student!!