

**Rotary District 5080  
YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM  
Club Manual**

**PART 1: GENERAL**

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**NOTE:** Forms on this Part are listed on the Index with a Document Reference # of 1.51 and higher. These form documents are separated as individual documents in order to facilitate printing and completing the forms. Many are fillable and savable pdf forms and therefore cannot be combined with the other sections into a single document.

## 1.01 Medical Insurance

Inbound exchange students will have either their own country's insurance or insurance through the District 5080 Youth Exchange Committee.

In a few cases our Outbound students are required to obtain medical insurance provided through their host Rotary District, but the majority of outbound students will be covered by insurance provided through District 5080. When the District 5080 Youth Exchange Committee has agreed in advance that outbound students will be covered by medical insurance provided in their host country, the Committee will prepay the insurance premium, as insurance costs are included in the "one price" fee paid by outbound students.

In the event of an injury or sickness, students should take their **medical insurance card and claim form** to the doctor's office or hospital. It is very important that students contact the insurance company within 24 hours of being hospitalized. **Both the exchange student and the doctor must complete the claim form.**

Occasionally a trauma center will not let students charge the cost of treatment. If this is the case, students must be sure to get receipts, so that they can send them to the insurance company for reimbursement (along with the completed claim form). Students should have their \$250 emergency fund available at all times, as it could be required for a medical emergency.

If inbound students have medical coverage from their home country, their medical card should indicate who to contact when making a claim. All students covered by District 5080 insurance will receive full information on the coverage provided, and claim forms are included with that information.

There are some significant differences in both the coverage and the cost of the insurance provided by District 5080 to outbound students from Canada and the US, and this is mainly due to the fact that Canadian students already have "universal" coverage under the B.C. Medical Services Plan. For that reason it is impossible to provide a simple summary of the coverage provided under each plan. However, both plans cover costs related to: emergency hospital services; emergency medical services; diagnostic, X-ray and laboratory services; dental accidents; ambulances/air ambulances; extended health care; emergency return home; etc. **All students and their parents should carefully study the policy information they will receive from the Coordinator and the Insurance Company.**

Students having any questions or difficulties relating to medical insurance should contact the CISI Bolduc Insurance: <http://www.culturalinsurance.com/rotary/cisibolduc.asp>

**Note that pre-existing conditions are excluded unless "Pre-existing Conditions" coverage is applied for and approved in advance.**

## 1.02 Compliance Requirements for All Volunteers, Host Families, and Clubs

The purpose of this document is to outline the following:

- Compliance Requirements
- Compliance Documentation
- Non-compliance Consequences

### Volunteer Documentation

All individuals over the age of 18 who have direct, unsupervised, contact with Youth Exchange Students must complete the volunteer document process. These individuals include but are not limited to:

- Youth Exchange Officers
- Counselors
- Host Family Members over 18 during the time of exchange
- Youth Exchange District Committee Members

### Volunteer Application (SCRYE Document – V-1)

The volunteer application is different for each jurisdiction within our district: Washington, Idaho and Canada. A list of all required documentation, with a link to SCRYE documents, can be found on our website [www.rotaryye5080.org](http://www.rotaryye5080.org) under (Forms and Links). The Canadian documents are shown in red, the Idaho and Washington documents are shown in green except the Washington Volunteer application which is shown in purple. The differences in these documents pertain to the wording of the different jurisdiction. All individuals over the age of 18 who are in one-on-one contact with Youth Exchange Students must complete the volunteer document process. The volunteer application is good for 3 years except for host family members which is good for one program year. **Volunteer applications are to be completed in the YEAH database system.**

### Background Checks

Appropriate criminal background checks must be conducted on all adult (age 18+) host family members and all program volunteers. The background checks for the US (CBC) are requested through the YEAH system and processed by the YEAH Administrator. The Canadian background checks (CRC) are requested by the individual volunteer and sent to the designated District Committee member. USA CBCs must be renewed annually, Canadian CRCs must be renewed every two years to participate in the program.

### Reference Checks (three)

The reference check forms (HFV-1) are processed by the YEAH administrator/compliance office, or appropriate district committee individual. The reference checks are good for 3 years except for host family members which are good for one program year.

## NAYEN (National Association of Youth Exchange Network) + Other Test Requirements

There are several tests required of all individuals who work with youth: Youth Protection Awareness, the US DOS Local Coordinator Training (US Volunteers) and volunteer training (Canada). The Youth Protection and DOS training courses must be done annually. Courses are done through the YEAH database system. The course link will be emailed to the volunteer through the YEAH hub. Other course links will also be sent to volunteers based on their role in the program (ie: Counselor Training, Host Family Orientation, Culture Shock and Reverse Culture Shock etc).

## Host Family Documentation

There are several documents that need to be completed by each host family:

- Host Family Application (HF-1) The link for host families to apply is on our website.
- Host Family Inspection (HF-2) with pictures:
  - Home Exterior & Grounds
  - Kitchen
  - Student Bedroom
  - Student Bathroom
  - Family Living Area
  - Other pictures as deemed appropriate (maximum two)
- Host Family Follow-up Inspection (HF-8) two months after the student moved in.
- **NOTE:** Short-term documentation is different and is as follows:
- HFST – Host Family Application-Affidavit
- HFST – Host Family In-Home Interview-Inspection
- HFST – Host Family Orientation
- NOTE: If a prior years host family wishes to host again there are a number of requirements that will need to be met. Please contact the YEAH Administrator/Compliance Officer for direction.
- The Host Family documentation is good for one host family/student pairing per program year.

## Host Family Orientation

Proper Orientation of all participants in district programs is required. Orientation must be provided for both inbound and outbound students in both long term and short-term programs. Orientation must also be provided for all (long term and short term) host families and for all volunteers in the program, whether a member of a Rotary club or not. The district has developed an explanation of items in Section 2 – Policy Guidelines, located in HF-4, which each YEO will use. Section 3 – Items to Present to Host Family, also located in HF-4, will be

provided by each YEO. Questions on either Section 2 or 3 should be directed to your district committee.

### **YEO, Counselor and Club Orientation (compliance contact reporting)**

There are several monthly contact reporting requirements:

- **Student contact reports** either in person, by phone or by e-mail. The first contact report must be in person. You will have a designated month period to complete this requirement.
- **Host family contact reports** are either in person, by phone or by e-mail. The first contact report must be in person. You will have a designated month period to complete this requirement.
- A first semester (6 month) compliance contact report for the Host family contact report must be in person. This can be combined with another contact report.
- A host family follow-up visit within the first month following the student's placement in the home. NOTE: This visit can be coordinated along with the HF-8 Follow-up Inspection Report and is completed by the counselor.
- If there is a specific individual, Local Coordinator – US only, this will be stated in the reporting requirements.
- For your club to remain in compliance these reports must be completed on time. To complete the report, click on the item shown and you will be directed to the area of YEAH where you will put in the required information.
- **NOTE:** Students must also do a monthly report entered into the YEAH database to keep us compliant as well. This requirement applies to both Inbound and Outbound students. Disciplinary action, in the form of a yellow card, will be given to students non-compliant with submitting their monthly reports.
- **NOTE:** When a student moves to a new host family, the District Coordinator **MUST** be notified within 72 hours so the student's records can be updated in the YEAH database system and additional documentation sent to the student as required.
- Both the Department of State and Rotary International require the records to be current as to the student location.

### **Drinking & Driving Regulations**

These regulations outline the policy of our district on Drinking & Driving. It is imperative that everyone is fully aware, and understands, the regulations.

- The Inbound Coordinator will include a copy of the Drinking and Driving regulations in the inbound welcome package which is sent out to the student and their parents prior to the student's departure on exchange.
- A copy of the regulation must be included in the Inbound student binder and reviewed, with the student, by the YEO or counselor.
- A copy of the regulation must be included in the host family binder. As a student moves from one host family to the next the YEO or counsellor must review the regulations with the host family.

### **Reporting to the District Governor.**

The District Governor has a responsibility to District 5080 and RI to ensure that the District 5080 Youth Exchange is meeting the required conditions. Therefore, the District Governor shall receive updated reports on club compliance status 3 times a year. The reports shall be as follows;

- Aug 15 ○ Jan 15 ○ April 15. Or as determined by the DG.

### **District Sleep Over Policy**

Sleepover Policy Rotary delegates to host parents the responsibility to decide if a student will be allowed to attend a sleepover in the home of a friend so long as the following criteria are met:

- The student has known the invitee for a period of time.
- The host family know the invitee and are comfortable allowing the student to spend a night away in the invitee home.
- The host family parent has contacted the sleepover parents and confirmed the plans for a sleepover and feel comfortable with the plans.
- There will be adult supervision at the sleepover home while the student is there.
- Should the sleepovers start to have some regularity, then the sleepover host family will be asked to become vetted.
- Should there be a refusal to vetting then the YE student will no longer have sleepovers in said home.
- Person(s) attending the sleepover must be the same sex as the YE student. No alcohol present or ingested by sleepover attendees.
- The YE student shall have contact access to host parent or YEO, or counsellor for a ride home any time during the night should the student wish to return to host family home.
- Regular follow up with YE student by YEO and or counsellor post sleep overs ensuring no harassment or abuse during sleepover.

### **Other District Policies**

Additional Youth Exchange policies can be found in the Youth Exchange manual. Some are:

- Crisis Management – Section 6
- Youth Protection – Section 7
- Travel Policy – Section 3

## Non-Compliance Consequences

District 5080 is required by both SCRYE and Rotary International to provide training on all the above requirements. In order to participate in the YE program, attendance and participation in the training sessions is mandatory.

The first step of compliance is attending the mandatory September Camp Lutherhaven training for YEO's and Counselors wishing to Participate the following year in the Youth Exchange program. (Club Presidents and other YE club committee members may also attend). This training is mandatory for clubs currently hosting inbound students and clubs planning on participating in Youth Exchange for the following year. There is a cost per person to the club to attend this camp. The Youth Exchange program year is from August to July.

The committee will provide other training as required, or requested by clubs, during the year. A timeline shall be given to the YEO to meet compliance. The length of the timeline will depend on the outstanding issues.

Training is the key to having successful clubs and the Youth Exchange Committee of District 5080 promotes this concept.

The process for non-compliant clubs are as follows:

- If the club is not in compliance they will receive a verbal notification on the non-compliance and be given a time line to complete the outstanding issue. The district will work with, and train, the YEO to bring them into compliance.
- Should the club/YEO continue to be non-compliant the club president and YEO will be given a written notice of non-compliance and in that notice, they will be informed of the next action if they continue to fail compliancy. The club will be informed they are now on probation. The Youth Exchange Committee will continue to train and address reasons for non-compliance and assist in solutions within the timeline given.
- Should the club continue to be in non-compliance after the above steps the District Governor shall be informed. The District Chair and the District Governor will discuss the severity of the penalty. The penalty may include no participation in the YE program for a year or more, which will mean the club will not be allowed to send out a student or host a student.

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## 1.03 Club Compliance Certification Requirements

In order for District 5080 to be certified by Rotary International to operate a Rotary International Youth Exchange Program, each participating club must provide the Annual Club Compliance Certification, \*( form IB-1 USA and cIB-1 Canada) and Youth Exchange Agreement, section 1.51, **due October 15**, which affirms and agrees that the club is operating the Youth Exchange program in accordance with:

1. the policies and procedures of all the District 5080 Youth Exchange Committee as specified in the Club Manual on the [www.rotaryye5080.org](http://www.rotaryye5080.org) website and
2. its adoption of Rotary International's Statement of Conduct for working with Youth:  
*Rotary International strives to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate in Rotary activities. To the best of their ability, Rotarians, Rotarians' spouse and partners, and other volunteers must safeguard the children and young people they come into contact with and protect them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Rotary International Code of Policies, section 2.110.1*

\* For forms IB-1 and cIB-1 see SCRYE forms page on our website  
[www.rotaryye5080.org](http://www.rotaryye5080.org)

## 1.04 Job Description Club YEO

### General

The Club Youth Exchange Officer:

1. Is appointed by the Club President. Ideally the appointment is for a minimum of two years to provide continuity in the Club Youth Exchange Program.
2. Provides leadership for the Club's Youth Exchange Program and serves as Chair of the Club's Youth Exchange Committee.
3. Has a thorough knowledge of the District Youth Exchange Program, including the District 5080 Club Youth Exchange Manual and Rotary International Policies pertaining to youth exchange and youth protection and, those sections of the District Committee Manual that apply to club programs.
4. Serves as the primary communication link between the club and the District Youth Exchange Committee

### Responsibilities

The Club Youth Exchange Officer:

1. Develops consensus in the club regarding participation each exchange year. Submits to the District Committee by October 15, the Annual Club Affidavit of Compliance and Youth Exchange Agreement, Club Manual Section 1.51, after obtaining approval of both the current and incoming club president.
2. Assures that the club is in compliance with all requirements of the District Youth Exchange Program, with special attention to those requirements regarding youth protection. Provides to the District Committee by October 15, the Annual Club Affidavit of Compliance and Youth Exchange Agreement, Club Manual Section 1.51, after obtaining approval of the Club President.
3. Manages the inbound and outbound exchange student process. Assures on time submission of outbound applications and processing of inbound applications, including Guarantee Forms.
4. Leads the promotion of the Club Youth Exchange Program in the local community to identify both potential outbound students and host families.
5. Identifies, recruits and recommends to the Club President, members of the Club Youth Exchange Committee, including Inbound and Outbound Counsellors. Provides training for Counsellors following their appointment by the Club President.

6. Periodically meets with hosted students, their counsellors and host families. Identifies and resolves problems or issues following District Committee procedures.
7. Immediately refers issues relating to youth protection to the District Committee Youth Protection Officer. Consults with the appropriate member of the District Committee on other issues.
8. Attends the annual Youth Exchange Committee training workshop.

Job Description Club Youth Exchange Officer  
2013.04.08

## 1.05 Promoting Youth Exchange

Check the Club Resources page of the District Youth Exchange website for a listing of Guides, brochures, posters, DVD's and other materials that can be used to promote Youth Exchange. Go to [www.rotaryye5080.org](http://www.rotaryye5080.org) . Discuss your needs with a representative of the Youth Exchange Committee for additional ideas.

At the beginning of each school year, ask the school counselor or career guidance counselor, to organize meetings with students who may be interested. At these meetings, use the promotional tools available on the website to describe the program to the students. Have a supply of hand outs, such as the [www.rotaryye5080.org](http://www.rotaryye5080.org) website address, brochures, and instructions on where to find and how complete the Preliminary Outbound Student Application and Country Preference, Club Manual Section 2.51. Advise students that Preliminary applications are to be completed in YEAH, the link to which is found on our website.

### WHERE TO PROMOTE

#### 1. Local groups and their websites

Provide the District Youth Exchange website address [www.rotaryye5080.org](http://www.rotaryye5080.org) to local youth oriented organizations, ask them to post a link to [www.rotaryye5080.org](http://www.rotaryye5080.org) on their site and/or "LIKE" the site to their facebook page:

- Schools, school groups and their websites
- Scout and Guide groups, websites
- church youth groups, their websites
- local Interactors groups, their websites

#### 2. Places of Employment

Put posters on staff bulletin boards in businesses with high school employees:

- fast-food restaurants
- sporting goods stores
- "Dollar" stores
- gas stations
- grocery stores

#### 3. Teenager Hang-outs

Advertise at places where students spend their free time:

- coffee houses
- arcades
- youth centers
- gyms and fitness centers
- community complexes

#### 4. Media Advertising

Free advertising in the form of articles is frequently available for non-profit groups:

- school newspapers
- school radio stations
- local radio stations
- local interest newsletters
- social media platforms (Instagram, Twitter, FB and others)

## **1.06 Reserved for Future Use**

## **1.07 Reserved for Future Use**

## 1.08 School Information

Rotary Exchange students should regard their exchange year as a time to learn or improve a second language, and experience a new culture. They have the opportunity to study subjects that are of interest, but for which they can usually not receive school credits in their home country.

Students outbound from District 5080 are advised that Rotary cannot guarantee that they will receive credit from their home school for any courses taken while on exchange.

Inbound students are enrolled in public schools, which are operated by elected School Boards in each community. School Boards are responsible for determining whether to accept exchange students, how many they will accept, what the students may study, and whether they may formally graduate.

Inbound students should be aware that studying in a second language, while adjusting to a foreign culture - and maintaining their obligations as a Rotary ambassador - is a very difficult task. The Rotary District 5080 Youth Exchange Committee reserves the right to require students to modify their course selection if this is considered to be in the best interests of the student or the school.

**Important note** - In many cases school graduation activities may conflict with the Youth Exchange International Friendship Tour. Inbound students should be aware that they are required to take part in the International Friendship Tour, whether or not this tour conflicts with local school graduation related ceremonies or other activities.

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## 1.10 Dealing with Reverse Culture Shock

### Where is “home” - Reverse Culture Shock

*by*

Ray L. Allen, Rotary District 7150  
Youth Exchange Program

**[An important message for the parents of students who have returned home after a year on exchange!]**

When your son or daughter arrived in their new country last year they were initially frustrated, for no matter how hard they tried to fit in, they were an outsider, not a member of this new culture they had been placed in. That feeling may have lasted a few weeks or even a few months. Hopefully, it gradually went away as they began to adjust and accept their new culture and change within themselves. They were going through the phases of culture shock.

After adjusting to the superficial differences; the food is different, they hold their knife and fork differently, their door knobs aren't round, etc., they were confronted with the reality that this new culture viewed the world differently, at a very basic level – in how they think, what they value in relationships, what is important in basic human equality. They may have reacted from mild rejection of this new culture to actually returning home early. Or, they may have “gone native”, but most probably, since your sons and daughters stuck it out, they ended up accepting this new culture which now is an integral part of their lives and a part of their inner feelings. They can't tell you when it happened because they don't know themselves. Maybe they woke up dreaming in their new language. Maybe they realized one day that they were being treated as a native by the natives, or were asked directions by a tourist who took them for a native. Whatever it was, they became comfortable with their new culture.

They have integrated their new culture with their former culture and are returning home as a person whose overall cultural being and identity is greater than the sum of the two cultures they have experienced. They are essentially “at home” and competent in at least two cultures, often ones with radically different points of view on a given subject. Paradoxically, your returning son or daughter is also not really “at home” in either culture.

They will tend to question positions and decisions more, they will speak out on issues more frequently and they will view their American culture more critically, possibly appreciating it more but now able to compare it with their “newly acquired culture”.

Their initial culture shock was anticipated, had been talked about at orientations, and to some degree they were prepared for it. They may have shared their feelings and frustrations with you in their letters home. But now a new experience awaits you and them. In the first few days, weeks or even months after they return to the United States, they may have some of the same experiences and feelings as when they went abroad. Most of your sons and daughters will experience what is called “Reverse Culture Shock”. It is easily recognized but often more difficult to handle, especially by you, their “United States” parents. In most cases, neither you nor they were expecting this. Yes, we covered this at orientation, but that was a year ago. We hope that the information that follows will help you to be prepared.

WOW!! Your “Kid” is back! The exchange program is over – or so you think. But think again. First accept the FACT that the “kid” you sent abroad a year ago is, for the most part, a young adult, and certainly

changed in many ways. You may not recognize him or her at the airport – a new hair-do or color, different clothes, taller, skinnier, etc. They probably are experiencing some confusion as to where “home” really is. The “Rotary Youth Exchange Program” is not over and for many of the students - and you - it may have just begun, even though “their year abroad” is over. Friendships made, “mom” and “dad” and other host family relationships, hopefully will remain far into the future.

Once they get over the jet lag, general exhaustion and overdose of welcome home parties plus preparation for school or some other next phase in their lives, you will find yourselves dealing with other feelings, sometimes subtle and sometimes hostile – but almost always difficult to accept as their parents.

When they first get “home” they may be on a natural high from the realization, emphasized by almost everyone they come in contact with, that they have gone places, seen and done things and handled more complex problems than most of their friends and family can only dream of.

However on the other side of that coin may be feelings of hostility toward their own country or even rejection (the “I hate America” phase), wishing they were really “Back HOME” (meaning where they spent their year abroad).

Almost all at some time or other will exhibit signs of sadness and/or depression. They have left behind close friends and families with whom they developed a close relationship and who they may never see again.

The second phase of the Reverse Culture Shock is more uncomfortable for both them and their family and friends. They have changed in ways they may not even realize yet. They can’t describe it or understand it. They now are a skilled world traveler – and even more so, a skilled bicultural person who can not only get along, but flourish in at least one other culture. They are bilingual, and no longer a “tourist”. They have become a citizen of the world and when they get “home” they question where home” really is. They may think or burst out with a statement in their new “native” language. Our daughter ordered in Portuguese at a Kennedy Airport restaurant upon arrival and her sister who had met her had to remind her to speak English.

Their original “home town” may be too small with nothing to do. Or, in talking about their host family call them “mom” or “dad”. (That will probably bother you some) Their old school chums may be dull, boring or “not worldly”. And, they have been making a lot of their own decisions without you, mom or dad, to check with. (Don’t be surprised if they rebel some when you question a decision or want to know “When will you be home?” or “Who are you going out with?”). They may be dissatisfied with everything and anything that is “American”.

It’s not only them who have changed. You, your family, your community, their friends and relatives have all changed also. They may not see it or may reject it. They may deny it in order to prove to themselves that things are just the way they left them a year ago. But some of you may have different jobs, a relative may have died, their friends may have developed a different circle of friends where they are not welcome, their 15-year-old sister or brother may have “grown up”.

But don’t despair, because in time they too will re-adapt, but in an integrated way, to “their new culture”, thus becoming bicultural. It would be nice to just be able to jump to this last phase, but this rarely is the case. To get there is part of a process that they and you must experience and grow through.

Here are some of the common concerns and thoughts your son or daughter will experience. You should be aware of them, understand and accept them as you work through this thing called “Reverse Culture Shock” with your sons and daughters.

1. My parents don't understand me. They think I'm the same "kid" as when I left.
2. I feel closer to my host parents than I do my own parents right now. I'm afraid my parents will be hurt if they find out. Should I hide my feelings?
3. It's difficult to adjust to my old lifestyle. Everything in America is so materialistic, so rushed, so ... "American"
4. I made so many new friends and now I might never see them again.
5. I don't like it here, I just want to go back home. But where IS home?
6. I didn't have that easy a time this past year, and now everyone is talking about how wonderful it must have been. I really don't want to tell them how it really was. What do I do?
7. My friends all ask me about my year, but then they don't want to take any time to listen to me. They aren't the same friends I left a year ago.

So, .... what do you do? You're frustrated, they're frustrated, and it bothers you that you have occasional thoughts of saying "...if you like it so much better over there, then go back..." or other "off the cuff" remarks. Here are some suggestions to consider. They are not the only way to get through this, and your own instincts may be best, but they are ones that have worked for others.

**First** – Remember, they HAVE changed. And, they would have changed even if they had stayed home - maybe not as much, but change and growth are inevitable. The difference is, if they had been home it would have been gradual, but they weren't home and so it may be a shock, seeing it all at once.

**Second** – Remember, you, your family and their friends have also changed. They may tell you about some of these changes they don't like. They "expected" everything to be the same. How dare you give their room to their sister! Change is difficult to accept. Listen to them, explain where necessary, but don't be defensive. They made decisions that resulted in changes to them, and you had every right to make changes also.

**Third** – They have become more self-confident, self-reliant and independent, which sounds a lot like becoming an adult. Therefore there will be inevitable conflict as you and they come to terms. Expect to give them more freedom to make their own decisions than in the past. But also set the rules in your home so long as they are living there. They, in turn, must be willing to accept more controls than they think they need. Discuss the differences openly, they are used to that now; and arrive at mutually acceptable living arrangements.

**Fourth** – Try to resist the urge to throw a gala welcome home party. These can be overwhelming. Between jet lag, different diet, different time zone, climate, separation from their new friends and host family; their emotions are running high and they may just not be up to it. Small gatherings of family and friends, given a week or two to adjust are usually better. They may have their pictures developed, their thoughts better sorted out and be able to better cope with the feelings they are experiencing if given some time before they are placed "center stage".

**Fifth** – as an extension to Four, help them to take things slow and easy at first. For the student who has to report immediately to work or straight off to college, it will be more difficult to get through the adjustment.

**Sixth** – Be tolerant of some unusual behavior. They may talk continuously or hardly say a word unless spoken to; they may be critical of America, family, friends, even you. Try to draw them out, to validate their

feelings based on their experiences, and understand where they are drawing these behaviors from. (You may be concerned because they no longer raid the refrigerator, or the half-hour showers are suddenly replaced with a 10-minute or every other day shower. They may be still living in their new culture, and may have come to the conclusion that they like it this way because...).

**Seventh** – Make contact with other Rotary students who have been back a few years and their families. Contact your District Rotary Country Contact for some names and phone numbers. They can help you and your son or daughter get through this. Encourage your son or daughter to join the local Rotex group. They can confirm to you that it does work out, and that exchange students usually become closer to their families than before.

Finally and most important – Listen, Listen, Listen. Most returned exchange students feel a great need to talk and have a frustrating time finding someone, even family members willing to take the time to listen. They may tell you the same story several times in different ways. Don't shut them off – but rather listen to what they are saying. Ask questions that require more than a “yes” or “no” answer. Plan a weekend shortly after he or she arrives home and go away where there aren't the distractions of home, telephone, television, etc. If you have a camp, go there; take a get-away weekend and let them tell you about their year, its ups and down, the friends they made, their host families, their disasters, the times they wanted to come home but didn't because they didn't want to fail in your eyes, the difficulty of saying goodbye, knowing that they would never see some of these people again. And be prepared that some may not want to, or be unable to, talk about their year so soon. They will talk in time.

They have also developed new “non-verbal” body language habits as well. They may no longer want to shake hands, but prefer to “hug”. They stand closer, or use gestures when speaking. They may or may not make eye contact, or tend to want to touch the person they are speaking to. They may kiss you on each cheek. Please, please, don't discourage them from expressing themselves. Americans generally maintain a greater spatial distance when interacting than do Western Europeans and South Americans, for instance. Females in Japan do not maintain eye contact with males in the same way that American females do.

The American “A-OK” hand sign has a vulgar meaning in much of the rest of the world. They will soon adjust and keep the good and discard the unacceptable in the culture in which they are living.

Reverse Culture Shock is to be expected and is a part of the exchange student experience. Because they now see their own culture from another point of view, and because they have lived life from that point of view, they can never be exactly as they were before. On the other hand, no matter how well they adapted to the host culture, they know inside that is not “them” either. Without your help in understanding this process, your son or daughter can spend a long time searching for who they are and where “home” really is.

In time they will view their culture more clearly, accept it and yet be more critical of it. They will develop an independence and sharper view of who they are, what they are willing to stand up for, and be more tolerant and understanding of other cultures and the world around them. They will understand with great insight these cultural differences, appreciate them for what they are and the different behaviors and values that come with them. They will also help you to join with them in this newfound understanding of the world around us. They are no longer concerned that differences exist between cultures, but rather tolerate them and appreciate them. They are no longer bound by their native cultural boundaries, but are now able to shift between cultures and accept other points of view.

When we send your sons and daughters around the world and tell them it will be “the experience of a lifetime” we are telling the truth. By learning to be culturally competent and by developing a high level of cultural sensitivity, we are helping them to become a more accepting individual. They have learned to function in and think on a more global level and to view the world as many fundamentally different cultures, each having its common aspects, but each being different. Hopefully they have learned to understand the value of the many worlds they live in.

You, the parents have been in on this metamorphosis from the start – the ups and downs, the frustrations and the successes. Remember about two years ago when they had their interviews and were selected? Remember the year it took you to adjust that they were “leaving home”? Remember all the letters and phone calls, the special occasions, birthdays, holidays they celebrated with their new mom and dad, but also with you in thought? Well – you are going to be part of their return too. You will be part of the adjustment period and will find that both you and they will adjust. Anticipate it, accept it and make it a positive experience for all of you.

Help them to find where their “Home” is. May you all have the best of both cultures. Call us, we are still here to help!

## 1.11 When Club YEO Needs Help

### When Club Youth Exchange Officer needs help....

As a club Youth Exchange Officer or the Chair of a Youth Exchange Committee, if you or the Committee have a problem - or need a question answered - here are the steps you should follow in getting help. Kindly direct your questions in an email to the appropriate contact. Email inquiries allow the committee to keep track of the issues/questions that come up. Of course, if the problem is urgent a phone call is appropriate.

If you do not get a response from the contact person listed below you may contact the Chair of the District 5080 Youth Exchange Committee.

### For problems or questions regarding:

**Outbound students:** Contact the Outbound Coordinator, Vice Chair

**Inbound Students:** Contact the Inbound Coordinator, Vice Chair

**YEAH database:** Contact the YEAH administrator

**Short Term Exchange:** Contact the STEP Coordinator

**Financial:** Contact the District 5080 Treasurer

**If the problem is urgent: Call (or have the District Vice Chair call) the Chair of the District 5080 Youth Exchange Committee.**

See the Contact page at [www.rotaryye5080.org](http://www.rotaryye5080.org) for contact details.

1.12 Reserved for Future Use