

Duties of Counselor – Rotary Youth Exchange D5170

DUTIES OF A COUNSELOR - Inbound Student:

Upon Arrival:

During the first week or two of a student's stay in the country the Counselor must set aside as much time as possible to spend with the student so mutual respect and confidence can be established. It is extremely important that the Counselor establishes a relationship with the student, so that when a problem arises it can be discussed in an open and frank manner.

If appropriate, be with the host family when the student arrives at the airport (this is not required, but sometimes it is helpful.) On occasion, the host family cannot be at the airport due to conflicts, you are the backup if this happens.

Each student is to bring \$500.00 US Emergency Funds. You should collect and hold their emergency funds. Sometimes they student does not have emergency funds, and only has a credit card. If this is the case, please collect:

- Credit Card #
- Expiration Date
- Name on the Card
- 3 digit security code

Monthly:

Minimum of 1 monthly visit with both the Inbound Student and the Host Family

This can be:

- In Person – preferred
- By Phone
- By email

This is best done with each separately (i.e. with family alone and with student alone, so that they will be free to talk about any issues)

Please remember to thank the Host Family often. Without Host Families, there is not a Youth Exchange program.

Be an advocate for the student.

This is the MOST important role of the Counselor. This takes time and sincere effort. A relationship needs to be built and it can start from the very first email the Counselor sends. If the relationship is built then if there is a conflict or a difficult issue arise there is a foundation of trust and good will built to go from.

Support the student and make student feel part of the Rotary family. Introduce them to club members and invite them to club functions.

Be the liaison between the student, Rotary Club, host family,

Required Monthly Counselor Report:

Complete the monthly Counselor report in the YEAH system: <https://yehub.net/W17.php>

Monthly Stipend:

Bring the Student to Rotary monthly

Collect and provide their monthly stipend – this is very important to the student

Please write the student a note to return to school

The note should say that “the student was attending a required Rotary event”

Generally, the student does not have a checking account here in the United States. Therefore, it is often easier for the student if they are given cash rather than a check, or a check payable to the Host Family, to cash and provide the funds to the student. If you are providing cash to the student, it is recommended that you have them sign a receipt for the cash, so they don't later claim they never received the funds.

Rotary Club Involvement:

It is best if the student is actively involved in the Rotary Club. Please invite the student to all of your Rotary fundraising events, socials, parties etc. The more active they are in the club, the better for all involved. If appropriate, invite the Host Family to the events as well, but make sure they know it is voluntary for the Host Family. Often the host family needs a “break”.

Schedule a time at the Rotary Club in the beginning of the students year, to introduce themselves and to thank the club for hosting them.

School:

Assist the student and the host family with any issues regarding school activities or issues
Help with schools

Get appropriate schedules

Not remedial classes

Not English as a second language classes

They are good students & we don't want them surrounded by poor/low achieving students

Have a conversation with the school about the Rotary Program:

They will be attending a monthly rotary meeting

The Rotary Exchange program is a cultural and language program

It is ok for club to encourage or require Interact participation, if the club has an interact club.

Counselor to enroll the student in school

Both Host Parents and counselor should be on the Emergency Card at school

End of the Year:

Schedule a time for the Student to be the program at your club to give a presentation on their year as an Exchange Student and to thank the club for hosting them. Students are generally prepared to do this presentation, and most have prepared some type of multimedia presentation.

Good Practices:

1. Ensure the student has and sends thank you cards to people who invite the student to special activities and events.
2. Liaise with host families so that they and the student will know well in advance when a move to the next home is due.
3. Liaise with the club president and the club committee chairman so that the student can be included in club programs as a guest speaker.
4. Ensure that the student attends Rotary meetings as a club guest weekly, or on a regular basis, and is invited to special occasions. Many clubs involve the students in club meetings and service projects which strengthens their feeling of belonging and often affords visitors the opportunity of seeing and hearing the students.
5. Encourage the student to join school clubs and/or sports activities
6. Remember the student's birthday and celebrate it appropriately. Ensure the student has the opportunity to celebrate Christmas, Easter, Jewish, or other holidays of their religion.
7. Arrange an appropriate farewell function at the end of the exchange period.
8. Before the emergency fund is released to the student at the end of the exchange, the counselor should ascertain that all debts to medical practitioners, host parents, and the District have been settled.
9. Ensure that any planned travel is first approved by the District's Youth Exchange Officer, Club Chair, natural parents, host parents and school.

PROBLEMS:

It sometimes happens that the Counselor and the student cannot get along. If this happens then the Counselor should stand down in favor of another Counselor, where there can be a happier relationship. The Counselor should not take this as an indication of their inefficiency as there can be times when personalities clash for no apparent reason.

It is imperative that the Counselor should be fully aware of the vital role they play in the program and their contribution to its success. They must keep the lines of communication open, keep club members involved in overseeing and guiding the activities of the student, and initiate changes and controls where necessary.

DUTIES OF A COUNSELOR - OUTBOUND STUDENT

A. BEFORE THE STUDENT LEAVES

1. Bring the student to the sponsoring club meeting at least twice so they can learn about Rotary and the sponsoring club.
2. Attend the Orientation for Outbound Students. Encourage the student and assist where possible.
3. Arrange for the student to address the club just before leaving.
4. Acquire for the student at least six (6) club banners to take overseas to exchange for other banners, which the student will present to the hosting club and other clubs they may visit.
5. Acquaint the student with all the club's activities and projects.
6. Ensure the student obtains an accident and health insurance policy, which is accepted in the host country. The coverage should be effective from the time the student leaves home until their return.
7. Ensure that the student makes contact with the host club as soon as possible once this club is known.
8. Ensure that the student notifies the host club and District 5170 Youth Exchange Officer of the time and flight number of their arrival overseas.
9. Encourage the student to take color slides of his/her family, pets, friends, school, personal interests, industry and community.
10. Plan a farewell for the student, with possibly a small present for the hosting club.

11. Obtain a good picture of the student and a brief write-up and send this to the local newspaper. During the year, continue to supply the news media with interesting activities of the student.
12. Ensure the student has a supply of thank you cards and is aware they should be sent to all persons who entertain, accommodate, or assist the student.

B. WHILE THE STUDENT IS OVERSEAS:

1. Keep in regular contact with the student.
2. Send over the club bulletin and an occasional local newspaper.
3. Invite the student's parents to come to at least one or two Rotary meetings during the year, and bring the club up to date on the student's progress.
4. Encourage the student to write regularly to their sponsoring club.
5. Contact the student's parents on a periodic basis.

C. ON THE STUDENT'S RETURN:

1. Plan a small welcome home group at the airport.
2. Plan ahead to ensure that the student returns at least once to the club to present the homecoming speech before returning to high school or going on to college.
3. Provide a picture and short report of the student's year overseas to be included in the local newspapers.