

BECOME PART OF A GREAT TRADITION

The idea of cross-cultural youth exchange was pioneered by Rotary clubs in Denmark and France in the late 1920's. The program was formally introduced by American Rotary clubs in 1958.

Today, Rotary Youth Exchange serves approximately 9,000 students from nearly 50 countries, building cross-cultural connections that make the world a smaller and better place.

Host families are the anchor of the program, opening their homes to provide students with a first-hand experience of life in a new culture.

District 6250, which comprises of Rotary clubs in Southwestern Wisconsin and Southeastern Minnesota sends multiple American students abroad and welcomes students from around the world to the Midwest every year. Local Rotary clubs recruit host families in our communities, with the support of their club representatives to ensure a positive and fun exchange experience.



THE IDEAL HOST FAMILY

A great host family is willing to open their hearts and homes to an exchange student. Family size and make-up is less important than a sense of generosity and adventure. Although host families often do have kids of their own, it is not required. Families with or without kids, empty nesters, or single parents can all make great host families.

WHAT ARE THE HOST FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITIES?

Exchange students typically rotate among three families during their year. That means you'd be hosting a student for 3-4 months. Your main responsibility is to create a welcoming environment for your exchange student. You provide room and board, exercise the same parental support and encouragement you would give your own children, and involve your student in the family's daily routines, chores, and activities.

Youth Exchange is about sharing American culture and family life while your family gets to learn about the student's culture and family. You don't need to provide elaborate entertainment, simply make the student part of your family.



Hosting an exchange student was something I always wanted to do because I remember the life experiences I gained traveling abroad, and I wanted to provide similar experiences to someone else. When Hagen joined our household he brought a whole new energy to our home. We had a great time playing numerous board games, attending Hagen's football games, and hiking the local trails. It was fun joking around and having serious conversations about various topics. It's definitely an experience we will remember forever."

– Brandon Harris, previous host parent

WHAT ARE THE EXCHANGE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES?

Rotary requires exchange students to attend school and participate in school activities. They are expected to follow your family's rules and help with household chores as your own children. There will be required Rotary events, such as meetings and District 6250 conferences that they will attend throughout their year. Exchange students are not permitted to drive or work and are required to follow all U.S. laws and regulations.

YOU ARE THE KEY TO A GREAT EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE!



WHAT SUPPORT IS PROVIDED BY LOCAL ROTARY CLUBS AND DISTRICT 6250?

Your local Rotary club supervises the program, helps coordinate with school, and provides the inbound student with a monthly stipend and cell phone. Host families are not expected to provide spending money. School lunch fees are paid for by the club, and the student is covered under their own health insurance through Rotary.

In addition to the direct financial support, the local club provides a support network for the host family and exchange student. This includes monthly check-ins with both the student and the host family. This network includes a Youth Exchange Counselor and Youth Exchange Officer to help with any questions or situations. Club members also provide transportation to required Rotary events.

Rotary International carefully screens students prior to acceptance into the program, and conducts extensive orientation programs to make exchange students aware of rules and regulations. Serious problems are rare, but if a situation beyond your capacity or comfort level arises, your local Exchange Officer or Counselor will be directly involved in finding a solution.



Hosting an exchange student expanded our world and connections to a bigger world.”

– Diane Knothe, previous host parent

BECOME A HOST FAMILY!

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

To begin the application process, contact your local Rotary club or send an email to couleeregionyec@gmail.com

WHEN YOU'RE READY:

1. Complete the host family application
2. You'll need to complete a background check and a member of your local club will do an in-home interview.

At any step in the process, feel free to reach out to the Youth Exchange Officer or Counselor of your local Rotary club, they will assist with any questions!



Who knew inserting a teen into our lives could be so much fun. We've hosted twice and thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the unique personalities, and sharing the beauty of our country. We are grateful to have had the experience.”

– Danielle Rathke, previous host parent

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Host a Rotary Youth Exchange student, and build relationships that last a lifetime!



CONNECT WITH US
couleeregionyec@gmail.com



TRAVEL. DISCOVERY. FUN.