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**Bring the World Home**

**Host a Rotary Exchange Student**

Hosting a Rotary international high school exchange student is a life-enhancing experience for your entire family. It’s a unique opportunity to get new perspectives, explore new customs, and share American culture and your community with others. Most of all, you’ll build special friendships and connections that often last a lifetime.

When you host an exchange student with Rotary, you benefit from more than 85 years of experience and an international network of Rotarians. Rotary has been hosting international students since 1929 and we have accumulated a wealth of knowledge and experience.

**We support you every step of the way with:**

* Local support. Our experienced local coordinators live in your community, so you always have someone to turn to for immediate guidance. The Rotary Club of Monroe is comprised of many community leaders who will provide assistance to ensure a positive exchange experience.
* Peace of mind. All Rotary exchange students are thoroughly screened prior to acceptance, and arrive with spending money and full insurance so you can be confident they’re ready to become part of your family.
* Exceptional students. Rotary has clubs in over 200 countries. Local Rotary clubs select the best students for participation in the program. The students are smart, engaged, and excited to share their country’s unique cultures, traditions, and languages.

**Main Points of the Program**

* An exchange student from overseas lives in your home, as a member of your family, for approximately 3-4 months.
* They are involved with your family, in school, with new friends, and are also active in Rotary events such as weekend conferences and weekly meetings.
* They are 15-18 years old and they are here for 11 months. While the exchange students are here they live with 2 or 3 families to give them a broader understanding of our culture.
* You have extensive support from the local Rotary Club of Monroe and over 3,000 Rotarians in the local district (District 5050).
* We have had students from Brazil, Italy, Germany, Argentina, Peru, Denmark, Bolivia, Sweden, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Japan and many others. They are wonderful young people.
* This year’s student is from Germany, and she is 16 years old. She is an accomplished pianist, loves music, and plays Volleyball on her school team.
* We promise you that the experience will enrich your family.

**What is expected of a host family?**

Hosting a student can be an extremely rewarding experience for everyone in the family, yet it is a role that requires a lot of responsibility. The sponsoring Rotary Club will provide training and support. Host families are to meet the following expectations:

* Before the student arrives establish communication with the student.
* Understand the program rules the student must follow.
* Know how to contact key Rotarians involved in Youth Exchange in case of an emergency.
* During the exchange provide a safe and welcoming environment for trust and friendship to develop between the student and your family.
* Support and make the student feel like a part of the family, with the same privileges and obligations.
* Gently encourage the student to learn and adopt most of the ways of your household.
* Provide room and board for the student. All students must have their own bed. If the student must share a room, it must be with a child of the same gender and similar age.
* Provide a place in the home where the student may study.
* Recognize the student’s birthday and other special occasions.
* Ensure the student knows how to contact family members, friends, and other support networks.
* In case of an emergency, know how to access and use the student’s travel insurance policy.
* Voice any concerns and questions regarding the student to the Rotarian host counselor, including serious homesickness, difficulty adapting to family life or school, or illness.
* Maintain close contact with the host club and address problems and concerns quickly.
* Exercise supervisory and parental responsibility to ensure the student’s well being.
* Encourage involvement in community life by introducing the student to neighbors, friends, and local groups.
* Teach the student about the local culture and learn about the student’s culture.
* Advise the student about matters related to school, family, community functions, and friendship. What’s in it for your family?
* A great way to expose your family to another culture. It’s amazing what you learn from having someone from a different country stay with you.
* Assist someone learning your language and customs and see your own town and country through their eyes!
* Often you will build up a friendship with the student you’re hosting that will last a lifetime… A place to visit when on holidays!

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**How long will the student be living with my family?**
Most long-term exchange students live with several host families during their exchange. This means the student may live with you for three to four months.

**Is it expensive to host a student?**
While you will see a rise in your grocery bills, there are no other costs to your family. The student receives monthly $100 pocket money from the club, a cellphone and other accommodations, and the club has made arrangements with the school; therefore there are no educational expenses, and the student is insured for any medical expenses.

**How will I communicate with the student?**
Most students do not speak English as their native language. While most have a reasonable command of English, you will undoubtedly have the chance to help them improve their language skills.

Some anxiety is to be expected if you have never hosted an exchange student. We find that most families find the experience so rewarding, that they do it again, some for many years. If you have questions, please contact your local Rotary Club to discuss them.

* ***We’re always looking for host families and will be delighted to talk to you.*** ***Please pass this opportunity on to other families in the community. Interested families can contact any Rotarian or one of our Monroe Rotary Club’s Exchange Coordinators.***

