



Thousands of families around the world have hosted YFU students since 1951. To help you make the most of your exchange experience with your new host son or daughter here is some helpful advice.

- Be relaxed about the experience and let family life continue as normal - remember your student is not just a visitor; he or she really wants to be part of your family.
- Give your student his or her own work around the house and explain what is expected as a family member. Don't be afraid to tell your student about little things that may seem unimportant, such as turning off the lights when they leave a room and where they can hang their towel.
- Let your student know about any family "rules" or "lifestyle" issues so there are no false expectations. Tell him or her, what you expect, as you would with your own sons and daughters. The student will need even more explanation, since he or she has not grown up in your family "culture"
- Don't panic if it seems to take a long time to establish bonds of trust and acceptance.
- Give them some time to themselves when they arrive, so they can get used to you and adjust to being away from their families.
- Host parents sometimes seem to be a lot "nicer" to the exchange student at first - allowing them special privileges or cooking special meals. Don't let this practice continue past the first few weeks or sibling rivalry may occur.
- Initially your student may spend a lot of time alone in his or her room; this is quite normal as it can be really exhausting to communicate in a new language and establish new relationships.
- Be prepared to explain gestures, words and things your student doesn't understand. Don't be afraid to use big words - just explain them.
- Your student will sometimes say things that seem blunt. Don't be hurt, this may be due to their limited vocabulary or a cultural difference. Some languages don't use the "magic" words we expect, such as please and thank you. These may need to be taught.
- Be caring and thoughtful when your student is upset at special times - like birthdays, holidays or a special anniversary. The student is a long way from home and may miss his or her family.
- Make your student feel comfortable, wanted and loved as they may feel lonely with their families and friends on the other side of the world.
- Give your student the freedom to go out with their friends and to speak with them on the phone— remembering that they may not always fit in with your son or daughter's friends.

Don't expect the entire exchange experience to be perfect. There will be some "difficult" times. Look at these as learning experiences. Almost always the good times will far outweigh the bad times.