

Rotary District 9520 Youth Exchange Program
LONG TERM OUTBOUND
STUDENT MANUAL

The Rotary Youth Exchange Program offers our students the opportunity to reach across borders and oceans to turn strangers into friends, thereby improving international relations and promoting world peace

We send out all our exchange students with our good wishes for the
'Year of their Lives'

Issued by Rotary District 9520 Youth Exchange Committee

<http://9520.ryea.org.au/>

Mobile: +61 408 317 326 (0408 317 326)

[email: chair@rotaryyouth9520.com.au](mailto:chair@rotaryyouth9520.com.au)

Contents

<u>Overview of Rotary International Youth Exchange Program</u>	Page
- the objectives, benefits and process of country allocation.	7
<u>A Summary of the Responsibilities of Parties within the Program</u>	9
- District Committee, Committee Group Coordinator, Australian Sponsor Club and Counsellor, Overseas Host Club & Counsellor, Overseas Host Families, Student and Students Parents	
<u>What do I do once I am accepted as an Exchange Student?</u>	15
- First things First; From Now until Departure	
<u>Your Exchange Year – Some Points on What to Do and What to Expect</u>	16
▪ Your host families, your responsibilities to the and theirs to you	
▪ Your obligations to your Host Club	
▪ Attending school overseas	
▪ Problem solving.....	20
- Coping with early problems	
- The Language	
- Homesickness	
- Friends	
- Weight gain	
- Family difficulties	
<u>The Rewards and Pitfalls of Living in another Culture</u>	22
<u>Local Laws and Rotary Exchange Rules</u>	25
- Local Laws	
- The 4 D's – the Major Rotary Exchange Rules	
- Your Compulsory Monthly Report	
<u>Travel by Students and Visits from their Parents.& Friends</u>	26
- Student travel	
- A Visit by your Parents to your Host Country during the Exchange	
<u>Correspondence and Keeping in Touch</u>	28
<u>Student's Presentation Talks</u>	30
<u>Insurance</u>	30
<u>Tips for Students to Use to Stay Safe</u>	33

<u>Rotary Youth Protection Policy – Abuse & Harassment</u>	34
- Definitions	
- What to do if you are effected	
- Cultural variations between countries	
<u>Questions for your first night with your new host parents</u>	37
<u>Finances and Allowances</u>	39
<u>Gifts and Souvenirs</u>	39
<u>Business Cards</u>	40
<u>Blazers</u>	40
<u>Some things you need to take with you</u>	40
<u>Health Issues</u>	42
<u>Australian Overseas Embassies and Consulates</u>	43
<u>Our Travel Agent, Overseas Flights and Baggage</u>	44
<u>Coming Home</u>	47
- The Student’s perspective	
- The Parents’ perspective	
- What can be done to help	
<u>Rotary – Its Beginnings, Rotary Today and our District 9520</u>	48
<u>2012 Outbound Student Details</u>	50
<u>D9520 Youth Exchange Committee Details</u>	52
<u>Your Australian District and Sponsor Club Details</u>	53
<u>Your Overseas District and Host Club Details</u>	54
<u>Departure Checklist</u>	55
<u>Key Contacts</u>	56

The compulsory monthly report forms for students and the club counsellor quarterly report forms are on the Youth Exchange web site. These report forms should be filled in and submitted online from the D9520 Youth Exchange website at

<http://9520.ryea.org.au/>

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

THE EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER in your host country is

.....

112 is the international standard emergency number which can only be dialled on a digital mobile phone.

Quotes from students:

“Be grateful for every experience, including the bad, the bad are simply steep learning curves, you will come out a bigger person. Smile, be enthusiastic and say thank you”.

“For every good time you’re bound to have a tough one, trust in your friends because they are the ones that will help you through. Smile constantly and turn every day into an adventure.”

“Be patient with the language- everyone learns at a different rate and just because someone picked it up in two months doesn’t necessarily mean that you will.”

“ The single most important thing I can say to you is to make sure that you treasure all the experiences you have, both good and bad, because it is from these that you learn the truth about yourself, the people you know, and the world around you. It is these lessons that you will carry around with you and draw on for the rest of your life, and it is these lessons that will help you grow into the amazing person you will become.”

Some words of advice from students who have returned from exchanges.

- To get the most out of your exchange you have to be prepared to participate to the fullest in family, school and Rotary life.
- Communication is the key to a successful exchange and will solve most problems.
- Nothing in your new country is better or worse than in your home country, just different.
- Be interested in all you see and hear and the people you meet; then people will be interested in you.
- Show your appreciation for everything people do for you. Remember they have volunteered to welcome us into their family and share their country and way-of-life with us. They have given us the best year of our lives – the very least we can do in return is thank them.
- Consider the consequences of any decision you may make.
- Abide by the Rotary expectations and rules; they are there for your protection.
- Embrace your new country, but do it while retaining your own basic values and personal beliefs. No-one expects you to change, just to “understand and appreciate”.

Overview of Rotary International Youth Exchange Program

The Youth Exchange Program enables students to travel to distant parts of the world to study for a year in a different environment. The impact of this program on improved international relations is difficult to quantify, but with some 8,000 Rotary Exchange students each year making close friends with people of other cultures, creeds and colours, the increased understanding between nations will be significantly strengthened. This in turn will lead to Rotary's aim, creating a more peaceful world.

Many exchange students will be future leaders in their communities. The breadth of experience and the widening of their horizons as well as the self reliance and personal development gained through the program will play a vital role in the shaping of tomorrow's world.

The program is a deeply rewarding experience for people who participate in it whether at student, club, host family, school or district level.

The basis of the program is the exchange of students who are aged 15 to 18 at the time of departure, with students from other countries. The exchange is for a period of twelve months. During their time away the student must attend a secondary school as they are away on a residential student visa.

The District Committee sends students to the country they consider most appropriate, taking into consideration the student's abilities, interests and characteristics. The Committee does however take into consideration, where possible and appropriate, the wishes of the student in relation to their choice of country. Students wishing to participate in the program **must accept the committee's decision.**

A condition of a student going on exchange is that the student, the student's parents and the student's sponsor club counsellor attend the two District briefing and orientation sessions arranged by the District Committee

Objectives of the program

- To further international goodwill and understanding by enabling the students and all who come in contact with them to appreciate that irrespective of culture, race, colour and religion all of us are basically the same.
- To make what in many cases are life-long friendships between the students and people of other countries.
- Advance the students education in a different environment.
- Broaden the student's outlook and maturity and develop their self reliance and independence.
- Have them be ambassadors for their country and Rotary.
- To experience different facets of life and culture in a new country.
- Present an opportunity for the students to meet and mix with other students from many different countries and cultures.

The Benefits of Student Exchange

It is hard for you to realise how many changes will take place as a result of your year away. There will be a marked change in your level of maturity; you will be more independent, tolerant of others, patient, and outgoing.

You will probably appreciate your own parents, brothers and sisters, friends and family more than you imagined you would, when you return. Starting a new life at home after a year overseas may be difficult but view it as another challenge, part of the exchange. You will be better equipped to cope.

The year overseas is likely to have far reaching benefits in relation to your ability to study. Your experiences and achievements will stand you in good stead when looking for employment and study opportunities.

Your opinion of life in general may change. In all probability the direction your life takes after your exchange year may be very different from what you now have planned. Go with an open mind and grasp every opportunity that presents itself.

To process of allocation of countries to students

Soon after the student District interviews, the District Committee allocates each student a country. This is based on

- your choice,
- the choice of other students
- the availability of places in overseas countries
- the Committee's assessment of your ability to cope with a particular country or language.

Once the District Committee has notified your counsellor and they have notified you of the country allocated to you, ***you and your family must fill in the acceptance of placement form.*** Once this is received by D9520 YE Committee, we post off your application papers, the guarantee forms (signed by you and your parents or guardians) and various other necessary documentation to the Youth Exchange District of the allocated country.

On receipt of these papers the overseas District committee assesses your application, and confirms or rejects their acceptance and if confirming, chooses a club in their district where they feel both you and their club will be happy. (In the vast majority of cases the overseas committee accepts the student but this cannot be guaranteed.) Some clubs may have specific requests, such as a specific gender or age, and may have specified a number of countries they wish their student to come from, or have nominated a country from which they do not want a student.

When the matched club receives your papers, they check to ensure you are appropriate and arrange for the guarantee forms to be completed. These forms must be signed by the School Principal where you will attend. The School Principal is also provided with details of the Rotary Club, the first host family and your appointed counsellor. The club also completes the information form containing details of your first family, school, the airport where you will arrive and depart and details of your monthly allowance, etc.

The overseas club retains your details and one guarantee form. They return one guarantee form and the information form to the Australian District. A copy of the information form is forwarded to you with details of the placement. You must then write introductory letters to the counsellor and your first host family.

The above procedure can take several months; some districts are quicker than others. Papers can be forwarded to more than one club before they are accepted. **It is not uncommon for some students not to know exactly where they are going until December**, though most know earlier.

You will be contacted by our Committee as soon as something definite is known by us. But sometimes you know before we do, as your overseas counsellor or first host family may write to you before we have received any details.

A Summary of the Responsibilities of Parties within the Program

All Rotary Exchange Students are to be admired. These young people have the courage at an early age to leave behind their families, their friends and all they are familiar with, and to go to a strange country where they know no one and where the surroundings and customs are strange to them. It is something many mature adults would not be brave enough to do. They deserve our help, our understanding and the support of the vast Rotary International network.

Rotarians by and large fall into the older section of our community and students need to appreciate this age difference will sometimes prevent Rotarians from thinking in the same way as a 17 year old. Students and Rotarians should endeavour to keep this difference in mind and try to see things from the other person's viewpoint. A little tolerance can make a big difference.

District 9520 YE Committee responsibilities

The District Committee's responsibilities for the outbound program include:

- Interview and final selection of club-nominated students and placing them with Rotary Districts overseas.
- In conjunction with Club Counsellors, preparing the students and their families for the student's year away from Australia.
- Training and assisting the Rotary Clubs Youth Officers and Student's Counsellors.
- Appointing a Group Coordinator who is the student, parent and Counsellors point of contact for the Committee.
- Compliance with Federal and State statutory requirements for accredited exchange organisations
- Compliance with Australian Rotary Youth exchange Student Protection Policy and certification guidelines as approved by Rotary International.
- Certifying Clubs that wish to participate in Long Term Youth Exchange and monitoring compliance by clubs with the procedures of the certification manual.
- Promotion to schools and community in cooperation with clubs

District 9520 Committee Group Coordinator responsibilities

Your Australian District Group Coordinators are here to ensure your exchange is as problem-free as possible. They are in constant contact with the D9520 YE Chairman, who can and will contact the district committee in your host country to help resolve any problem you may encounter which you require assistance with.

Your monthly on-line reports go to the Committee Chairman and your Group Coordinators (not your counsellors).

If for any reason you feel there is difficulty in resolving a problem with your host family or your club counsellors, contact your Group Coordinators on the District Committee here in Australia. They the members of this District Committee who are responsible to liaise between you and the Australian District Committee Chairman. **Advise them of any problems.** Warning signals are helpful - don't wait for a full-blown crisis. Fill out your monthly reports carefully and in detail mentioning any possible problems that could develop so your group coordinator and the Australian Chairman get a true picture of your situation. Remember, most problems can be sorted out, but real problems rarely solve themselves. **Problems** are invariably much more **easily resolved** if they are **tackled early**.

Australian Sponsor Club - Counsellor Responsibilities

Every Australian student going overseas will be allocated a counsellor from the Australian sponsoring club. This Rotarian will help you with your district application and guide you in the many things you will need to know before your departure. The counsellor will also keep in touch with you while you are away, so the better you get to know each other before you leave, the easier it will be to discuss any problems while you are overseas.

Your Australian Club Counsellor is responsible for the following:

- Providing general support in your preparations for going away.
- Briefing you on the history and function of Rotary.
- Providing you with specific information about your sponsor club.
- Arranging a supply of club banners, (we suggest six).
- Assisting you with your standard presentation and organising for you to give it to your club before you depart.
- Arranging for you and your parents to attend several club functions prior to departure.
- Arranging a farewell function at the club.
- Assisting with check-in procedures etc. at the airport.
- Corresponding regularly with you and keeping in touch with your parents.
- Relaying news of you to the club.
- Being at the airport to welcome you home.
- Organising for you to address your club on your year away.
- Helping you to settle in when you return home.
- Notifying the District Committee of any problems settling in upon your return
- Organising to come with you and your parents to the Debriefing.

Overseas Host Club Responsibilities

The overseas Host Club is responsible for

- appointment of the Host Club Counsellor who is of the same gender as the student.
- the payment of the student's standard school fees and books (where applicable) and pocket money of approximately A\$120 every month. (See also "Parents Financial Responsibilities, page 12.)

Overseas Host Club Counsellor Responsibilities

Your host club will allocate a Counsellor who should become your confidante, the person you turn to for help and advice. Write to your counsellor well before leaving Australia to discuss school arrangements and subject choices. He or she will also be able to advise about the language requirements of your host district and the extent of language courses you should undertake prior to leaving. In addition, partners of Rotarians can play an important part in the counselling role. This is particularly important where the counsellor and the student are of a different gender. You may feel more comfortable talking to your counsellor's husband or wife on some personal issues where your counsellor is not of the same gender as you. This is normal and expected, so try to get to know them both well.

The Overseas Club Counsellor should be your wise uncle or aunt for the twelve months of your exchange. Most clubs will select the person carefully for this role and appoint a person early to enable involvement from the commencement of the exchange arrangements. A counsellor is normally an experienced Rotarian, dedicated to the Exchange Program with the ability to relate to young people, who is prepared to give the time to keep in regular contact and properly counsel the student. Although caring they need to be familiar with the rules of the exchange and prepared to be firm where necessary.

They are responsible for the following:

- Arranging your initial reception and introducing you to the Overseas Club.
- Selecting, briefing and counselling of your host families.
- Facilitating your changing host families.
- Conducting an initial briefing for you on local Rotary rules.
- Enrolling you into satisfactory courses at school.

- Establishing a savings account with your signature and establishing an emergency/contingency account with both your signature and your counsellor's signature and ideally another club member's signature in case of your counsellor's absence.
- Ensuring there is regular payment of your pocket money allowance from the Overseas Club.
- Ensuring safe custody of your important documents, passport and return ticket accessible to you...
- Obtaining approval for any specific travel you request if he or she concludes the travels arrangements are appropriate.
- Assisting with travel arrangements for your return to Australia.
- Ensuring you are involved in your Overseas Club's activities.
- Making sure he/she is kept advised of everything you are doing (other than day to day activities).
- Should an emergency occur either in Australia or in your host country, your Overseas Counsellor is a vital contact and must know where you are.

Learn to confide in your counsellor (and their partner) because in times of difficulty this close association can be of great help.

Some Overseas Clubs may not appoint a Counsellor. If this is the case, make a deliberate but diplomatic approach to your Overseas Club president to have one appointed. If this is not successful, contact your Group Coordinator in Australia immediately and this will be rectified.

If you feel you cannot get along with your Overseas Counsellor or your Counsellor cannot or does not help when required, discuss this with your Overseas Club President. A change of Counsellor, for instance, may solve everyone's problems. Alternatively you may discuss the problem with your sponsor Club Counsellor or your Group Coordinator in Australia.

Your Counsellor may seem to be always busy, which may in fact be the case but they should not be too busy to talk to you. This is part of their contribution to Rotary and the Youth Exchange Programme. Again if this is the case, contact your're Club President and if this fails, you're District Group Coordinator.

Your Overseas District also has a Youth Exchange Committee Chairman is also a Rotarian in your overseas country. Your Australian Committee Chairman can and will contact the overseas Chairman if things get really serious and are not being resolved.

On the other hand, don't expect to be treated as a VIP or for your hosts or Counsellor to give in to your every whim.

Host Family Responsibilities

Host families have a very real obligation to provide exchange students with the same accommodation, food, care and love as the student would receive at home. If you don't feel that these needs are being met, don't leave the problem to escalate, talk it over with your host family. If that is difficult, approach your counsellor and if necessary your group coordinator back home.

Student Responsibilities

You have a responsibility to a large number of groups and many of these are given in more details in other sections of the book, but this list of headings should give you an overall picture of your responsibilities

To your Australian Rotary Club (Sponsor Club)

- Ensure you meet the President and the members before you go.
- Keep in touch with your club during your year away through letters, post cards and e-mails to your club counsellor. Keep them informed of your activities and new life.

To your Overseas Rotary Club (Host Club)

- Earn their trust. Get involved with the Rotarians and ask about their projects.
- Accept offers of outings etc. If you keep saying no to a new experience, there will soon be no new experiences offered.
- Try to learn something new every day.
- Show your gratitude, even if the invitation was not really to your liking.
- Smile, a bright cheerful smile will bring numerous opportunities to travel, meet people and do things.

To your Overseas Counsellor

- The counsellor is the person to whom you can turn.
- Make an effort to get to know your counsellor.
- Rotarians are usually very busy people - you will need to make contact with them - don't wait for them to contact you.

To your Australian District Committee

- You are required to complete monthly report forms and sent them to your District Committee Group Coordinator. **Under regulations relating to Rotary's Duty of Care to exchange students if we do not receive your monthly reports we are required to repatriate you.**

To your home country

- Learn to promote it well, be an Ambassador.
- People will want to know about Australia so it is up to you to tell them.
- Be prepared and know your facts.
- Remember, you are on show all the time.

To your overseas country

- Learn about recent events in your new country before you leave Australia. Study the country's history and geography.
- Find where you will be located and check the climate and expected temperatures.
- Look up the exchange rate to give yourself a 'rule of thumb' comparison of values.
- Prepare a very short speech introducing yourself for your Host Club in their language.

To your Host parents

- Within the first hour find out how to address them correctly.
- You are required to adapt to their ways, do not expect them to adapt to you.
- Establish the rules of the house and abide by them.
- Families can be quite different - do not compare.
- Do not try to manipulate the family to suit you.
- If you are required to do chores, do them willingly.
- It is the little things that count - remember birthdays and other special events.
- Fit in with your host brothers and sisters.
- You may have to work hard to obtain the trust of your host parents.
- Do not stay in your room because you cannot speak the language. You will never learn it.

- Different foods will be encountered so be prepared to try what is different.

To your Natural parents

- **Telephone or SMS home advising of your safe arrival, or of any delays along the way.**
- Set yourself a pattern in E-mailing and contacting home. Concentrate on telling them the positive side of your exchange. Do not only tell them all the bad things.
- Telephone home only on special occasions, once every two to four weeks.
- If you are homesick, do not contact home immediately; wait for a day or two. Things will look brighter.

To your School

Select your courses carefully. If you are still studying to complete year 12 and feel you can gain by doing more work on subjects you were previously doing in Australia, select them or some of them. If on the other hand you have finished high school, it may be much better to select courses such as local history, or subjects relating to the culture in your new country, or just subjects you have not had the opportunity to do at home like drama or art. Write to your host counsellor about this before arriving. The flexibility and choice will vary greatly in different countries.

If you plan to enter university on return, arrange your tertiary deferment before you leave.

A summary of things to do

- You will have new families and friends so make the most of the opportunities to meet new people.
- There is the real possibility of homesickness and loneliness so try to keep busy.
- Learn the basics of the language before you go and the teachers will take you more seriously.
- Language problems will be overcome in time, be patient but strive to learn the language as quickly as possible. Ask your host parents to speak to you in their language, even if they speak English well.
- Ensure you have a good knowledge of Rotary.
- Ensure you have a sound general knowledge of Australia
- Prepare a talk to give to your Australian and Overseas clubs.
- Expect a lot of hard work, not a holiday.
- Be prepared for the unknown.
- Once school is finished, concentrate on planning for your year away.
- Thorough preparation can save embarrassment

Your Parent's Responsibilities

Parent's Financial Responsibilities

Parents' payments to the District before their child goes overseas covers the following package which includes the resident student visa, full insurance and overseas round-trip travel costs, the blazer, rugby top, and visiting cards.

Students should have an emergency fund of an amount specified by the host district (typically \$400-500), provided by the parents and held in a bank account in their overseas district in the joint names of the student and counsellor. These emergency funds are to be used to cover the immediate costs of unexpected expenses and will be returned to the students towards the end of their stay. Students should also have a separate local account for their own every-day use. These accounts should be opened as soon as possible after their arrival.

Parents will need to supply additional spending money for daily expenses though some students have saved to cover this. (See "What do I pay for" and "What does my host family pay for" page 17). The amount needed will vary from country to country, but as a guide we recommend an amount equal to the pocket money, the equivalent of A\$120 per month. Other items some parents may be required to pay for while their son or daughter is overseas are specific school fees if their student wishes to do extra curricular

subjects which are not part of the normal school curriculum, language school fees if they are required or if the student elects to have language tuition, and school trips or excursions where fees are charged.

Any internal travel while overseas and the Rotary arranged tour is payable by parents

Responsibilities of Parents to Their Son or Daughter Overseas

The rapid advance of modern communication system can make major difficulties for exchange students, particularly in the early stages of the exchange. It is a natural tendency for parents to want to communicate and comfort their children when they first leave home and arrive in a new country where everything is strange and different. Unfortunately unless the exchange student is left on their own to a reasonable degree to settle into their new life without continual reminders of family and home, the time taken to settle in can be unnecessarily extended and can be very difficult. It can also promote and prolong homesickness. This is a bit like sending your child to school for the first time but staying in the classroom yourself. As a guide, we would suggest e-mailing or sending SMS messages no more than twice a week and after an initial phone call when they arrive, limit the calls to preferably one per four weeks certainly no more than one every two weeks. This is unless of course there is an emergency that requires a call or for a special occasions e.g. a birthday. Keep the length of calls to a sensible time. Students may be a little angry with you for this restriction of communication but they will soon come to realise they have to be left to make their way themselves in their new world. To learn independence is one of the reasons they applied to go on exchange in the first place. If you are thinking of video messaging, we would very strongly suggest this is not done until your son or daughter has been in the country for a number of months and is fully settled and quite over any homesickness. If one person only is seen to get a bit weepy, soon the whole family will be in tears. Urge your son's/daughter's friends to not forget them while they are away but to also restrict the e-mail and Facebook communications as you will be doing.

Write real letters every week or two. Include family news, paper clippings, pictures, etc. These items, no matter how trivial they may seem to you, are interesting to someone cut off from home. There is very little coverage of Australia in overseas papers. Real letters bring your student up-to-date and make them feel they are still in close touch but the time delay takes away some of the feeling of immediacy that can cause homesickness. Be careful in all forms of communication with what is said - e.g. death of the family cat.

Always be cheerful and supportive in your communications - don't make it obvious that you are missing your son or daughter. Students do need contact from home to reduce the homesickness, but **too much** contact can have the **reverse** effect. It is not unusual for some students to take several weeks to settle into their new environment and **well meaning constant contact** from **parents** can make this process **much more difficult** and take much longer.

Negotiate with your son or daughter any changes at home such as repainting or refurbishing their bedroom while they are away. A sudden surprise on arrival home can be upsetting.

Visiting Overseas

Visits by parents are to be treated with caution especially if your son or daughter has had trouble settling in. If you are going to visit, do so in the last half of the exchange but not in the last month when they are preparing to say goodbye to new families and friends. This is an emotional time for all exchange students.

WHAT DO I DO ONCE I AM ACCEPTED AS AN EXCHANGE STUDENT?

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Once the District Committee has notified your counsellor and they have notified you of the country allocated to you, *you and your family must fill in the acceptance of placement form*. **This form was given to you and your parents at the District Interview.**

IF THIS FORM IS NOT COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO THE YE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN YOU WILL NOT BE GOING ON EXCHANGE.

FROM NOW UNTIL YOUR DEPARTURE

As soon as you know which country you are going we **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** you to **arrange private tuition and devote adequate time to learn the conversational essentials of the language of that country prior to departure**. Starting to learn the “conversational” language as early as possible ensures you gain the maximum benefit from your exchange. You have seven or so months between your acceptance into the exchange program and your departure. This is plenty of time to learn basic conversational skills in your new language. Do not wait until after your end-of-year exams even though this may seem a distraction from your aim to do well in these. **The importance of having a basic understanding of your new language CANNOT BE STRESSED ENOUGH.** Your first weeks abroad will be so much more enjoyable if you can use the language to make friends and understand at least a little of what is being said in school. It has been a great shock to past students to feel so helpless in a foreign country because of a lack of understanding of what is being said to them and around them.

“I wish I had spent more time learning my new language, I have almost wasted the first part of my exchange because I couldn’t understand or talk to anyone ”...this is the type of comment we hear all the time from students during their first six months of their year away. Your counsellor and family should assist you to find appropriate books and tuition especially for languages that are not taught at your school. but take the initiative to ask for help if it is not immediately forthcoming – it is YOUR exchange and it is up to you to prepare for it as best you can.

All Australian Rotary Exchange students are required to have a medical and dental check up during the month prior to departure for insurance purposes. Any remedial work on pre-existing conditions such as wisdom teeth should be done here before departure. They are not covered by insurance and are usually very expensive to be done overseas.

When placement with a host Rotary Club has been confirmed, the student should commence correspondence immediately with the first host family and the overseas Rotary Club counsellor. The parents should also correspond with the host family.

Keep the District Committee, your parents AND your host parents /counsellor informed of any delays or alterations to arrangements with your travel to your host country. Once you have reached your host parent’s home and settled into you room check the time difference back in Australia. At an appropriate time back home, phone your family and let them know you have arrived safely.

YOUR EXCHANGE YEAR – WHAT TO DO AND WHAT TO EXPECT

Set out to impress in your new country by presenting a smart, friendly and appealing image. Outlandish hairstyles and colours, body piercing other than earrings, tattoos and other extremes of dress and attitude are not allowed. Rotarians are generally conservative so you are expected to present yourself accordingly.

Your Host Family

Don't Be Too Demanding

Your families are expected to look after you, but at the same time live their normal lives, lives you must fit in with. Do not ask them to be running you around and doing things for you. If they offer to do something extra for you, take you on holidays to exciting places or even another country, it is great, but don't expect it. Bear in mind you are a family member not a guest and you are expected to assume the responsibilities of a family member.

Family Understanding

No host parents will be the same just as no students are the same. We all have different views and expectations and it is very important for you to realise that you are experiencing a different culture, food and values and may react differently to another student in the same situation. Your host parents will in all likelihood understand this so if you have a problem explain it to them; talk it over and find a solution before the problem becomes a big one.

Family Differences

One very important fact to remember is that all families are different and will do and expect you to do things in different ways. No family is right and another wrong, they are just different. As a member of a family you are expected to do things their way, **as long as you feel safe and comfortable doing so**. If you are asked or expected to do something that you are uncomfortable with, explain politely to them that you "*would rather not because...*" – you will find they WILL understand if you explain your concerns calmly and politely. As a student you are the one who must adapt to your family's ways. They do not have to adapt to you. This can mean several changes in the way you do something during your year. Learning about different people's approach to things and adapting to fit in is one of the things Rotary Youth Exchange is all about.

Don't Forget to Express Your Gratitude

If you show that you are grateful for the things people do for you, you are much more likely to receive more help and opportunities to do things and go places.

Helping in the Home

A few jobs that are naturally expected of you and are very much appreciated by a host mother are keeping your room tidy, offering to help around the home, making your own bed and either putting your dirty washing out or finding out how to do your own and when is the right time to do it, helping with meal preparation and doing the dishes. Other little jobs most host mothers will appreciate may be hanging out, bringing in or folding up the laundry, sweeping the floor, putting the shopping away or feeding the pets. Some host parents will openly ask you to help, but often they may just hope that you will see what needs doing and either offer or just do it. Ask in a way that shows you want to help, rather than ask what is expected of you.

Always Ask

If you want to request a favour of your family such as to bring a friend home, especially if it is for a meal, ask your parents if it is ok before you extend the invitation. Most families will be happy to oblige if it does not clash with anything they have planned and if you ask first.

Family Confidentiality

What each family does is their business. You must respect their confidence and not discuss with others

the way they did things or what they allowed or did not allow you to do. If you are indiscrete, the person you tell will learn not to trust you. Nothing will upset a new host family more than to say when you are asked to do something, "My last host parents didn't make me do that".

The Cost of the Phone, Fax and E-mail

From some overseas countries phone calls can be very expensive and in any case should not be made often. Find out what your host parents want you to do about the cost of all types of communications. Some parents may suggest you make a very quick call to your parents and ask them to phone you back so the cost goes on their account. Other parents may charge you each month for calls made and any time spent on the net. A prepaid calling card could be an easy alternative. SMS messages are economical from most countries if you get a local SIM card for your mobile phone.

When can I use the Phone, Fax, Computer or E-mail?

Discuss this with your host family. Remember other members of the family will also want to use this equipment. In most families there is probably only one phone line, so whenever the phone, fax or internet connection is being used, no one else can use the other equipment and no incoming calls for the family can be received. Many families have limits like no more than 10 minutes per call, and a total of 20 minutes per day. Many will stipulate what time to telephone or what time the net can be used. Remember that even if you are using the computer off line other family members may also want to use it, so computer use also needs to be agreed upon. Do not download large files such as music, games or videos and be careful not to open doubtful attachments. You will not be popular if you unwittingly download a virus on your host parents' computer. Alternatives are school or library computers or internet cafes.

What do my host family pay for

- Your accommodation and food as they would for their own children.
- Your transport to and from school by whatever means they choose.
- Generally small items like toiletries, but you should confirm this with each host family.
- If your family takes you somewhere locally, they will normally pay your costs.

(See also Questionnaire for First Night with New Host Family pages 37 and 38.).

What do I pay for

- The costs associated with going anywhere with friends or going somewhere on your own for a day
- Any extra food or drinks you want to buy
- Any clothes you need
- If you are offered the opportunity to go to stay somewhere different with a host family's relatives or other Rotarians, you may be asked to pay the travel expenses if you want to go.
- The cost of organised Rotary trips.

When must I be home at night

This is for your host parents to decide and will vary from family to family. The host parents have the final say in this matter and you must comply with their wishes.

Smoking

In your application papers you signed a statement saying you do not smoke. Your host families have accepted you on that basis. Rotary expects you to honour that commitment. Action may be taken if you are found smoking and continual disregard for this rule could see you returned home.

What other things must I do

Your host parents are acting for your natural parents and you must abide by their decisions in all matters. Remember they do not know you nearly as well as your real parents and so may be much more cautious in what they allow you to do.

If I really think my host parents are being very unreasonable what do I do

Firstly discuss the matter with them. Try to see their point of view.

If you are still very unhappy with the outcome and feel your host parents are being very unreasonable, talk to your counsellor. Remember you are also welcome to contact your Group Coordinator in Australia to help with and problems you cannot resolve yourself, and they can call on the District 9520 District Chairman to speak with his counterpart in your host country.

If I have a problem at school what do I do

Talk to the teacher about it. Talk to the schools student counsellor. If this does not seem to work, talk it over with your host parents. They will try to help or get your host club counsellor to do so.

Your Obligations to Your Host Rotary Club

As your exchange has been made possible by Rotary, your first obligation is to your host Rotary Club. You will be expected to attend club meetings and other functions of your club when asked. Some clubs expect the student to attend most club meetings; other may not. Talk to your counsellor to find out what your club expects of you. If there is a special function your club wants you to attend, this must come first before other commitments. You need to remember that at all times you are an ambassador for Rotary Youth Exchange, your Australian club and overseas club. The continuation of the Youth Exchange Program depends on your creating a favourable impression.

Rotary Talks

Most clubs will ask you to address the club and tell the members about yourself, your country, etc. sometime after you arrive. They also will expect you to give a farewell speech before you depart. Other Rotary clubs as well as other organisations may also ask you to speak about your country. This is an excellent opportunity to improve your public speaking skills as well as giving people in your host country a better understanding of Australia and its culture.

(Refer to Student Presentations page 30.)

Attending School Overseas

Level of Academic Achievement

You are expected to obtain the best results you can. Depending on your knowledge of the language when you arrive, you may not be able to do well in some subjects, but you are expected to do your best. You are required to do any homework set, if you are able. In most instances your year away is not going to help you academically for a school year at home. If this is the case hopefully you will be able to choose subjects that interest you which you don't have the opportunity to do at home. As well as school overseas being compulsory, school is also the place where you will make the friends that will be the most significant aspect of your exchange.

Your school experience will vary greatly on whether you are placed in an English speaking or non-English speaking country.

English speaking schools

There may be high expectations that you will maintain a specified grade average. You may have the opportunity to choose subjects that present you with a challenge or that will help you with your future studies when you return home. This will help you to maintain interest in your study program. On the

other hand there may be subjects such as ones relating to the history or other subjects on your host country which would be very interesting
Be prepared to give lessons (geography, history and general lifestyle) about Australia.

Non-English speaking schools

- Your first challenge is to master the language, as you will be unable to participate effectively at school until you have.
- You may be able to assist teachers in presenting English lessons (but ensure you don't become over-committed because you need lots of opportunities to practice your new language). Be prepared to give lessons or talks about Australia when you have sufficient language skills.
- Take your present school syllabus, the schools postal and e-mail addresses, telephone and fax numbers so you can consult with your present school if necessary in helping to decide your subjects.

Coping with School problems

- Approach members of the school staff for help with problems. If you search there will normally be someone with whom you can communicate freely. Some teachers are reluctant to help students that do not know the language and are not studying seriously. Other exchange students who have come for a “gap year” may have disheartened them. Make it clear to them that you are here to learn and want to master the language so that you can fully participate.
- Try to participate in any extra curricular activities such as drama, music, sport or dance if they are available. This will help you assimilate into the school.
- It may be difficult to be accepted in established social groups. Don't push too hard. You will be accepted in time, but it can often take about six months before you feel you are fully part of a group. Some schools have many exchange students from various countries so you may not be seen as anyone special.
- Find out about all the implications of your year away for your future studies, i.e. completing your Secondary School Certificate or future Tertiary courses - acceptance/deferral, change of mind?

School Attendance

Rotary Youth Exchange is a student exchange program. **All exchange students therefore must attend school regularly** and have your host parents report to the school if you are unable to attend if you are sick. If an opportunity occurs for you to do something special which involves missing a couple of days of school, you may have your host parents ask the school if you can have time off. Students who have been trying hard at school and have been well behaved and helpful are most likely to be given time away.

School Holidays

Any travel opportunities that arise and are approved should be planned in the school holidays

Adapting to Your School

You are sure to find many things about your new school which are different from your school back home. It is your job to adjust and fit into your school life here and accept the differences.

Problem Solving

During the exchange problems will arise. It is important these problems are identified early and handled appropriately. The student's Group Coordinator on the District Committee should be informed of any problems so they can act where appropriate **to solve them before they become major difficulties.**

Communication is the single most important aspect of any Rotary project, including the Youth Exchange Program, yet it is the one in which people can often fall down. **Students, counsellors, club members and host families must work hard to ensure good communication is maintained.** We ask the student to interact with people of a wide diversity of age, culture and creed and in many cases this has to be done in a language initially basically unknown to the student. Inevitably some misunderstandings will arise and need to be promptly corrected. If sponsor clubs initiate communication to build a relationship with the host clubs in the early stages of the exchange it will make problem solving so much easier if it is needed.

Coping with Early Problems

A description of some of the first problems all exchange students face follows including the language, what you should be doing, homesickness, and making friends. Knowing the rules and what is expected of you will go a long way towards making your early assimilation into your new home and community run smoothly; so please read the rest of this section carefully.

Very often it is some of the very simple things that can cause problems and stress to a student when they first come to live with a host family or change families. To help sort out some of these problems, we have prepared a list of questions for you go through with each host family when you first come to live in their house. It can be found in this manual on pages 37 and 38.

The Language

You should have undertaken to gain a basic "conversational" knowledge of your new language in the seven or so months since you accepted your exchange, however you may still find the spoken language difficult to understand in a day-to-day setting at first, and even those going to an English speaking country may find that people do not understand our Australian idioms, strange expressions and accent.

With the knowledge you gained before leaving you will quickly start to pick up more and more. People are different and some will learn very quickly while others may need significantly longer. It's a bit like music, where some just seem to have the talent to pick it up quickly. The difference is that everyone can learn to be good at a language if they persist, whereas some people will never become good musicians. If you find it difficult and see others doing well, do not give up. In four months most students get a good understanding of what is being said and after six months you will be thinking in your adopted language.

Language differences can cause a breakdown in communication between the family and the student. Just as it is hard for the student to understand and translate into their new language, it is difficult for host family members to speak slowly or try to comprehend what the student is trying to say. Many students have found it helpful to (after asking permission to do so!) stick "Post-It" notes around the house with the words for various things written on it – it can also be a big source of amusement to your host family but they WILL appreciate your attempt to learn their language and will probably help you accordingly.

Home Sickness

This is something almost all students experience, some more than others. It is normal. There are a number of things you can do which will help.

- Keep busy; find people to talk to and things to do. Do not stay alone in your room.
- Smile. It may be hard to do when you are feeling unhappy, but it helps a lot. Other people will do things with you if you look cheerful. (They don't want to spend time with someone who is miserable.) It is also easier for you to feel better if you are smiling. The famous "Rotary Smile" has helped many students over homesickness.
- Do not phone home. Hearing your parents' voices will only reinforce the fact that you miss them. Write an e-mail instead (but make sure it hide the fact you are homesick, as this will worry them), or better yet send them a "real" letter. Tell them about what you have been doing and all the positive things you have experienced – it will remind you of all the good things as well! Don't communicate too often, and as tempting as it is, **STAY OFF Facebook** - it will only remind you of what your friends are doing back home without you. You need to force yourself to think of the positive aspects of your new life and not concentrate on home.

What is home sickness like?...this is a quote from a student who has been overseas for 7 months when asked what we should brief our outbound students on:

"...Tell them what home sickness IS, not just say that it is something everyone will experience. It is when you cry for no reason at all, when you start crying irrationally in the middle of class, walking to school or at dinner with your host family. And it isn't because you are having a bad time, or that you want to go home, it is just because you are so far from home for such a long time. And also tell them that after 3-4 months they will be fine, once they have found their place as an exchange student in their new country..."

Friends

School is one of your best opportunities to make friends. Choose them wisely. Although it is often easier to make friends with other exchange students who are experiencing similar problems, it is important you make friends also with the local young people. Remember you are on exchange to get to know the culture of your host country. Having local friends is one of the best ways to do this. At school or in your local community playing sport, being involved in music, drama, or debating are other ways to make friends.

Weight Gain

If you find that you are putting on weight, do not starve yourself or refuse to eat. For many people weight gain is a natural reaction to stress. Explain the situation to your host mother, and ask if she will cooperate by providing smaller serves or substitute fruit as snacks rather than the notorious Tim Tams or other chocolates. Tim Tams seem to be a hit everywhere as an Aussie snack but save them for your friends if this is not successful, do not worry unnecessarily as in most cases the excess weight will be shed quickly after returning to Australia.

Family Difficulties

You may encounter domestic disputes, jealousy, restrictions by host parents, boredom, tiredness and feelings of wanting time on your own. In spite of all this it is very important to join in the family life and keep busy.

THE REWARDS AND PITFALS OF LIVING IN ANOTHER CULTURE

Absorbing a New Culture

Youth Exchange – A Great Opportunity

Youth Exchange for the big majority of young people who participate in it is a great experience. On exchange a student will see many new and interesting sights, have the opportunity to do things they have never done before, in many cases learn another language as well as make new friends.

But there is a lot more you can gain

All of this is very worth while and can, but sometimes doesn't, lead to the student having a really great exchange, a life-changing experience.

This will happen if you, the student, are able to absorb and become part of the culture of your host country. When you are able to think and talk and act like the locals, you have really made it.

Becoming Bicultural - A Mind-Blowing Experience

The students who return and talk of their mind-blowing exchanges all tell how they became part of their local community. At the beginning of these student's exchanges they were confronted with what seemed to them to be some unusual attitudes, funny habits and strange behaviour by the locals. These ways and habits, however, gradually became normal to them until they felt very comfortable living that way. They understood why the people thought and did as they did. These students *have become bicultural*.

Switching Cultures

After you return to your own country, your exchange completed, some things done there may now seem a little strange and in some instances it may take some time and effort for you to fit back into your own culture. This will happen but perhaps not before you decide something you have experienced in your new country is a preferable way of thinking or doing something than the way you used to do it before. It is a wonderful advantage to have had the opportunity to select what you believe is, for you, the better of two cultures.

A bicultural student will find they are always able with very little effort to return to their country of exchange and fit back into that way of life. Once absorbed, the ability to appreciate your host country's culture is a skill you will retain for life.

Bonus Benefits

A further benefit a bicultural person has is their understanding that *all* cultures are different and there are good reasons for this. This brings about a tolerance and understanding of different races all of whom may seem strange, even wrong, to a person who has only experienced their own culture. This tolerance and understanding of others is a big step in achieving friendship between nations and hence world peace.

How to Get There - Problems Along the Way

Learning a New Culture Takes Effort

Ok, I am going on exchange, everybody agrees it is good to become bicultural, it will just happen, won't it? No. It's not that simple and modern technology has made it harder.

Can You Leave Your Own Culture Behind?

It is very difficult, almost impossible to absorb a new culture if you are still living your own culture. Sure you may be living and going to school in another country, almost the opposite side of the earth to where you come from, but thanks to Skype, Facebook etc, you can still chat to your family and friends and follow in real time everything which is going on in their lives. You can know everything about that party your friends are going to back home, know who is dating whom, what your mother is making for dinner tonight, etc. etc..

Comforting, But Not Why You Are On Exchange

In other words modern technology can enable you to remain immersed in your own culture. It may feel comforting to do this when everything about you including the language is strange, but this is not why you

decided to go on exchange. You went on exchange to experience another way of life, experience new things and to absorb another culture.

Be Strong, Make the Break

The only way to achieve this is to be strong and explain to your friends back home and your parents you have not got time to do everything you need to do in your new life and keep fully in touch with them. Don't forget them, of course, but stand back a bit; give yourself decent spaces of time to be fully involved in your new life.

Some Guidelines

You are strong or you would not have come on exchange in the first place and you will probably work out before long what sort of distance you need to place yourself from your old world. Plan to give yourself at least a number of days between any form of contact back home, particularly direct contact like Skype and phone calls. Only you can judge how long these periods without interruption to your new life need to be.

Hard, but Worth It

This will seem hard at first, but the rewards of breaking into your new culture are worth it a thousand times over. For the rest of your life you will be so pleased you did it.

Guidelines for Absorbing Your New Culture

Having said all this, getting away from your old culture is one thing. You still have to work at absorbing your new one. There are a few key things you need to do to achieve this.

- Accept things are different in your new country not right or wrong, good or bad, just different and eventually you will find out different for a good reason that initially is not obvious.
- Learn your new language (if you have one) as quickly as you can. Until you can communicate in the native language of your new country, you have an uphill battle. It may seem almost impossible in the early stages, but don't give up; work at it; it will come.
- Be friendly, smile, offer to help and people will help you.
- Enthusiastically grab any opportunity to do something or go somewhere whenever you are offered a chance.
- Take an interest in all that is going on in your new home, your school, your town and your country. Ask questions even if you have to point and use sign language.
- If you are in a country with a foreign language, tell people not to talk to you in your own language even if they can. The more practice you get learning your new language, the quicker you will succeed.

What Could Happen – Avoid It

The Consequences of Not Coming to Grips with Your New Culture

If you do not distance yourself to a degree from your own culture and do not make an effort to absorb your new one, you might get through your exchange, you might not, but either way you will not get nearly as much enjoyment out of it as you might and you could have a really miserable time.

Culture Stress

Even with the best attitude and approach you will probably after a few weeks feel some stress from your new culture and if you do not make progress absorbing and understanding this new culture, the stress can build up.

The Relationship Between Culture Stress and Homesickness

For these feeling homesick (for some this is very slight and passes rapidly) homesickness and culture stress are very much interwoven. Homesickness is missing your family, friends and previous lifestyle. The multitude of differences between your life in your new country and back home together with the stress of trying to understand all the new things you are now being bombarded with makes you tired and magnifies the differences and sometimes brings on the feeling of homesickness. Understanding and appreciating the

differences in your new life will ease the brain overload and stop you feeling so weary. This will help homesickness a lot.

What Sometimes Happens

On arrival in your new country there will be interesting things to do and see. People will treat you with kindness as someone special. You will feel great but this probably will not last. You gradually come to realise that you do not really understand some or much of what they are doing, or why they expect you to do things the way they do. You may find yourself colliding with their ideas. Why don't they hang out like your group does at home? Why aren't they interested in the things your friends back home like? They may even think you are rude and you do not know what you have done. In some situations they expect you to understand their way of doing things. They may not think to explain their differences and sometimes they can't explain them. This inevitably produces in you a sense of confusion, uncertainty and a longing for home and friends. This is cultural stress.

What Could This Lead To?

Some students find that they start to think that everything about their new country and its people is not as good as at home. They find the only time they are happy is when they are communicating with friends and family at home and want to do this more and more. They may find they want to withdraw into their room to avoid the confusion and minimize the discomfort, or not wanting to get out of bed in the morning. It is a natural response to stress. They may become angry, frustrated and hostile and even start to blame other people for their pain and uncertainty. They may do things that later they will find difficult to understand they could actually have done. Tempers are much more easily lost and tears come readily. The people are stupid and their food is terrible.

What Are The Risks Of This Happening To Me?

A number of factors will determine if you will succeed and how hard it will be –

- First and foremost is your attitude. A positive attitude and determination to succeed is vital.
- Learning a new language is difficult but even speaking the same language is no guarantee you will be immune from culture shock. All cultures are different and students whose cultures are as similar as those of Australians and Americans have suffered from culture stress if they do not have the right attitude and approach.
- The time it will take you if you have a new language to learn to reasonably communicate in your new language will vary. (Some students even with the best effort take longer than others. Reckon on between three to five months if you try hard.)
- The amount of variation between your old culture and your new one. The most difficult are widely diverse cultures like Japanese or Brazilian compared to a western culture.

What Happens To Most Students

The large majority of students do make the effort and come to understand and appreciate their new culture. For the rest of their lives they feel that learning to live in and fully understand their second culture was the most important lesson they ever learned. It brings them the great satisfaction of having a broader understanding of the world and people as well as life-long friends from other countries.

Summing Up

Being an exchange student is not easy, but it brings immense rewards. For most it is THE BEST YEAR OF THEIR LIVES.

Local Laws and Rotary Exchange Rules

a) Local Laws

Be aware that laws in a foreign country are often different to Australian laws. What is legal here may be illegal in your host country and vice versa. Get the advice of your host family and counsellor on anything

you have doubts about.

b) The Four Major Rotary Exchange Rules

Rotary has in addition to the local laws of your host country, four very important rules. They are known as the four Ds. If you break the first one you will **be sent home immediately**. If you break the others, you run a strong risk of **being sent home**.

1. Drugs

The taking or possession of any illegal drugs is strictly prohibited. This also applies to marijuana, a drug that in some countries is not looked on as such a serious offence. Immediately a student is found to be taking illegal drugs, they will be sent home. No excuses are considered.

2. Drinking

It is strictly forbidden for any exchange student sponsored by District 9520 to consume alcoholic drinks in public. The legal drinking age varies considerably in some countries but Rotary International rules state that all exchange students should refrain. It is however possible that your host family may occasionally invite you to have a drink with the family meal. If such an invitation is offered, you do not need to accept if you do not want to, but you may.

3. Driving

The driving of any motorised vehicle is strictly forbidden. **To do so violates your insurance policy** and puts your Rotary Club at tremendous risk should anything happen to you. A motorised vehicle to avoid any confusion covers any form of powered vehicle even down to such things as ride-on lawn mowers or quad bikes on farms.

4. Dating

A serious, romantic connection with another person is strongly discouraged. The aim of a Rotary Exchange is for you to experience as many different aspects of your new life and culture as possible and to mix with as many people as possible. If your life is centred on one person, this will not happen. Any student found to be having sexual intercourse could be sent home immediately.

c) Compulsory Monthly Report Forms

In order that we can see how you are getting along and to see if there is anything we should do to help you during your year away, we have produced monthly report forms. They are on the website <http://9520.ryea.org.au/>

Failure to return monthly report forms violates Rotary's duty of care and **can cause you to be sent home**. Please ensure you send them on time.

In many instances these forms have enabled us to help solve problems before they get serious, so be honest and open in them.

Reports are confidential and are only seen by the D9520 YE Committee Chairman, Outbound Coordinator and club councillor.

Travel by students and their natural parents

Student Travel

It is a privilege to have been chosen to go on an exchange to another country. The aim of your year overseas is to live and study in your host country, not to be a tourist. Hosts tire very quickly of students who are always seeking to go on trips. You need to settle into the life of your family so you really get to know them and their friends. This won't happen if you are travelling from one tourist spot to another.

- The first thing to remember about travelling other than organised Rotary travel is that it is a **privilege not a right**. The only travelling you are automatically entitled to participate in is the organised 'Rotary Tour.'
- Keep in mind your host parents want you to enjoy yourself, but like your own parents, they may not want to spend time taking you places every weekend.
- Do not compare your travel opportunities with those of other students. Where you are placed may determine the amount of travel that is practical. Remember, there is a cost for all travel and someone must pay.
- Travel can only be undertaken if your absence does not offend your hosts, your club and others who provide hospitality to you during your stay. It must also not break school attendance requirements.
- The host club, counsellor and host families are responsible for your safety and wellbeing. With this in mind as the first priority, they must assess any travelling you want to do.
- Travel opportunities come to those students who work for them. If you are bright and cheerful (that Rotary smile) and take an interest in your host families and club members and other people you meet, you will be more likely to find people will want to take you places and invitations will come.
- Have fun and accept your year for what it is – a wonderful chance to see and learn about another country and another culture.

Some travelling which is forbidden

- Travelling by light aircraft is not covered by your Rotary insurance and is therefore strictly forbidden. Light aircraft covers all planes that are not licensed to carry passengers. If there is any doubt the host parent or counsellor should ask to see a certificate of currency for passenger liability. Travel on smaller planes that are licensed but are not scheduled commercial flights requires permission from your parents and is discouraged.
- Travel on gliders, ultra-light planes or hang-gliders are strictly forbidden.
- Hitch hiking can be dangerous and it is strictly forbidden for all exchange students.

A Visit by your Parents & Friends to your Host Country during the Exchange Year

What is allowed and not allowed?

- Visits by close friends (i.e. boyfriends, girlfriends or school friends) **are prohibited**.
- Visits by relatives and family friends can occur but should be kept to a minimum length of stay and not take the student away from their host family.

Each host club and district will have its own rules for parent visits. The following are the rules our district imposes on parents and others visiting students hosted in District 9520. We believe they are very practical and can be taken as a guide to the restrictions most overseas Rotary Districts are likely to have in place on this matter. Our Rotary Youth Exchange program puts restrictions on visits by parents, friends or relatives as such visits have the potential to unsettle the student and may conflict with the objectives of the Exchange Program. On the other hand short visits by the parents within the guidelines can be **rewarding** giving the parents an insight into the life the student is leading.

Each visit will be judged on its merits and may be approved or refused depending on the nature of the proposed visit. Earliest possible notice of visits will help negotiation for approval.

Should the student's exchange be partially financed by a scholarship, **parents must gain approval from the D9520 YE Committee before making arrangements to visit.** Failure to do so may result in part or all of the scholarship money needing to be repaid to the D9520 YE Committee.

Timing of parents visit

- Visits are not allowed in the first five months as they may severely unsettle the student.
- Visits should be planned to take place in the second six months.
- Visits must never occur in the last month.
- Your parents should consult with you as near to their planned visit as possible to ensure you are comfortable with their coming and that you feel you can cope with the emotional stress of your parents' coming and then saying goodbye to them when they leave.
- **Where possible all visits are to take place in school holidays.** If your parents wish to take you touring this must occur during school holidays and should not exceed one week.
- Parents should always consult with their student's host club to be sure all aspects of their visit will fit in with the club and host parent activities and holiday plans.
- Many clubs will be happy to organise the parents' stay in their town to make it more memorable.

Correspondence

As a Rotary Exchange student, you will have many responsibilities. One that will quite often make huge demands on your time is correspondence. This is an essential ingredient in every successful exchange.

The frequency with which you write and the length of the letters will depend on many factors e.g. how busy you are at different times, what access you have to E-mail and the number of people you have to write to. Talk to your family and friends before you go, so everyone, (particularly you) has an expectation of how often they will hear from you. It is nice sometimes to write a different letter to special people, but there is absolutely no reason that you can't write a generic letter, and attach it to a small personalised one to each of your friends. Think about who will read these emails or letters and make a good impression with spelling and grammar, rather than using SMS expressions that only your school friends will understand.

You may write a letter in the depths of a bout of homesickness, which you realise on reading the next day is too morose, and is better left unmailed. Whenever you write when despondent, don't post the letter straight away. Many things appear better the next day.

It usually helps to number your letters in the event one goes astray. This applies particularly if you are in a country with an unreliable postal system.

Correspondence these days generally comes in three forms e-mails (sometimes faxes where e-mail is not available), hand-written letters and instant electronic texting (eg MSN, Facebook, etc). All forms have their place.

Snail Mail

Don't ignore posted correspondence (snail mail). There is something much more personal about a real letter. It has your handwriting on it, little sketches you might do, enclosures you have cut out to send. It is however comparatively expensive and a bit more time consuming.

E-mail

E-mail and text messages on the other hand are quick, cheap, flexible, can be personalised and generally widely available. You can e-mail a lengthy epistle to a multitude of addressees simultaneously (use bcc so the addresses do not appear on each email). Most students can get e-mail access. Many families now have e-mail, and most schools allow students to use the school facility to correspond with home. (Faxes are a substitute for e-mail where this is not available and are invaluable where a particular document needs to be transmitted. Faxed signatures are often legally accepted.)

MSN, Facebook, etc.

This form of communication should be VERY CAREFULLY USED. Not only can the instant communication remind you of what your friends are doing back home without you (and therefore bring on homesickness) but you would be amazed what sort of things end up on Facebook, and WHERE they end up!— things you may have been involved in either directly or indirectly, things you may not have posted yourself (or had any control over the distribution of) but which put you and Rotary Youth Exchange in a bad light or are misinterpreted. It is a fact that last year 5 students were sent home to Australia after only a few months of their exchange because of pictures put on Facebook that were seen in a completely different part of the world. SO BE CAREFUL and chose your friends and activities wisely!

Who do you need to correspond with?

Family and Friends

In most cases, there would be no exchange if it were not for the sacrifices made by parents. In addition, don't think that you will be the only one having difficulty in adjusting. Your parents will be worried about your safety, and they will miss you probably more than you miss them, after all YOU are the one having all the new experiences. You will have a whole new world to replace what you left at home. All they have is an empty room. You owe it to them to be in touch regularly. Be positive in your outlook. Do not grizzle

unnecessarily. It is pointless raising a significant problem that they can do absolutely nothing about. This will only cause them anxiety.

Think of your extended family as well. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins etc. will also be very interested in how you are getting on. Your letters will be quoted so be careful of what you say and write. Don't use expressions or descriptions that can be wrongly interpreted in your letters. Write some family letters that your mother can copy and pass around the family and friends who are interested.

Your sister or brother will be lost without you - this may not seem possible but it will be a fact so don't forget to write to them once in a while and don't forget birthdays etc.

Australian Club

You owe it to your sponsor club to stay in touch and tell them about your exchange. They will be very interested. Remember without them, you would not be on exchange now. In addition, remember that you may be the yardstick your club is using to decide whether or not they will participate in the program next year. It would be terrible if your failure to keep them informed resulted in their withdrawing from the Exchange Program next year, thereby denying someone else the opportunity to do what you are now doing.

Agree on your frequency and method of communication with your counsellor before you go. In most cases, he or she will be happy to pass on to the club information you send. You might also find out your counsellor's birthday or maybe the Club President's and send a card at the appropriate time. A Christmas card to the club in early December would also be a nice touch.

Australian District Committee Chairman

Complete your monthly report on time. Be open and honest with everything. Some things that you wouldn't say to your parents may be applicable in your monthly report. The District Chairman is interested in knowing that you are having a good time, but is equally interested in hearing about any problem big or small that you may be experiencing. There will not be much that happens to you that we haven't experienced. We can also very quickly contact our counterparts in your country if there is a problem that needs action. A letter, e-mail or card occasionally to your Group Coordinator (Refer page 51) is also much appreciated and a little more personal than the required reports.

Regrettably, there have been many exchanges that have ended prematurely, despite monthly reports glibly proclaiming "I have no problems". There are 3 truisms that you should always remember:

1. Your Australian District Chairman or Group Coordinator can't do a thing about it, unless they know there is a problem.
2. All problems are easier to deal with sooner rather than later.
3. If we do not receive your monthly reports, we have no option other than to repatriate you.

Student presentations

You could be asked to speak at a variety of different venues and to a variety of different audiences. Be prepared to speak at your Overseas Rotary Club, your school, social gatherings, Interact Groups, Rotary District Conference, Church Groups, Rotaract Groups and Youth Groups.

The secret of successful public speaking is:

- **Planning** your speech to suit the audience.
- **Thorough Preparation** - the content material. Make sure you have interesting facts that are correct.
- **Practice** – Try your speech in front of the mirror and then to your host family or a friend. There is no substitute for practice.
- **Presentation** - Speak **clearly** and **slowly**, use pauses to effect. Remember you have a funny accent.
- **Timing** – Make sure when you practice your speech it **takes the time allocated**. Meetings must stay on time. You will not be thanked if you go well overtime no matter how interesting your talk was.
- **Questions** are generally permitted at the end of a talk. Allow 3 or 4 minutes for questions from the audience. If you do not know an answer, do not guess. Undertake to find out the answer if you can.
- **Evaluation** - Listen to the comments of your audience and make the appropriate adjustments before your next talk.

Before you leave Australia build your confidence in public speaking by:

- Asking your parents to listen critically to your speeches.
- Keeping a notebook to write down ideas or things you notice that could be useful for a speech.
- Before you leave most Australian Rotary Clubs will ask you to present to them the talk you plan to give your overseas club. After you have given your talk ask them to comment.

Power Point Presentations

The following hints will assist you if you plan to illustrate your talk with slides or power point presentation with digital photos. These can be stored on a memory card or USB. Keep photos on a CD. Avoid text only presentations.

- Become familiar with the potential audience, their background knowledge of what you are going to talk about, age, common interests, possible language problems, etc.
- Select the photos you wish to complement your talk. These slides should explain or illustrate what you are intending to say.
- Don't overfill the talk with slides. 12 good appropriate slides are much more effective in a 15 to 20 minute talk than 25 unrelated slides. You must give the audience time to look at each slide while you are talking. Don't try to cover too much material in any one address. If you are introducing yourself to your new club, do just that - don't aim to cover all aspects of the life in Australia, select a few good close up slides of your family, your home, your school and town. Remember your hosts are interested in you as a person and your own environment.
- The night before your speech, edit the PowerPoint and if possible have a trial of the equipment you will be using.
- On arrival at the venue check details of the room including where you will stand to talk, the locations of light switches, the position of the screen to ensure everyone can see it easily, preferably without having to move from their dinner positions. Check the remote control works from where you will stand. If there is no remote, it is probably best to have someone else along side the computer/projector changing the slides in response to a hand signal from you.
- Finally, after the screening, return the equipment, thank the suppliers, and collect your possessions. Always check them again before you next use them. Don't assume that because it all worked last time, it will the next time you plan to give a talk.

Insurance

Once you are accepted into the Youth Exchange program, and prior to your departure from Australia, you are covered by Rotary's blanket accident insurance whilst you are attending any compulsory Rotary function

Please Note: Should your exchange be terminated due to failure to comply with Exchange Guidelines/Rules your insurance cover ceases immediately and you should ensure you have your own insurance cover for your return trip.

The Australian Rotary Student Exchange Cover

It is a requirement that all Australian Rotary Exchange students hold the Australian Rotary Youth Exchange Insurance Cover organised through AON Risk Services while on exchange overseas. This travel policy covers the student for sickness, accidents and liabilities as well as covering their possessions. The premium is part of the overall exchange cost. This very comprehensive policy is in line with Rotary International guidelines and in fact exceeds them, and covers you from the time you leave your country of residence until you return to your country of residence at the end of your exchange.

It is possible in some overseas countries you may be asked to take out their insurance cover. **YOU DO NOT NEED TO TAKE OUT THIS ADDITIONAL INSURANCE.** If this happens, show them your policy and point out it exceeds the Rotary International requirements. If they still press you to take their cover, **report this immediately to your Country Coordinator** in Australia and he will ensure the matter is resolved. Prior to departure you will be provided with a wallet which contains the Ace Emergency Assistance Card, a certificate of currency, summary of cover booklet and a claim form. It is imperative that this wallet goes overseas with you. **Do not leave it home with Mum or pack in your check in luggage.** The emergency card must be kept **on your person at all times.** Copy the policy and the card and **give a copy to your current host parents.** Remember if something happens to you and you are unable to phone the ACE assistance number, they will have to do it for you. They need to understand how it works.

The ACE Emergency Assistance Card

The card has a phone number on it as well as the Rotary Youth Exchange identification number. For the cost of a local call you can reach an English-speaking operator at any time of the day or night from anywhere in the world. A call to this number will rapidly bring to you whatever help is needed whether it be an ambulance, a doctor, a plane to fly you somewhere for specialist treatment, and the assurance that these services will be paid for by the insurance company. The policy provides **unlimited** cover for medical expenses with no **excess.** The card must only be used in an emergency situation or one where you receive a large medical/dentist cost which you are unable to pay yourself, typically over \$300.

Normal Medical and Dental Claims

In some countries you are partially or fully covered by that country's health insurance. In others you have to pay some or all of the costs yourself. For normal doctor/dentist bills you should pay any cost required yourself. If necessary, use your emergency fund to pay these costs until you get the insurance money back. Using the claim form you have in your insurance wallet, fill in all the information needed to submit a claim to AON for reimbursement...

Baggage Claims

Baggage claims are subject to a \$250 excess (e.g. lost baggage, cameras). You need to take copies of valuations or receipts for items such as cameras, musical instruments or any more expensive items as proof of ownership and value. Report losses to the airline officials when flying, to the Police or your school if the loss occurs in your host country or to the chaperones if you are on tour. Make sure you get a copy of the report in writing from the person concerned as a copy needs to be attached to your claim. Read your policy carefully. Items left lying around or in unlocked cars are not covered.

Claims Procedure

If you have a medical claim or a stolen item such as a camera, the best way to claim is to post or fax a copy of details of the claim as outlined above to your parents. Retain the original documents. Your parents can then file a claim and in the case of a stolen item giving some evidence of the value of the item claimed to the Australian Youth Exchange Insurer -

**AON Risk Services
GPO Box 65
Brisbane Qld 4001**

Pre-existing medical conditions

The exclusion of pre-existing conditions on the policy has been waived. However the following conditions still apply:

- The insured Person must obtain approval from their doctor advising they are fit to travel.
- The insured person cannot travel solely for the intention of having treatment for an existing medical condition.
- The policy will not cover expenses incurred for a condition which commenced prior to the commencement of the journey and which such medication the Insured Person has been advised to continue during travel.

Major Problems Necessitating Repatriation

Rotary is the largest voluntary service organisation in the world. The organisation has been involved in Youth Exchange for over 50 years and has built up a tremendous amount of experience worldwide in running an exchange program. Rotary is an organisation with a well-established international network made up of districts. Each district comprises 30 to 60 clubs. Worldwide there are 1.2 million Rotarians in 30,000 clubs divided into 595 districts. In each Rotary District a Youth Exchange Committee is appointed to coordinate the exchange carried out by clubs in that district.

In the rare event of a major problem occurring during an exchange, Rotary's worldwide network is a valuable resource. Parents and students can be assured that the solutions to such problems are handled in a professional manner. If any major problem does occur, parents will be contacted immediately and a communication network set up.

In the event of unrest due to political, economic or other factors the parents have the right to ask Rotary to withdraw their son/daughter. These wishes will be respected and acted upon swiftly.

The Committee reserves the right to withdraw a student if it considers an unacceptable risk may occur. This would be done in full consultation with the parents.

At least one **parent or family member** should have a **current passport** to facilitate an immediate flight overseas in case of an extreme emergency arising in relation to their son or daughter (road accident etc).

Rotary Youth Exchange - Tips for Students to Use to Stay Safe

- If you have a problem or are worried about something, always tell an adult you trust about it, such as your teacher, counsellor or current or recent host parents – **NEVER** suffer in silence!
- Pack your own suitcase and never carry items abroad for others. Take care that you do not unwittingly or wittingly act as a drug courier for someone else given that some countries impose death penalties for drug offences.
- Before you go on exchange find out how to use a public phone in your new country. Carry the telephone numbers for the emergency services in that country and keep them handy.
- Ask your first host parents to send you their address written in that language and the script of their country. Organise this before you go on exchange and take it with you.
- Explain to your hosts about your insurance cover.
- Follow the instructions of your leader, teacher and other supervisors, including those at the venue of the visit (unless those instructions constitute a crime or are contrary to Rotary regulations).
- Tell someone where you are going and what time you will be home – don't change your plans at the last minute as this can cause confusion.
- Look out for anything that might hurt or threaten you or anyone in your group and tell someone responsible.
- If you are out at night in the centre of town, stay in places with street lights – wherever you are, make sure that you don't get separated from your friends.
- If you need to use a public toilet, go with a friend.
- If you are going to or travelling through an impoverished country, do not carry handbags, cameras, or wear jewellery of any kind, even cheap earrings. Watches, necklaces and earrings may be grabbed and pulled away, causing injuries.
- If you do get lost or separated go to a shop or place where you will be seen by lots of people to ask for directions.
- If someone you don't know talks to you, just walk away.
- Have the details of your accommodation on you, whether it's your host family's address and telephone number or hotel or campsite details.
- Keep enough money to make a telephone call.
- Keep your money hidden in an inside pocket, bum bag, concealed money belt or something similar – choose whichever is comfortable for you.
- Arrange for someone to pick you up at night unless you can take public transport where you are amongst a sizeable group of people.
- Make sure you know the person who is coming to pick you up. Never get into a car unless it is with this arranged person.
- If you are on a bus and someone makes you feel unsafe, move to a seat near the driver.
- Dress and behave sensibly and responsibly.
- Be sensitive to local codes and customs.
- Think things through carefully before you act and do not take unnecessary risks.
- Always look and behave confidently.

Rotary Youth Protection Policy - Abuse & Harassment.

Harassment and abuse can take many forms – from bullying and neglect, to mental, physical or sexual abuse.

Rotary International, through its Certification Process, has made every effort to screen all those involved in the Youth Exchange Program both in Australia and overseas, to protect our Exchange Students from any form of abuse or harassment. Details of this certification can be found on our website www.rotaryyouth9520.com. Rotary International will also not tolerate any exchange student committing any form of abuse or harassment. Such acts committed by students will be subject to local laws of the host country and result in the student's repatriation.

What is sexual harassment?

The legal definition of sexual harassment in Australia is any unwanted or uninvited sexual behaviour that is offensive, embarrassing, intimidating or humiliating to the person to whom it is directed. It may be an isolated incident or a series of incidents.

What may be funny or insignificant to one person may be disturbing to another and therefore be considered harassment. It has nothing to do with mutual attraction or friendship. Sexual harassment often precedes sexual abuse. In these instances it is referred to as grooming, the gradual exposure of a young person to more and more things of a sexual nature gradually desensitising them to its impact.

All Rotary Youth Exchange students, their parents, Rotary Clubs and host families are advised that sexual harassment in any form will not be tolerated by Rotary. In some situations and instances sexual harassment is against Australian law and can lead to convictions. Such laws may not exist, or may be different in many exchange countries. All exchange students should be aware of this, and the fact that Australian Law does not necessarily protect them when outside of our country but importantly **Rotary will protect them**. District 9520 has agreements with the overseas districts we exchange with to ensure this happens.

Examples of sexual harassment

- Touching, patting or fondling.
- Staring or leering.
- Sexually suggestive comments, jokes and teasing.
- Requests or demands for sexual favours.

Where can sexual harassment occur?

- Anywhere
- At school.
- In your host family or with their friends and acquaintances.
- In your Rotary Club or at some of its associated activities
- Wherever other exchange students might be.
- At social or sporting events.

What is sexual abuse?

In the case of a person under the age of consent sexual abuse is –

the persuading or forcing of a child to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts alone or with another person or persons of any age, of the same sex or the opposite sex.

In the case of a person over the age of consent sexual abuse is –

the forcing of a person to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts alone or with another person or persons of any age, of the same sex or the opposite sex.

Under the laws of Australia and the countries 9520 exchanges with, sexual abuse is a criminal offence punishable by a goal term.

Examples of sexual abuse are

- The showing of pornographic images.
- Taking visual images for pornographic purposes.
- Touching, fondling, or masturbation.
- Indecent exposure.
- Rape.
- Any other physical sexual act.

What do you do if you are being harassed?

Do not ignore sexual harassment or think it will go away. This is terribly important. Silence may give the impression that you approve of the behaviour and the perpetrator may proceed to sexual abuse.

Politely but firmly, tell the person that you object to their behaviour and do not want it repeated. If they persist, make it clear that you will talk to a person in authority who will force them to stop.

If you don't feel that you can or are unable to confront the person in this way, tell a person in authority, your host parents or a past host parent, your Rotary Counsellor, your Club President, your school counsellor or if you are having trouble talking to anyone in your country, inform your parents at home, your Australian club counsellor or your Australian Group Coordinator.

The person **informed must**

1. **Immediately** inform the **police** in the town or suburb where the student is living. The police will decide if they consider it a harassment matter where they do not want to proceed with charges or a more serious matter where they will confront the perpetrator.
2. Where the police do not proceed, the district committee through the club counsellor (assuming the counsellor is not the perpetrator) must be told and they will take the necessary action and commence an enquiry.
3. The Chairman in District 9520 in Australia must be informed.
4. Do not confront the perpetrator or tell any other parties.
5. Talk calmly and quietly to the victim and reassure them of support, promise them privacy, but not confidentiality, as you must inform as above.

What do you do if abused?

Again tell someone in authority as with harassment. In this instance the **person told must**

1. As before tell the **police immediately** and in this case timing is very important, as forensic evidence could be lost if there is a delay. In a case of sexual abuse, the police will definitely do all of the investigation and confront the abuser.
2. Information on the abuse (after the police have been informed) must be given to the Youth Exchange District Chairman in the district where the crime was committed and also to the Chairman of District 9520 in Australia.
3. On no account must anyone but the police approach the perpetrator of the crime.
4. Talk calmly and quietly to the victim and reassure them of support, promise them privacy, but not confidentiality, as you must inform as above.

What do you do if matters are not being satisfactorily and speedily resolved?

- If you feel the situation is not being speedily and satisfactorily resolved, without delay contact your District Committee Group Coordinator.
- The vital thing is that you do not ignore harassment or abuse; you must not tolerate it and must immediately tell someone who will have it stopped.
- Remember, your exchange will not be disadvantaged by any action you take to stop sexual harassment. If you make a complaint to the appropriate person no matter how awkward the situation may seem you will have the full backing and support of Rotary.

Variation in attitudes towards social behaviour in other countries

Attitudes on social behaviour vary from country to country, and in some countries we exchange with the laws are less stringent. Some actions which may be considered as harassment in Australia may be considered normal behaviour in another country. Conversely simple actions showing affection in Australia, for example hugging or kissing between family members or close friends, may be considered offensive in other countries.

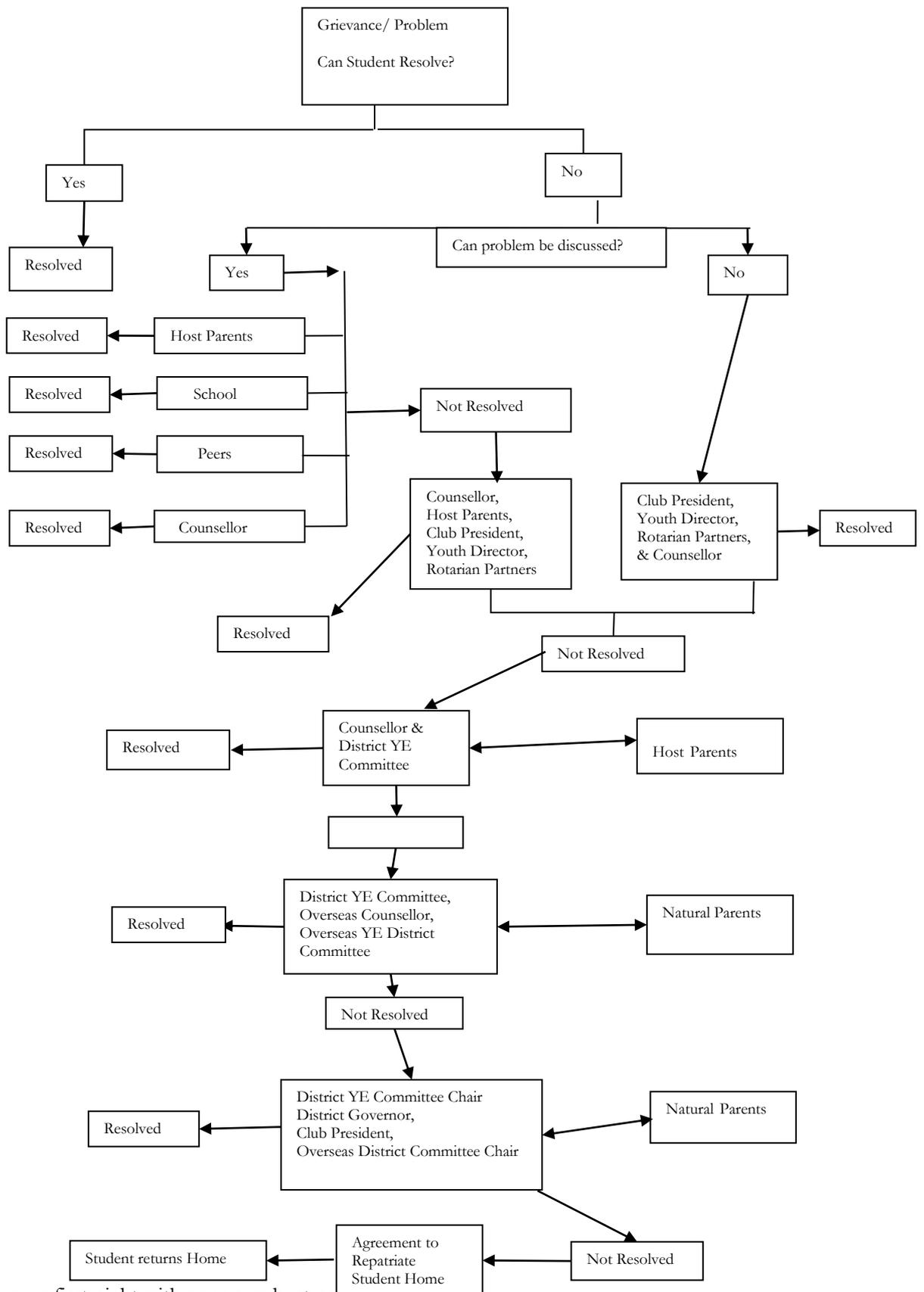
It is expected that Rotary Youth Exchange students will not engage in any behaviour to any person which could be interpreted in **Australia** or **in their host country as sexual harassment**.

You should be circumspect in your behaviour, and not act, dress or otherwise behave in a manner that might be considered provocative. Be conscious of the fact that what may be acceptable in Australia may be provocative in or alternatively offensive in other countries. Never be lead astray regardless of the behaviour or attitudes of those around you. Be very sensitive to the established customs and practices of the country in which you are living and at the same time abide by the social attitudes and practices you have been brought up with in Australia.

Conclusion

Regardless of the country in which you are living, you must not accept any offensive treatment that would be considered sexual harassment in Australia and definitely no form of sexual abuse is to be tolerated. Your reaction should be the same as that advised above. If you do not receive an adequate response from those you have contacted in your country, or feel you cannot discuss the problem with them or they have not resolved it satisfactorily, you must contact your District 9520 Country Coordinator immediately.

ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE



Questions for your first night with your new host parents

Asking and discussing these and any other questions will assist you to achieve a common understanding with your host parents, and they will serve as an “ice-breaker” for the many wonderful conversations you will have together.

What would you like me to call you? Mum or Dad, by your given names or something else?

What can I do to help around the house, other than make my bed, keep my room tidy, and leave the bathroom clean after use?

What is the procedure about dirty clothes? Where do I keep them until washing day? Should I wash my own clothes?

What should I do about ironing clothes?

May I use the washing machine, the iron, the sewing machine etc?

Where can I keep my toilet accessories?

Do I need to provide my own toiletries?

When is the most convenient time for me to use the bathroom, especially during weekday mornings?

What times are meals during the week and weekends?

How can I help at meal times; for example, to set the table, clear the table wash the dishes, dry the dishes, empty the rubbish etc?

May I help myself to drinks (non-alcoholic of course) at any time, or must I ask first?

May I supply my own cordial, soft drinks, milk and place in the refrigerator?

What areas of the house are strictly private - bar, study, sewing room, father's chair etc?

May I put up flags, posters, pictures in my room and if so where and how?

May I rearrange my bedroom?

Where can I store my suitcases?

What are your rules for me with regard to alcohol?

What time must I get up in the morning on school days, weekends and holidays?

What time do I go to bed (and lights out) on school days?

Where may I do my homework and what time?

What time must I be in at night if I go out? What exceptions may be made?

May I have friends spend the night or visit during the day?

Am I expected to make a telephone call if I am going to be home later than expected? Should it be if I am going to be 10, 20, 30 minutes, or only if I will be an hour or more late? Should I always ring before midnight or will any time do just so long as I ring?

Will I be collected from bus/train stop, the venue etc?

When are the birthdays of the host mother, father, sisters and brothers or anyone else living in the home?

What is the procedure for posting letters? Where is incoming mail left?

What are the rules about paying for outgoing telephone calls, local, country, and international? When may I make them and for how long? Likewise for incoming calls?

Do you have a computer? Can I use it? Does it have internet access? What are the any restrictions on using it, eg time of day and amount of time spent? Time off-line? Time on line? Burning CD's of your photos? The same applies if you wish to use your own laptop or PDA.

Do you have access to a fax? May I use it for incoming and outgoing messages?

May I call my friends and may my friends call me?

Do host mother, father, sisters, brothers etc. have any pet dislikes - unshaven for breakfast, chewing gum, music, being unpunctual, interruptions when reading the paper etc?

How am I expected to get around - school, outings, etc?

What are your feelings or fears about public transport, being driven in friends' cars etc.?

May I use the sound system, television, video recorder? Who selects the TV programs?

What are the expectations about going to church?

When we go out as a family, should I pay for my own entrance fee, etc?

What arrangements should I make for school lunch?

Does the Rotary Club pay my cost of travel to school?

Am I to attend Rotary Club meetings? If yes, how will I get there? If your host parents are not Rotarians ask your host counsellor. Some clubs meet at venues where the meals cost \$40 to \$80 each, so do not be upset if you are not invited as often as may be usual in Australia.

What else can I do around the house (gardening, help clean, baby sit, etc.)

Please let me know how to interact with the house servants (where applicable).

Is there anything else you would like me to know?

Finances and allowances

The typical allowance for students overseas is about AUD\$120 per calendar month to be paid by the overseas Host Club. Some clubs may pay a little more and some a little less. The amount should be stated on the guarantee papers sent by the host club. If you are concerned about the amount proposed, discuss this with your Group Coordinator in Australia.

Use your allowance for postage, films and developing, personal items (toiletries etc). Your allowance will not cover everything.

You are required to provide an emergency fund of US \$400 - take it with you and ensure that a bank account is opened and this money deposited. The account should be operated in joint names with your counsellor as co-signatory and preferably one other member of your Rotary Club to act in case your counsellor is away. If any funds from the emergency fund are used, your own family will need to replenish the account to its original amount.

In the majority of the countries we exchange with Visa Card is probably the most convenient and economical way to transfer funds from Australia while overseas. Discuss this with your parents and bank. It is a good idea to have a limit put on withdrawals, but on the other hand you should withdraw funds in reasonably sized amounts, say \$100 at a time, as there is often a flat amount charged on each withdrawal.

Your host counsellor should assist you to place your tickets, passport and any other documents in the bank or other equally secure storage. You are entitled to have access to these and may need your passport for the Euro Tour and for opening bank accounts. In some countries you will need to have your passport for checking into a hotel even if you are travelling with your host parents.

Departures Tax may need to be paid on leaving other countries including your Host country (check this at time of confirming booking and ensure that you have the required amount with you). Our travel agents will have paid all taxes associated with leaving Australia.

Be prepared for unexpected costs during your flights. A late flight could mean you miss a connecting flight and have an overnight stopover. Take a small amount of cash with you for such emergencies in the currency of the country to which you are going. This can be changed at an airport if needed. Remember all but small amounts can normally be charged to a Visa Card.

Prior to departure you will be informed if you are required to attend a Language School once you arrive in your host country, what the fees are and how they are to be paid.

Live within your means and prepare and keep a budget. Remember that your parents are making a financial sacrifice. Spend carefully and do not pressure them unnecessarily for more money while you are away. Get advice from the students who have just come back on how much extra money they needed.

Gifts and Souvenirs

The giving of small gifts is a very good way to show appreciation for the hospitality that will be shown you while you are overseas. A gift is also something which is very much appreciated when a special event such as a birthday occurs in the family hosting you.

Consider gifts for your counsellor, host parents, host brothers and sisters, host grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, school friends etc. Remember you will probably have quite a number of extended families. Also small gifts and cards for people who take you places.

You will probably give a lot more gifts than you think. You may wish to purchase Australian pins and badges for swapping with other exchange students for blazers, or for a more personal touch, making some out of beads, etc

Business Cards

You will find your business cards which have your photo on them invaluable during your year away. You will meet many people that, for all sorts of reasons, will need or want to get in touch with you. Business cards make it easy. Always carry some with you. If someone needs your current host family details, write them on the back.

The YE Committee organises and provides you with a supply of business cards. When you are asked, please check the details to be included on your cards carefully. Make sure the email address is the one you will use while away. If you miss an error and as a result the cards are printed incorrectly, you will be responsible for the cost of having them reprinted.

Blazers

When you are wearing your blazer you are immediately identified by everyone as someone special, a Rotary Exchange Student. You will find people will be especially helpful to you because of this. This is useful when you are in a strange place like a big international airport or a strange city and you need a little guidance or information.

Blazers are also fun. As you will have seen from other exchange students everyone swaps badges and pins and attaches them to their blazer. Each of these swapped items brings with it the memory of a person or place. It is great if you are going somewhere with Rotary or giving a talk to wear your badge-covered blazer. This applies not only during your year away but when you have something to do with Rotary or talk to a group about your exchange after you return to Australia.

The blazers are all tailor made and you are measured by the tailors at the first Briefing Weekend. Your blazer is given to you at the final briefing.

Some Things You Need To Take With You

Ensure you have the **following phone numbers IN YOUR LUGGAGE:**

- **Your first host family**
- **Your host counsellor**
- **Your Australian Group Coordinator**
- **Your Australian counsellor**

Take a small album containing about 20 photos of your family, close friends, pets, your home, your school and your town. This album needs to be small enough for you to easily take it with you when you visit people. It is an excellent way of starting a conversation.

Organise a larger collection of photos (suggested on CD or DVD) which you can use to explain more about yourself and life in Australia to your host families.

Also very useful are some maps, one covering the area where you live, one of your state and another of Australia. Many people overseas have very little knowledge of our country or its size. A small map or slide showing Australia superimposed over a map of Europe, Japan or North America is quite a good way to enable them to visualise the size of Australia and is well worth taking if you can get one.

If you have flight problems or delays – you **MUST** let someone at each end of your trip know where you are.

Obtain a letter of introduction from your Australian club president to give to the president of your overseas club when you first visit that club.

If you are going to a country where another language is spoken, a small dictionary which you can carry around with you will be essential. This can either be in book form or an electronic one. The electronic ones do have more information in a smaller size and are therefore worth considering.

Health Issues

a) Between now and your departure

Fitness

Try to maintain or increase your stamina through regular exercise.

Immunisation

There are specific disease risks in certain countries. Immunisation advice is available from:

Travel-Bug Medical & Vaccination Clinic
182 Ward Street
NORTH ADELAIDE SA 5006
Telephone (08) 8267 3544

Ensure your immunisation is current e.g. polio, measles, rubella and tetanus. Take a list of all your vaccinations, including the dates they were administered.

Medical conditions

If you have an existing medical condition, take a typed letter (and, if possible, a translation in to the language of your overseas country) from your doctor.

Medications

If you take any regular medication, ensure that you carry an adequate supply (at least three months). Carry all medications in their original packaging. Ensure that the label includes the correct chemical name of the drug or drugs in the medication, not just a local trade name and take the prescription with you. Do not mix tablets in one bottle as Customs Officers will confiscate any drugs they can not identify. Most medications will be available in your overseas country.

b) Around departure

Sleep

Be sensible about sleep as the lack of it can increase susceptibility to infection.

c) After arrival

Diet

It may take a while to adjust to different foods. Eat carefully at first, but don't be surprised if you develop either diarrhoea or constipation - both should settle within a few days. If constipation continues to be a problem increase bran cereal, fresh fruit and vegetable intake and drink plenty of water (at least two litres per day). Help your body to protect itself through a daily intake of Vitamin C - citrus is the best source.

Homesickness

Homesickness and depression can strike when least expected. Recognise the symptoms and know how to combat them. Confide in someone close to you. Familiarise yourself with the sections on dealing with homesickness and culture stress in this manual.

Illegal drugs

Avoid illegal drugs completely. Involvement means expulsion from the program and an immediate return home in disgrace.

Menstrual irregularities

It is common for periods to start early or stop for months. Be prepared for the unexpected by carrying appropriate supplies. Prevent anaemia by maintaining your iron intake - red meat is best, but chicken and fish are valuable too.

Sickness

If you are sick, talk to your host mother as you would at home. Stress can be a cause of physical symptoms which could occur at any time during your year. Talking about it with someone you trust is essential to help you to deal with it.

Experience has shown that medical problems in the Youth Exchange Program are few, but those that arise can be handled capably in the overseas countries we exchange with.

Weight

Weight gain is common during exchanges. Choose low fat foods and increase your exercise if you are concerned. Don't get too stressed about it - your weight will reduce upon your return home.

Australian Overseas Embassies and Consulates

Details are available at www.dfat.gov.au and you should register on line at www.smartraveller.gov.au before leaving Australia.

Soon after arriving overseas you should advise the nearest embassy or consulate of your year in the country as an exchange student. Where possible, pay a visit to your nearest Australian Embassy or consulate. There is often the opportunity to borrow from the library in the information section of the Embassy. Videos and films are available for loan and these may be of assistance when speaking to Rotary Clubs, schools and other groups. Request to be placed on the mailing list so that you receive news sheets and remain up to date with current events in Australia.

Our Travel Agent, Overseas Flights and Baggage

Our Travel Agents – TERRA AUSTRALIS

Most of the twenty-six Rotary Districts in Australia utilize the same travel agent. They have a vast amount of experience and knowledge of all student exchange travel arrangements.

Please watch out for mail or e-mails from them **and respond promptly to any requests**. Your departure will be delayed if you do not supply documentation when asked. Do not delay in sending your **passport to Terra Australis** – send it as soon as you have it, as group ticketing cannot commence until Terra Australis have obtained visas for all students, and **with the security measures now in place, visa applications can take up to 10 weeks**.

Terra Australis have arranged **chaperones** for flights leaving Australia with large numbers of students. Your chaperones will contact you prior to departure. **Promptly provide them with any information they request**.

If you have any concerns or questions relating to requests received Terra Australis can be contacted by phone (02 4022 8792) or e-mail tim@terraaustralistours.com.au

Airports and luggage

Carefully check your ticket when you receive it, following through each stage of your flight and ensure each lines up with the next.

Carry a small amount of cash with you in the currency of the country to be visited.

Luggage trolleys, especially at railway stations, may cost one or two dollars or need a local coin as a deposit.

Watch your possessions at all times - especially cameras and handbags. Do not put anything down. Current security regulations require impoundment of any unattended luggage or parcel.

Do not carry **anything** on or off the plane for **anyone**.

Carry your passport, tickets and money in a special wallet, and carry them on your person at all times. Include in your wallet your contact names, addresses, and telephone numbers. Do not place these in your luggage.

Wear your Rotary blazer and badge at all times in airports. It makes you instantly recognisable by any chaperones there to meet up with you or to look after you. It is also amazing how much a smile all will help, even when you are feeling panicked and stressed.

Take a small piece of hand luggage of no more than 6kg. What is acceptable to one airline may not be by the next. Remember you have to carry it and be able to lift it into the overhead locker.

Your hand luggage should contain a spare set of underwear that you can use if there is a lost luggage problem as well as something comfortable like a track suit which you can slip into while actually on the aircraft. Only take what you really need for the journey or valuable items that would not be insured if in your check in luggage. For security reasons airlines may severely restrict hand luggage without notice. The less you plan to carry the less problems you will have.

The maximum luggage allowance varies depending on the airline and the country you are going to. Adhere to the Rotary rule given under “baggage allowances” on Page 45 and remember you have to carry it.

Excess luggage is very costly. Consider sending some luggage as unaccompanied baggage - it will be cheaper. See details below for methods of sending unaccompanied baggage.

Use a light weight case with wheels and a strong colourful strap to secure and make it easy to recognise.

Make sure you have your name and **first host family’s address** on an outside label and also on the inside.

It is recommended that you wear comfortable shoes on the aircraft. **Your Rotary blazer should be worn at all stopovers and airport destinations to assist the chaperone and other people who are there to meet you.**

Remember that it will be cold in the Northern Hemisphere, so carry a warm coat if that is your destination.

Pack your bags and then take out 50% as you will probably not need it. Remember there will be shops where you go and the local clothes will probably be more appropriate than what you can buy here, especially winter clothing for colder regions.

Think carefully about the weight of books and gifts that you are taking with you. It may be better to plan ahead and send as unaccompanied luggage when you know your first host family's address.

If there is no one at the airport to meet you when you arrive at your final destination, do not leave the airport. Phone your host parents or your counsellor and wait.

Ask your parents to allow you to have a mobile phone with a global roaming account so you can call or SMS if there is a problem during the trip. You should change this to a local SIM card, preferably prepaid so you can budget calls once you have settled in with your host family. Prepaid cards from Australia cannot be used overseas.

Unaccompanied Baggage

A couple of weeks before your departure you may decide you need to freight a parcel to your new country. There are a number of ways you can send parcels overseas. Australia Post is reasonable for parcels under 10 or 20 kgs depending on destination.

A firm which quite a number of students have used and found good provided the parcel is more than 20 kgs (their minimum charge) is

Baggage Masters- Specialists in Unaccompanied Baggage
140 Ashley Street, Underdale SA 5023 (Ph: 08 8352 1355 ; Fax: 08 8352 1255)
E-mail info@baggagemasters.com.au Web www.baggagemasters.com.au

Baggage allowance

Airlines abide by the Free Baggage Allowance as set down in the International Airline Agreement and often are very strict in their application of the maximum allowable.

Flights to some destinations have a weight allowance and others have a volume allowance. Rotary Youth Exchange recommends all students have only one bag for check in and this should weigh a **maximum of 20 kgs**. Whilst some airlines allow more on certain international flights such as North and South America you will need to seek the travel agents advice concerning restrictions on any connecting flights, especially within the destination country. However, keeping to the 20 kg limit will ensure you do not contravene any airline regulations.

Airport Dramas

On top of the emotions associated with leaving Australia, quite a few students complicate and turn their good-byes at the airport into a nightmare.

Some things we see every year are

- Students arriving at the airport without their tickets and/or passport – CHECK THAT YOU HAVE EVERYTHING BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME.

- A student with his/her case open on the airport floor trying to decide what to take out and give to a hovering family to send on later because the airline have said the suitcase is too heavy and they will not take it.
- Students after having their luggage rejected waiting anxiously for the official to come that assesses the payment to be made for 'excess luggage'. One student with 55 kg was charged \$960 and charges around \$400 for smaller amounts are not uncommon.
- Students running back from the boarding gate and running out of time to catch their flight because they have too much hand luggage and trying to get family to send it to them later.

Sorting out luggage problems generally takes a lot of time and often after this time lost we have to make a student board their plane before they have had time to say good bye to those who have come to see them off.

It is true sometimes the airlines will allow several kilograms of extra luggage but **unless the allowance is noted on your booking it cannot be guaranteed...** The loading of planes is continually monitored and it depends on things like the amount of cargo they are carrying as to whether they will stick to the rules or be lenient on luggage.

Remember also you are the person who has to pick up the luggage and get it through customs at your destination. After a long tiring flight you will really appreciate easy to handle luggage which isn't overweight.

Everything is easy and predictable if you arrive at the airport with a bag weighting a maximum of 20 kg or 'what you can easily carry' and the correct amount of hand luggage.

Your flight back to Australia

Prior to your departure all travel arrangements will be made for you to travel, as far as possible, as groups to your destination. Your tickets are valid for twelve months from the date of departure. Certain arrangements have been made with airlines to allow homeward travel to be amended to bring you home should exceptional circumstances arise e.g. your exchange has been terminated or there is a death in the family.

In approximately **August/September** Terra Australis will reconfirm your return booking. This advice is sent to **your parents** to forward to you. **Under no circumstances is the date or route of this flight to be changed.** These are group bookings so any attempt by you or your parents to change one ticket could affect the reservations of other students. After you receive this information, it is your responsibility to maintain contact locally with the airline to ensure no further changes occur, as airline flight schedules sometimes change. Close to your departure if you have a long wait in Singapore, Terra Australis will give you details of hotel 'day rooms' where you can stay and an Australian coordinator who may meet you.

You must return directly home in accordance with flight schedule booked for you. Additional or lengthened stopovers are not allowed under any circumstances.

Coming home - A Student's Perspective

Your exchange will go quickly so make the most of it. You may be spoiled (or neglected). In many ways you will be on your own and become quite independent. You will make many new friends and it will be hard to leave them. Coming home can often be much harder than leaving Australia.

You will form strong ties with your host families, school friends, etc. Many of you will be torn between leaving your new home and returning to your own family. You may feel that you now belong to two countries. Most students usually feel better once they begin their return flight.

Try not to show your own family on your return how you are missing your overseas hosts. It is hard for them to really understand and it makes it look like you don't love them. If you really want to you will return sometime in the future. This is certainly a goal to strive for.

Network with other returned exchange students who will understand how you feel.

A Parent's Perspective

During the year overseas your child's life will have undergone some dramatic changes. It is almost certain to be the first time they have lived away from you and others that love them for a prolonged period of time.

They will have experienced very different surroundings and a very different culture. They arrived in a strange environment not knowing anyone and had to make new friends from scratch. Quite possibly when they arrived, they were in a situation, where communication with anyone was difficult. They may have had to cope with and learn a new language. They will have faced and overcome the many problems which inevitably arise with all of these things.

These factors may have produced considerable change in your son or daughter. Some of the changes, such as small things like picking up a foreign accent, will be immediately obvious. It is almost certain that your child will have matured considerably. A child went away and a young adult will be returning. Remember that in addition to all of their experiences of the past year, they are now a year older than when you last knew them. They are at a very formative stage in their lives, and some change would have occurred even if they had remained home.

The maturity they have gained will probably make them feel less dependant on you and the family than before they left. This may show, but do not think they love you any less. Accept and be positive about their maturity. However difficult the changes may seem to you, it is probably more difficult for them. They will be very conscious that they cannot fit back into the role they left.

Another major problem your child faces is being parted from families, friends, and a life overseas they adjusted to. Just as they felt homesick for Australia when they first left you, they now feel homesick for what they have just left behind. There is no set pattern or time taken for returning students to settle back into life in Australia. Some do it relatively easily, and for some it is harder and takes longer.

Do not get alarmed with all of the above. We are sure your son or daughter will settle down well and have the ability to handle life successfully as a result of their exchange. They have experienced a unique and invaluable learning experience.

What You Can Do to Help Homecoming

- Show love and understanding for their situation and their maturity.
- Encourage them to talk to you about their life and friends they have left.
- Allow them to talk to their Australian Rotary counsellor, or other returned exchange students about any problems they are having on return. Someone outside the family who understands is often a help.
- While they are away, do not change their room unless they have been consulted and agreed. It helps them to come back to familiar surroundings.
- The District Debriefing, generally at the end of January, is often a great help in settling back in. They will see that any problems they have are not imagined but shared by many returning students.

About Rotary

How and why Rotary began

Early last century a young lawyer in Chicago shared with three friends an idea he had been thinking about for four or five years. The young lawyer was Paul Harris.

His idea was that all men in business in Chicago should be personal friends. Three of his friends, Silvester Scheile, a coal dealer, Gustavus Loehr, a mining engineer, and Hiram Shorey, a tailor, liked the idea and agreed they would organise a club based on Paul Harris's dream. It happened on the 23rd February, 1905 in an office block in Chicago, Illinois USA.

At their first meeting in Scheile's office, at which only six men attended, the club was formed with Scheile as President, Jensen, a Real Estate Agent as Secretary and Ruggles, a printer as Treasurer. Paul Harris declined office.

They had decided that they would limit membership to one representative from each business or profession in the city. He would have to be the owner or proprietor of his business, or a partner or corporate officer. Their meetings would be held in turn at each other's place of business so that they could each learn about each other's trade or profession and they would work as a group to enlarge their circle of business and professional acquaintances. Their main aim was to share fellowship, friendship and offer mutual assistance to each other.

The club had no name until Paul Harris, noting that each meeting was to be held in each member's office in rotation, suggested the name "Rotary". Rotary in Chicago grew attracting young businessmen acquainted with city life, who were lonely or wanting help and so they befriended each other.

Rotary's first Community Service Project was the building of a public comfort station in Chicago. In 1910 Rotary became International when a club was formed in Winnipeg, Canada and multilingual when a club was formed in Havana Cuba.

Rotary spread to London, England in 1911, Dublin and Belfast followed then Manilla, Shanghai and Calcutta, proving the principles of Rotary possessed the vitality and appeal across the barriers of race, creed and colour.

Two world wars changed conditions in some countries. During the Second World War Clubs in Germany, Italy and Japan were disbanded but some continued to meet as "Wednesday" or "Friday" clubs named after their day of meeting. All were reactivated after 1946.

Some countries which came under communist influence are reforming clubs following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 2000 there were 29,000 Rotary Clubs with a membership of 1,200,000 in 162 countries and the numbers continue to grow.

Rotary is non-political, non-religious, non-discriminatory, and non-racial. Its motto, developed as far back as 1911, "Service Above Self - He Profits Most Who Serves Best" is practised.

In a nutshell, this is the story of how the first and largest service club organization in the world was formed. From the simple idea of a lonely young man who, with the help of three friends started a movement which in almost 100 years has transcended national boundaries, language limitations, barriers of race, colour and creed, advancing, as no other movement has, international understanding, goodwill and peace amongst the free people of the world.

Rotary Today

Rotary is a global network of community volunteers. It works to improve the quality of life for all people, and exists to do good in the world.

Rotary is an international service organization of 1.2 million business and professional men and women who, as volunteers, address needs of their home and international communities. There are more than 31,000 Rotary clubs in 166 countries.

Rotary initiates local and global service projects to promote world understanding and peace and improve the life conditions for people of all ages and cultures. An example is Polio Plus through which Rotary has virtually eradicated polio, which now only exists in small pockets within our world, and a push in 2011-12 hopes to see it completely eradicated.

Rotary's strength lies in the volunteer service of its membership, an international network of business and professional leaders implementing a wide range of programs to meet human needs.

Rotarians are men and women of integrity who represent a cross-section of business and professional backgrounds. As volunteers of all ages, they work to address community and international concerns.

The Object of Rotary

The Object of Rotary is to encourage and foster:

- the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise;
- high ethical standards in business and professions;
- the recognition of the worthiness of all useful occupations;
- the dignifying by each Rotarian of his occupation as an opportunity to serve society;
- the application of the ideal of service by every Rotarian to his personal, family, business and community life;
- the advancement of international understanding, goodwill and peace through a world, a fellowship of business and professional persons united in the ideal of service.

Our Rotary District 9520

District 9520 covers part of four Australian states - South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. It is about 1,300 kilometres long and 400 kilometres wide. There are more than 1,400 Rotarians in 53 clubs. The main population centre is Adelaide, the capital city of South Australia.

The District stretches from the South Coast of South Australia, through the southern half of the metropolitan area of Adelaide, and includes the Fleurieu Peninsula and the Lower Murray. The District also takes in the Riverland area of South Australia, the Sunraysia district of Victoria, Wentworth and Broken Hill, in New South Wales, and reaches into the south west corner of Queensland.

Throughout the District there is a wide variety of primary industries - grain, cattle, sheep, fruit, vegetables and nuts. Fruit production includes high quality citrus, stone fruits and grapes.

Excellent wines are produced in the Adelaide Hills, the McLaren Vale Region (south of Adelaide), in the Riverland and Sunraysia. In recent years wineries in the District have made a major contribution to a dramatic increase in Australia's wine exports. There is some light industry in country towns, but most manufacturing, finance and business is centred in and around Adelaide including two major motor vehicle plants. Roxby Downs is a major mining centre and in the Far North of South Australia there are oil and gas fields; natural gas is supplied to Adelaide and Sydney.

Tourism plays an important part in the economy of the area. Adelaide has its internationally renowned Christmas Pageant and the biennial Festival of Arts. The South Coast, the Riverland, Sunraysia and Broken Hill all have their own individual tourist attractions.

Your Rotary Information

Australian District & Sponsor Club Information

Obtain and fill in this information about our district and your club well before you leave. It is the sort of information you will be often asked overseas

District Number: 9520

District Youth Exchange Chairperson. _____

District Committee Group Coordinator _____

Group Coordinators phone & email _____

Sponsor Club Name _____

When it meets _____ at _____

Size of the club _____ members. When chartered _____

Name of the Club President _____

Name of next Club President _____

Counsellor's Name(s) _____

Counsellor's Address _____

Counsellors Phone & email _____

Current Club Service Projects _____

Major projects your club has done in the past _____

Overseas District & Host Club Information

Fill these details in as soon as you get them so that all the information you need is together in this manual.

District Number _____

Overseas Club _____

District Governor (on arrival) _____

District Youth Exchange Chairman _____

Address _____

Size of the club _____ members. When chartered _____

Club President _____

Counsellor's Name _____

Counsellor's Address _____

Counsellor's Phone and Fax _____

First Host Family _____

Address _____

Phone and Fax _____

Your Departure Checklist

Have you prior to departure

- Filled in the details of your Australian Club and Overseas Club on the previous pages
- Had a final medical and dental check up

Prior to departure, have you written to:

- Your host counsellor
- Your Host Club President
- Your First host parents
- Other host families (if known)
- Your host School Principal

Have you included these essentials in your hand luggage?

- Name badge
- Visiting cards
- A few Australian badges without pins. (Anything sharp is a security risk and will be confiscated)
- Passport and Visa
- or equivalent for the USA
- Flight tickets and itinerary
- Vaccination certificate where applicable
- Small amount of cash - in currency of stopover and destination
- Visa Card (or similar)
- Insurance Policy and Emergency Card
- List of names, addresses, phone and mobile numbers of hosts and host counsellor, Australian Counsellor and Committee Group Coordinator

Have you included in your luggage or on forwarded?

- Australian Flag
- Australian Club Banners (at least 6)
- Photocopy of passport and visa, airline ticket.
- Your speech notes for your presentation to your club
- Colour slides or CD presentation and photographs of family and district
- Little Aussie Fact Book and the Student Manual
- Your Personal Diary

Have you, a week prior to departure ?

- Advised your Host Family/Counsellor of your date/time/point of arrival/flight number. Use an E-mail or a fax if possible.

Key Contacts:

Insurance Broker:

AON Risk Services
GPO Box 65
Brisbane Qld 4001

ACE Insurance Policy No. 04PP005604
(24 hr ACEAssist help: Ph +61 2 8907 5995)

Travel Agent:

Terra Australis Tours
PO Box 713
Newcastle NSW 2283
Telephone (02) 4022 8792
1800 648 864
Fax (02) 4297 5141
Email: tim@terraaustralistours.com.au

Australian Embassies and DEFAT advice: www.smartraveller.gov.au

Baggage Forwarders:

Baggage Masters
Specialists in Unaccompanied Baggage
140 Ashley Street
Underdale SA 5023
Telephone: 08 8352 1355
Fax: 08 8352 1255
Email: info@baggagemasters.com.au
Web : www.baggagemasters.com.au

D9520 Youth Exchange web site: <http://9520.ryea.org.au/>