

Post-Arrival Orientation for Americans Overseas



Association for Teen-Age
Diplomats

Dear Overseas Liaison.

Upon the arrival of American Exchanges Students in your country, it is important that you orient them to your city and its customs. Below is a list of topics that you should discuss with the exchange students. This discussion should be held within 1 weeks of the arrival of summer students, and within 3 weeks of the arrival of year students.

Introduction:

Introduce yourself. Explain your role in the exchange program and role with the exchange student. Provide the student and host family with information on how to contact you and an alternate contact person.

Language and Customs:

What phrases and gestures are considered rude?

What phrases and gestures that might be considered rude in the United States are acceptable in your country?

How can the student get help if he or she is having difficulty with the language?

What holidays are celebrated in your city?

What cultural values are different from the United States?

What might be considered inappropriate behavior by an adult toward a student, and who the student should go to for help?

Family Living:

How do family members typically interact?

What is the typical role of a teenager in the family?

How does a teenager show his or her host parents respect?

Transportation:

Describe the common means of transportation in your city and how to use them.

How will year students get to and from school?

Money:

What is the approximate exchange rate for the US dollar?

Explain what items may be much more expensive or much less expensive.

How easy is it to use a credit or debit card?

What expenses will students have while attending school?

Explain the banking system and how the students may open an account, withdraw money, and use a bank card.

Clothing:

Describe the average temperature and weather while the student will be in your city.

Suggest the appropriate clothing to wear for specific occasions, e.g. school, when out with friends, when attending religious services, when it is not appropriate to wear jeans.

School:

Describe the structure of the school the student will attend, e.g. number of grades, size of the school, if students change classrooms.

Explain how students typically interact with teachers, e.g. informal, very respectful.

What courses will be required and what flexibility does the student have to change his or her own courses?

Explain the grading system.

How can the student get help if he or she is having a problem with a class?

Discuss the rules and expectations of the school. Provide the students with a school handbook if available.

Activates:

Tell the student where he or she can go to get involved in activities he or she is interested in, e.g. sports, clubs, acting, music. All students are encouraged to participate in activities.

Teenage Life:

Describe how teenagers typically interact in groups, individually, and dating customs.

If the student does not have host siblings, suggest the best way to meet other teenagers.

Close with encouragement and a warm welcome of the exchange student to your country.