

# International Re-Entry Orientation



# Association for Teen-Age Diplomats

## Early June, Week Night

6:30 Students and Parents Arrive  
6:30-6:50 Welcome/Purpose of Orientation

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

6:50-7:15 Discovering What We Have Learned  
7:15-7:45 Anticipating Going Home  
7:45-8:15 Saying Good-Bye  
8:15-8:30 Wrap-Up

8:30 Students and Parents Leave  
8:30-8:45 Staff Evaluation  
8:45 Staff Leaves

### HOST PARENTS

6:50-7:30 Discovering What We Learned and  
Anticipating Student's Return Home  
7:30-8:00 Saying Good-Bye  
8:00-8:30 Wrap-Up

### SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION GROUPS

Put key phrases on the wall - flip charts and magic markers will be provided. Leave critical pages on the wall throughout the orientation. Copies of all handout materials for the students and parents will be provided to you. Please try to stick to the assigned times for each session. If a session ends early, don't bore the students by going back over the material. Let the students talk among themselves, walk around the room, or get a snack. Please do not let them disturb the other groups. The lesson plans are guidelines only; you are free to improvise as you feel appropriate. Be sure your students have paper and pencil during the orientation to write down whatever is important to them, or for questions which would be better addressed later in the program. If your group runs late or finishes early, that is fine. Go with what keeps the interest of your students.

Please take informal attendance of your group. No student is to leave the orientation unless they see the Orientation Coordinator prior to their departure.

## Welcome / Purpose of Orientation

LEADER'S NOTE: The welcome will be presented by the Orientation Coordinator. Then students will be broken into individual discussion groups of 8-10 students each, and parents into their own separate discussion group.

PURPOSE: To introduce the staff and review the agenda and expectations for the day.

1. Introduce staff.
2. Thank ISs and parents for attending.
3. Review the orientation agenda and its purpose. State that:

*Although the International Student will be returning to their home country where they have grown up and lived for many years, and the Host Family will be returning to the daily routines with one less person in the home, everyone has changed during this experience, and it will not be an easy adjustment for anyone to "go back to the way they were". In fact, nothing will be the same for the International Student or the Host Family. The purpose of this orientation is to:*

*Develop realistic expectations regarding the international exchange experience.*

*Develop a deeper understanding of ourselves and what we have learned as a result of the experience.*

*Plan how to say good-bye.*

*For the International Student to anticipate difficulties in re-entry and explore positive ways to handle them.*

*Develop into world citizens with more confidence, direction, commitment, and awareness of the interdependence of nations.*

4. Review any rules or expectations for the day. Let everyone know the location of the restrooms.
5. Assure everyone has a nametag.
6. Have students and parents break into individual discussion groups.

# International Students

## Discovering What We Have Learned

LEADER'S NOTE: All exchange students should already know each other well. But if there is any doubt, the leader should have everyone briefly introduce themselves.

PURPOSE: To allow students to think about rewards and areas of growth as a result of the exchange experience, and to help them begin to think about their return home and the challenges they will face.

I. The leader gives a brief introduction:

*During your exchange experience you have grown and changed. It may not be apparent to you, but others may notice a "different you" than they remember from several months ago. During this session we will be talking about how you have learned and grown during your family living experience.*

II. The leader labels 3 flip chart sheets with: "*Best Part of the Exchange Experience*", "*Most Important Thing Learned*", and "*Greatest Concern About Returning Home*" then gives the students a moment to think about the one item which would best fit each category for them. Go around the room and have each student talk about what they would put in each category, while the leader or assistant briefly writes down their comments on the appropriate flip chart. Once all students have had a chance to comment, summarize by mentioning some of the common responses in each category. Mention that the orientation is intended to help everyone learn how to deal with both the positive experiences as well as the concerns they may be beginning to have.

Hopefully the lists will give the leader an opportunity to show that students have learned about other cultures and values. The leader can point out that the students have not had to change their own values to learn about and even learn to love another culture. The exchange experience has enhanced our awareness, and in some respects changed our behavior. This is something the students will need to be aware of upon their return home, and which will be discussed in more detail later in the orientation.

III. The leader then continues by asking the students to mention some ways they have changed. Allow an open discussion so everyone can contribute and participate. It may take some careful reflection for the students to realize how they have changed:

How have you changed since you left home? more mature  
What new ideas and attitudes do you have? more global perspective  
What new skills have you developed? independence, ability to solve problems

Discuss how the changes they have undergone will be helpful to them in the future.

IV. Summarize that it is important for the students to be able to identify the changes in themselves, to be aware of how family and friends will see them and react to these changes upon their return home. It is also helpful to identify new skills and see how they can be positive assets in the future.

## Anticipating Going Home

LEADER'S NOTE: Hand outs of “*Re-Entry Concerns Expressed by Exchange Students*” have been included for discussion.

PURPOSE: To give students an opportunity to think about returning home and anticipate potential readjustment problems they may have.

### I. Introduce the session by saying:

*We know from the experiences of many exchange students returning home that it is not always easy to fit right back into life at home. This can be upsetting because we think we should easily adjust back to our own culture. Many students experience an adjustment period somewhat like they did when they came to the U.S.*

Have the students think about what adjustment they may need to make when returning home:

1. Excitement at seeing everyone and everything again.
2. Getting back to the old routine in the house and at school.
3. Unhappiness, withdrawal because no one identifies with your strong feelings about the exchange experience; you feel you are more mature than your classmates but they see you as arrogant.
4. Learning how to adapt again, including finding new friends and new ways to fulfill your international interests.
5. Finding a compromise lifestyle that gives you outlets for changes in yourself, while still doing what you are expected to do.

Tell the students:

*Reverse Culture Shock can be more difficult to deal with than classic Culture Shock. Some people actually resist fitting back into their home countries because it symbolizes going back to “who I was.” They are so different and they don’t want to endanger this new self or compromise this richer person they have become. Many of the skills learned as an exchange student are going to be just as useful upon their return home.*

Have the students discuss some of the skills that will help them adjust back to their home country: patience, ability to solve problems, communication skills, ability to make new friends, interest in new things, etc.

### II. To make the return home a positive experience for everyone, the students should consider how they can best share their experiences with others at home. Lead a discussion using each set of questions:

1. What questions do you think you will be asked about the U.S. when you return home?  
How long do you think people will want to listen to your answers?
2. How many pictures have you taken?  
How many pictures do you think you can show to your friends at one time?
3. What do you want to share? (love of host family, how hard it was at first, friends, the fun of doing \_\_\_\_\_, etc.)  
How can you do this? (talking, scrapbook, cooking a meal, etc.)

Explain to the students:

*It will be helpful to take things a little easy when returning home. Try to take a little time to look around and figure out what and how things have changed, what you have forgotten about, and what things are very different from the culture you have just lived in.*

*Take your time to explain all that you have experienced as an exchange student. Your family and friends will be interested, but they may not want to hear everything in the first week! One seasoned traveler says diplomacy is the key. If you are wildly enthusiastic about the foreign country, it is best not to say so if family and friends want to hear about how happy you are to be back home. They might find you unloyal for having enjoyed yourself so much.*

*Finally, you may not recognize some things that are really important to you until a few months later when you realize some of the wonderful things that are missing. Take time to develop a perspective of your experience.*

III. Explain to the students that it may be hard for them to readjust to their home culture. Discuss some of the reasons for this:

1. It is easy to glorify your home when away, especially when things are not going well in another place. When you return, sometimes home is not as perfect as it seemed from a distance.
2. You may feel like an outsider. Many things have happened and changed while you were away, which you did not know about. You need to take some time to catch up with family, friends, and current trends in your country.
3. Your support system has changed. While living with your host family you learned new behaviors and family rules. It takes time to readjust to your old way of family life.
4. Your role has changed. While an exchange student, you were someone special and different. When you are home, you may be viewed as “just like everyone else”.
5. You have changed: you have matured, gained new skills, gained an appreciation for different points of view and ways of doing things, and are more aware of the world. These may be different than the values of your peers.

Help the students understand that they will fit back in, but it will take some effort on their part. Discuss what they can do to make the adjustment process easier. Students need to be prepared to experience some “reverse culture shock”, and recognize that this readjustment is a normal process. They should have the same confidence in themselves and use the same skills they used to adjust to the U.S. to help in their readjustment back home. If they are aware that they may experience an uncomfortable period, then they will be better prepared to handle it.

Hand out “*Re-Entry Concerns Expressed by Exchange Students*” to help the students consider areas where adjustment may be difficult.

IV. To summarize, reinforce that the students must realize that the process of going back home will take some planning and skills on their part, skills which they already have. The important part is an awareness of some of the issues they may face, so they can call upon these skills to make the “going home” process happy and exciting for everyone.

# Re-Entry Concerns Expressed By Exchange Students

## FAMILY

1. Fitting back in; knowing you have changed and wondering how your family will accept you.
2. Natural family's jealousy over your love for your host family.
3. Readjusting to the formality of meals, manners, and food.
4. Being treated like a child after having experienced a lot of independence.
5. Being considered arrogant; not understood or accepted.
6. Boring family with tales of American life.
7. Family sees you as more American than their native culture.

## FRIENDS

1. Reaction of old friends to the "new me"; will they still be my friends.
2. Being able to communicate with friends.
3. Old classmates have graduated; need to make new friends in a younger class.
4. Friends will think I'm bragging or showing off when talking about the U.S.

## SCHOOL

1. Making up missed semester or year.
2. Going back to a more rigorous academic system; more studying.
3. Ability to pass university exams.

## LANGUAGE

1. Being less fluent in native language now.
2. Mixing English into native language.
3. Losing the ability to speak English well.
4. Slang expressions have changed.

## PERSONAL

1. Missing host family and friends.
2. Wanting to maintain some new attitudes and ways.
3. Seeing own country realistically, and how to communicate this.
4. Catching up on missed news and developments.
5. Conveying experience to those at home.
6. Missing luxuries; having to return to a simpler life.
7. Clothing, music, dances, etc. have changed.

## Saying Good-bye

### LEADER'S NOTE:

PURPOSE: To give students some ideas on how to say good-bye, not only to family and friends, but also to objects and the feelings they hold.

I. The leader introduces the session by saying something like:

*Most students face returning home with mixed emotions. On the one hand they are excited to see their natural family and friends again, but on the other hand they may find the idea of leaving difficult to handle. Perhaps one of the most difficult parts of the exchange experience lies ahead of you - the process of saying good-bye to a second family, new friends and activities, and places that you really enjoy. Planning how to do this and taking time to say good-bye well is going to be important to you, your family, and your friends. It is a means to establish life long communications and to not feel you have left something "undone" when you leave.*

*How many of you have actually given some thought to how you will approach this?*

Mention that now is the time to begin to think and talk about how they will feel about the separation.

II. Prepare 3 flip charts with titles of: "*Tangible Things*", "*Feelings*", and "*Family and Friends*".

Have the students discuss what they will miss and why. This may include host sister, best friend, food, TV shows, cars, wide open spaces, informality with teachers; things both tangible and intangible. As they mention what they will miss, write it on the flip chart under the category which it best fits. This discussion should help give students a chance to identify what is important and valuable to them from the exchange experience. After all the ideas have been listed, tell the students that we will now discuss each category separately for ideas on how the student can "say good-bye" to each.

III. Begin with ways the students can leave yet still remember the tangible things they will miss. Some ways to preserve these great memories might include:

1. Pictures - students should take pictures of their home, room, school, and other things they value before returning home.
2. Recipes - take home recipes (and ingredients if needed) of your favorite dishes, and make them for your family at home.

IV. Next discuss how the student can leave the things they will miss which are more feelings: the way people act, the response to the environment, the frustrations with transportation, the joy of team sports. Explain that the feelings do not need to be left behind, but might end up getting forgotten if they do not have a way to keep them alive. Some ways to do this might be:

1. Journal - hopefully the students have been keeping journals throughout their stay, which will have many of these feelings. Rereading the journal will bring the feelings sweeping back.
2. Letters - the letters the students have written home are themselves a journal, and will contain many of these feelings. The students should ask their family and friends to share the letters they had sent. The student will relive their entire experience as they read through these letters.

3. Scrapbook - make notes of what you felt during each activity or event.

V. Finally discuss ways in which the students can say good-bye to their family and friends.

During the last month:

1. Make small gifts of something typical of your home country.
2. Talk to your host family about how you are feeling about leaving. Talk to your friends about how you will miss them. One important part of this process is to not leave anything unsaid for a future card or letter, because if you think you are busy now, wait until you get home! Also, this process will serve as a release so feelings don't build up and become overwhelming.
3. Make a list of friends you want to see, and spend time with each of them. This does not need to be a long time; just getting together for a Coke is good enough. Don't leave all your visits until the end or you will run out of time. Think ahead a little. It will make leaving a lot less hectic and emotionally draining.
4. Before classes are over and exams begin, take time to thank the teachers who have been particularly helpful or supportive.
5. Take pictures of all the "memories" you want to keep.
6. Make a sketch book of memories.
7. Sit down and talk. Stress good rather than bad moments.
8. Buy a tree or bush and plant it with your host family. As it grows so will their memory of you.

During the last 1-2 weeks:

1. Party - many families or friends like to plan going away parties. At the party go around the room and have each person give a farewell toast, say something they want you to remember, say something funny, etc. Record the comments on a cassette recorder.
2. Have friends and family record something on a cassette recorder, which you will listen to only after you get back home.
3. Family outing where everyone can spend time together as a family.
4. Prepare a meal or dessert from your home country for your family or friends.
5. Give small gifts, including things you cannot take back home as plants, balloons, unused coupons, etc.
6. Plan one last visit to your favorite place, do your favorite activity, eat your favorite food.
7. If you mow the lawn, leave the shape of a heart unmowed in the middle of the lawn.
8. Play a game that you like to play with your host brother or sister.

During the last 1-2 days:

1. Family dinner.
2. Hide Post-It notes in drawers, cupboards, etc. with special thank yous or memories for family members to find after you leave.
3. Spend a few private moments with each member of your family.
4. Thank your host family for all they have done for you, giving specific examples of things for which you are especially appreciative. It is important to tell your host family how much you appreciate that they were the ones who made all of this possible for you. They need to hear this in your words, not just through your actions.
5. Walk around your house and neighborhood to take one long last look.



It is recommended that the students say good-bye to their friends first, and then leave the last day or two to be with their immediate family. It is also recommended that only the immediate family and perhaps one very closest friend be at the airport. These are the people the student has been with the longest, depended on the most, and probably grown the closest to. These are the people with whom it will be the most difficult to say good-bye, and with whom it should be the most special. This final farewell is not easy, and sometimes it is impossible to put one's feelings into words. A warm hug for each family member, a smile, and a sincere wave as you pass through the gate to board your plane will say everything you need to say.

VI. Explain to the students that in addition to planning for those things you still need to do, it is also important to plan for those things you will not do. Have the students think about those things that they will not be able to do in the time that is remaining. Explain that they need to simply let those things go. It will not help to fret over the one activity you did not get to do, or the one last camping trip you cannot take. Instead, the students need to glory in and remember all the things they did get to do and experience.

VII. Summarize this session by saying:

*It is wonderful that the exchange experience gives each student the opportunity to make some very deep and meaningful relationships with people in a totally different culture. Even though it will be difficult to say good-bye, memories have been developed which will last a lifetime, and relationships have been established which will remain over the miles and hopefully for many, many years to come. And the best way to make those "good-byes" is to look for fun ways to share the last experiences you have with your family and friends. It is important to say good-bye well, to help you leave behind what must be left, and to get prepared for all that is ahead.*

## Wrap-Up

LEADER'S NOTE: "Student Evaluation" and "Staff Evaluation" forms have been included to be completed at the end of this session.

PURPOSE: To finish on a lighter note, and help students look forward to the final month of their stay.

- I. The leader saying that the last part of the orientation will be spent discussing some lighter issues, and logistics of when they leave.

Passport - Make sure you locate your passport AT LEAST 3 WEEKS prior to your planned departure, then put it in a safe place. It may have been several months since you have had it out, and it is IMPORTANT to find it in ADVANCE.

Airplane Tickets - Program Chairs will either give the students their airplane tickets at the airport or a few days in advance. If 2 weeks prior to your departure you do not know all of the specifics of your flight and how you will get your tickets, talk to your Program Chair.

Packing - Students should start to pack about 2 weeks before they leave. Most students find that they have many more items to take home than what they brought. Light weight items that will not be needed back home for a while can be shipped by surface mail. A 3 foot square box will cost \$30-\$40 to mail, and take about 6 weeks to arrive in their home country.

Gifts - It may be nice to give your host family a small token of appreciation, but it certainly is not necessary. A hand made item or meal from your country would be a wonderful gift. You also need to think about gifts to take home. Again, nothing needs to be expensive. Small tokens of the American culture will be valued by family and friends back home as much as lavish gifts. Also plan for what you want to buy for yourself (jeans, CD player, Kodak film, etc.). But remember finances may be limited; it is getting near the end of your stay and you may have little money left. Plan purchases wisely.

Bills - Pay any unpaid bills for phone calls, stamps, etc. If the last phone bill has not come in, estimate with your host parents about how much you expect it will be, then give them the money.

School Transcripts - Ask the school guidance counselor or your Program Chair for an official copy of your school transcripts if you will be getting credit for any part of your school year back home.

- II. Summarize the orientation session by saying:

*We have spent a good deal of time today talking about the sad parts of getting ready to go home, but there are also many exciting things about going home. We talked about some of the new knowledge and skills you have gained. Although there may be some tough things ahead to deal with, you have developed great skills in this area through your exchange experience. Remember the best, and live your best, and your will always cherish this experience.*

- III. Have the students fill in the "Student Evaluation" and straighten up the room before they leave. Wish them the very best and thank them for coming.

Discussion leaders should fill in the "Staff Evaluation" forms.

## STUDENT EVALUATION

Group discussions were: helpful \_\_\_\_, some value \_\_\_\_, no value \_\_\_\_, boring \_\_\_\_,  
exciting \_\_\_\_, other:

Staff was: helpful \_\_\_\_, no help \_\_\_\_, interesting \_\_\_\_, OK \_\_\_\_, other:

Accommodations were: good \_\_\_\_, OK \_\_\_\_, poor (why):

Most important thing learned was:

The least useful part of orientation was:

Additional comments:

# HOST PARENTS

## Discovering What We Learned and Anticipating Student's Return Home

LEADER'S NOTE: Although this orientation material is geared toward host parents, host siblings can also be included in the parents or in a separate discussion group using the same material.

Host families should already know each other, but it is always nice to have everyone introduce themselves.

PURPOSE: To have host families think about areas of rewards and growth as a result of the exchange experience, and to begin to think about their student's return home and the challenges still ahead.

I. The leader gives a brief introduction:

*During your hosting experience you have probably noticed a change in not only your exchange student, but also in your own children and in your family unit. During this session we will be talking about the effects your exchange student has had on your home.*

II. The leader labels 3 flip chart sheets with: "*Best Part of the Exchange Experience*", "*Most Important Thing Learned*", and "*Concerns About Student's Return Home*" then gives the parents a moment to think about the one item which would best fit each category for them. Go around the room and have each parent talk about what they would put in each category, while the leader or assistant briefly writes down their comments on the appropriate flip chart. Once everyone has had a chance to comment, summarize by mentioning some of the common responses in each category. Mention that the orientation is intended to help everyone learn how to deal with both the positive experiences as well as the concerns they may be beginning to have.

Hopefully the lists will give the leader an opportunity to show that families have learned about other cultures and values. The leader can point out that neither the parents nor student have had to change their own values to learn about and even learn to love another culture. The exchange experience has enhanced our awareness and appreciation for others.

III. Discuss the "*Concerns About Student's Return Home*" in more detail. Explain that:

*We know from experience that upon returning home it is not always easy for students to fit right back into life at home. The students have changed and their home country and friends have changed while they were here. Many students experience an adjustment period similar to when they came to the US. We can help prepare our students for the emotional difficulties they will have leaving the US, and for the adjustment difficulties they will have upon their return home.*

Helping students to be aware of adjustment difficulties still ahead will give them a big advantage in overcoming them. Discuss some emotions and problems the student might face in the last month, and how the host family can help the student through these difficult times.

1. Family life style will be different, perhaps with less independence, treated more like a child, or even jealousy of the host family of how "Americanized" the student has become. It takes time for the student to readjust to the old way of family life.

2. Home and support system has changed. Upon arrival in their home country the student needs to take some time to catch up with family, friends, and current trends. They need to use the same skills they did in adapting to the U.S. when they return home: patience, problem solving, communication, ability to make new friends, interest in new things, etc.
3. Student has matured, gained new skills, and gained an appreciation for different points of view and ways of doing things. These may be different than the values of peers at home. Some may find the student arrogant or the tales boring. Once returning home, the student should take time in explaining all the experiences. Friends and family will want to hear, but maybe not all at once.
4. Student may feel less fluent in their native language, even mixing in English phrases and slangs. The students need to understand that after speaking a language for 16 years it will not all be lost in 1 year. It will take a few weeks, but they will quickly become fluent again, and perhaps add some color to their own language with some American phrases.
5. Feel that new attitudes, ways, and friends and family gained in the U.S. may be lost. This can be overcome by special attention to the preparation during the last month of their stay in the United States. By staying aware of and addressing these issues before leaving (in the next session), one's experiences can last a lifetime.

If the students bring up any of these or other issues before their departure, the parents should try to help the students understand that they will fit back in, but it will take some effort on their part. Students need to be prepared to experience some "reverse culture shock", and recognize that this readjustment is a normal process. They should have the same confidence in themselves and use the same skills they used to adjust to the U.S., to help in their readjustment back home. If they are aware that they may experience an uncomfortable period, then they will be better prepared to handle it.

#### IV. Explain that as Host Parents, they are part of the transition process in many ways.

The final weeks of a homestay can be traumatic for everyone. The family dynamics will change as this member of the family prepares to leave. A certain amount of stress and confusion will arise in this transition process. The family needs to deal with their own sense of loss as the student leaves. The student and family may share many of the same feelings. They might be irritation, sadness, confusion, relief, nervousness, possessiveness, jealousy, can't wait for the day to depart. These feelings are normal, but none the less difficult. Ask the families if they have already noticed some of these feelings or behaviors. These might include: moodiness, avoiding homework, regressive behavior (clinging, demanding, less tolerant), denial, anger.

Encourage the parents to use the skills they have developed as parents and as host parents to support and help their student and entire family through this time. Encourage them to take these last few weeks to be together, to talk with each other, to share special evenings. If a solid friendship has been established, it will endure

- V. To summarize, reinforce that this has been a great opportunity for both host families and exchange students to learn about and experience another culture. There have been rewards throughout, but there are still some issues ahead to overcome, and some even deeper rewards in the future.

## Saying Good-bye

### LEADER'S NOTE:

PURPOSE: To give families some ideas on how to say good-bye to their new son or daughter.

I. The leader introduces the session by saying something like:

*Most students face returning home with mixed emotions. On the one hand they are excited to see their natural family and friends again, but on the other hand they may find the idea of leaving difficult to handle. Perhaps one of the most difficult parts of the exchange experience lies ahead for all of you - the process of saying good-bye. Planning how to do this and taking time to say good-bye well is going to be important to your family and your exchange student. It is a means to establish a life long relationship.*

*How many of you have actually given some thought to how you will approach this?*

II. Over the next month your exchange student and your family should be preparing for the departure. It is not a time to dwell on the student's leaving, but rather a time to delight in the time left, to make sure things are not left undone or unsaid. The following are things that should be considered:

1. Pictures - take lots!
2. Scrapbook - help student put some of the memorabilia into a notebook and label the activities or events. This will be a great way to "reminisce" over the year.
3. Concentrate on the good - at dinner have each member of the family mention what family trip or activity over the last year was the most fun and rewarding to the entire family.
4. Make small gifts for student's family.
5. Talk about feelings - it is important to not leave things unsaid and regret it later. Also, talking will serve as a release so feelings don't build up and become overwhelming.
6. Have student visit friends one last time - don't leave all visits until the end or student will run out of time, in addition to making things more hectic and emotionally draining.
7. Have a party - you may want to plan a farewell party for family or the student's friends. At the party have each person say what they will remember most about the student, say something funny, etc. Record the comments on a cassette recorder.
8. Family outing where everyone can spend time together as a family.
9. Fix student's favorite food.
10. Write a letter to student's natural family thanking them for entrusting their son/daughter to you.
11. Each member of the family spend a few private moments with student - tell the student in specific terms how he or she has been important or special.
12. Leave a surprise in the student's suitcase, to be discovered when unpacking back home.

We recommend students say good-bye to their friends first, and then leave the last day or two to be with the immediate family. It is also recommended that only the immediate family and perhaps one very closest friend be at the airport. These are the people the student has been with longest, depended on the most, and probably grown the closest to. These are the people with whom it will be the most difficult to say good-bye, and with whom it should be the most special. This final farewell is not easy, and sometimes it is impossible to put one's feelings into words. A warm hug from each family member, a smile, and a sincere wave as your son or daughter passes through the gate to board the plane will say everything you need to say.

III. Explain that the day the student leaves it is important for the family to have something planned for after the departure to keep busy. Have them even plan a few events over the next week. The house will seem empty and the parents will feel like there is “not enough to do”.

Explain that it is OK for members of the family to feel sad; remember that everyone is missing the International Student. Talk about the student. Keep them an active part of your memories.

Plan for some special treat for your student. Begin to assemble a scrapbook that you will send for the next birthday. Have all members of the family write on occasion, but remember that the student is very busy back home, and has a lot of friends in the U.S. to write to. Don't expect frequent letters back.

Remember to step back and let go of the student. Assume a secondary family role now.

VII. Summarize this session by saying:

*It is wonderful that the exchange experience gives each of us the opportunity to make some very deep and meaningful relationships with people from another culture. Even though it will be difficult to say good-bye, memories have been developed which will last a lifetime, and relationships have been established which will remain over the miles and hopefully for many, many years to come. And the best way to make those “good-byes” is to look for fun ways to share the last experiences you have with your exchange student. It is important to say good-bye well to help establish a life-long relationship.*

## Wrap-Up

LEADER'S NOTE: It is unlikely that the parent's Pre-Departure Orientation will require the full two hours. However, because the total amount of time is so short, it is unlikely the parents will want to leave after their part of the orientation is completed, then return for their exchange student later. Once all material for the parents has been covered, let them talk among themselves. This will be a good opportunity for them to reminisce with each other.

PURPOSE: To talk about a few of the last minute details to be considered, and to thank the host families for their hard work and involvement.

- I. The leader should mention that this same material will be reviewed with the students, but it is important to also make the host parents aware of these last minute details:

Passport - Make sure your student can locate his or her passport AT LEAST 3 WEEKS prior to departure, then put it in a safe place. It may have been several months since it was out, and it is IMPORTANT to find it in ADVANCE.

Airplane Tickets - Program Chairs will either give the students their airplane tickets at the airport or a few days in advance. If 2 weeks prior to departure you do not know all of the specifics of the student's flight and how they will get the tickets, call the Program Chair.

Packing - Students should start to pack about 2 weeks before they leave. Most students find that they have many more items to take home than what they brought. Light weight items that will not be needed back home for a while can be shipped by surface mail. A 3 foot square box will cost \$30-\$40 to mail, and take about 6 weeks to arrive in the home country.

Gifts - Your student may want to go out shopping for gifts to take back home, or a few items for him/herself. Help the student remember that gifts do not need to be lavish and that finances may be limited; it is getting near the end of the stay and the student may have little money left.

Bills - Make sure you discuss any outstanding bills with your student, and how he/she intends to reimburse you for them, e.g. phone calls, stamps, etc. If the last phone bill has not come in, estimate with your student about how much it will be.

- II. Summarize the orientation by saying:

*We would like to thank each and every one of you for opening your homes and hearts to an ATAD exchange student. We hope it has been a positive experience with many wonderful memories. Your warmth and generosity over the last year has been deeply appreciated by everyone, especially your new son or daughter. We wish you the very best in the future, and hope to hear from you again when you are ready to host your next ATAD exchange student.*

- III. Have the parents fill in the "Host Parent Evaluation" form before they leave. Wish them the very best and thank them for coming. Tell them that the exchange student should be done about 6:00, and they are welcome to sit around and talk until that time.

Discussion leaders should fill in the "Staff Evaluation" forms.



## HOST PARENT EVALUATION

Group discussions were: helpful \_\_\_\_, some value \_\_\_\_, no value \_\_\_\_, boring \_\_\_\_,  
exciting \_\_\_\_, other:

Staff was: helpful \_\_\_\_, no help \_\_\_\_, interesting \_\_\_\_, OK \_\_\_\_, other:

Accommodations were: good \_\_\_\_, OK \_\_\_\_, poor (why):

Most important thing learned was:

The least useful part of orientation was:

Additional comments:

## ORIENTATION LEADER EVALUATION

Discussions were: successful \_\_\_\_, boring \_\_\_\_, too long \_\_\_\_, answered questions \_\_\_\_,  
got students thinking \_\_\_\_, not enough adult help \_\_\_\_, too structured \_\_\_\_,  
students didn't pay attention \_\_\_\_, other:

Students were: enthusiastic \_\_\_\_, interested \_\_\_\_, bored \_\_\_\_, other:

Structure was: too structured \_\_\_\_, disorganized \_\_\_\_, knew my expectations \_\_\_\_, enough preparation \_\_\_\_,  
uncertain as to expectations \_\_\_\_, hand outs hard to follow \_\_\_\_, other:

—

Accommodations were: good \_\_\_\_, OK \_\_\_\_, poor (why):

Meals were: good \_\_\_\_, OK \_\_\_\_, poor (why):

Other comments: