

IMPORTANT SHORT TERM EXCHANGE INFORMATION

- Core information
 - **About the Program**

Rotary Short Term Exchange presents opportunities for students to advance their knowledge and world understanding by allowing them to exchange in a different country. Participants will live with host families in their selected land usually for three to four weeks in the summer, under the sponsorship of their local Rotary Club.
 - **Objective**

To foster world peace, international understanding and good will by extending international communication at the personal level through the exchange of students of high school age. It is our hope that these young people will be able to observe, first hand, the problems and accomplishments of other countries by living with and meeting people of cultures, creeds and colors other than their own.
 - **Eligibility**

Any student, age 15-19 of good character who possesses a warm personality and a desire to live abroad and host in return. Candidates should be adaptable and flexible, well mannered and want to experience life in other countries and cultures. Children of Rotarians and non-Rotarians are equally eligible.
 - **Sponsorship**

Applicants must be sponsored by a local Rotary Club. Contact any member of a local club who will put you in touch with its Youth Exchange Chairperson regarding details. Your High School Guidance Counselor usually cooperates with the Rotary Club and can help you make that contact.

Additional information which may be most useful by linking to a new page from the STEP page. Do what you think works best, Bob.

- Countries Available for Exchange

Rotary offers you a broad choice of countries to ensure you have the most exciting summer of your life. Country availability varies from year to year.

 - Belgium
 - Brazil
 - Colombia
 - Ecuador
 - France
 - Germany
 - Italy
 - Netherlands
 - Spain
 - Sweden
 - Switzerland
 - Taiwan
 - Turkey
- FAQs
 - **Why is it called an exchange program?**

You will be matched with a student of similar interests in a country of your selection or approval. The two of you will spend an agreed upon time together – half of that time in your home and half of the time in their home. Typical visitations are 3-4 weeks each

way. It will be up to you and your foreign host family to agree upon the actual dates of the exchange. Generally our students fly to their host country first, then bring their host brother or sister back with them to complete the exchange. However, you may also agree to host first then travel abroad second.

○ **Is proficiency in a foreign language needed?**

No. The program is cultural in nature but is also for a short period of time. Many countries throughout the world teach English as a second language and most participating students are quite proficient in speaking our language. If you have taken a foreign language in high school and elect to visit a country that speaks that language, you will be able to gain some conversational ability. Most students do not find language to be a barrier to having a great exchange experience.

○ **What is so special about Rotary's Short Term Exchange Program compared to other programs?**

The Rotary International Short Term Exchange Program is volunteer driven. It is organized and administered by volunteer Rotarians throughout the world. The operation is done at several levels; namely the local Rotary Club, the district and the regional levels. They screen the students, prepare them, arrange hosting abroad, insurance, etc. All this work is done by Rotarians as a service. They are not paid to provide this service. At times of immediate need, students who are away from home will be more comfortable knowing that Rotarians will be available to help and offer guidance.

○ **Is this a mutual exchange?**

Yes, a student will live with a foreign family for approximately 3-4 weeks. When he or she returns, the foreign brother or sister will also fly back with the student and stay with the U.S. student's family. The stay here will also be for approximately 3-4 weeks.

○ **May my student select which country to go to?**

Every effort will be given to match a student with his/her first choice of countries, *but cannot be guaranteed*. Availability of foreign students varies year-by-year. This mutual exchange only works when the genders, ages, and interests match. Quality is important in the program. A quality ambassador must be flexible.

○ **May I request which gender my student may exchange with?**

Yes, in fact we will obligate ourselves to your choice. The application form contains the following: "the family can host: boy/ girl/ or either."

○ **Exchange Dates**

The Actual dates of the exchange will be coordinated by you and your host family. Typically, summer exchange programs occur during **June, July, and August** when you are out of school.

If you choose to make an exchange with a southern hemisphere country then your exchange partner will expect to come here during their long summer break in December and January.

Normally you will travel to your host country first, then bring your host brother or sister back with you for the second half of the exchange. Or, you may agree to host first then travel to your host country second. It all depends on each family's schedule.

○ **What is the expected timeframe to finalize these arrangements?**

February 28th to April 30th: Matches are arranged. Finding a match in the country of your choice is the responsibility of the Short Term Exchange committee members. Once your application and program fee is received we begin an immediate search for a match in the country of your choice.



The matching process is dependent upon; 1. When applications are received on both sides of the pond. 2. The number of applications received. 3. The gender of applicants.



Your application information is shared with our contacts overseas. They in turn share information about their applicants with us.



Once a potential match is found we contact you to confirm the match.



The host family's information is shared with you so you can begin the process of coordinating the dates of your particular exchange.



Once you and the host family agree upon the dates of your exchange you would then book your flight.



Very Important: Before booking your flights, be sure you and the host family have unconditionally agreed upon the dates of the exchange. If you, or the foreign student, cancel the exchange after booking your flights you could stand to lose all, or a portion of, your airline ticket cost. Cancellation of your airline tickets would be subject to the terms agreed to with the airline you choose.

April: Orientation Meetings are held. These meetings are mandatory. You and at least one of your parents or guardians are required to attend.

June: The fun begins. Students either fly overseas or prepare to receive their visiting brother or sister.

○ **How does the flight get booked?**

Once you and your matched family have Contact your travel agent or use an online travel site such as travelcity.com, to make flight arrangements. The cost of the round-trip airfare is your responsibility.

○ **How much does it cost?**

- **\$250 Administration Fee** which includes the cost of processing application and background checks, supplemental Life and Medical insurance while abroad, orientation meeting, Rotary Shirt or related item.



Administration Refund Policy: In the rare instance that a match is not found for the application we will refund all but \$100.00 of the Administration Fee. The \$100.00 is used for phone, printing, mailing, and other miscellaneous costs associated with our attempts to find matches for our students.

- Cost of round-trip airfare from your home to the foreign country. Airfare costs have run anywhere from \$1,000 to \$1,700 depending on your destination and the number of connecting flights necessary to get to your destination.
 - **PLEASE let your SYE Coordinator know your travel dates as soon as they are confirmed. Insurance coverage needs to be arranged to cover the specific dates you are traveling.**
 - There is also the cost of having a guest in your house for 3-4 weeks and the additional cost of any excursions or events you may attend.
 - You must obtain a passport and visa (if required).
 - Provide your own spending money for the duration of the exchange.
- **What are the host family's obligations?**
In a nutshell, we expect our host families to entertain the student, to some extent, beyond the normal family activities. For example, family vacations to a summer cottage, a relative's home, or even another state are normal. Room, board, travel expenses incurred in the States are paid for by the host family as they would if the visiting student were a normal family member. Special outings to the zoo, to a baseball game, to a museum, etc. should also be provided. American students should have NO job commitments during the exchange period so they can spend time with their foreign students. We have found that our students are treated first class when they travel abroad. We would like the American host family to reciprocate with a first class experience for the foreign students.
- **What responsibility does the local Rotary Club have?**

Each Rotary Club **MUST** interview the student applicant to insure he or she will be a good ambassador for their community. The Rotary Club is also responsible for ensuring the student's home is appropriate to host the inbound student. The Rotary Club President and Youth Exchange Officer **MUST** sign the application. The Rotary Club and student should remain in contact during the exchange. Both students should make every effort to attend a local Rotary meeting during the exchange and should be able to speak about their experiences.

- **Am I expected to attend an orientation?**

Yes, a formal orientation will be set up in the April timeframe, ahead of summer departures. The student and at least one parent **MUST** attend the orientation session. For District 6250 the session is held in the Baraboo / Wisconsin Dells vicinity.

- **How much money should the student take?**

Again, this will be a personal issue. It will be up to the student and family to decide what works best in their own situation. Students have been known to leave with \$200.00 and come back with \$150.00. They've also been known to leave with \$2,000.00 and call home for more. This must be a personal decision based upon the individual's situation.

- **My student has graduated from high school. May she/he still apply?**

Yes, the age limits are from 15 to 19.

- **May the student participate in this program more than once?**

Yes, they may even want to apply for the long term exchange after visiting a country for the summer. We believe the short term summer exchange can compliment the 11 month long term exchange program.

- **Useful Links**

- Visit this Rotary link to find a Rotary Club nearest you.
<http://www.rotary.org/en/AboutUs/SiteTools/ClubLocator/Pages/ridefault.aspx>
- [Rick Steve's Europe Through The Back Door](#)
With 30 years of travel experience, Rick Steves knows his stuff. Here you'll find thousands of articles on trip planning, a community of travelers, guided tours, and a travel store.
- [U.S Department of State Passports Page](#)
To obtain a passport, and a visa (if required).
- Visit this Department of State site to learn about country specific visa requirements, crime and security information, and any current health issues.
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_4965.html
- [What Shots do I Need?](#)

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