

HOST AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

Have you ever thought of being a host family to an international student? Are you overwhelming yourself with questions and that stops you from checking it out?

Below are some of the top questions that come up and some of the answers (cut and pasted) from our key contacts and their websites. We believe this will help fill in the information gap and help you in making a fully informed decision.

We hope that you will prayerfully consider becoming a host family!

Frequently Asked Questions for Hosting an International Students

1) How will our family benefit by hosting an international exchange student?

Hosting an exchange student is a rewarding experience for your whole family. You'll learn about another culture and language – without leaving home. You'll start a life-long relationship with your new "son" or "daughter," and when your student returns home you'll have a friend in another country. Members of your family will feel closer to each other through sharing your daily lives with an exchange student. If you have children, they'll gain a broader perspective on the world, learning more about geography, communication and international cultures. If your children are young, they'll probably love having a big brother or sister from another country. You will be a citizen diplomat by creating positive impressions about America and Americans, breaking stereotypes, and fostering mutual understanding and respect.

2) How long do we have to host our exchange student?

Currently, you can host a student for one semester or for the entire school year if you choose. Some students plan to come for the year while others plan to come for just a semester. Let us know which arrangement would work best for you.

3) Do I have to have a teenage son or daughter to be a host?

You don't have to have a teenager to be a host family. Host families come in all shapes and sizes. Host families may include married or single parent households, parents with adult children, families with small children or many other varieties. A few examples of host families include (but are not limited to):

- * Single adults
- * Working parents
- * Single parents
- * Couples without children
- * Couples with children (of any age)
- * Adoptive parents
- * Empty nesters

"Don't neglect to show hospitality, for by doing this some have welcomed angels as guests without knowing it." – Hebrews

13:2 (HCSB)

4) What is required of a host family?

The health and safety of each student is our highest priority and so we ask our host families to abide by regulations of the U.S. Department of State and the Council of Standards for International and Educational Travel (CSIET), as well as, provide:

- Be able to provide for an additional member of the family including a separate bed (which can be in a shared room with a host sibling of similar age and same gender), suitable quiet study area and three meals per day.

- Offer a supportive environment as the student goes through his or her adjustment process.
- Be interested in teenagers/international students and have realistic expectations of what life with a teenager is like. Help your student adapt to your family and to U.S. life and culture.
- Familiarize your student with your hometown and promote participation in school and community events.
- Provide a safe and secure environment for the student to live and learn.
- Open communication, encouragement, patience and sound advice
- Local transportation (students are not permitted to drive while on the program)
- Treatment as a member of the family, which may include household rules, responsibilities and privileges.

5) Will my exchange student speak English?

It is required that all students must be able to function in their classrooms while an international student. While students do speak English, some cultures will be more proficient in the beginning.

6) Am I the exchange student's legal guardian?

No. The exchange student's natural parents remain legal guardians. Each exchange student's Certificate of Health contains a medical release form so that host parents may secure medical treatment in the case of an emergency.

7) Will my international student be covered under my health insurance?

Students have their own accident and health insurance coverage during their stay. They will not have to join your health plan.

8) How will our exchange student get around?

Since exchange students are not allowed to drive, the host family is expected to provide transportation. Though students can take the school bus when available, host parents must make sure the student

has transportation to and from school each day. The host family may also transport students to after-school events, social activities, and cultural programs, just as they would their own child.

9) What countries do the students come from?

Students can come to WCA from all around the world but traditionally have come from China, and Korea. We have had students from the Philippines, Brazil, Austria, and Thailand.

10) Do I get paid to be a host family?

You do not get paid, but your family is provided a stipend by the international student company or directly from the family to cover the costs incurred when hosting an international student.

WCA is currently offering an additional incentive of \$1000 toward your families tuition costs if you agree to host an international student.

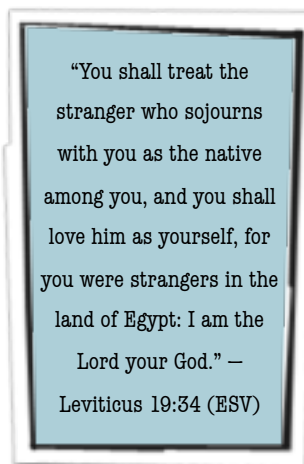
11) How expensive is it to host a student?

Host families are required to cover costs associated with at-home meals, any packed school lunches, transportation to reasonable social and extra-curricular activities, and shelter. Students bring their own pocket money to cover routine expenses including cell phone bills, school expenses, clothing and recreation

such as trips to the movies. Students also are required to purchase approved health insurance valid in the United States. All of the international student's tuition is paid by the student's family. You will need to pay the extra, minimal costs, associated with housing another person, such as utility bills, increase in groceries, etc.

12) What if I have questions about adjusting to my student? Who do I contact?

If your student is here through a company, you will have access to 24 hour support and advice from your Local Coordinator, who will help pair you with a student, promote the program to your community, and monitor your experience during your student's stay. If your student comes to WCA without using an



international company, you should contact the school's international student coordinator.

Like our students, host family applicants undergo a screening process to ensure that they are well suited for an international experience. To become a host family, at least one adult in the household must be a minimum of 25 years old. If you are single and wish to host WCA must get permission from the student's parents before placing a student in your home.

13) How are students selected?

The international company we work with has a rigorous student selection process to ensure that students are well suited for an exchange experience. They must pass a strict screening process for motivation, character, grades and proficiency in written and spoken English language skills. For students coming to WCA without an international company, WCA screens and interviews the possible candidates to ensure they will be a good fit. Student applications must include a letter of recommendation, academic transcripts, an essay written in English and a number of short-answer questions about the student's family life. Students must be between the ages of 15 to 18 to participate in the program. Once students arrive, they are held to high behavioral and academic standards which they are expected to maintain throughout their year.

14) What about the student's homework?

Host families can expect their international student to have homework and may need a little help. WCA does provide tutorial services to the international students to help support them academically but they will still have work to do when they get home. Host families should ask, offer support and contact the tutor if the homework is overwhelming for the student.

15) Is the international student expected to participate with all of our family activities?

Yes, part of the international

student coming to the United States is for the student to participate in family life. They should participate in all ways that you would expect your own student to participate in.

16) What about holidays with an international student?

Students who come for the whole year should celebrate holidays with you. It doesn't mean you have to spend lots of money to buy as many gifts for your international student as your own children - but you do want them to experience the celebration of Christmas the same way we do. Often times - their own parents will send the gifts that they would open on the holiday.

17) What if our family is planning a vacation?

Plan far enough ahead so that your student can participate if at all possible. It takes a little more coordination but can allow the student's parent to purchase the student's plane tickets or hotel accommodations.

18) What if it does not work out?

If problems arise between the host family and student, the local coordinator or WCA International Student Coordinator is there to provide support with professional guidance. If it turns out that differences cannot be resolved, either the international company or WCA International Student Coordinator will help the student transition to a new home. We are committed to ensuring that both students and host families have a positive exchange experience.

"If anyone speaks, it should be as one who speaks God's words; if anyone serves, it should be from the strength God provides, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. To Him belong the glory and the power forever and ever.

Amen." – 1 Peter 4:11 (HCSB)