



SPONSOR CLUB STUDENT COUNSELLOR

(Outbound Students)

Congratulations for volunteering and being appointed as an Outbound Youth Exchange Student Counsellor by your local Rotary Club. Over time, as you foster and develop a lifelong friendship and mentoring role with a remarkable young teenager and their family, I am sure you will discover for yourself, like many of us have in the past, that this role can be one of the most rewarding and personally satisfying positions afforded any Rotary member.

Please enjoy the role, befriend your Outbound Student and their family and remember that Youth Exchange is a life-changing event for everyone involved – even the Counsellor!

General Responsibilities and Other Information

As a Sponsor Club Counsellor you serve as liaison between your Rotary Club, it's Outbound Youth Exchange Student(s), their family and the District 9780 Youth Exchange Committee. Your role, as Counsellor, is pivotal to the thorough preparation of the Student and, ultimately, their future success as a Rotary Youth Exchange Student.

Your attendance or that of a nominated Club Representative, at prescribed District Youth Exchange Events, is a **mandatory** requirement. During these events the District YE Committee programmes into the agenda specific Information sessions that it is most important you are exposed to and understand. In addition, there are numerous opportunities for you to bond with your Student, their parents/guardians, the members of the District Committee and other Rotary Club Outbound Counsellors. In the past 18 months we have strived hard to make these District Events lots of fun and very informative.

Assist your Club's Sponsored Outbound Student with all facets of their preparation - including a Country & Personal Presentation that can be used by them in their Host Country.

Encourage your Outbound Student and their parents/guardians to regularly attend Club Meetings and ask your Program Director to schedule the Student on the Club's Dinner Program at least twice prior to their departure in mid-January. Initially, as early as possible after being nominated by District, allow your Exchange Student time at a Club Meeting to formally introduce themselves to your Club Members and to "thank" them for sponsoring them on the amazing journey that is about to unfold. Finally, book them in to the Club Program prior to the departure to make their Country & Personal Presentation and to be presented with their Youth Exchange blazer by your Club President. Parents/Guardians should be invited to attend these meetings as well.

Try to have your Outbound Student make their Country & Personal Presentation at School and to other Service Clubs or appropriate Community Groups in your town. Not only is this a great opportunity for the Student to refine their presentation, but, it is a fantastic way to promote the Rotary Youth Exchange Program across our District.

Where possible, introduce the Outbound Student and their parents/guardians to past Outbound Students (and parents/guardians) who are from and/or continue to live within the local area. This is a great way for them to get a better understanding of the highs and lows

of the Exchange Program and also assists the Club in retaining direct contact with past Exchange Students.

From the outset, establish a Reporting Program between the Student, their parents/guardians and yourself. This should be at least “monthly”, and even more often if problems are being experienced. Encourage the Outbound Student to add you to their “group email” list so that you receive all the news from their Host destination. It is vital that you maintain and document regular contact with the Outbound Student.

If you discover that your Outbound Student’s financial means are insufficient you may like to assist them in organising one or more fund raising activities eg. Club Dinners, Meeting raffles, progressive dinners, dinner dances, car wash’s (subject to water restrictions), etc. As a Sponsor Club you are not obligated to provide financial support to the family, but your assistance could prove to be invaluable. Ensure that the Student and their family do not become solely reliant on either yourself or your Club when it comes to raising any funds!

Report any problems being experienced by the Outbound Student to their designated District Youth Exchange Country Coordinator as soon as practicable after becoming aware of them. The District YE Committee exists to help the smooth running of the Program and has direct access to counterparts in all countries that District 9780 exchanges with. Most problems that arise are “minor” in nature and can, and should, be dealt with easily. However, if the need arises it is much more appropriate to get the District YE Committee involved!

Remind Outbound Students of their obligation to Rotary to report regularly (monthly) to the District Committee and their Sponsor Club during the 12 months overseas. Ensure that your Bulletin Editor includes an occasional update in the Club’s weekly newsletter so that the Members of the Club are informed of the progress of the Student at all times.

Arrange for the Outbound Student and their parents/guardians to attend at least one Sponsor Club Meeting upon their return home at the conclusion of their 12 months abroad. Slotting your Student into the Program will generally be uplifting for all members and very positive for the Club as a whole.

Assist the Student, wherever possible, settle back into their home environment. It is suggested that regular contact for at least 3 months after the student returns be maintained to assist the student and their family readjust to “normal” life following the exchange.