

Parent's Do's and Don'ts



DO

Be a good listener – Their exchange can be an agent of growth and change for the whole family (even parents). Ask them for their ideas, plans, and strategies. This can help you understand where they are, and where they are going in their exchange without telling them where you think they are and where they are going.

Be confident and let go of the need to control – You have raised them well. Let the students work to solve their own problems and master their challenges successfully with the strong team support of Rotary, Host Parents, Youth Exchange Counselors, and Youth Exchange Officers.

Be positive – Be aware of your own fears and concerns and don't transfer them to your child. Let them know you have feelings but give them your support to complete their exchange.

Be flexible – Items in the process may change; sometimes good, sometimes bad. Demonstrate a positive attitude to your child in being flexible.

Be knowledgeable – Patience is needed as you may also need time to learn about culture shock and reverse culture shock. It can take time to process the experience and move on to a new "normal".

Be non-judgmental – Your child leaving can produce some strong feelings in everyone (pride, jealousy, fear, confidence, uncertainty, ambition, irritability, inspiration, and more...) We offer strategies and support to work through these challenges and capture the benefits. Remember, you are not alone!

Be independent – Your family dynamic will now change. Open yourself to new activities, set goals, do something different. This may help balance your changing feelings.

Be proud – Just getting on a plane elevates our child above most.

Be aware – You may not be prepared for the changes that you have not been part of.

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Youth Exchange
District 5230



Don't

Don't be a Bulldozer - A bulldozer parenting attempts to remove all problems before a student is able to try to solve the problem themselves. Prevents growth and independence.

Don't be a Chipper - A chipper expects or creates daily or frequent communication which degrades your student's full engagement in the exchange. Especially true in the first few months of exchange.

Don't be a Helicopter - A helicopter parent attempts to fix problems after they have happened. Don't drive your child's exchange with lots of advice and making decisions for them.

Don't be a Stink Bomb - A stink bomb steals does not allow the student to form their own opinion about the exchange. They set up personal or cultural stereotypes in the student.

Don't be a Panic Button Pusher - Being calm about your student's experiences comes from being knowledgeable about student exchange best practices. Connect with other exchange parents and Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE) committee officers and counselors.

Don't rush the re-entry process - Your student will come back changed and will keep changing after their return as will your relationship. Don't assume your student will or will not experience homesickness.