



## FAQs and Information

### Hosting an Exchange Student through United Studies Student Exchange

**Why should my family host?** Hosting brings worlds together in a most rewarding way. Families who host exchange students develop bonds with an international teenager that can span a lifetime. Through sharing daily lives, you will learn customs and traditions from another part of the world at the same time your student learns about America and the diversity of culture in our society. Children in your family gain a brother or sister. Whether they are very young or grown and on their own, an international sibling brings many adventures. At its core, student exchange is a way of fostering global understanding and diplomacy; it can tear away stereotypes and misinformation about cultures and people. But most importantly, you should host a United Studies student because it is *fun*!

**How long do students stay?** Students are typically here for the academic year (August to June) though some may come for only a single semester, beginning in August or January.

**Can a student share a bedroom?** Yes, students can be given a bedroom of their own or they can share with a host sibling of the same gender, who is between 12 and 18,

**Do we need to have a high schooler at home?** Absolutely not! Young children benefit greatly from an international brother or sister. Also, families who have no children or grown children make excellent hosts. Single people are able to host as well with an additional reference checking process. For every different kind of family there is a student who would love to stay with you.

**What about school?** All students attend high school. Your local Area Rep will work with you to determine the school district in which you live. He or she will communicate with the school and work to secure approval for the student to attend school. In some cases, private schools may be an option.

**How does the student get to and from school?** Students are able to ride the school bus to and from school. They are not allowed to drive (or take Driver's Ed) and will need your support to assist with transportation for sporting/extracurricular events. They may be able to carpool with friends as well; that will be at your discretion as a host parent.

**Do we choose our student?** Yes, with the help of an Area Representative close to you, your family will be able to select a student who best matches your interests or personalities.

**How much does it cost to host?** Hosting an exchange student should not add considerably to a family's monthly costs. Host families provide room and board (three meals a day) as well as the support of a loving family. Many families who choose to host are able to do so with little impact to the "bottom line". \*Families who receive needs-based government subsidies are not able to host as regulated by the Department of State.

**Do we need to make special plans or trips while the student is here?** You should treat the student to whatever activities your family does in a typical year. If vacations are part of the plan, your student may be invited to go along. If you have plans that are already set and you are not able to add your student into them, he or she may stay with a friend.

**How can we be sure our student will speak English?** All United Studies students are interviewed overseas by partner organizations. USSE staff review each student application for understanding of English along with a demonstration of earnest interest in participation in the program and cultural flexibility.

**Will the student be able to play sports?** Most likely, yes. This is a decision made by individual schools. For the most part students are eligible to play sports. United Studies encourages all students to become involved in school activities – sports, theater, clubs, social projects, etc.

**What if things go wrong?** Every student and host family will have a local Area Representative who will be the liaison for United Studies. The AR will be available for support and advice throughout the program and will work to help head off potential troubles. United Studies Directors are also available via the 24/7 toll-free hotline. Students also have a comprehensive accident and illness insurance policy, which will cover expenses if medical care is needed.

**Ready to take the next step?** Contact your local Area Representative or apply online at [www.unitedstudies.org](http://www.unitedstudies.org).