

Host an exchange student



It's a great family experience!

Thousands of volunteer families have enjoyed hosting a visiting teenager from another country. Many of them come back every year and host again.

We invite you and your family to host an exchange student. Our students come from over 20 countries and bring with them their own spending money, health insurance and a wonderful attitude and desire to learn about their new host country. Your whole family...and your relatives and friends...will grow and learn as you all get to know your new 'son' or 'daughter' from another land.

Meet the Laine-Barclay Family

"Having Yuri join our family this year has given us the opportunity to re-experience things with her for the first time and giving us an excuse to take short breaks as a family. Yuri quickly became part of our family, spending a lot of time sharing the differences between her life and experiences in Japan with our kids, which has been an eye opener for them. My youngest daughter and her have formed a great bond, with many hours of colouring in, origami birds, cards and board games and Yuri's patience with Poppi is an example of her polite nature. We've shared so many first experiences with Yuri, that will have a special part in all our lives forever, from her first time camping, first encounter with a green frog, swimming in the beach, vegemite sandwich, learning to live with the family dog, crocodile, bushwalking, stars at night, Easter and the list could go on and on. It's been fun!"



Meet the Donoghue Family

"Our family hosted Paula from Germany this year and it was the most wonderful experience. How did hosting impact our family? The positive impact having Paula stay with us for five months was incredible. We spent more time together as a family and got to see our local area through new eyes. Most importantly though, Paula was a fantastic role model for our younger children. Thank you Paula!"

We had such a great time with Paula and cannot thank her enough for the great influence she has been on our own children."



You've got questions?

Who can host an exchange student?

Our host families come in all shapes, sizes, backgrounds and ages. Retired couples, single parents with or without children, couples with primary school children, couples with teenagers and a family pet... all can apply to become a host family and all can benefit in many ways from the exchange experience.

Do the students speak English?

Students have all been tested and speak English well enough to attend classes at a local school. As with any non-native speaker, there may be a period at the beginning of the exchange where they need extra help and patience as they get used to speaking and hearing English.

How are students selected?



We work with our partner organisations around the world with whom we have long standing relationships. Every new student is interviewed, their medical and academic records are checked and references are always required. Students come from over 20 countries, are usually aged between 15 and 18 years old and their natural parents must have the financial means to support them while on exchange. Each student comes with a passport and return ticket plus money to cover personal expenses and school costs.

Why does the program use volunteers?

Student Exchange Australia New Zealand Ltd is a registered, non-profit student exchange organization. Exchange programs like these depend on the good will of a number of participants. Volunteers help to look after the students while they are here and provide additional support services. The combined result is that many more students from around the world can share in the experience of living and studying in another culture.



What are our responsibilities as a host family?

Your basic responsibility is to welcome the student as a member of your family and to provide the same care and support you would give to your own children. We ask that you provide a bed and two to three meals a day. Students assume the normal responsibilities as a member of your family and are expected to undertake the same simple chores you would expect your own children to do.

What are the student's financial responsibilities?

Any school expenses incurred by exchange students are their own responsibility – school fees, uniforms and all equipment required by the school. Students are expected to have access to a minimum of \$150 to \$200 a month to cover personal expenses and all ongoing school costs. Students are responsible for the cost of all personal telephone calls they make and internet charges if applicable.

Where do the students go to school?

Exchange students will go to the local secondary school in your area. Our local coordinator will arrange the initial approval after discussion with your family and then we ask you to assist with finalising the enrolment details when the student arrives.

Can we select our own student and how do we choose?

We will provide you with profiles of students which will include information on their interests and family background, and a 'letter' written to you as a prospective host family. This will often give you a special insight into the student which will help your decision. You then make a decision based on the students available.

Do the students have health insurance?

All students have overseas student health insurance cover with the same benefits to the student as Medicare.

What role does Student Exchange Australia New Zealand Ltd play?

We provide a coordinator who will live locally. Trained by us, this person provides support to the host family and the student. Full time staff are available 24 hours a day in case of an emergency. We arrange transport for the student to the nearest main airport when they arrive. We also provide you with handbooks and other information.

Is it really as good as you say?

We're probably biased, but YES! We can have you talk to families who tell us how their lives changed by participating in student exchange. Having said that we wouldn't dare say your experience will be without its problems – after all you are welcoming a teenager into your home. But we find host families cope well and help students through any problems they have and we are here to support you.

Our Organisation

Student Exchange Australia New Zealand Ltd is an Australian not-for-profit company registered as a secondary exchange organisation with Departments of Education around Australia and with the New Zealand Ministry of Education. Our mission is to offer the unique experience of living and studying in another culture and to enable young people to develop the skills and awareness that will enhance their future potential. Experience is everything™.

If you want to learn more, contact us on
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