

YFU Answers Your Questions about Being an Exchange Student

What is Youth For Understanding?

Youth For Understanding USA (YFU), an educational, non-profit organization, prepares young people for their responsibilities and opportunities in a changing, interdependent world. YFU was founded in 1951 when the US State Department asked Dr. Rachel Andresen of Ann Arbor, Michigan to locate host families for 75 German teenagers. Since that time, thousands of families around the world have opened their doors to YFU exchange students.

What is an “exchange student?”

Being a YFU exchange student means having a full-time educational experience that also happens to be fun, exciting, and full of adventure. You live with a host family in another country for a year, semester, or summer. If you are on the year or semester program, you attend high school in your host country.

Why should I go abroad with YFU?

- **Choices.** With YFU you decide the country and choose the duration.
- **Value.** YFU offers comprehensive services. From negotiating safe, efficient air transportation to placement with a caring host family, YFU is committed to bringing you the best programs at the best possible price.
- **Experience.** YFU puts the international experience of one of the oldest, largest, and most-respected exchange organizations in the world at your fingertips. To serve you directly, YFU Admissions Counselors have extensive information about programs. They can share their own international experiences with you. Call them with any questions you may have at **1-800-TEENAGE**.
- **Contacts.** YFU has offices in each host country, a national office in Bethesda, MD, and district offices across the United States. In addition to the experienced, professional staff, YFU has a network of over 2,600 volunteers worldwide.
- **Security.** Nothing is more important than the safety of every YFU exchange student. With over 50 years of experience, over 225,000 parents have trusted us with their children.

Why go on an exchange program when I can travel on my own?

Although you learn a lot traveling on your own, global skills are best obtained by living in another culture and experiencing life hands-on as an active member of a family. Sharing in your host family's daily activities and taking part in the day-to-day life of your host community gives you a greater understanding of the world. Other benefits include:

- improving foreign language skills,
- possibly earning credits for college,
- gaining advantages in the college admissions process,
- gaining valuable experience to prepare you for your future,
- increased maturity, and
- forming friendships that last a lifetime.

What programs does YFU offer?

YFU offers American students the opportunity to study in more than 40 countries through three distinct types of programs: academic year, academic semester, or summer. YFU offers over 300 corporate and government scholarships. Please visit the YFU USA Website at www.yfu-usa.org for more information on all of our programs.

- **Academic Programs**— available for the year or semester, students will live with a host family while attending school. Academically you will gain from learning in a global setting, benefit through the unique strengths of academic institutions abroad.
- **Summer Programs**— offer students an international perspective. Live in another culture while focusing on specific interests – intensive academic, journey, or discovery programs.
- **13th Year Abroad Programs**— available for the year or semester. Designed for recent high school graduates, the Global Graduate offers traditional academic and specialized programs. YFU Admissions Counselors should be contacted for further information by calling **1-800-TEENAGE**.

Change Your Life,
Change Your World!

The Learning Adventure of a Lifetime

How long do the programs last?

Academic Year:	10-11 months
Academic Semester:	4-6 months
Summer:	3-8 weeks

What kind of people will be in my host family?

YFU host families are caring volunteers who gladly open their homes and hearts to students usually without any financial compensation. They provide food and shelter, a warm, supportive environment, and are eager to share their culture with you.

How much do the programs cost?

Program tuition varies according to how long you stay and the country you choose. Our program tuitions typically range from \$5,600 to \$10,000.

YFU Program tuition includes:

- professional orientation programs and materials,
- all of your group international and domestic air travel costs and assistance from YFU travel staff at international gateway airports,
- local and regional trips and educational activities while you are overseas (where noted), placement with a carefully screened YFU host family,
- support through counseling, tutoring, and other means, training for volunteers who provide professional, individual support for you and your host family,
- 24-hour worldwide professional emergency assistance,
- enrollment in school if you choose a year or semester program,
- assistance in acquiring your visa or residence permit if required,
- the 1-800-TEENAGE line and Website staffed with friendly and knowledgeable Admissions Counselors to answer all of your questions.

For scholarship and program discount information as well as ideas on fundraising for your trip, call an Admissions Counselor at 1-800-TEENAGE.

Do I have to speak a foreign language?

For most YFU countries, you don't need to know the language before departure, although a few countries do require previous language study. Most countries offer some language training for students on academic programs upon arrival. In addition, because English is studied extensively around the world, there may be someone in your host family who speaks some English.

Will I receive credit from my high school at home for attending school abroad?

Many students get full or partial credit for their year or semester abroad. Discuss your school's guidelines with your guidance counselor before leaving to be sure you understand all the requirements. Only your school can tell you what classes you must take or make-up for credit. Most students find discussing their exchange with a guidance counselor before leaving ensures they will receive credit for classes overseas. You are responsible for obtaining your overseas transcripts for your American high school.

How does the exchange experience affect my plans for college? What about the SATs?

Colleges look for the traits you gain during your time abroad: maturity, interpersonal skills, self-confidence, and understanding of international issues. Over 100 colleges and universities state that YFU alumni have a clear advantage in their admissions process.

If you need to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for college, you can usually arrange to do this while abroad, depending on the country involved. Make arrangements by contacting the Educational Testing Service at Rosedale Road, Princeton, NJ 08541, by phone at (609) 921-9000 or on the web at www.ets.org.

In addition, you may be able to earn college credit while abroad. To learn more about earning college credit speak to your Admissions Counselor.

Can my family host an international student?

Yes, hosting an international student is a rewarding experience. Families, who host, consider this a great way to learn more about the world and themselves. It is also a great way for the entire family to share an experience similar to your YFU experience without leaving home. Students come to the US for a year or a semester and live as a member of your family, just as you will in your host country. If your family hosts an international student, they provide room and board, and the student attends the local high school.

In addition, you will qualify for a host family discount on your own tuition if your family hosts. For more information on hosting, call 1.800.TEENAGE.

Get Started. Contact your Admissions Counselor at:
1.800.TEENAGE or Email: admissions@yfu.org

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Youth For Understanding USA

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