



Ask Us!

Q: How do I know if my exchange student is experiencing 'Culture Shock'?

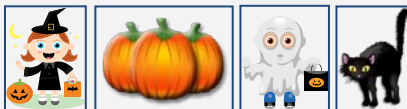
A: Although culture shock isn't a clinical term or medical condition, it's still a real problem that should be dealt with seriously. In simple terms, culture shock is a way to describe the confusion and nervous feelings a person may have after leaving a familiar culture to live in a new and different culture. It is very common for someone with culture shock to feel sad, anxious, frustrated, and wanting to return home.

Some signs of culture shock include: sadness, sleeping too much or too little, loss of interest in activities, irritability, and social withdrawal. It is important to keep in mind that not everyone will exhibit signs of Culture Shock. This is why it is very important to keep the lines of communication open with your exchange student the first few months after their arrival.

The effects of Culture Shock are temporary. One of the best ways to treat Culture Shock is for your exchange student to stay active and not isolate themselves from the rest of the family. Encourage your student to join an afterschool club and try out for a sports team. By becoming active at school, your exchange student will have more opportunities to meet new people and establish friendships.

Q: What is the best way my student should contact their natural parents?

All students should be advised to use a phone card when making any international calls from your home's landline. Students are also aware that they will be held financially responsible for the phone bill, if a phone card is not used. Phone cards can be purchased through FIEA.



What Hosting is All About

Two basic aspects come to mind when hosting is mentioned: Sharing your family's lifestyle and providing a helping hand to your exchange student. Both are important to your student's adjustment in your family and their new surroundings.

Sharing your family's lifestyle can be achieved by the things you do, the opinions you express and the company that you keep. A lot of learning can be done through observation and the course of daily living. But the more your lifestyle is discussed and clarified, the better your students' understanding of your family's way of life. It is also important to discuss family values and beliefs. The following are some good discussion topics:

- What ethnic traditions and ancestry make up your family heritage?
- Is yours a family of doers, talkers, or thinkers
- How does your family rate the importance of togetherness, achievement, open communication, or affection?
- Is your family "traditional" or "non-traditional"

Revealing your family's lifestyle to your student will ultimately make them more accommodating to you. It is realistic to expect your exchange student to be accommodating. After all, your student is moving into your lifestyle, not vice versa. While some give and take will be necessary, the end results are worth-while.

A helping hand can be provided to your exchange student through a "cultural advisor". This is a person who is familiar with both the old and new culture. Your exchange student is also likely to turn to your guidance, when it comes to issues dealing with American culture and defining meaning of unfamiliar words. Aiding your student with the English language is particularly important to their progress. It also prevents the student from being misunderstood or embarrassed. It is very common for students to initially mispronounce words or mix up meanings of certain phrases, when they first arrive.

Another important factor is to address the difference in your student's behavior, attitude, and values which will eventually emerge. Not discussing such issues now, could potentially lead to serious problems in the future. For instance: old familiar ways of doing things no longer work (ie: eating manners) and the student may find the situation annoying and start to complain.

As a host parent, it is your responsibility to provide guidance and understanding when talking about such matters to your student.



Rahel Magula: 10-03

Dmytro Lokot: 10-04

Lisa Lin: 10-05

Daniel Menkenhagen: 10-07

Paul Geyer: 10-11

Andre Klasvogt: 10-11

Penny Yuan: 10-11

Moritz Braun: 10-12

Kathleen Mahn: 10-15

Elizabeth Lee: 10-19

Isabella Beck: 10-19

Victor Sousa: 10-28

Kevin Tai: 10-28

Lucia De Bustos: 10-31

Advice CORNER

Dear Forte Advisor:
My exchange student is very shy and spends all of their free time in their room. Is this normal and what can I do to change this behavior?

-Worried Host Mom

Dear Worried Host Mom:

It is normal and actually quite common for students to spend their free time in their bedrooms, after they first arrive. Many students start off very shy and talk very little to their host family. This will change as time passes. Plan some family events where you bond with the exchange student. Even a simple task like asking your exchange student to help you with dinner, is an opportunity for you to bond with your student. Remember, the more time you spend with your student, the more comfortable they will become with you.

Dear Forte Advisor,
My student has a very healthy appetite and is eating more than what I can afford to buy! What can I do?

-Running Out of Food

Dear Running Out of Food:

Your exchange student is a teenager and is still growing, which means some students will have a larger appetite than others. If it comes to your attention that your student is hungry even after a meal, suggest that they purchase some food of their own. Maybe you can even ask your exchange student to cook some native dishes from their home country. It could be a good learning experience in cultural cuisine.

Dear Forte Advisor:
My exchange student is having issues at school. Who should I contact first about the problem, after speaking to the student?

-School Troubles

Dear School Troubles:

Contact your Local Rep. first about the situation and they will take the appropriate actions to handle the problem.

Holidays in October

Columbus Day: October 11th

This day commemorates Christopher Columbus, the Italian navigator, who landed in the New World on October 12, 1492. This date was made into a federal public holiday in 1971 by Former President Nixon. Most public institutions in America, including schools are closed on this federal holiday.



United Nations Day: October 24th

United Nations Day is devoted to making known to peoples of the world the aims and achievement of the United Nations Organization. In 1971 the United Nations General Assembly declared that United Nations Day shall be an international holiday and recommended that it be observed as a public holiday by all United Nations member states.

Halloween: October 31st

Introduce Halloween to your exchange student by doing a variety of fun activities such as: carving a Jack-O-Lantern, get dressed up in costume and going to a Halloween party. If there are small children in the household, ask your exchange student to accompany them around the neighborhood for trick-or-treating.



Elisabeth Hohmann (Germany) poses with friends at her school's Homecoming Dance.
Photo courtesy of Roxanne Lau



FIEA exchange students, at Disney's "Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween Party", pose with host siblings.
Photo courtesy of Ginnie England

Getting Your Exchange Student Involved!

Aside from their Host Family, the exchange student will spend the majority of their time at an American High School. It is important for the host family to encourage their exchange student to become active in their school by either joining a sports team or afterschool club. By doing so, the exchange student is able to have increased opportunities to make new friends and have a high school experience that does not revolve around only academics. If your exchange student is interested in sports, find out when try-outs are being held. Usually fall sports may not be ideal since exchange students arrive in late August, when try-outs may occur early or mid-August.



Clubs and Sports is not the only way your exchange student can be involved in their high school. Suggest your exchange student to volunteer their time in Student Government, or a committee that plans school dances or events.

Be sure to also encourage your student to attend afterschool events such as football games, dances, and fundraisers. Your exchange student may not have such events at their high school in their native country, and it may be an experience they would enjoy.

Remember: the more active and involved your student is, the more memorable the exchange experience will be for them and for your family.

CSIET Annual Art Cover Contest

The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) is hosting its annual art cover design contest. This is a great chance for your exchange student to show case their artistic ability!

All types of art are welcomed to be submitted, including designs done by hand and the computer. Students are encouraged to be creative with their artwork that represents the spirit of youth exchange and how it can transform the lives of young people.

The winner's artwork will be featured on the cover of the 2010-2011 Advisory List and the CSIET website, along with a cash prize of \$500. The winner will be notified by writing on May 13, 2011.

Rules & Recommendations:

- Artwork should be no bigger than 6 ¼ inches wide and 8 ½ inches tall.
- There should be no reference to a specific exchange organization, sport, or high school graduation in the submitted artwork.
- More than one entry is allowed. However, each submission should be accompanied by a completed and signed copy of the entry form.
- Entries must be submitted with the application form to qualify for the contest.
- Artwork should NOT incorporate the CSIET logo
- Emailed entries will not be considered unless a hard copy of the submission, along with the signed entry form, is submitted together.

**The entry form to submit artwork will be emailed to the host family. In the event that you do not receive it through email, contact your Local Representative, as all of this information has already been forwarded onto them.



Picture CORNER

Students enjoy their Post Arrival Orientation in Oklahoma (Photos courtesy of June Miller)

