



Lions Clubs International

Host Club Handbook

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Introduction

Congratulations on becoming a Lions Clubs International Youth Camps and Exchange (YCE) Host Club!

Being a Host Club to an Exchange Youth (ages 15-22) through the YCE program is guaranteed to be a rewarding experience as you share in each other's culture through conversations and cultural activities while showing the youth what Lions International is all about.

This handbook is designed to help you understand your Host Club roles and responsibilities. It includes the rules and expectations necessary for making the YCE experience successful for all participating parties. Your club should have open communication with your multiple district or district YCE Chairperson to fully understand the Host Club requirements of your local YCE program.

Youth protection

- All participating Host Clubs of the Lions YCE program are expected to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate.
- Please contact your local YCE Chairperson to learn more about how you can be better prepared for reporting and handling incidents, such as allegations of abuse or harassment.
- Please contact your local YCE Chairperson to learn more about how you can be better prepared for crisis management in the event of an emergency such as a natural disaster and/or civil or political unrest.
- Notwithstanding any policies or procedures provided by Lions International, Host Clubs must comply with all local laws and regulations regarding youth protection.

Personal data protection

- It is generally recommended:
 - That where personal data about a minor is collected, parental consent should be obtained.
 - That once personal data has been used and the purpose of the information has been fulfilled, the personal information be destroyed, deleted and/or erased to prevent any misuse.
 - The YCE Chairperson should ensure that a standard procedure, such as specific time lengths, is implemented for keeping personal data of YCE participants (youth and adults) after the program is complete. This will minimize the potential for complaints at a later time.
- Consent
 - All application forms should disclose in clear and distinguishable language how and what personal data may be used. As a Host Club, you are responsible for complying with any local data privacy laws and protecting the information that you receive in this role.
 - To post pictures or videos taken during the youth's YCE experience on social media, it is encouraged to obtain written consent from the youth, or if a minor, the parents/guardians.

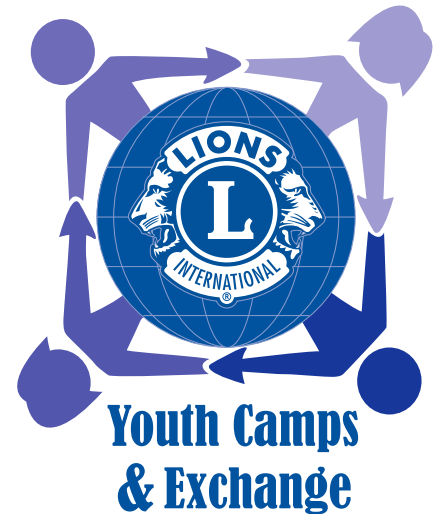
Youth Camps and Exchange

History

The Youth Exchange Program was authorized by the Lions International Board of Directors in early 1961 after a successful summer-long exchange program between Lions in the United States and Japan. Later, the Youth Camp Program was authorized in 1974. Both aspects of the program were established for the purpose of furthering Lions International's first objective of "creating and fostering a spirit of understanding among peoples of the world."

Definition of program

YCE does not involve tourism, academic study or employment. Instead, youth are encouraged to use their travel opportunity to share their own culture while experiencing a new one. The YCE program is comprised of two major parts: international exchanges and international camps.



Roles of a Host Club

Financial responsibility

- General
 - In the event that your club needs to make immediate payments for the youth concerning unexpected or substantial costs, the YCE Chairperson, coordinating Lions, youth's parents/guardians and the sponsoring Lions club must be informed immediately.
 - An agreement must be reached as to how these costs will be covered.
 - Each youth should have personal funds for incidentals, minor medical costs, souvenirs or possible social activities not planned by the hosts.
 - Your club can recommend a specific amount of personal funds for youth to have on hand.
- Exchanges
 - Please work with your local YCE Chairperson to determine the specific financial responsibility of your club regarding exchanges.
 - Depending on your YCE program, some Host Clubs may pay or reimburse any "planned expenses" sustained by Host Families during the visit of the youth since Host Families provide room and board.
 - "Planned expenses" are defined as but not limited to, local transportation for cultural activities, fees for visitors' attractions, entertainment events (sports, music) or restaurant meals.
 - It is recommended that you meet with Host Families to establish a limit to the reimbursement, or this topic should be covered in the Host Family orientation.
 - Some host multiple district or district YCE programs provide stipends for Host Families but is not required.
- International Camp
 - If your club is part of a multiple district or district hosting an international camp, all costs related to boarding and hosting of the youth while attending the camp will be the responsibility of your club, multiple district or district.
 - Reasonable contributions could be needed for special cultural and educational activities that are part of the camp experience provided during camp.
 - These reasonable contributions could be considered as part of the camp fee, should your club require a camp fee.
 - International camp fees are not required, but some clubs choose to include a camp fee to cover various costs such as rental, insurance or activity fees.

Fundraising suggestions

- Create a 5-10 minute presentation including a PowerPoint with plenty of informative pictures and stories for surrounding local Lions clubs and other local sponsors.
- Some multiple district or district YCE programs receive annual donations from each club, district or multiple district required in their policies.

Insurance

- The YCE program and its participating affiliates are covered by the general Lions International insurance liability. Meaning, Lions International's general liability insurance would likely respond in the event of an accident or emergency if a YCE Chairperson or program affiliates were deemed legally liable for damages.
- It is the responsibility of your club to verify that the youth has sufficient travel, accident, life, personal property, health and liability insurance to cover any and all contingencies during the YCE program.
 - This is important to determine before the youth travels. Your club, Host Family, Sponsor Club and YCE Chairperson should evaluate whether there is a need for more insurance based on the risks involved with planned activities.
 - It may be in the best interest of the youth to ensure that their travel insurance includes medical transportation coverage in the event that the youth needs to be transferred home due to a medical emergency.
- Regardless of whether or not more insurance is required, the youth must provide your club, Sponsor Club, Host Family and YCE Chairperson all of the specific details such as phone numbers or local branches of the youth's chosen insurance company in case a claim arises.
- Your club may want to consider securing a release of liability from each youth or, if a minor, from the youth's parents/guardians.
 - This should be part of the Youth Participant Application.
- If your club is hosting an International Camp, your club should do research in case you need to secure separate insurance coverage for the camp itself depending on the activities of the camp.
 - Costs of such insurance coverage could be reimbursed to the camp organizers through camp fees.

Communication

- Ensure seamless communication between youth, Sponsor Clubs, Host Families, other coordinating parties and YCE Chairpersons.

Publicity for program

- Write a press release about the YCE program requesting families who are interested in hosting a youth to contact your club.
 - Please see Appendix A for an Example Press Release.
- A personalized letter to a potential Host Family from your club may increase your chances of securing a dependable Host Family.

Before hosting

Specific YCE program rules

- Your multiple district or district YCE program could require more rules and expectations in addition to those in this handbook.
- Your club is responsible for the youth while the youth is participating in your YCE program in your country.
- Your club must follow the YCE policy which should be provided by your multiple district or district YCE Chairperson.

Host Family recruitment and screening

How to recruit

- Prospective Host Families are typically found through friends, fellow Lions, fellow Leos, current Host Families or from the community.
 - The Host Families do not need to be Lions International members.
 - Families whose children have been Lions exchange participants are good prospective hosts.
- Qualified families should have an interest in other cultures and enjoy discussions with youth.
- The Host Family should have a good reputation and have adequate space in their home to house the youth.
- Each potential Host Family should complete an application form.
 - Please see Appendix B for the Host Family Application Template
 - This Appendix is a template only. YCE programs are at liberty to make changes to this form to accommodate the information that they need for their specific YCE programs.
- Following a review of the application, the Host Family should be interviewed.
- The Host Family must be endorsed by the Host Club in order to host incoming youth.
 - Additionally, an endorsement from the incoming youth's Sponsor Club is a plus, but not required.
- It is recommended to have a waitlist of Host Families in the event that it is needed.
- YCE Chairpersons will give final approval of Host Family Applications.

Screening

- Potential Host Families must be screened. Screening items include, but are not limited to:
 - Age: The family should have experience with youth of similar age as the incoming youth.
 - Though not required, children of the same age as the youth in the Host Family are desirable.
 - Character: The Host Family should be understanding, interested in other cultures, open-minded, tolerant and have ability to communicate and/or deal wisely with youth.
 - Language ability: It would be helpful if one or more members of the family speaks the youth's language and/or English (most YCE programs require English as the preferred language), and could be necessary in some cases.
 - In some cases, youth are restricted to very few phrases in the host language required by the YCE program. Therefore, it is important to know a Host Family's capacity for hosting a youth with limited language abilities.
 - Knowledge of the YCE program and policy: Host Families should have some familiarity with the YCE program and/or hosting youth. This quality guarantees a more successful outcome of the exchange experience.
 - If a non-Lion Host Family is considered, they should be well informed on the scope and objectives of Lionism, and on the YCE program and policy.

- Living conditions: Host Families should be able to accommodate an additional person in the home without discomfort or financial burden.
- Family preferences: Determine family preference regarding the youth's nationality, language, religion, gender or age.
- Availability: It is important for the Host Family to make sure their schedule allows accommodation to spend enough quality time with the youth.
- Any special interests should be determined during the screening interview for the allocation of youth for better matching.
- Please do not to select Host Families simply to fulfill a quota.
- It may be helpful to create a checklist or list of questions for the screening process.

Host Family orientation

- Provide a fun and engaging orientation for the Host Families
 - This orientation is provided in conjunction with your YCE Chairperson.
 - Host Family orientations are often done through person-to-person meetings, meetings with experienced families or electronically by webinar.
- Orientation topics can include, but are not limited to:
 - Roles of Host Families
 - Rules and regulations for Host Families
 - Expectations of Host Families
 - Explaining/preparing for cultural differences
 - Meeting past Host Families to share hosting experience
- Organize activities for Host Families to get to know each other before the youth arrive
 - Get creative and start group conversations over social media outlets like WhatsApp, Facebook or Instagram.

Communication

With the Exchange Youth

- Facilitate the initial contact between the youth and their Host Family.
- Each youth should have written a personal letter of introduction to the Host Family as part of their application form.
 - This personal letter should contain information about their: interests, studies and hobbies; family members and home community; previous travel; expectations for the exchange; and a photograph of themselves.
- Dates of the visit and travel should be agreed on at least six weeks in advance by host and Sponsor Clubs.
 - The schedule during the YCE experience and means of travel to and from the host country should be determined at this time as well.
- Changes to plans should be discussed and mutually agreed upon if at all possible.
 - Last minute unavoidable changes should be communicated immediately to all coordinating parties (your club, Sponsor Club, YCE Chairperson, coordinating parties and the Host Family).

With the Sponsor Club and YCE Chairperson

- Initial communications between an interested youth, your club and the Sponsor Club will be through the multiple district or district YCE Chairperson.
 - If contact information is unavailable for a YCE Chairperson, this communication should be done through the district governor.
- Your club should communicate and discuss the logistics of the YCE program the youth will participate in, including schedule of cultural activities, dates of camps, dates of Host Family stay and transportation details.
- YCE Chairpersons should be involved in most, if not all, communications between your club, Host Families and the youth.

During hosting

Arrival of Exchange Youth

- Depending on the arrival arrangement between the Host Family and youth, your club can send a person to pick up the youth from the airport or train station.
 - Those responsibilities include arrangements for the youth's arrival and departure; plans for loss of luggage; delayed flights or trains; or security issues.

Cultural activities and transportation

- The Host Club should schedule a “country presentation” for the youth to come to a club meeting and present about their home country.
 - If your multiple district or district is hosting an International Camp, the youth give their “country presentations” at camp. Therefore, use that opportunity to invite club members to those presentations at camp.
- Your club is encouraged to organize and schedule other events such as meetings or service projects to include the youth.
 - This is how the youth is exposed to and understands what it means to be a Lion or Leo.
 - If necessary, provide local transportation to events organized by your club.

Extended travel, personal requests or unauthorized visitors for Exchange Youth

- Extended personal travel by youth or leaves of absence from the YCE program, even if to visit close friends or relatives, are not allowed unless written permission has been obtained at least one month in advance from each of the following parties: parents/guardians of the youth, Sponsor Club, sponsor YCE Chairperson, host YCE Chairperson, Camp Director (if applicable), Host Club, Host Family and coordinating Lions (if applicable).
- Unauthorized visitors: YCE program organizers are not obligated to extend hospitality or further travel arrangements for unauthorized visitors, whether these be individuals or groups.
 - Host Families are welcome to visit camp on visitors' days only.
- Personal requests: Youth cannot request to be enrolled in school, trainings or employment.
- Requests for long-term boarding and lodging or the right to operate motor vehicles should also be denied.

Incompatibility with Host Family or need for removal of the Exchange Youth

- If relations between Host Family and the youth become extremely difficult, the matter should be handled tactfully by your club or YCE Chairperson. Your club officers and YCE Chairperson should be prepared to arrange transfer of the youth to another qualified Host Family.
 - In extreme situations, it could become necessary to arrange to return the youth to their home.
- If an assigned Host Family withdraws from the program after a commitment has been made to host a youth, or the youth needs to be moved to a new Host Family home, your club is obligated to provide a qualified replacement Host Family.

Accidents/illness or emergencies

- Any illness or accident involving a youth requires the prompt attention of club officers, International Camp Director (if incident happens at camp), any coordinating Lions (if applicable) and YCE Chairperson.
- In the event of serious illness or accident the YCE Chairperson should make every effort to contact the youth's parents/guardians immediately to provide them with complete information, including a doctor's diagnosis and recommended treatment.
 - All youth application forms should include written permission from parents/guardians for any necessary medical or surgical treatment in the event parents/guardians cannot be reached during an emergency.

After hosting

Surveys

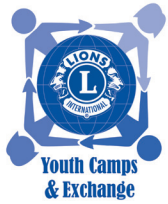
- Create and provide a set of survey questions about the YCE program experience for:
 - The youth
 - Host Families
- This will help your club improve its program for the following year.

Lions International membership follow-up

- Provide a thank-you activity such as a dinner or outing for Host Families.
- Include information about how to become a Lion or Leo member.

Appendix A: Sample Press Release

Sample Press Release



(Name of Lions club) seeks Host Families for Exchange Youth

(Name of Lions club) Lions club is looking for Host Families in (Name of your town or city) who can open up their hearts and homes while sharing their culture from (insert Host Family date range from beginning to end) to host a Lions Youth Camps and Exchange (YCE) Exchange Youth. The YCE program brings young adults from various parts of the world to further the Lions Clubs International mission, “To create and foster a spirit of understanding among peoples of the world.”

(Name of YCE Chairperson) currently has (Number of incoming youth) unplaced incoming Exchange Youth for this YCE season.


Host Families do not need to be Lions members. They also do not need to have children or youth at home. Host Families are responsible for Exchange Youth’s room and board. Visiting young adults come with spending money and additional activities will be at your discretion.

If you are interested in becoming a Host Family, please contact:


(District YCE Chairperson) at (phone number) or (email) or visit (if applicable, YCE program website).

Appendix B: Host Family Application Template

Host Family Application Template



Lions Clubs International



LIONS YOUTH CAMPS AND EXCHANGE (YCE) HOST FAMILY APPLICATION

This form is intended to be completed by potential YCE host families. It is the responsibility of the host Lions club to maintain records on YCE host families for security purposes. Completed forms should be kept on file with the host Lions club. Forms should not be sent to International Headquarters.

Please attach: • A recent photograph • A letter of introduction describing the family's home and community life

I. HOST FAMILY DATA

Name(s) of Parent(s)/Guardian(s) _____
 Address _____ City _____ State/Province _____ Country _____ Postal Code _____
 Home Telephone _____ E-mail _____
 Parent/Guardian 1 occupation _____ Parent/Guardian 1 business phone _____
 Parent/Guardian 2 occupation _____ Parent/Guardian 2 business phone _____
 National origin: _____
 Parent/Guardian 1: _____ Is Parent/Guardian 1 a Lion? yes no _____ club name _____ district number _____
 Parent/Guardian 2: _____ Is Parent/Guardian 2 a Lion? yes no _____ club name _____ district number _____
 Name, age and sex of children living at home: _____

 Languages spoken in home _____
 Home's religious affiliation/preference _____
 Family interests, pastimes _____
 Is home located in an urban area rural area small city other _____ Population of town/city _____ Usual temperature _____
 Pets in the home _____ Is there smoking in the home? yes no _____
 Previous hosting experience (include details) _____

II. HOST FAMILY PREFERENCES

We would prefer: a female; a male; either smoker non-smoker _____
 Age _____ Nationality and/or other preferences _____

Complete if requesting a specific youth:

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State/Province _____ Country _____
 Sponsoring Lions Club _____ Length of time we can host _____ Earliest date of arrival _____ Latest departure date _____ Airport preferred for arrival/departure _____

We confirm that a parent/guardian will remain at home during the visitor's stay. In fairness to the youth and other host family(ies) involved, we understand we must relinquish contact with the youth while he or she is visiting with another host family.

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