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DEAR HOST FAMILY

In a short time you will be sharing your home and daily life with one of the many teenagers from abroad who are fascinated by the United States. How lucky your visitor will be to learn about American life through the warmth and openness of your family rather than as a tourist! The hospitality of families is the backbone of the Nacel Open Door program.

The cross-cultural experience yields exciting results. It is an opportunity not only to share your own culture with your student but also to learn about another country and its people as you enjoy your student's visit.

This handbook seeks to give you the necessary practical points as well as background material which can be helpful in understanding your student and the hosting experience. Many generalities are discussed and they may not always apply to your visitor. But years of experience have shown that it is helpful to share observations of those who have previously participated.

We want to express our gratitude for your enthusiastic participation in our program. We believe that there is no better way to build lasting international understanding than by opening the family circle to people from another land.

Merci!

Danke!

Gracias!

Thank you!

The Nacel Open Door Team

PREPARATION

THE PARTICIPANTS

Many students abroad dream of the opportunity to experience America. The importance of foreign languages in their education, particularly the English language, explains their desire to learn. Parents often arrange for the children to have experiences in other countries, believing that such opportunities are valuable for their growth and enrichment.

The purpose of the Nacel Open Door program is to help these students discover American life by becoming a member of an American family.

Nacel Open Door representatives and language teachers in over 40 countries explain the spirit of Nacel Open Door and encourage students and their parents to be sure this is the program for them. Application forms are completed and, after being accepted into the program, students receive a handbook which helps to prepare them for their stay. Before departure, students are encouraged to attend an orientation meeting organized by their local Nacel Open Door representative.

PREPARATION

Please carefully read this handbook so that you will be aware of the adjustment you and your student will face, and of things your family can do to help. Encourage each member of your family to read it and to become involved in welcoming the student into your home. It is very important that the decision to host be a family one. Planning and getting to know as much as you can about your student and his/her country can help relieve the anxiety and the uneasiness of the unknown.

Please understand, however, that no hand book will eliminate surprises. This homestay experience will be an adventure for both you and your student! Expectations should be realistic, and be ready for individual differences. Some students will be less outgoing than others, some will have better manners than others, some will have more ability to communicate than others, some will be less adventurous than others. Openness and personal understanding will be essential to bring out the best in each individual. Warm, enriching and meaningful experiences can take place when everyone is willing to

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WELCOME LETTER

Immediately upon receiving the name and address of the student assigned to your family, write a letter of welcome introducing your family members and describing your community.

Be sure to include:

- family photo.
- Any special information you might want your student to know (for example, types of clothing necessary because of your plans.)
- A note of welcome from each member of the family.

When addressing the envelope, please keep in mind the following points:

- people abroad use capital letters for last names and cities
- the zip code comes BEFORE rather than AFTER the name of the city
- Be sure to write the name of the country as the last line of the address
- clearly mark your letter AIRMAIL and be sure to use the appropriate airmail postage. (Airmail usually takes 6-10 days, while other mail can take up to 6 weeks.)

As a family, you will experience various stages throughout your hosting experience

- **Arrival:** You may feel like you have a stranger in your home for awhile. The transition from guest to family member may require time and patience.
- **Settling In:** Don't feel like you must constantly "entertain" your student. Include him/her family activities, and help him/her follow your rules.
- **Establishing a Meaningful Relationship:** After the initial stages, more sharing takes place. You'll hopefully feel that you have gained a new son or daughter, while enjoying the learning experience.
- **Departure:** You may feel a sense of loss when your student leaves. However, the relationship you developed can still grow "long-distance"

ARRIVAL

If possible, have your whole family greet your student upon arrival. A warm welcome makes a lasting impression, and the students are pleasantly surprised by American enthusiasm. When there are large numbers of students arriving on the summer programs, it can be somewhat chaotic at the airport or other arrival places, so we ask that you please be patient.

- Making a sign with your student name to welcome him or her can be fun and very helpful.
- Remember that your student has had a long flight and may have traveled some distance before boarding the plane, so don't expect too much at first. A lot of rest will be needed to compensate for jet lag.
- Have a postcard of your area ready with an airmail stamp for your student to send to his/her parents the day after arrival.

The parents will be anxious to receive news. Your student may want to call home collect to indicate his/her safe arrival.

WELCOMING YOUR STUDENT INTO YOUR HOME AND COMMUNITY

Help your student to feel at home with your family, welcoming him/her as another son or daughter, brother or sister. Establish positive attitudes from the beginning, and try to provide a friendly, warm environment that will stimulate meaningful relationships.

- Let everyone know you have a special visitor! Neighbors, friends and relatives can help to expand impressions of American life and make the stay even more enriching.
- Help your student become familiar with the new surroundings. Point out things and places to be aware of, and encourage full participation as a member of your family.
- Give your student a list of important phone numbers, in case he/she gets lost or needs help.

ACADEMIC SEMESTER/YEAR STUDENTS:

If you have a child of high school age, we suggest that your child introduce the exchange student to the principal, teachers and friends during the first day in school. Americans tend to be somewhat casual about introductions, but most foreigners are used to simple formalities and will expect to be properly introduced to young people as well as to adults.

If you do not have a child of high school age, we recommend that you introduce your foreign student to other teenagers in your neighborhood or with whom you are acquainted. It would be a good idea to ask one U.S. student to act as a guide for the exchange student during the first few days in school, in the same manner as a host brother or sister would.

RELATIONS WITH FAMILY ABROAD

Our greatest hope is that this experience will provide you with the opportunity to develop a lasting friendship, not only with your student but with your student's family as well. We encourage you to: Write a note to the parents of your student during the stay. Writing in English is fine. The parents abroad would be delighted to hear from you and will find a way to have your letter translated, if necessary. You may need to remind your student to write home at least once or twice during the stay. Please encourage your student to limit phone contact with their natural parents to once a month. Academic semester/year students should also be encouraged to write to their natural families during their stay, encourage their phone contact to be limited to twice a month.

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COMMUNICATION

Communication will be the key to a rewarding experience. This communication may not always consist of talking, however!

- Gestures and facial expressions will be extremely important. Remember that when communication is difficult, a smile is worth a thousand words.
- The most important thing is getting thoughts and feelings out in the open to avoid misunderstanding. The students speaking abilities vary greatly.
- Complimenting and encouraging can help bring out the best in your student.

The first few days may be a little more difficult. Often, students will not understand or follow when groups of people are talking.

- Speak slowly when necessary and try to be patient! (It does not help to simply speak louder to the student!) Rephrasing your sentence using simple words may help.
- It may be necessary to repeat important information regarding your daily routine and time schedule.

Students may have trouble remembering their English at the beginning of the stay. Your American accent may be very new to them. They will most likely be eager to learn new expressions, and they will also want to improve their skill, so don't hesitate to correct their pronunciation and usage now and then. Also, it may take a while to become accustomed to your regional accent and vocabulary.

Don't be surprised if your student seems quiet at first.

- The change in schedule as well as the extra effort needed to communicate will contribute to the student's fatigue, and they will need time to adjust. They may simply need to rest at first.
- It is natural and should be expected that your student may want to spend time alone during the stay, or in his/her room, reading and writing, or going for walks. This does not always mean that your student is unhappy! However, if this behavior becomes excessive, perhaps you should talk to your student about how he/she is doing, and encourage more interaction with friends and your family.
- You may also notice what might seem to you like a lack of enthusiasm. Children from abroad are often taught that it is polite to be rather quiet and calm. Being bubbly or excited is sometimes considered immature, and they may say no to an activity simply because they hesitate to burden you.
- Be aware that many students will have a limited vocabulary, and they may be unable to express themselves as they would in their own language. For example, you may find that they speak quite directly, briefly or even seemingly harshly (I don't like, I don't want, I go to bed). You will perhaps avoid misunderstandings by remembering that your student is probably thinking and feeling much more than he/she is able to tell you.
- Your interest in learning about your student's country and the life of its people will help get your student involved in conversation. Young people may not be storehouses of statistics or specialists on political and economic situations, but they are able to share firsthand information about everyday life.

INTEGRATION

Encourage and help your student to become involved in conversation and activities. Students may not take the initiative because of language difficulty or because they may not be sure what you expect of them. Following are several ways you can help your student integrate into your family.

- Sharing a room with one of the children in the family can help the student to become a more integral part of the family if the student is about the same age. However, sharing a room with small children could be difficult. If an option is available, just ask the student whether he/she would prefer sharing a room or having a private room. **Students who share a room must have their own bed.**
- Make room for your student's clothing and personal items in a bureau, closet, and the bathroom. Your student will feel much more at home if he/she doesn't live out of a suitcase.
- Ask them to do their part in keeping their room clean and helping with certain household tasks. Even though they may not be accustomed to helping at home, they have been encouraged to do so because it provides an opportunity for them to be a part of your routine. It's fine to say, "Please help me do this...". Then, show your student how to do what is expected. Sharing responsibility for odd jobs can strengthen relationships.

Try to understand that the "normal" way of doing things in America is not always the same as in other parts of the world. Good manners, proper behavior, and family rules may vary depending on the culture. For example, some students may not know that the shower curtain should be kept inside the bathtub when showering. Many may have never experienced the hot, humid weather we have and, like young people everywhere, may occasionally need a reminder about taking a shower and using deodorant. In some other cultures, students are often used to keeping all the doors inside their homes closed at all times. Discussing the differences as you help your student understand American culture will be one of the enriching aspects of this experience.

While it is expected that your exchange student will need to adapt to your family, also remember that your own children may need to adapt to their new sister or brother. Your own children might feel left out a times, and it is normal for them to be frustrated with the extra attention you may be giving your exchange student. To help cope with this:

- Let your children know that you understand what's bothering them. Show that you care by asking their opinions and including them in making plans.
- Don't ask your children to make too many sacrifices for the student. You might want to consider making alternate plans for your student (with friends, for example) and do something alone with your children once or twice during your student's stay.

If there are other students from abroad in your neighborhood, it is recommended that no great effort be made to bring them into daily contact with each other. Too much time with friends from abroad may lead them to rely too much on each other and hinder their integration with their host families. The time your student spends living in your home and community should be an **American** experience! We do, however, encourage you to call other host families in your area and arrange for a picnic or barbecue during the last week of the stay. You may want to include chaperones, language teachers, your representative, or coordinator, too!

ADJUSTMENT

Generalities do not often help people to understand each other, and we ask you to be conscious of the fact that there are significant differences in cultures. Children from abroad are brought up differently than American children.

Sometimes students act on the basis of impressions they have received from television and movies about life in the States. America is still for them a land of dreams and adventure, and it's difficult for them to have a clear idea of what life here is really like before they personally discover it.

They have usually learned that American people are "relaxed" and they sometimes interpret this to mean that we don't care about rules. They may have a confused picture of shifting social patterns and freedoms and may not realize that many American families are basically quite conservative.

For example, although the students are told to bring along dress clothes as well as casual clothes, once in a while they arrive with nothing but jeans because they're convinced that all Americans always wear jeans! (When writing to your student, please indicate the need to bring dress clothes if there is going to be a special occasion to attend.)

It will be interesting to discuss the impressions your student has about America and the changes in attitudes, of your family as well as the student, during the stay.

We encourage you to:

- talk about the differences in culture, remembering that each country has special qualities.
- enjoy the observation of these differences rather than comparing them judgementally.

The following sections on family life and social life are meant to help you understand the background of your student. You shouldn't change your schedule or habits, but we hope an awareness of what the students may be used to will make it easier for you to help your student adapt to your family's lifestyle.

FAMILY LIFE

Families in many other countries are traditionally close-knit. A lot of time is spent together as a family, and parents assume a great deal of responsibility for teaching their children to become responsible adults. Children are often brought up under careful discipline and are taught to think and reason in an orderly and philosophical manner. In the United States people seem to focus on the importance of youth, while many foreigners tend to focus on the importance of becoming a mature adult (the French and Spanish languages have no word for teenager!). Whereas we encourage children to express themselves, children abroad are usually taught to speak to adults only when spoken to, to contribute intelligently and not to monopolize conversation. They are taught to be individuals and to spend a certain amount of time alone in their rooms, doors closed, for reading or writing.

Television doesn't play as big a role in all countries as it does in some American homes. There are usually fewer TV channels, the broadcasting day is shorter than ours, and there are fewer commercials, sometimes grouped in a certain time slot. There are many documentaries and discussions on various topics including quality of life, leisure activities, political matters, justice, pollution, foreign civilizations, etc. In addition to the news and sports there are many favorite American series, movies, westerns, and war films. Ask your student about the American shows seen on their television.

Mealtime is a very important part of the day. The noon meal has traditionally been the most important meal of the day in homes abroad, but work requirements are gradually changing this tradition, particularly in large cities. In some places, businesses and schools close for one to two hours so that families can have a leisurely mid-day meal. Whether at mid-day or in the evening, meals are an important time for families to share.

Breakfast abroad is light; usually bread or rolls with coffee, tea or hot chocolate. (In Germany, for example they may have cold cuts and a boiled egg as well.) The main meal usually has an appetizer, a main course, salad, cheese and dessert (often fruit). Dinner or supper is later than in most American families; ask your student to describe meals and dining schedules in his/her country for you.

It is important to remember that your schedule may be totally different from your student's usual schedule. This doesn't mean you should change **your** habits; we simply want you to be aware of the differences. If your family's main meal is in the evening, explain to your student that lunch will be a light meal and encourage eating a bigger breakfast (cereal, toast and juice or whatever the rest of your family has) so that he/she doesn't get hungry during the day!

If your family is expected to be on their own for lunch, please explain this carefully and give your student some explicit directions. Eating out of the refrigerator on one's own would be a new experience for most students.

Your student may be surprised at some of our eating habits. Snacking between meals and even while sitting on the floor will seem quite strange. Putting everything on the table at the same time rather than eating in courses may be a new experience. Table manners vary from ours; people from abroad keep both hands on the table during meals. Milk is not usually a common beverage for most students; dairy requirements are satisfied mainly with cheese. Most of the quick foods, sandwiches, sweets, watermelon, peanut butter and corn on the cob will be quite new. (Corn is eaten mainly by livestock in many countries, so students may be hesitant to try it at first.)

Eating out: Because there are so many fast food and family-type restaurants in the U.S., and schedules are often busy, American families tend to eat out more often than families abroad. While the student is expected to use personal spending money for snacks or treats when out with friends, it is understood that all regular meals are to be provided by you, whether at home or in a restaurant.

SOCIAL LIFE

Whereas Americans tend to belong to several social and service clubs, music organizations and athletic teams which require members of a family to go their separate ways in the evenings, people abroad are quite family-oriented and tend to spend more time at home or doing things together as a family.

They generally don't socialize in homes as much as Americans, and neighbors or children's' friends usually don't just drop in. Socializing is done more often in cafes or outdoors.

Our relaxed atmosphere, the way we greet each other, and our frequent use of the telephone may be surprising to the students. They may find that there is less distinction among social classes in the U.S. than in their own country.

Many people in other countries live in apartments, and those who live in individual homes usually have small yards surrounded by walls, fences or hedges. Your student may be surprised to see that we have so many open spaces; they are always impressed by the vastness of everything, at how large our farms are and how spread out our cities are. While many Americans enjoy suburban living, most people abroad consider it desirable to live in the city center.

The distances from one place to another in the U.S. may be almost inconceivable to your student, who will probably find the size of our highway system amazing. Gas in the U.S. is about one-third the cost of gas in most other countries. Students may be surprised at how often Americans use their cars and how few people use public transportation. Trains abroad are run by sophisticated computer systems and are a regular means of transportation, rather than automobiles.

People in other countries often consider Americans to be wasteful consumers, but our respect of nature, concern for the environment, community pride and patriotism usually impress people from abroad. They are surprised to see our flag displayed in so many places. Their national pride is seen rather in their efforts to preserve and restore historic buildings and monuments.

RELIGION

Historically, religion has played an important role in many countries. Currently, however, many people abroad go to church only for special occasions.

Many Catholics abroad tend to think of Protestants as one large group. They have a difficult time understanding the concept of various denominations which are prevalent in the United States. Some students may be surprised at the role that religion plays in the lives of many Americans. In fact, foreigners often find Americans quite "puritan." Their views of American society have been shaped largely by movies, rock music, and TV shows.

The students have been strongly encouraged to attend church services with their host families if invited to do so. Some students may be reluctant to attend church more than once a week. Others may want to attend only a church of their own religion and, if so, have indicated this on the questionnaire. Please remember, your student has the right to his/her religious belief, whether or not it agrees with your family's practice.

EDUCATION

The curriculum in schools abroad is highly structured and there are few electives or extracurricular activities. The systems are very competitive and selective, and homework is very important, even for young children.

- Mental and intellectual discipline are stressed, with emphasis on factual knowledge and the ability to analyze. Foreign languages, politics and philosophy are studied more than in most American schools.
- Foreign languages are required for anyone who intends to pursue a career involving university studies, usually beginning at age 11. English is the most important language, and many students study another language as well.

Be sure to ask your student about the types of classes taken and the daily schedule. Discuss the differences between your local school system and your student's, and explain the cost of higher education in the U.S. Your student will be quite surprised because most universities in his/her country are tuition-free.

Academic Semester/Year Students: Nacel Open Door Exchange Students are expected to maintain at least a "C" average in their school courses here. If your students is struggling with the school work and/or falls below this average, please contact your local representative.

RECREATION

While physical education is taught in schools abroad, interscholastic sports competition is rarely available. Most people abroad have never heard of cheerleaders! American football, baseball and hockey are little known, but many students are interested in learning more about them. The most popular sport in many countries is soccer.

Very often, people abroad have to belong to clubs in order to participate in sports. Some of these are quite expensive and, as a result, some sports are limited. Golf, for example, is played by very few people.

Most people abroad have 4 to 5 weeks of paid vacation, usually in July and August. University age students may work during their summer vacation, but high school age students rarely have jobs. Since the ocean or the sea is never too far away, people often go to the beach during vacation time. You may notice that some students have skimpy swimwear. Attitudes in many countries toward such styles are quite open and matter-of-fact and shouldn't be misinterpreted.

Young people abroad usually begin dating at a later age than many Americans and tend to go out more often in groups. Movies and dancing are very popular, and many students will be familiar with American music. Sometimes they will know the words to a song even though they have no idea what the words mean. Be sure to let your student know how you feel about dating.

EMPLOYMENT-ACADEMIC SEMESTER/YEAR STUDENTS

Students are not permitted to accept employment in regular business establishments. They are, however, permitted to do part-time, informal work, **not to exceed ten hours per week**. The types of jobs they might accept are language or other tutoring, grass cutting, snow removal, car washing, baby-sitting, newspaper delivery.

PLANNING ACTIVITIES

We hope that through participation in the daily activities of your family, your student will develop an appreciation of American life. Students will learn a great deal from sharing in your normal everyday life; they'll find contrasts with what they're used to, and in some cases differences from what they've heard about the United States. It's certainly not fair to generalize, but many have the idea from television and movies that the United States is New York on the east coast, Los Angeles on the west coast, with cowboys and Indians in between! Help foster a better understanding of American culture as found in your area.

- Remember the importance of opportunities for the student to observe things which may seem insignificant to you but tell a lot about your way of life: visiting mom or dad's place of work, visiting your school, going shopping, getting groceries, looking at family pictures and recalling important events in your family's life.
- Games are usually good mixers and can be a fun way to "break the ice." Table games as well as outdoor games are things almost everyone can enjoy (badminton, Pictionary, charades, etc.).
- Although you are not expected to plan daily excursions, it would be nice for the student if a few points of interest in your area could be visited. If you plan to take a day or weekend trip somewhere during the summer, why not plan it during your student's visit?

On the following page you will find a list of activities for at home and away which past host families have enjoyed sharing with their students. Many of them are low-cost or no-cost activities. Perhaps you can share this list with your student and decide together what looks interesting.

Very often children from abroad will respond "no" to a suggestion simply because they have been taught that it is more polite to do this than to eagerly agree to something. Strongly encourage your student to take part in activities, even if the first response is negative. Instead of asking, "Would you like to do this?", say "Let's do this" or "We're going to...".

Many times a student doesn't know how to answer to a question about an activity, because he/she may be unaware of the cost and time involved and doesn't want to be a burden. Encourage participation and enjoyment by being encouraging, frank and positive!

Your student might be interested in:

- keeping a journal (with new vocabulary words!) or scrapbook about the stay. If so, you could help gather appropriate items.
- participating in a local TV or newspaper interview, arranged by your family or your representative. Your coordinator/specialist would appreciate receiving a copy of any newspaper article featuring your family and student!

Try not to leave your student alone for long periods of time. If everyone in your family needs to be gone for a certain part of the day, be sure to make arrangements (possibly involving friends or neighbors) for someone to be responsible so that he/she won't be left alone for an extended period of time.

More important than any number of activities is the attitude each member of your family takes toward hosting a student. If everyone is involved and concerned about making the experience worthwhile, everyone will benefit.

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES FOR AT HOME AND AWAY

- Go to the public library and check out a book or videotape.
- Visit a local industry (winery, fishery, factory) and take a tour.
- Go to a baseball game (local or professional) — watch or participate!
- See a rodeo.
- Go to an amusement park or fair.
- Attend a summer festival or arts and crafts show.
- Take in a movie or a summer theatre production.
- Take your student with you to work — let them see what you do “on the job.”
- Take a low-cost community education course — they’re offered on a variety of fun and interesting subjects.
- Participate in your local park recreation program.
- Take an aerobic exercise, jazzercise, or dance class, or do some weight-lifting. Sometimes the “Y” or other sports clubs have special short-term memberships.
- Visit a local museum or art gallery. Students are often especially interested in native American Indian culture.
- Visit your state Capitol building, courthouse and historic sites.
- See some old cathedrals and modern churches.
- Go to a zoo.
- See a university campus — check out the architecture, see the sports facilities, visit the student union.
- Drive to a state park (or a national park) and take a picnic lunch — see some lakes or mountains, visit a ski resort, do some hiking.
- Ask your state tourist or visitor’s bureau to send you a guide outlining summer events in your state.
- Visit a swimming resort or go to the local public swimming pool.
- Float down a river on a raft or inner-tubes, or visit a water slide resort.
- Play some games — card games, charades, “Taboo”, “Pictionary”, etc. Have the family learn a new game!
- Pick fruit at a local fruit farm and make jam.

- Visit a farmer’s market or craft fair.
- Show the student how to prepare American food (they love chocolate chip cookies, homemade ice cream, jello, etc.).
- Help your student prepare a typical dish from his/her own country.
- Buy some food from your student’s own country at a deli for the family to try.
- Have a neighborhood barbeque.
- Visit an Amish community if close by.
- Visit a radio/TV station and take a tour; they may want to do an interview!
- Enjoy a sporting event of the season.
- Take the student on your errands, to the grocery store, etc. Many of the things we consider “routine” are new experiences.
- Make a scrap book or home video.
- Most of all, HAVE FUN!

TRIPS

You may take your student with you on family trips and vacations.

- If you are going to be away longer than overnight, please inform your representative stating where you will be and when you will return. You should indicate the dates you will be away as well as addresses and phone numbers of contact people.
- If possible, give a name and phone number of someone who would know how to reach you in case of an emergency.
- Families planning to visit Canada or Mexico should contact their coordinator/specialist for specific procedures that may be necessary.

Students should not leave their host families to visit anyone during the stay unless there are special circumstances which have been cleared through your coordinator/specialist and the Nacel Open Door national offices both here and abroad.

Do not allow overnight trips by students, even with members of your own family, unless there will be adult supervision.

TRIPS - ACADEMIC SEMESTER/YEAR STUDENTS

Visiting Friends and Relatives while in the United States

Nacel Open Door discourages frequent or extensive personal visits to friends or relatives during the exchange experience, since the foreign student is expected to become part of a new family, school, and community during the stay in the United States. It is, however, understandable and natural for many exchange students to wish to visit relatives or close friends of their natural families while they are in the United States. Such visits may be permitted if they do not interfere with the primary obligation of the exchange students to their host families and schools.

Permission for personal visits may be granted according to the following criteria:

- Since the first month of the exchange is an important adjustment period for the students and host families, visits should only take place after this period.
- Personal visits are not permitted during the school week, but only on weekends and holidays, and then, only with the permission of the school and host family.
- If an exchange student has received an invitation from relatives or friends which includes an overnight stay, it is necessary for the natural parents to write to Nacel Open Door, giving permission for such a visit.
- The student should contact his/her coordinator and/or national counselor regarding permission and arrangements for such visits.
- Nacel Open Door reserves the right to disapprove requests for independent travel or visits based on specific circumstances related to the requests.

- The name, address and telephone number of the relative or friend should be given.
- Students are not allowed to travel by bus or train without adult supervision, and arrangements should be made to travel by air wherever possible.
- Special holidays, such as Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and Easter Sunday, should be spent with the host family.
- If a student is traveling with members of the host family, or with persons known to the host family and permission is given by the host family, it is not necessary to request permission from Nacel Open Door for such travel.

Visits by Parents, Relatives or Friends of Exchange Students

Occasionally, parents, relatives or friends may wish to visit the exchange student in your home. Host families are not expected to provide room and board for any visitors, and such visits should be limited, since they tend to disrupt the continuity of the exchange and hinder the student’s adaption to the U.S. family and culture. *Should a host family experience problems with regard to visits of relatives or friends, the local Representative, coordinator/specialist, or national counselor should be consulted, and Nacel Open Door will deal with the situation in as diplomatic a manner as possible.*

SPENDING MONEY

Students are asked to bring approximately \$200 in pocket money per month.

- Going over each monetary unit with your student will help him/her understand the value of each piece. At first it may seem like “play money” and will take awhile to get used to.
- You may also want to help your student budget his/her spending money during the stay, by planning in advance how much money will be needed for special activities. Suggest an amount of money to bring when going somewhere in particular. This will hopefully avoid awkward moments.

If you want to treat your student to something once or twice, always mention, “I’m treating you this time; next time I’ll let you pay.” If not, the student may incorrectly assume that you are always willing to pay. Don’t hesitate to ask your student for the admission fee to a movie or another outing, when appropriate. Remember, students bring spending money to cover these types of expenses.

While the student is expected to use personal spending money for snacks or treats when out with family or friends, it is understood that all regular meals are to be provided by you, whether at home or in a restaurant. Bag or school cafeteria lunches must also be provided for semester and academic year students.

EXCHANGE STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO PAY FOR:

- postage
- personal phone calls
- photography film and development
- souvenirs and snacks when out with family and friends
- museum and amusement park admissions
- any additional personal expenses (clothing, gifts, etc.) Some students bring extra money specifically to buy something they know is less expensive here than abroad.

Host families should not accept responsibility for phone bills. It may be very helpful to discuss phone use and payment arrangements with your students at the very beginning of the stay. Be sure your student understands that the phone should not be used without your permission. If unauthorized phone use becomes excessive, please contact your coordinator/specialist or, in the case of academic term students, contact your national counselor.

We do not recommend that you lend money to your student. This could lead to misunderstandings and hurt feelings. If students need additional spending money, they can ask their parents to send it through Nacel Open Door.

Semester and Academic Year students should open bank accounts in their own name upon arrival in their host communities.

RULES

NACEL OPEN DOOR RULES

SMOKING: The students have been warned that smoking is not allowed in many public places in the United States, and that they must observe all U.S. regulations regarding smoking (students must be 18 to purchase cigarettes). Please explain your own family’s rules about smoking to your student. *In many countries abroad, young people are permitted to smoke, and many do so by age 15 or 16.*

DRINKING: Nacel Open Door students are not allowed to consume alcoholic beverages, unless your family permits a glass of wine with dinner occasionally. *Youth from abroad are permitted to drink wine and beer in their country, so don’t be surprised if students say they are used to having wine or beer.*

DRUG USE: Any student who becomes involved with drug use will be sent home at their natural parents’ expense. Drug use by any member of the American host family will necessitate moving the student to another host family. The student must not associate with any persons involved in illegal drug taking or drug trafficking.

DRIVING: Students are NOT to operate ANY motor vehicle. This includes recreational vehicles and farm equipment as well as automobiles and motorcycles. Please contact your coordinator/specialist for rules on driver’s education.

SEAT BELT USE: In accordance with most state laws and most importantly to prevent serious injury in case of an accident, we require that students wear their seatbelts while traveling by car.

FAMILY RULES

Nacel Open Door expects host families to set reasonable rules of their own, and expects students to follow them. Plan to discuss your family’s rules the day or so after your student’s arrival. It may be helpful to make notes of your schedule and expectations. Be sure to discuss:

- **Meal times:** Explain your family’s schedule and whether snacks are acceptable in between meals.

- **Daily chores:** Students have agreed to help with daily chores, such as making their bed, clearing the table, picking up belongings, putting dirty clothes in the hamper, etc.

(Please indicate to your student where to put clothes to be laundered. As some students may be hesitant to give you their personal items, it is best to indicate a place where they should leave them rather than asking that they give them directly to you.)

- **Occasional tasks:** Other household tasks that your student could help out with might include bringing in the mail, folding laundry, vacuuming, carrying groceries, cleaning their room, etc.
- **Sleeping hours & curfew:** In many countries abroad, it is quite common for people to stay up much later than we do in the United States. Set reasonable times in accordance with your own family, and if you don’t have any teenagers, talk to friends with teens for suggestions.
- **Dating:** Foreign teenagers often go out in groups, as opposed to dating in the American sense. Dates can be allowed if you feel comfortable with the invitation. You should use your best judgement, as you would with your own children.

Help your student follow your rules...

It’s OK to treat your student like a guest for a day or two while he/she is recovering from jet lag, but start treating him/her as a member of the family as soon as possible.

There are some family rules which are understood and learned over time, and they won’t be evident to your student. Therefore, when situations arise these subtle rules will have to be explained. For example, one “rule” may be: Don’t eat the last piece of cake before asking if anyone else would like it. These “rules” vary from family to family.

Communicate openly with your student, letting him/her know when your family is happy or displeased with his/her conduct. Remember to make sure that your student knows what you expect. Please inform your coordinator/specialist if an infraction of these rules has been made. We need to know about problems in order to resolve them.

NACEL OPEN DOOR'S SUPPORT NETWORK

YOUR AMERICAN TEAM

Everyone involved with Nacel Open Door wants the homestay to be a good experience for both host families and students. Our support network is provided to make lines of communication available. The Nacel Open Door team is happy to discuss any questions or concerns, big or small. Feel free to contact:

- your Nacel Open Door local representative
- your Nacel Open Door coordinator/specialist
- your student's Nacel Open Door national counselor (academic semester/year students)
- in case of emergency, Nacel Open Door's national office

FOREIGN CHAPERONE'S ROLE (SUMMER)

In addition to the American support team, chaperones of the students' nationality are available to provide assistance as needed. For summer programs, one teacher-chaperone accompanies approximately every 25 students on their trip to and from the United States. Chaperones are teachers of English, and stay with families in the general area where the students are placed. Their presence is an assurance to the parents abroad and to the students that someone of their own nationality and language is available. Their role is to contact all of the families and students by telephone during the stay to offer encouragement and to help if occasional assistance is needed. Please feel free to share any concerns you may have. If the chaperone has not reached you and your student in the first 10 days, please call him/her collect. The chaperone may have tried to call you without reaching you.

AVAILABLE SUPPORT

You or your student may want to talk to a chaperone or to your American Nacel Open Door representative or coordinator/specialist to discuss questions during the stay. Please feel free to call or drop a note at any time. You will receive the names and telephone numbers of the summer students' teacher-chaperones when you receive the confirmation of the arrival schedule. In case of an emergency, if you are unable to reach your coordinator/specialist or your chaperone, you may contact the Nacel Open Door National Office at 651-686-0080 or 800-622-3553.

NATIONAL COUNSELORS

Academic Semester/Year Students) In the best interest of our academic year and semester students' success and well being, our Nacel Open Door Support Network also includes National Counselors. These trained, experienced and professional Nacel Open Door team members are dedicated to assisting students with questions, concerns, and issues which are not able to be handled by the host family, local representative, and/ or coordinator specialist. They are also the liaisons responsible for any necessary communication between the student/host family and the foreign country director/natural parents. (Counselors will work to keep both our national office and the student's foreign director apprised of issues, as needed.) The National Counselors are also responsible for reinforcing the standards, rules, and guidelines of our academic year programs and will deal with discipline, probation, and repatriation incidents as necessary.

ADDRESSING A CONCERN

If you are uncomfortable with your student's behavior at any time, please address the issue immediately by talking directly with your student, and by contacting a Nacel Open Door representative. You should not hesitate or feel embarrassed about addressing a concern. When an experience relies on human relations, it is natural that situations requiring diplomacy and understanding may arise. Unhappy situations should not be ignored as this would only defeat the purpose of this program. We want to help, and we need to be made aware of a concern in order to be helpful. The coordinator/specialist (and the national office) will take responsibility for making any necessary decision(s). For semester and academic year students, a monthly contact by your local representative will be made with your family and student to monitor the exchange experience. *Please contact your local representative coordinator/specialist or the national office if this contact does not occur.*

DEPARTURE

All exchange students must leave their host families on the date and time scheduled by Nacel Open Door. They are not permitted to remain with the host family beyond the period of the exchange. Special permission must be granted by the natural parents in order for a student to return independently of his/her group. The student and his/her natural parents will be responsible for all costs and liability if they choose to depart independently.

Because of the time difference, flights to Europe arrive there the day following departure. Your student may have the date of arrival at home in mind, so it will differ from the date of departure from the United States. Please check carefully the schedule information you receive from your coordinator/specialist. Mark your calendar with the date and time of departure for YOUR area.

Make sure your student remembers his/her PASSPORT and all personal belongings. Remind your student to put breakables or valuables in a carry-on bag, and not to leave anything in your home, car, or in a bus.

EVALUATION

At the end of your student's stay you will receive an evaluation form from your coordinator/specialist. Please take a few moments to complete it with your comments and suggestions. Your input is very valuable as we plan for future programs. Your student will get an evaluation to complete during the return flight.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY IN OPENING YOUR HOME. IT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

INSURANCE INFORMATION

INSURANCE COVERAGE MEDICAL AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE

All students and chaperones are covered by a medical and accident insurance policy up to \$100,000 (up to \$300,000 for academic semester/year programs). **Expenses not covered** include, but are not limited to: eye and dental care, routine physical exams, immunizations, plastic surgery (except as needed following an accident), medical care for pre-existing conditions, psychiatric care, and use of drugs not prescribed by a physician. If you have any questions regarding insurance, please contact your Nacel Open Door coordinator/specialist.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

All students (and chaperones) are covered by a liability insurance policy for claims involving involuntary property damage or bodily injury. However, the liability insurance does not cover any damages resulting from student operation of a motor vehicle. Students are not to operate a motor vehicle during their stay. This is stated in the Nacel Open Door Rules, and students have also been informed of this rule. Therefore, the liability insurance does not cover any such related damages.

Should an accident occur, the student (or chaperone) involved must, as soon as possible, provide a *signed* statement describing how the accident happened and his/her involvement in it. This statement must be completed and mailed directly to the national office of Nacel Open Door, prior to the student's (or chaperone's) return to his/her home country; otherwise, the claim *cannot* be processed. A liability claim form along with a damage estimate form and complete instructions will then be sent to the host family. The host family must complete both the liability claim form and the damage estimate form and return them to Nacel Open Door for processing and reimbursement. (Both forms are also available from the coordinator/specialist.)

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RETURN INSURANCE

The medical insurance company will pay the expense for emergency repatriation to the student's home country required by a covered accident or illness. The repatriation must be ordered by a physician and approved by the insurance company.

PREMATURE RETURN

Nacel Open Door organizes the return flight in the case of a death in your student's

immediate family. The cost of a return trip for any other reason would be the responsibility of the student's natural parents.

ILLNESS/ACCIDENT

In case of any sickness or accident, please do exactly as you would for your own son or daughter. Someone away from home is often uneasy about receiving medical care in unfamiliar surroundings. (For Summer hosting, if it would be helpful, the coordinator/specialist can arrange for a chaperone of the student's nationality to make a visit. For Academic Year/Semester hosting, the student may contact a national counselor for additional support.)

You should be in possession of the medical release form signed by the student's natural parents (sent to you with the student dossier). Please take this along should you need to take your student to a doctor or hospital.

Your student should also have an insurance card, which he/she should show the medical provider. The card contains the student's name, the group policy number, and a 24-hour, toll free coverage assistance phone number for the insurance company. If your student has not received an insurance card (from the coordinator/specialist, at the orientation program, or by mail from the national office), please call the Nacel Open Door national office in St. Paul, MN (1-800-622-3553), and a new card will be sent to your student. Medical providers may also call the national office to verify insurance coverage.

Please ask that any bills be sent to the Nacel Open Door national office. Bills should never be sent to the student's address abroad as this only complicates and prolongs payment process. Simply follow the instructions in the following section on completing and submitting a Medical Claim Form. Feel free to contact your coordinator/specialist if you have any questions.

IMPORTANT: If your student needs to be hospitalized or receives treatment for anything major:

- Please notify your Nacel Open Door coordinator/specialist immediately.
- If you are unable to reach your coordinator/specialist, contact the Nacel Open Door national office (and/or your student's national counselor, for academic semester/year students.)
- If there is a serious medical emergency and you are not able to contact Nacel Open Door, please contact the insurance company directly at the number indicated on your student's insurance card.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MEDICAL CLAIM FORM

- Ideally, **medical providers** should bill Nacel Open Door directly, by sending either the **(red & white) original HCFA 1500 or UB92 form to the national office**. The insurance company will then pay the doctor or hospital, unless an original paid receipt accompanying the bills shows that reimbursement should be made to the host family or the student.
- In the rare case where the provider will not accept the conditions of insurance and insists on immediate payment, be sure to **secure an original receipt for any payment you make. Also secure a statement of diagnosis and treatment for the student**. Submit these original documents (original receipt and diagnostic/treatment statement) along with your claim form to the national office.
- For **prescription reimbursement** to the student or the host family, save the original receipt, which is stapled to the prescription bag and shows the student name and address, doctor's name, prescription description and date. This **original receipt must be sent with a completed claim form** to the Nacel Open Door national office in order to receive reimbursement. The prescription will not be reimbursed until the doctor's statement of diagnosis and treatment has also been received by Nacel Open Door, and approved as a "covered expense". (Please refer to the following section regarding items *not covered* from insurance coverage and reimbursement.)
- You may want to **make a few photocopies of the claim form** (found near the inside back cover of this booklet) before completing it, in case you have additional bills to submit at a later date. If necessary, additional claim forms can be obtained from your coordinator/specialist.
- You and your student should **complete all parts** of the claim form. Make sure that you correctly spell your student's first and last names. The student group code, which should also be indicated on the claim form, can be found on his/her student record, at the top of his/her dossier.

- The **insurance claim form should be sent to the Nacel Open Door national office** at the address indicated below. *Original* copies of the appropriate bills statements and/or receipts should be attached. (*Please note that fax, photo, and carbon copies are not acceptable, and cannot be processed.*)
- **For your future reference, please make a photocopy** of your completed claim form and any original bills, receipts, etc., prior to mailing them to the national office.
- Please mail all insurance claims to:

Nacel Open Door, Inc.

3410 Federal Drive, Suite 101
St. Paul, MN 55122
Telephone: 651-686-0080 or 800-622-3553

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MEDICAL CARE NOT COVERED BY INSURANCE

- Please read THE the insurance certificate carefully concerning the coverage available to your student through this policy. Should your student require medical care for excluded expenses, such as pre-existing conditions (i.e. allergies, acne, chronic heart problems), eye care, glasses, dental care (greater than \$50 maximum per student), or any other type of excluded treatment, agreement must be obtained from the student's natural parents, who are responsible for the cost of such treatment. Your coordinator/specialist (or national counselor, for academic semester/year students) can assist in obtaining this agreement for you. (If agreement is obtained for such care, an original bill showing the complete name of the student and the nature of the services performed must be sent to the national office of Nacel Open Door at the address given in the previous section.
- Please Note: Exclusions on the Insurance Certificate are explicit. However, **if the doctor's diagnosis leaves a question regarding coverage, confirmation of coverage must be obtained before further medical treatment is received**. Inquiries regarding coverage must be directed to Nacel Open Door, who will obtain determination of coverage from the insurance company.