



## INTERNATIONAL FOUR-H YOUTH EXCHANGE HOST FAMILIES



*Being a Host Family . . . An experience that will last all your life.*

### **Hosting a person from another land.**

Each year the International 4-H Youth Exchange (IFYE) Program brings young people from around the globe to experience life in the United States. As members of American families, they experience the American way of life and share their own culture in countless ways. It is truly an unforgettable experience.

It is an experience that will change your life and open a brand-new world to a young person from overseas. You and your family can join in this unique adventure by becoming a host family. All it takes is a warm heart, an open house, and a zest for international family living experiences.

### **Answers to your questions about the host family experience.**

#### ***Q ~ What is IFYE?***

A ~ IFYE stands for International 4-H Youth Exchange and is a cross-cultural exchange program. Since its founding in 1948, IFYE has helped thousands of young people from across the United States, Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the South Pacific learn about life in other lands. IFYE is dedicated to world understanding through international youth exchange and provides the leadership and management for the IFYE Program in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture - Extension Service and the U.S. and Kansas IFYE Alumni Associations.

Travelers see mountains,  
museums and human masses,  
and mimic a country's culture.  
IFYEs pass through front doors  
of home to live as sons,  
daughters, brothers, and sisters.  
Thus the culture engulfs them.

Iowa delegate to the Philippines

#### ***Q ~ Where do participants come from?***

A ~ IFYE program participants come to the U.S. from Europe, Latin America, Asia, and the Pacific.

#### ***Q ~ What do host families do?***

A ~ Host families play a unique role in helping participants discover daily life in a new country. They welcome the IFYE into their homes as a member of the family, rather than as a guest or tourist. In turn, the IFYE shares in most daily activities, just as a natural son or daughter. The family is responsible for introducing their young person to American culture through the normal support of a caring, understanding family. Host families provide affection, meals, a bed, and more - just as they would for their own family members.

#### ***Q ~ What do IFYEs do?***

A ~ IFYE stresses family living as the heart of the learning experience, offering young people the chance to experience other cultures through personal involvement in the homes, schools, and communities of their host countries. IFYEs are expected to join in almost all aspects of U.S. family life - sharing quiet moments, as well as taking on household and family chores, celebrating birthdays and holidays, enjoying family vacations, and participating in community activities.

**Q ~ How long would an IFYE stay with my family?**

A ~ Approximately three to four weeks in your home; a lifetime in your memories.

**Q ~ What will I have to provide as a host family?**

A ~ Room and board, love and understanding, care and guidance.

**Q ~ What expenses will I have to pay?**

A ~ Host families are expected to pay only for food and housing. The young person will bring their own money for incidental expenses.

**Q ~ Must I have children of my own to be a host family?**

A ~ No. Host families are of all sizes and backgrounds. Families with young children at home, grown children, and no children have all hosted international youth successfully. The most important qualification is a love of young people.

**Q ~ Will we be paid?**

A ~ Families who volunteer to host exchangees receive no remuneration. 4-H believes that to put the relations on a fee-for-service basis undermines the quality of the experience and adversely affects the basic aims of the program. Families are not selected on the basis of wealth, but on the capacity for caring and their capabilities for showing and sharing qualities that have made our country as it is. Just as importantly, IFYEs are selected for their desire to participate in a family living situation. They neither want nor expect a bed and breakfast.

If a man be gracious and courteous to strangers, it shows he is a citizen of the world, and that his heart is no island cut off from other lands, but a continent that joins to them.

Francis Bacon

**Q ~ What do we get out of this?**

A ~ Your family gains while giving. For U.S. families, the program offers an opportunity to host an international young person and to watch that person and the entire family grow in understanding of and sensitivity to another culture. Opening your home and heart to an international exchange participant can be an enlightening and rewarding experience for any family willing to take on the opportunity. You not only share your way of life but you learn about another.

**Q ~ How may my family become a host family?**

A ~ If your family is interested in becoming a host family, contact your local or state Extension office to obtain an application and to learn about the selection process, timeline, etc.

Host families are as diverse as America itself; they come from all nationalities and religious backgrounds. Some families have children, others do not; some are affluent, others come from modest (average) circumstances. They may be rural, suburban, or city dwellers - but they all have an interest in learning more about the world and about themselves.

### **Kansas 4-H International Exchange Programs**

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