

## **STUDENT PROTECTION POLICY**

Rotary International is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Rotary Activities. It is the duty of all Rotarians, Rotarians' spouses, partners, and other volunteers to safeguard to the best of their ability the welfare of and to prevent the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact.

*-- Rotary Code of Policies, 2.110 Youth Protection, November 2005*

Rotary International and District 5190 are committed to the safety and security of each of the young people who is in our care through the Rotary Youth Exchange Program. The United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Youth Programs Division; and The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) have implemented rules and regulations designed to provide a safe exchange experience for exchange students. District 5190's policies relating to the safety of youth is based on the requirements of these agencies along with Rotary's requirements and policies.

In order to provide a safe environment for our inbound students, the District 5190 Rotary Youth Exchange Program has implemented the following procedures:

- In-home interviews for host families
- Personal references for host families and volunteers
- Criminal background checks for host families and other program volunteers
- Orientation and training for host families and other program volunteers
- Monthly visits with students and host families

### **IN-HOME INTERVIEWS**

All potential host families will have an in-home interview before they are accepted as host families. The interview will be conducted by one or more Rotarians and will follow a format set by the RYE District Committee. All members of the household will be interviewed. Along with evaluating the members of the family, the interviewer(s) will also evaluate the family's home to insure that it meets the minimum standards for hosting an exchange student.

### **PERSONAL REFERENCES**

A prospective host family will be required to fill out a host family application, and a personal reference form.

## **CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS**

Criminal background checks will be conducted on 1) host family members age 18 or over and 2) any one (Rotarian or non-Rotarian) who has direct one-on-one unsupervised contact with students. Adults who are to have criminal background checks will be required to fill out a criminal background authorization form. A member of the District Rotary Youth Exchange Committee will conduct the criminal background checks.

**Ineligible to Participate** - A host parent or volunteer will be ineligible to participate in the RYE program if:

- They do not provide personal references
- They do not authorize a criminal background check
- A host family is not visited (by appointment or un-announced) at home before and during an exchange
- If information on the application form, on the personal reference form, or on the criminal background authorization form; or given during the in-home interview is false

**Background Check Disqualification** - an applicant will be automatically disqualified if they have committed:

- Crimes against children
- Felony offenses against persons
- Felony domestic violence
- Crimes of public indecency
- Crimes of using weapons
- Felony drug crimes
- Other crimes as determined by the RYE District Chairperson

And

- If they are a registered sex offender
- If they are residing with a registered sex offender

If an individual has committed the following crimes, they may be disqualified:

- First time DUI, DWI, or possession of a controlled substance under two ounces
- Crimes involving theft, fraud, embezzlement, and forgery
- Other crimes as determined by the RYE District Chairperson

**APPEALING DISQUALIFICATION DECISION** - Any host family member or volunteer has the right to appeal participation denial by:

- Providing written notice of an appeal to the District Chair or District Governor within ten calendar days of being advised that participation has been denied
- If the appellant feels that the information that led to the denial is not accurate, it is the responsibility of the family member/volunteer to provide the corrected information from the source that provided the challenged information

*Rotary District 5190 reserves the right to exclude altogether or limit a prospective host family member or volunteer's participation in District youth programs including, but not limited to Rotary Youth Exchange.*