

DRAFT:

CLUB OUTBOUND RYE COUNSELOR

The Outbound Counselor at the local Club level is a person who *advises and mentors* the Outbound student in their preparation to go on a Rotary Youth Exchange. There are several others in the District, Multi-District, Club, family and community who will have roles in assuring that the detailed requirements of the exchange preparation are met, and the Club Outbound Counselor can help coordinate those efforts of others with the student. However, the primary function of the Club Outbound Counselor is to add unique local knowledge and support to assure that the student has the best possible opportunity to be prepared to succeed during their exchange year. The Club Outbound Counselor should add local personal mentoring that will help the RYE Outbound student in their transition from newly-accepted-candidate to ready-to-get-on-the-plane-alone ambassador.

WHO IS THE IDEAL CLUB OUTBOUND RYE COUNSELOR?

- Enjoys working with young people.
- Able to converse effectively with a teenage student.
- Willing to advocate for the student.
- Familiar with the Rotary Youth Exchange program benefits.
- Familiar or able to become familiar with RYE program requirements, and procedures.
- Familiar with local community resources which can offer a student specific support.
- Willing to meet with the student on both a regular and as-needed basis.
- Familiar or able to become familiar with the operation of the YEAH database for RYE.
- Able to be fully vetted as a RYE volunteer.
- Willing to complete all required and recommended training.

WHY IS A LOCAL CLUB OUTBOUND RYE COUNSELOR NEEDED?

A RYE-experienced person who is also locally connected to the Outbound student's community is uniquely able to monitor all levels of the student's preparation.

The Club Outbound Counselor can:

- Assess the student's strengths and challenges through local adults with contact and experience with the student, and also through personal contact.
- Assess the student's plan for preparation and help them improve it.
- Learn the individual student's initial and changing concerns through regular contact.
- Advise on additional local resources (e.g. language learning, financial, service opportunities, nearby Rebounds).
- Assist the student in providing all the requirements of the RYE program administration.
- Provide access to local Rotary activities and knowledge about Rotary International.
- Assess progress and suggest refinements.

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- Assure the student leaves for their Host Country with the strongest base of knowledge and support of which the student is capable.

Rotary Code of Policies 41.070.8.A.: “The sending ... clubs must select individual Rotarian counselors from their clubs with whom each student is to be in regular contact and to serve as a liaison between the student and the club, the student’s parents or guardians, ... and community at large.”

Rotary Youth Exchange Handbook: “Serving as liaison between the student, Rotary club, ...family, and community at large, the Rotarian counselor plays a crucial role in the success of the Youth Exchange program. ...A Rotarian counselor for outbound students helps prepare for departure and provides support with their return.”

IS A CLUB OUTBOUND RYE COUNSELOR REQUIRED?

Each Club participating in RYE is to provide a Counselor for each Outbound and Inbound student.

Rotary Code of Policies 41.070.8.A.: “The sending and host clubs must select individual Rotarian counselors from their clubs with whom each student is to be in regular contact and to serve as a liaison between the student and the club, the student’s parents or guardians, ... and community at large.”

Rotary Youth Exchange Handbook: “Counselors must be assigned to every outbound and inbound student in all exchange programs.” “The counselor should identify as the same gender as the participant. ... The Rotarian counselor should not be a close friend or relative of other volunteers involved with the exchange student, or have authority over the exchange, such as a school principal or Youth Exchange Chair.”

IF I AM AN OUTBOUND RYE COUNSELOR FOR MY CLUB, WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM ME?

EXPECTED

1. Introduce yourself to the student in person.
2. Advise the student your purpose is to help them be as prepared as possible before their departure for their exchange year.
3. Give the student your contact information in writing.
4. Advise the student of the best way(s) to contact you.
5. Advise the RYE student’s parents you are also available to them for clarifications.
6. Meet with the student at least monthly, face-to-face in a casual place where the student can be free to talk candidly.
7. Connect with the US Country Coordinator for the country to which student has been assigned. All direct contact with the Host country will be through this person.
8. Ask the Country Coordinator (CC) what things are important for the student to have prepared prior to departure (especially level of language fluency), and what other things they recommend that a student going to the host country will be able to do on arrival.
9. Assure the Club Youth Exchange Officer (YEO) knows which student you are mentoring.
10. Check with other RYE personnel on any technical questions for which you do not have knowledge (Club counselor supervisor, Club YEO, CC, District Outbound Coordinator).
11. Address promptly any issues the student raises during their preparation.

SUGGESTED

1. Keep notes of your student meetings and make them soon after the meetings.
2. Keep a log of what the student has planned or promised to do, and the progress.
3. Keep a log of suggestions you have made.
4. Keep a log of unmet student requirements learned from the Country Coordinator or Club Youth Exchange Officer (YEO).
5. Encourage the student to work to make money for their exchange.
 - a. Hopefully to pay for the exchange, definitely for spending money abroad.
 - b. Help them connect with prospective employers in your local area.
6. Discuss learning to prepare a couple of “American” meals for their Host Families.
7. Discuss the student making personal gifts they can give to Host Families and other special friends.
8. Discuss having inexpensive local-related gifts as quick give-aways.
9. Discuss the emotional changes that are likely to occur as they move through their preparation months.
 - a. Help student develop a reasonable expectation of their ability to prepare.
 - b. Ask the student to describe how they are feeling about preparing to leave.
 - c. Ask the student if they are having any difficulties preparing.
 - d. Ask the student if they are having any difficulties satisfying the paperwork required for their exchange.
10. Check on what methods they are planning to use to learn their language.
11. Check on whether they have changed their language-learning plan.
12. Ask their assessment of their language ability.
13. Help connect them with a local native speaker of the Host Country language, and ideally the dialect of their Host Club. Do this soon after they learn their specific hosting.
14. Help the student create the presentation they will give to Rotarians and others abroad.
15. Encourage the student to give their presentation to the US Sponsor Club RYE Committee as a trial run; help them make suggested changes.
16. Help the student create their personal introduction “elevator speech” in English; encourage them to use it at a local Rotary meeting as a way to meet members of their Sponsoring Club.
17. Assure the student has practiced their introduction “elevator speech” in their Host Country language.
18. List with the student the things they are interested in doing while they are on exchange.

NOT SUGGESTED

1. Employing the student.
2. Waiting for the student to contact you.

PROHIBITED

1. Meeting with the student in a non-public place without another adult present.
2. Direct contact with the Host Country personnel unless specifically requested to do so by the US District/multi-District’s Country Coordinator or Outbound Coordinator.

WHEN SHOULD A LOCAL CLUB COUNSELOR BE ASSIGNED FOR A RYE OUTBOUND STUDENT?

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The Local Club Outbound Counselor should be assigned to the student as soon as practical after the student's country assignment is made. This allows the counselor to begin to assess the level to which the student will need support and in what areas, and also to begin developing a reliable pattern of contact with the student.

If a counselor is not assigned until later in the student's preparation, the student will have less opportunity to learn of local support resources, and the counselor will have less opportunity to develop a supportive rapport.

If a counselor can be assigned when a student first applies for the program, suggestions can be made to help the student be thorough and also be able to include student/parent letters which will be a good representation of the student a year later when the student arrives in their Host Country.

IS THERE AN ONLINE TRAINING FOR ME AS A CLUB COUNSELOR FOR AN OUTBOUND STUDENT?

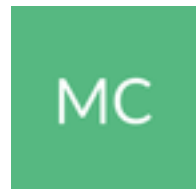
NAYEN has currently developed an online training course for counselors. Although it is designed mostly for Inbound Counselors, it is recommended that you take this course for all you can learn, and for the reference materials it includes for you.

Below is the list of best practices for Inbound Counselors. Many of these suggestions will also apply to you as an Outbound Counselor, and your experience over time will help you see how to adapt these to your position as a Club Counselor for Outbound RYE students.

FROM NAYEN ONLINE COUNSELOR TRAINING COURSE FOR INBOUND COUNSELORS IN USA:

Lesson 6 of 9

Best Practices



Mike Cloutier

These are the top recommendations for Youth Exchange success from Youth Exchange Committee members around the US. The ideas listed here are recommendations, not requirements, but have been found to significantly enhance the Youth Exchange experience.

Contact

Read the Student's application and essay to get to know who they are.

Counselors should attempt to establish a connection very early in the exchange via email, Skype or Line. In the case of Inbound Students, the Counselor should make a concerted effort to correspond with the student prior to arrival, meet the student at the airport and facilitate their introduction to the first host family.

Counselors should contact their associated Inbound Students at least weekly, either in person or via email or social media. Provide them with your phone numbers (cell, home, and work) as well as email addresses. Make sure you have opportunities to talk: Invite them for dinner; go to a movie or take them for ice cream. Convince them that you really want them to contact you when they have a problem.

Take the time to learn how to ask the important questions on how they are doing and how to recognize red flags if they are not doing well.

The importance of a good relationship between the Counselor and Student cannot be overstressed

Host Families

The Counselor should work diligently and early to identify potential Host Families. Have a back up Host Family in place in case you need to do an emergency move of a student due to a family emergency or other issue.

Have the Club President or President-elect do the the Host Family follow up visit. This gets them more involved in the Youth Exchange program and can demonstrate to the Host Family the importance of their role in the exchange.

Notify the District or Club Compliance officer as soon the family agrees to host to facilitate early screening.

Be a part of students first few weeks in settling in. Offer to help the Host Family with the many things that need to be accomplished when they arrive.

Make sure you take the time to check in with the family and have an honest discussion on how things are going with the student.

Clubs should always have a “welcome and/or emergency” family ready and vetted at all times. A Rotarian “welcome family” should be the first family for 1 to 2 weeks if the first family is NOT a Rotary member family. This way they are introduced to Rotary and they have one more level of contact within the club.

Student Interests

Early in the exchange year, the counselor should compile a list of the things the student is interested in, or things they would like to do. Some examples might be: sing in a choir, play with a community musical group, go cross country or downhill skiing, attend a college or professional sporting event, climb a mountain, go sailing, water skiing, tour a factory, etc. It gives Rotarians a reason to invite the Inbound to do something.

The counselor should then talk to Rotarians in the club to identify potential activities in which student could join them.

One way to coordinate these activities is to have the YEO circulate a sign up sheet to club members to volunteer to host the student to an event. It just takes a little push.

If possible in your school district, get the password to your students record at school so you can monitor their progress in their classes online and are the one that receives their progress reports.

Club Meetings and Participation

The student should attend as many Rotary meetings as possible, preferably weekly, and the Counselor should facilitate this attendance. If the Counselor transports the student to and from the meeting, it provides an opportunity for a private conversation.

For lunch clubs, the Counselor should talk to the school about the importance of the student attending Rotary meetings.

Teach your Inbound a short introduction script: "Hi, I'm Azzlybgnn Nanopingaporiashawa from Krakhozha. I'm your clubs Inbound and I'm attending George Washington Carver HS. I just wanted to introduce myself and thank you for hosting me this year."

Make sure within the first month, the student begins talking in front of the club when they are there – a thank you for someone doing something with them; an upcoming school performance or game they are in – something that again puts them in front of the club. "Thank you's" go a long way.

Have the Inbound student memorize it and serve as a greeter for a few weeks, introducing themselves to the entire club. This will usually catch a few early invitations for activities outside of Rotary.

Make sure the club celebrates the Inbound Student's birthday at a meeting, if it falls in the school year. Also recognize holidays from his or her country - Independence Day, religious holidays, etc.

Have the student sit at a different table at each meeting. That can facilitate invites, but also engages other club members. If there is more than 1 student in a club, they should sit at separate table, not all together.

Invite the host families to several meetings and get them involved with club activities. In addition, to helping them understand their importance in the process, your club might get some new members.

Clubs should be encouraged to include the Inbound student in their weekly program to get an update on their past week and/or collect the "happy bucks", be the greeter, etc. They feel more a part of the club when they are participating every week and are more likely to routinely attend.

Ambassadors

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Counselors can help remind everyone that these students are not your “typical” HS student; Rotary doesn’t pick typical, we pick ambassadors

If the club is not really active in YE and not really doing anything with the student, have them get the phone number of every club member and call them, asking if they could do something with him. A touching example from Alaska was that a student called a very old member of a club and got a response that the old man didn't do much. So the student asked if the old man had tea in the afternoon and the answer was yes. He got the old man to invite in to tea and they had a great time.

This idea might only work with smaller clubs.

Reporting

When completing the monthly counselor report for Inbounds, make sure that it is accurate and detailed on both the student and host family ... no one liners!!!

Make sure that your Outbound students complete their quarterly reports. Take the time to read them and respond back to the student.

If you do discover any issues, please make sure to document them early and notify the appropriate District committee members.

RESOURCES

[RYE HANDBOOK 746en.pdf](#)

[RI Youth Protection Guide 775en.pdf](#)

[Culture Shock.pdf](#)

[conflict-resolution.pdf](#)