

YOUTH EXCHANGE INFORMATION

Why Lions Arrange Youth Camps and Exchange – The Youth Camp and Exchange Program was authorized by the Lions International Board of Directors in early 1961 for the purpose of furthering the first Objective of Lionism. To Create and Foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world.

The objectives of the program are: To bring young people into contact with youth and adults of other countries; To share family and community life of another culture: To promote international understanding and good-will throughout the world of Lionism.

These objectives apply to the participating youth, and to the sponsor and host Lions Clubs and families. All participating parties shall conduct the program and themselves so as to prevent any element of personal profit or gain.

These are the official lines and obligations of Lions.

What can you expect as a Youth Exchange Student. You can expect the host family to take you into their family as their son/daughter having the same obligations as a son or daughter. As you are not allowed to make any travel plans away from your host family, you may expect great flexibility to find other ways to keep you occupied. In some cases, all camp costs are paid for by the Lions Club of the District you are visiting and others will have a nominal fee that you are advised of before you go. Your stay at your host family is free, and hospitality will be provided. Many will take you places and cover admission fees. Pocket money and personal necessities are at your own costs. You will go to a friendly people and a clean well-organized country, where your parents and sponsoring club can feel secure to send you.

What is expected from you. That you understand and accept that Lions Youth Camps and Exchange is not tourism, but a serious effort to spread international co-operation and good will. That you have an obligation and responsibility towards others. That you are a conscientious representative of your nation, local community, and your sponsoring Lions Club. That you accept the idea of participating with active, unprejudiced engagement in order to create and maintain a deep mutual understanding among the peoples of the world. That prejudice regarding social status, religion, and political standing is contradictory to understanding. That your personal aim is to be tolerant, observant, extrovert and yielding. That you contact your host family as soon as you get their address and you respect them for opening their home to you. That you respect your host family's culture and behave accordingly, which includes the food you are served. Be a fine son/daughter to the family. That you are willing to tell about your country, your way of life and your cultural background. That you forward required information about insurance and itinerary at the earliest possible time.

Practical hints regarding your individual home stay. You are urged to contact your host family as soon as you get their name. Most will have e-mail address. Once you have contacted them, you will have started to create a fine relationship with them. Do not tell them the food you prefer, but tell them that you would like to have their food. That is part of the experience. A lot of the children in the homes you are staying in have chores to do, so please do not comment about them, but pitch in and help. Be careful to avoid critical statements about the host country's customs. You should not make unfavourable comparisons between your country and theirs. You should be able to tell them about the size of Canada, the population and climate as well as your own town and school. A small gift from you, your family or sponsoring Lions Club will be received as a token of friendship.