

## APPENDIX A

### FIRST NIGHT QUESTIONS

#### Introduction

When an exchange student arrives at a new host family, it can be a challenge to readily adjust to the new environment. Each family is different, and their homes operate in different ways. Unless the family has previously hosted students, they may never have even considered the unwritten rules used in every house on a day-to-day basis to ensure that the home operates smoothly. The sooner that the new student understands and adopts these house rules, the less chance there is of an unfortunate misunderstanding occurring which could have a negative impact on a new relationship.

If an exchange student breaks one of these rules, it could create a problem. For example, the family may be unhappy that the student chooses to sit in what has traditionally always been "father's chair" but are too polite to mention it. This can lead to a strained relationship, which the student may detect but not understand. Because families have never thought about their unwritten house rules, usually evolved over many years but rarely if ever discussed, it is difficult to explain them to a new arrival. A sample list of First Night Questions for the students and host families to review at the start of each home stay has been prepared. All exchange students are encouraged to discuss these questions with the host families immediately after arrival. Should this not happen, then host families are encouraged to initiate these discussions.

#### Why Use First Night Questions?

Timely discussion of First Night Questions cannot only reduce the risk of unfortunate misunderstandings but is also a highly effective "ice breaker" for an exchange student in a new home. Sometimes this discussion is a little difficult because of a language barrier. In this case, this website shows how the same questions translated into a number of different languages: [www.yeoresources.org/First Night Questions.htm](http://www.yeoresources.org/First_Night_Questions.htm).

If language could be a problem, consider printing out these questions from the website in the appropriate languages. The questions are suggestions only. The student and host family should discuss anything that they think is important. Please discuss the items most important to you as soon as possible. A student with limited language skills should probably not assume anything. Ask instead. The simplest questions may be the most important, such as "Where is the bathroom"? You can come back to other questions as they seem necessary.

### List of First Night Questions

1. What would you like me to call you? Should I call you "Mom", "Dad", or given (first) name, or something else?
2. What are my daily responsibilities while living in your home?
  - (a) Make my bed?
  - (b) Keep my room neat and clean?
  - (c) Clean the bathroom after I use it? d. Other?
3. What is the procedure for laundering clothes? Where do I keep dirty clothes until they are to be washed?
4. What is the procedure if I need to iron my clothes?
5. May I use the iron, washing machine, sewing machine, etc.?
6. Where can I keep my bathroom accessories?
7. When is the most convenient time for me to use the bathroom on weekday mornings (in order to get ready for school)?
8. When is the best time for me to shower or bathe?
9. Is there anything special about using the bathroom I should know?
10. May I use the family's shampoo and tooth paste or should I buy my own?
11. When are mealtimes?
12. Do I have any responsibilities at mealtimes, such as to set or clear the table, wash or dry the dishes, dispose of the garbage?
13. May I help myself to food and drinks (non-alcoholic) at any time or must I ask first?
14. May I use kitchen appliances such as the microwave, dishwasher, or stove?
15. What areas of the house are strictly private, for example, your study, bedroom, pantry, etc.?
16. What are your rules about my drinking alcohol? (Note: District 5040 **has ZERO tolerance** for drinking – No alcohol permitted on your exchange.)

17. What time must I get up weekday mornings?
18. May I rearrange the furniture in my bedroom?
19. May I put posters or pictures on the walls of my room? If yes, how do you want things attached to the walls?
20. Where can I store my suitcases?
21. May I use the stereo, home computer or TV?
22. What time should I get up weekends and holidays?
23. What time must I go to bed weekdays? Weekends?
24. What time must I be at home on school nights if I go out?
25. What time must I be in on weekends if I go out?
26. What dates are the birthdays of family members?
27. May I have friends stay overnight?
28. What is your rule on entertaining friends in my room?
29. Can I invite friends over during the day? After school? When no one else is home?
30. What is the landline, and your cell phone numbers here? How do I contact you in an emergency when I am not here?
31. How do I make telephone calls? (discuss if you have brought a cell phone from home)
32. What are the rules about access to the Internet and e-mail, social media usage in the house? Are there time limits or time periods that use is permitted or prohibited? If you are not connected to the Internet, where can I find an Internet service to contact my family and friends?
33. May I receive telephone calls and texts from my friends? Are there times of the day when calls are not acceptable?
34. What is the procedure about sending and receiving (snail) mail?

35. Do any of you have any special dislikes? For example, chewing gum, types of music, being late, wearing a hat at the table, being interrupted while reading, etc.
36. What transportation is available to me? (Walking, bus, bicycle, being driven, riding with friends, etc.) Are there times or places it is unsafe for me to walk unescorted? Are there rules about traveling with friends?
37. What transportation is available for shopping or going to movies?
38. What are your expectations for me about going to church or other religious institution?
39. If I am having a problem, how do you want me to handle it: (Check out Appendix D)
  - (a) Write a note to you explaining it?
  - (b) Ask for a face-to-face discussion with you?
  - (c) Tell my Rotary counsellor?
  - (d) Keep it to myself and live with it?
40. How do I enroll in school?
41. What do I do about school lunch? If there is an expense, who pays - me, you, or Rotary?
42. How can I arrange to go shopping for personal items?
43. Is there anything else I can do around the house to be of help?
44. Am I expected to attend Rotary meetings? How often? Who will arrange for this?
45. Is there anything else we should discuss?

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