Coordinator`s Guide 2010

HOMESTAY

A Message from Our President…

On behalf of the **People to People** Student Ambassador Program, I would like to thank you for committing your time and energy to coordinating the homestays in your area. The homestay is one of the most important elements of our programs. Ideally, the homestays give our students the opportunity to interact with a family and learn about local customs and culture and also provide an opportunity for your friends and neighbors to learn about American students and their families.

If you have coordinated the homestays for People to People in the past, you know that many of the students and host families form lifelong friendships. These international bonds are exactly what President Dwight D. Eisenhower envisioned when he founded People to People over 40 years ago. Your efforts are essential in fulfilling his dream of peace and mutual understanding through cultural exchange.

If you are new to the People to People program, welcome. We hope you will enjoy meeting our students and leaders. We look forward to assisting you in any way possible in preparing to host these bright, engaging young people.
Thank you for choosing to work with our organization. We appreciate your efforts to provide our students some local hospitality.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. Thomas
President & CEO
People to People Student Ambassador Programs

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History of People to People

The history of the Student Ambassador Program dates back to 1956 when U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, a man of vision and integrity, accepted the mantle of leadership of the United States. In 1956, the state of world politics was at a crossroads. The Cold War was gaining momentum in a world divided by ideology. Nations were stockpiling weapons of mass destruction at an alarming rate and the world itself seemed to be careening toward another global armed conflict. President Eisenhower believed that the only way to prevent another conflict was to build international understanding one person at a time. He believed, "the people want peace. Indeed, I believe they want peace so badly that the governments will just have to step aside and let them have it."

This belief inspired President Eisenhower to call a special conference of 100 American civic leaders, including Walt Disney, Conrad Hilton, Jesse Owens, and Norman Rockwell. He asked these civilian leaders to help him start a program called "People to People" which would put ordinary American citizens in contact with citizens from other lands. He believed that people could find common ground if they visited each other's homes, schools, and communities. This knowledge would eliminate the misunder-standings, misperceptions, and suspicions born from fear of things unknown.

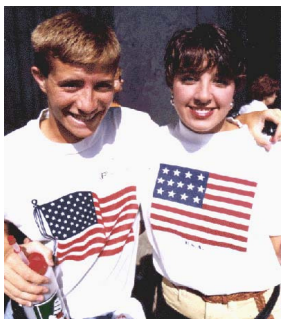
In 1963, the first delegation of Student Ambassadors went forth, forging new friendships. Shortly after the first delegation of students returned, inspired by the goals and aspirations of People to People, Walt Disney opened the timeless attraction "It's a Small World" at Disneyland.

From that time forward, the Student Ambassador Program has taken thousands of young Americans across international boundaries. Through that time, the White House has continued to be a strong supporter of People to People programs. President's Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Reagan, Bush, and Clinton have served as Honorary Chairman of People to People International.

The aim of the People to People Student Ambassador Program is to give students a greater understanding of people throughout the world. This is accomplished through an exciting program of educational activities that acquaint students with the political, economic, and cultural characteristics of the countries visited.

In coordinating homestays you fulfill the key mission of People to People Student Ambassador programs. In the generosity of opening your homes to our American youth you represent your country at the same time and our students see the future full of hope, courage and with the promise of peace. Through this experience, we hope you will make new friends and memories that will surely remain with you the rest of your life.

The Selection and Preparation of Student Ambassadors



Each Student Ambassador must undergo a selection process that requires school references and a personal interview. The selection process is designed to identify outstanding students who can best represent their state, county, and local community. Student Ambassadors come from all ethnic groups in the United States and from a wide diversity of areas, including rural communities and large cities. Our student groups also represent many different religious backgrounds.

During the months prior to departure, leaders and students study and prepare for their three-week program. At least 12 classroom hours of orientation are required for each Student Ambassador. The program is one of the few student exchange projects worldwide granting both high school and college credit for successful participation.

Participation in the program has grown from 16 students in 1963 to more than 22,000 in 2003. Since 1963, over 170,000 Student Ambassadors have traveled to 35 countries and on all seven continents!
Student Ambassadors pay their own expenses for the program.

The Purpose of the Homestay

A homestay with a host family is an important element of the Student Ambassador Program. The purpose of the homestays is to introduce students to the culture and lifestyle of the host country. A short stay with a family (two days and three nights between end of June and beginning / middle of August) can often provide experiences that will last a lifetime, giving the student a clear understanding of the cultural differences between the host's country and America.

Rules for: Student Ambassadors

1. While staying with a host family, the Student Ambassador is expected to help with household chores and act as a member of the family.
2. Students must ask permission to use the host family's telephone and are responsible for paying any telephone charges they incur. If necessary, feel free to explain that all calls are charged, even local calls.
3. A Student Ambassador is not allowed to smoke.
4. Student Ambassadors are not allowed to consume alcoholic beverages at any time.
5. Student Ambassadors may not operate any motor vehicles, including motorbikes and scooters.
6. Students are not allowed to go out alone during free time. Students should not be out late at night, and host families may impose an evening curfew.
7. The students are aware of all the rules and need to adhere strictly to them.

Guidelines for Host Families

- Ideally, a host family should have at least one child of the same sex and of the approximate age of the visiting Student Ambassador. (European male student's are not allowed to host American girls)

- To ensure the student's safety, an adult member of the host family should pick up the student at the beginning of the homestay or, if the students will be riding the school bus home, there should be an adult at home when they arrive.

- The host family environment should meet European standards of quality. All Student Ambassadors require individual beds during their stay. But they will be happy to share a bedroom with a host child of the same gender.

- All meals should be provided at the times of day that are normal for that host family. Students should be encouraged to share all meals.

- All students should be allowed to phone their delegation leader or delegation manager at least once during the homestay, if they request to do so. (In the US local calls are free. You may explain that each call, even local calls, are charged. We expect the students to offer to pay the local fee for their calls.)

- Family activities outside the home are encouraged in order to expose Student Ambassadors to the typical daily life of the host family. For example, students can be taken on daily shopping trips, to schools, to visit the mother or father at the work-place, or on local sightseeing trips.

- Ideally in the homestay setting, two-parent families are preferred. However single parent families may be used if the single parent is a female with at least one child. Additionally the single parent must be available to supervise.

- European girls are allowed to host American male students; unfortunately it is not accepted the other way round.

- Host parents must be willing to accept responsibility for the safety of the Student Ambassador whom they host. **Student Ambassadors should not be left unsupervised within the home. Students should have access to the home or other suitable base, such as school, at all times during the stay.** Host families may impose an evening curfew for their Student Ambassador since the students are not allowed to be out late at night.

- **Alcoholic beverages are not permitted at any time.**

- These groups are to be known as '**People to People Student Ambassadors**

Guidelines for Homestay Coordinators

1. Please begin locating prospective host families as soon as possible. This will help reduce the number of scheduling conflicts, since families can reserve the host dates early.

2. PDM will provide you with a form for host families to complete. All families are to sign and return to you (the coordinator) a copy of the Principles of a Successful Homestay Form. The form is to be returned to PDM Homestay.

   The purpose of this form is to provide a memo of understanding showing that the families are aware of the intentions of the homestay and of their responsibilities in providing a safe and worthwhile homestay. After feeding our online-system with all dates of the families, please return the forms to us.
   Our belief is that if a family does not return the form then the family should not act as host family

3. In due time to the arrival of the students, we will send you a list with the names of the American students and their matching host-family.
   The list will include any known allergies, medical conditions, and dietary requirements, as well as e-mail addresses, phone numbers and mailing addresses. To keep privacy, please don't show these information to any strangers.

4. Please check the list with the matches to ensure, they add up your expectations. If you have done so, please send us an email, to give our office in the US the opportunity to confirm the location of the homestay to the groups. You can hand the information about the students ambassadors to the guest-families, so they get the chance to make contact with their guests.

5. Understandably changes may need to be made to your Template. However please ensure you inform the Vienna office **IMMEDIATELY** of any changes to template.

6. Please provide us your private phone- or cell-phone number, where we can reach you during the homestay, in case problems occur. So we can try to find a good solution together.

7. Do not make changes to these guidelines or distribute different rules, because they are irrevocable, so we are not able to make any exceptions for anybody.

8. In addition, we ask you to fill in the information about the guest-families to our Internet registration system (the link will be sent to you timely)
   Following information are required from the guest-families:
   - Name of the student
   - Phone-number of the guest-family (very important!)
   - Date of birth of the student
   - Address of the guest-family
   - Names of the parents
   - Email-address (if available)
   - Pets in the house (for allergy-issues)

9. It would be preferable, if the homestay coordinator could attend the arrival and departure of the student-ambassadors.
10. You are welcome to visit our website **www.studentambassadors.org** to find out more about the people-to-people program and its history. You will also find some comments from student ambassadors, as well as a picture gallery. (Please encourage your families to log onto this website as well)

11. In case the homestays are during school-days, the student ambassadors should join their host children in school, so please try to arrange this with the head of the school.

General Information

- Until **ALL** departures and homestays are confirmed there may be some slight date changes or at the worst cancelled tours. These are due to changes enroute or inadequate numbers. At this stage the above dates are confirmed, and if there are any changes to its status, you will be contacted immediately.

- Closer to the date of your delegation's arrival, you will receive updated information on the delegation; including numbers, additional dietary requirements, and the approximate arrival time at your organization.

ABBREVIATIONS

When the website becomes available it will give you details such as name, address, gender, date of birth, grade, e-mail, allergies, dietary requirements, medical, interests and siblings. Some of the abbreviations may be unclear to you as to what they mean. The following are the abbreviation codes and what their definition:

VLML: Vegetarian: no lactose or eggs
VGML: Vegetarian: eggs and dairy okay
ADD: Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
Also, you may notice the following:
Visually impaired: This generally means that the student wears glasses.
Hearing impairment: The student wears a hearing aid.
Acne: May mean they are on medication.

If you have listed any of the above that is causing concern to you, please e-mail PDM for more details.

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