

HOSTING YOUTH EXCHANGE IN MICHIGAN

"Hosting" is having the student stay in your home for all or part of the time.

Share your culture and experiences as a Michiganders with an international student through our hosting program. Participating students are invited to live as a member of your own family and be part of your day to day life.

SUMMER 2025, HOST FAMILIES APPLICATION DEADLINE 06/30/2025

The Lions Youth Exchange Program was started to provide today's youth, our leaders of tomorrow, an opportunity to learn about people and countries other than their own to promote world peace. The goal is to have each participant return home, apply greater awareness and appreciation of others to fellow students, friends and family. In doing so, we hope to foster harmony and understanding toward goodwill in international relations.

The Lions Clubs International Youth Exchange Program was officially adopted in 1961 as a unique cultural learning opportunity for our youth and not conducted for tourism, formal education or employment. It is promoting World Peace, One Student at a Time.

To our very exceptional and generous host families, we cannot thank you enough. Without you, this program cannot work. You are taking these students to become a part of your family. We would like to recommend that you take two students from two different countries. This is so that they will need to speak English to each other. When taking Japanese students, it is wise to pick an older and younger student so the older can help the younger speak English.

Upon arrival and before anything else, please explain the house rules to your new family members.

This is so that there is no misunderstanding as to whether smoking, drinking, etc. is allowed in your home.

Other suggestions we have are:

1. Your Lion Youth Exchange Chairperson will require you to attend an orientation meeting prior to being accepted as a host family. This meeting will cover Youth Exchange Policies and things to assist you and your student and to become acquainted with our program. Other families will be there too so that you can get acquainted and share activities together. If you have hosted before, your input will be appreciated to help the new host families.

- a) It is required by the Youth Exchange Policy that you accept the visiting youth as a member of your family, not as a guest. Meet your new family member on arrival and share your home with your new son or daughter. They are not to be used as babysitters or housekeepers; however, they should help with chores and to keep their room clean. Males and females should be hosted in separate homes and/or bedrooms. They should be provided with a bed not a couch. Youth may

share a bedroom with host siblings of the same sex and over 10 years of age.

2. Arrange a schedule of things to do and places to go. Ask your new son or daughter if there is anything special or places they would like to see or do. If you are able, try to accommodate them as you would want your own children to be accommodated if they were also being hosted. They are not, however, to leave your care to travel on their own to other countries, or to travel to meet close friends or family if they are in this country. Match your schedule with your local Lions club or district so as not to overlap planned activities. Keep in mind that you are not a travel agent or tour guide, and the concept of the program is a cultural exchange. Your new family members would like to interact with students their own age if possible. Look to your community and surrounding areas for events other than the Lions events.

Please call your district Lion Youth Exchange chairperson to see if they have a planned itinerary.

a) Plan to spend time at home getting acquainted with your student. Do not make the hosting period a continuous round of events. Time to rest and relax at home is important for both students and family. They will need time to wash clothes and write in their journals.

b) The Lions Youth Exchange Program is meant to be a learning experience. Allow your visiting youth to have ample opportunity to learn about the nature of our people, our democracy and our heritage and culture. Be sure to learn about theirs but please do not get political or try to proselytize.

c) Allow them periods of privacy each day.

d) Your student should have adequate funds for personal expenses.

You will be responsible for their meals and entertainment when you are with them as you are with your own children. When and if they are not with you, the funds they brought should be used for whatever meals, entertainment, and souvenirs they wish to purchase. The students will also be responsible for their own phone bills and any other expenses they may incur in your home. They are not to leave you with any of their bills. If there is a problem, please contact your Lion chairperson.

e) It is important that you take your youth to a Lions Club or District meeting, if possible. Arrange with the District Governor or Club President to have your student speak as a program. Your student may have pins and/or banners to exchange with the District Governor or Club President.

3. The hosting process is normally three to four weeks but can be split into multiple families. Our international camp (D-Bar-A Scout Camp) will be in between hosting periods.