



Summer Short Term Exchange Program (STEP)

Frequently Asked Questions by YEO's

The **Commonly Asked Questions by Students and Parents** document will answer many of your questions and can be forwarded to families that inquire about the Summer Short Term Exchange Program (STEP).

Here are a few additional questions/answers just for **YEO's and other Rotary leaders**. Remember this is a relatively new program so don't worry if you don't know the answers. Refer students to the website and you and/or the student can contact STEP Committee member Elaine Baumann at elaine.baumann1@gmail.com with questions.

What if a student asks which program they should apply for – long term or short term?

- Both programs support the Rotary Youth Exchange mission to promote world peace and understanding and provide an exchange experience, but they are very different in several ways.
- The **Long Term** exchanges are focused on language and cultural immersion. Often the greatest take away for long term exchanges is the personal growth and development of the individual student on exchange. Students on **Long Term** exchanges are hosted by families that may or may not have children. While close relationships are often made with host families, that is not the focus of the exchange.

- In short term **Family to Family Exchanges** friendships are made between the matched student partners and their family. Participants share family life and culture with their match and many participants make friendships that are long lasting.
- The **STEP Family to Family** experience is a way to engage younger students (freshman/sophomores) or those who might not have the confidence to go away for a full school year.

STEP Family to Family Exchange vs. Long Term Exchanges

- The short term Family to Family (F2F) is usually one month in another country with a partner and their family and one month hosting back here. The exchange takes place in the summer and school is not usually a part of the exchange. Long term is 10-11 months that involves attending high school full time, usually in another language.
- Long term exchange students become fluent in another language and acquire cultural competence. STEP students get a taste of their exchange country and build a lasting friendship with their matched siblings and family.
- STEP applicants and their families must be excited about travel, comfortable with their child traveling alone, and ready to host a student for a month in the summer. They should have the time to spend making special experiences and sharing their culture with the partner student in a warm and welcoming environment.

STEP Camps

- The STEP Camp option is usually a 2-3 week theme focused camp experience hosted by a club or clubs in the host country.
- Camp options run a wide range of options all over the world.

- Camps are usually intentionally composed of students from all over the world, often intentionally limited to one or two students per country to create a unique international experience.
- Camps themes range from mountain hiking, archaeological digs to traditional culture immersion.

What is our Rotary Club and YEO responsible for?

- Promote the opportunity for both school year long and summer short term exchange programs to students in your community.
- Meet and interview students and families. This starts the club's relationship with the family. All applicants will be interviewed again at the district level after their application is complete.
- Along with the applicant, complete the required sponsorship/Rules and Conditions forms sent by North Star.
- For Family to Family Exchanges - Complete the Host Club Guarantee form sent by North Star and conduct a home visit and host family interview. Complete the Host Family Approval forms in the HUB.
- Invite participants to share their experiences on Exchange with the sponsoring club.