



Student Handbook



My Host Family

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ / _____

My Community Coordinator

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ / _____

My High School

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ / _____

Insurance Policy

Insurer's Name: _____ Policy #: _____

Telephone: _____

Standards of Conduct

DFSR developed the Standards of Conduct to maximize the probability of a successful and smooth program experience for all concerned: you, your hostfamily, your natural parents, your DFSR Community Coordinator and your high school. They may not be modified in any way. These Standards are a condition of the program. On your *Student Application*, you and your natural parents signed that you have read and accept these Standards. You are required to abide by them at all times. We wish you a successful exchange experience. For your easy reference, the Standards of Conduct are reprinted below.

I. DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES

Please check with the DFSR office which kind of activities are not covered by the SITE insurance.

II. DRINKING

Consuming alcoholic beverages is not allowed while on the exchange program. However, the legal drinking age in Germany is sixteen. Natural parents and partner agency must sign whether they allow the exchange student to drink alcohol in the physical presence of the hostfamily or if they don't allow it at all.

III. DRIVING

Because of the danger involved and lack of liability and insurance coverage, under no circumstances may a student drive a motorized vehicle for which an operator's license is required. However, students may participate in Driver's Training classes and take the driver's test provided:

- A. No local or state laws are violated in obtaining the license.
- B. The Host Family and/or DFSR is not required to submit a statement assuming financial responsibility for the student to qualify for the driver's license.
- C. The student surrenders the driver's license to the DFSR Coordinator until he/she completes the DFSR academic year/semester program. Driver's Education or Training may not be available in some states or regions. Foreign students are subject to the same guidelines as German students, which may include waiting lists and other restrictions.

IV. DRUGS

The purchase, possession and/or use of illegal (non-prescription) drugs is forbidden. Further, no association is to be maintained with anyone involved with drugs or drug use in any way.

V. EXTENSIONS

A student on the fall semester program may transfer to the year program by applying and paying the difference in fees plus the established surcharge only if there is no change of host family and school. Any student extending his/her stay beyond the scheduled return will be considered terminated from the program and the Immigration and Naturalization Service will be notified that DFSR is no longer responsible for the student.

VI. FINAL AUTHORITY

- A. Students must respect all decisions made by DFSR and its coordinators or staff.
- B. DFSR reserves the right to dismiss a student from the program, if there should arise, in the judgment of DFSR officials, a condition likely to be detrimental to the health of the student.
- C. DFSR reserves the right to dismiss a student from the program should the student violate the Standards of Conduct or for other disciplinary problems.

VII. HITCHHIKING

Hitchhiking is extremely dangerous. Students are not permitted to hitchhike, either alone or with friends.

VIII. HOST FAMILY REGULATIONS

Each family has rules and regulations which help it function effectively. It is imperative that each student makes every effort possible to understand what his/her family expects. Each student must be respectful of his/her Host Family and the rules that govern the household. Activities must be approved by the Host Family. At all times, the student's Host Family must know where the student is, with whom and when the student will return.

IX. LAW VIOLATIONS

If a student admits to a criminal law violation, or is arrested and charged, or if reliable information is received that the student will be arrested and charged, the student will be returned to his/her home country as soon as legally possible. Students are expected to obey all laws of the host country, state, city and community.

X. LEAVING THE PROGRAM

A student may not leave the program at any time without the express written consent of DFSR. Students are not permitted to return home during the program. Doing so will be considered leaving the program. When a student leaves the program, except for emergencies, he/she may not return to the program. The student may

leave the program due to death or serious illness in the immediate family or for other bona fide emergency situations as determined by DFSR.

XI. MONEY

Because each student is responsible to purchase his/her personal items, clothing, entertainment, etc. each student is required to have at his/her disposal, a minimum of € 200 each month. Each student is responsible for his/her own spending money. DFSR is not responsible for any lost or stolen money. It is against DFSR regulations for a student to place his/her money in the Host Family's bank account. Further, no student shall lend money to, or borrow money from, any member of his/her Host Family.

XII. SCHOOL

- A. The student is on an Exchange-Visitor or Student Visa and must attend school regularly and obey all school rules.
- B. The student is expected to show an interest in his/her school work and make an effort to do his/her best.
- C. If, in the school's or DFSR's opinion, the student needs a language tutor to succeed in class(es), DFSR will help to arrange for such a tutor. The cost for tutoring will be the sole responsibility of the student's natural parents.
- D. If the student is given a failing mark in attitude as an official complaint from the school, he/she will be returned to his/her home country.
- E. Dismissal from school will result in dismissal from the program.

XIII. SEX

The exchange experience is not intended to be a time in which romantic attachments are formed. The exchange student is an ambassador of his/her country. Therefore, it is extremely important that the student's moral behavior be beyond reproach at all times. If it is found that a student is involved in a sexual relationship while sponsored through the DFSR program, that student may be returned to his/her own country immediately. If it is found that a student is pregnant while sponsored through the DFSR program, that student will be dismissed from the program.

XIV. SMOKING

The student must follow the rules of his/her hostfamily and refrain from smoking in the home if required.

XV. PORNOGRAPHY

Purchase, possession and/or downloading of pornography is not permitted.

XVI. INTERNET AND E-MAIL

While use of the Internet and e-mail is generally deemed acceptable, it may also be detrimental to a student's program. Students must respect and abide by host family and school rules in relationship to use of computer, Internet and e-mail.

XVII. TRAVEL

Students will be permitted to travel while in the host country only according to the following conditions:

- A. If with the Host Family and if longer than overnight, the DFSR Coordinator must be informed of dates and a phone contact where the student can be reached in case of emergency.
- B. If with another family, the Host Family must approve and the same regulations as "A" above.
- C. School and group-sponsored trips are permitted. Again, Host Family must approve and DFSR Coordinator must be notified.
- D. If independently to visit another family, the inviting family must confirm the invitation with the Host Family and DFSR Coordinator.
- E. Travel by air, bus or train is permitted only under the following conditions:
 - 1. Chaperoned group trips.
 - 2. Direct trips from departure point directly to destination, to be met by family visited.

Note: Unauthorized travel may be cause for dismissal from the program.

XVIII. WORK AND JOBS

Students sponsored by DFSR are in the host country on an Exchange-Visitor Visa. It is against the law for an exchange student to hold a job or seek employment. Exceptions to this may be occasional baby-sitting, lawn mowing or other odd jobs which might be offered to the student by his/her Host Family or the Host Family acquaintances.

XIX. VISITS FROM RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

Visits from relatives and friends should be restricted to the end of the student's program. Earlier visits may result in disruption of student/host family adaptation process. Approval of host family must be obtained prior to the visit. Guests may not expect that host families will be able to accommodate them in the host home.

XX. CURFEW

Students should be at home at 22:00 during the week and at 24:00 on weekends, unless discussed differently with the hostfamily. They should always tell the hostfamily where and with whom they are going out.

Expectations

ADJUST TO YOUR HOST FAMILY'S LIFE STYLE

Your host family has accepted you into their home because they want to share what they have and because they have an interest in learning about a foreign culture. You will be staying with a German family who may or may not have the same background as you. You will need to accept and adjust to their standard of living. The student is expected to adapt to the family, not vice versa. Keep your expectations at realistic levels and avoid demands on your host family.

ESTABLISH REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

In preparation for your exchange experience, it will be helpful to think through your expectations and check if they are realistic. We encourage you to review these expectations with your host family soon after arrival so that they can be aware of them. Your host family will also share their expectations of you.

WHAT ARE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS?

Realistic expectations of your host family may be to become a member of the family, to participate on outings with them or to learn about their life-style and culture.

Unrealistic expectations of your host family may be to travel outside of the country or to have complete freedom to live the same way as you do at home.

It will be helpful to have realistic expectations of your social life, too. You may find that German students do not go out of their way to include you in their social activities. It will be up to you to make an effort to get involved in their events. Be the first one to say, „Hi“ or to extend an invitation like, „Are you going to the game on Friday?“.

You should also form realistic expectations of your DFSR Community Coordinator. He/she participates in the DFSR program in his/her free time. Your Coordinator chose to supervise and help you because of his/her interest in other cultures.

YOUR DFSR COORDINATOR

In the event there is anything that is troubling you, you should communicate directly with your Coordinator. You are encouraged to pick up the phone and call your Coordinator if you have a question or a problem. If your Coordinator is not available to you, you may call DFSR for assistance.

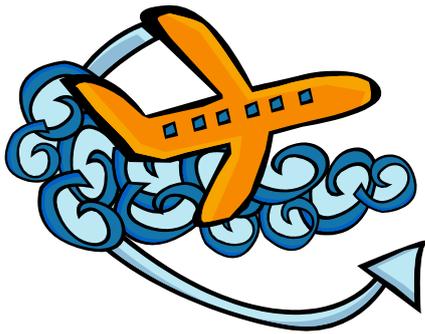


The First Few Weeks

You probably have spent many sleepless nights preparing for your trip and wondering what your life in Germany will be like. Shortly after your arrival, your Coordinator will contact you. Do not feel embarrassed to ask even „silly“ questions.

JET LAG

The first few days of your stay will probably be very tiring. Your body is still on the time schedule of your home country. You may awake in the middle of the night and be ready to go to bed in the middle of the afternoon. You may even feel irritable. Jet lag is common to all travelers. Your host family will want to show you their home and community right away. Be patient and let them know that you are excited, but a little tired.



CULTURE SHOCK

Culture shock is to be expected in some form during the program. You may experience the following:

Panic:

You may feel that the whole thing is a mistake and want to go home. This is a natural feeling when adapting to a new environment. As time goes by, you will feel more at ease and confident. Most people have periods of uneasiness when they find themselves in new situations.

Disinterest:

You are not excited about being in Germany and the things you have been dreaming about for months. As you get more involved with your host family and school your excitement will increase.

Nervousness & Uncertainty:

You may feel a lack of confidence and not sure of yourself. As you become more familiar with the German life-style and get to know your family better, you will feel more settled and comfortable.

Impatience:

You are impatient with people around you and your inability to communicate and understand quickly and easily. Remember that you are straining with the language. The simplest encounters may require more effort from you than ever before. New routines may take some time to adjust to.

Criticism:

You may be critical of your new surroundings because they are different or because you feel homesick. Because you are young, adaptable and open-minded, you will soon feel energetic, comfortable and confident in dealing with the totally new environment.

HELP YOUR HOSTS UNDERSTAND

Talk things over with your host family, no matter what kind of effort it involves. Expressing your feelings will help your family understand you better. When your host family knows the cause of the problems, they can help you solve them.

When you communicate with your family, try to relate your feelings to your actions. If you are feeling depressed or tired or grumpy for no real reason, try to let them know. You do not want your host family to feel as though they have done something to make you unhappy when it may be just homesickness or problems at school that are causing these feelings. Be sure to communicate to them that they are not the cause of these feelings.

Communication

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Communication will solve most problems. Nonverbal communication, body language, is also an important way of communicating. A smile has a universal meaning. Use your eyes, hands and/or facial expressions, or even pictures from magazines, to express what you mean. Do not worry about feeling foolish. People around you will not think that you are foolish; they might even think it is fun to act out things.

You may want to write things down if you have trouble speaking. Many students have learned to write German better than they speak it. A journal in which you write down your experiences and thoughts may be helpful now, and you will enjoy reading it at the end of the year to see how much you have changed and grown. It may also be something you keep to read later in life.

Your host family will be facing the same feelings of enthusiasm and anxiety that you are. So, give them a chance to share their feelings, too. Try your best to be a good listener as well.

GETTING USED TO GERMAN

The German you will be using in everyday situations will seem very different from the German you learned at home. Many Germans speak quickly; they mumble and slur their words or use words you have never heard. The language among young people in Germany changes so quickly that it never becomes part of what is taught in your home country. Not to worry, you will soon catch on. Please do not be afraid to ask someone to speak more slowly, repeat him/herself or to explain the meaning of a word or phrase. Your first encounter with the language as it is spoken will be challenging. Do not be embarrassed or shy.



UNDERSTANDING CLASSES

It will be difficult in school to ask the teacher constantly for help. He or she may not always have time during class. Probably the best way is to write down your questions and speak to the teacher after class. You will need to do this less and less as your understanding of German improves.



GAINING FLUENCY

At times you may find yourself feeling frustrated and confused. Learning German will become easier and easier. You must give it time and patience. A month or two or three is not too long. Your fluency will increase without your even being aware of it.

In the meantime, you should not forget you are learning on all kinds of levels and in all kinds of situations. On a bus, for instance, you can observe things like social relationships between people and neighborhood characteristics. This kind of learning does not depend on language, but it is important and valuable in helping you understand your new German environment. You will learn that Germans have a distinct body language just as people in your country do. You will master quickly if you are observant and ask questions.

You have taken the first step by deciding to come here. Now the next step is absorbing as much as you can of the culture, the language and the attitudes. Use every opportunity to communicate in order to truly become a member of your host family and community.

Your New Family

Of all the friendships you make during your German stay, your experience with your host family has the most potential for a close, lasting and personal friendship. DF SR host families voluntarily provide an extra bed, a place at their table and a place in their hearts for you. **They do this without receiving any payment for your stay.**

REVELATIONS & DISAPPOINTMENTS

Your host family has chosen you and you have accepted them. It is hard to get to know other people through letters or pictures, so your first few weeks together will include many revelations and a few disappointments. This is quite normal.

HOUSEHOLD RESPONSIBILITIES

Your host parents will explain what is expected of you. You will be expected to fulfill these expectations. You, your host family and your DF SR Coordinator should review these rules. Perhaps you have never been expected to help with housework chores at home. However, in a new home where everyone is expected to share household responsibilities willingly and automatically, you will be expected to also.

FAMILY STRUCTURE

In German homes where everyone is working or going to school, responsibilities are evenly distributed. It may seem that they have an easy and generous manner with each other. This does not mean that there are no rules. Perhaps, in your home, your father is the authority figure. He makes the decisions, and no one questions that. In your new family everyone in the family may contribute an opinion, and then a decision is made. It may seem awkward to you, but that is the way many families operate. The reverse may also be true. Perhaps you are used to being able to have a say in making decisions in your home country. In your German family the father or mother may make all the decisions. You may find that your host mother's opinions count for

a lot more than you are accustomed to, or that you are asked to do something that your mother did for you back home.

Look at these differences as a part of learning about a different society and life-style. You will have to adapt to these situations and live by the rules established in your host family's home.

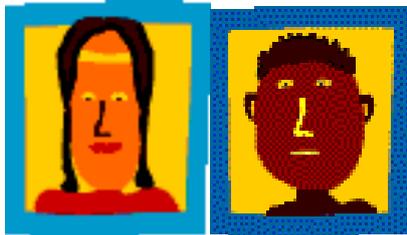
SHARING THE LIMELIGHT

What about your host brothers and sisters? Sometimes the closer we get to each other, the more difficulties seem to arise. When you first join the family you may be the center of attention. But everyone likes the „limelight“ once in a while, so do not be surprised if your host brothers or sisters feel some resentment because of this. Help the situation by showing a sincere interest in your host brothers' or sisters' activities. Be willing to learn from them and be curious.



It's Not Right or Wrong, It's Just Different

Each culture has its own rules of behavior. You will most likely find that customs in your country are different from those in Germany. Basic courtesy and good behavior will apply to every aspect of your life in Germany. Teachers, friends, class and teammates will all react with pleasure to your thoughtfulness. Your sensitivity and willingness to learn and adapt to new ways will help you to quickly adjust and integrate into German life. Consideration of others' feelings and good manners come from a natural impulse to please or to show respect for another.



COURTESY

If you are going to be late, call to let someone know. If you want to make a long distance call, ask permission and observe rules the family has made. If you want to invite a guest, check with your family first to see if it is going to be convenient for them. "Bitte" and "Danke" are the two most important words you will use during your homestay. Use them liberally and frequently. It will be very important for your host family, Coordinator, teachers and friends to feel you appreciate them. Criticism of anything German will only make people around you angry and upset. Your positive attitude will always work to your benefit!



EATING HABITS

In Germany, usually the most substantial meal of the day, lunch, is eaten at around noon. Dinner is called "Abendbrot". Bread and cold cuts will be served. You may be surprised at

the early hour (from 06:00-7:30 pm) at which Germans eat. German families often like to talk over the day's experiences, make plans for tomorrow or have a lively conversation on a current topic during the evening meal. After a good meal, prepared by a host parent, complimenting him/her would be good manners in any culture. Even if you do not like the food your host family prepares, try it. If you politely explain that the food is different and it will take some time to become accustomed to, your host family will not feel insulted.

HYGIENE

While you are living in Germany, you will be expected to adopt German hygiene habits. Germans take a shower or bath, use deodorant daily and shampoo their hair at least three to four times a week. Women usually shave their legs and under their arms. Clothes are washed after being worn a few times. We recommend you ask your family about water use, (They may have water restrictions.) how often clothes are laundered and their bathroom schedules so that you can fit in with their routine.



SOCIAL HABITS

Be sure to discuss with your host parents their rules about dating. Usually it will not be acceptable to invite a person of the opposite sex into your bedroom. Sexual activity is not permitted while you are on the DFSSR program.



Daily Life

If you open it, close it.
If you turn it on, turn it off.
If you unlock it, lock it up.
If you break it, admit it and have it fixed or replaced.
If you don't know how to operate it, leave it alone and ask someone.
If it is broken, don't try to fix it; ask someone who can.
If you want to borrow it, ask for permission.
If you borrow it, return it.
If you value it, take care of it.
If you make a mess, clean it up.
If you move it, put it back.
If it will brighten someone's day, say it.
If you hurt someone's feelings be the first to say, "I am sorry. Let's talk things out."
If someone hurts your feelings, say, "Let's talk things out."

+ **Expressing yourself:**

Even when language is difficult, it is better to keep the lines of communication open than to keep everything to yourself. Talk to your family, Coordinator or your school counselor.

+ **Responsibilities:**

No matter what you have been accustomed to doing in your own home, you must assume the responsibilities given to you by your host family.

+ **Maturity:**

In some ways, yours is the most demanding position in the family, at least at first. There is only one of you for them to deal with, but there may be three or four family members whose feelings need to be considered. You will need to be aware of this and use a lot of understanding and patience.

+ **Attention:**

With all the attention being paid to you as a newcomer, do not forget that your host family will want your attention in return. It is sometimes difficult to tend to all aspects of life such as school, friends, sports, activities and still leave time for your family. Try to remember

that your host family wants and deserves to see you more than once in a while. Make time to play a game with them or just have a chat with all the members of the family. Ask about their day and show a sincere interest in them. After all, they are your "adopted family" who have chosen to care for you.

+ **Your resources:**

Do not be hesitant about talking things over with your Coordinator. Sometimes another point of view can help you resolve a difficult situation.

+ **Life-changing decisions:**

Please do not make any decisions of this nature during your stay here. This means delaying decisions such as deciding to marry, to have a baby, to become a German citizen or to change your religion. These are extremely difficult and important decisions and should not be made while living away from home.

Friends

The new friends you meet will make your stay all the more enjoyable. We hope that you make many new friends, each one with a new tie to Germany.

CLUSTERING

It is easy to cluster with other foreign students and it is understandable to share a common sense of being different for a time. However, do not let it become a habit. This tendency to rely on others in the same situation as yours can lead to problems. Your host family and German students, who have awaited your arrival and anticipated your friendship, will naturally feel left out of your life if you cling to other foreign students. They may feel you have rejected their hospitality. For you, the experience of being in a different culture and atmosphere will be somewhat diluted. Your language skills will suffer and your whole adjustment period will be prolonged. So, while it is fun and profitable to exchange impressions with other foreign students, it is not a good idea to spend too much of your time with them exclusively. After all, you chose to come to Germany to learn the German way of life. To do this, you will need to make a point of spending your time getting to know Germans.

MAKING GERMAN FRIENDS

The best way to make friendship with Germans will be to participate with them in activities which revolve around school. Unlike schools in America, German high school do not offer as many group activities in addition to academics. Each school's extracurricular activities vary.



ATHLETICS

Soccer is very popular in Germany, but other sports such as basketball, volleyball, swimming, track and field, tennis may also be available. Getting involved on a sports team is one of the best ways of meeting people with similar interests.



CHOIR, BAND AND ORCHESTRA

Exchange students are often well respected members of the choir, band or orchestra. If you play an instrument, this is an excellent way to get involved and make friends.



AG'S (ARBEITSGEMEINSCHAFT)

Many schools have AG's in the afternoon. AG's are voluntary study groups. You can choose from natural science, economics, languages etc.

Academics

DFSR is very concerned about your academic progress and good behavior at school. You need to think carefully about what you want to accomplish this school year. You will need to know the requirements of your present school to see if it is possible to satisfy them and, if you wish to do so, continue your studies without missing a year. Remember that you are an ambassador representing your country as well as DFSR.

Schools are NOT required to issue a diploma to foreign students. Each high school in Germany has different requirements. There are many high schools which will not issue a regular diploma to international students under any circumstances.

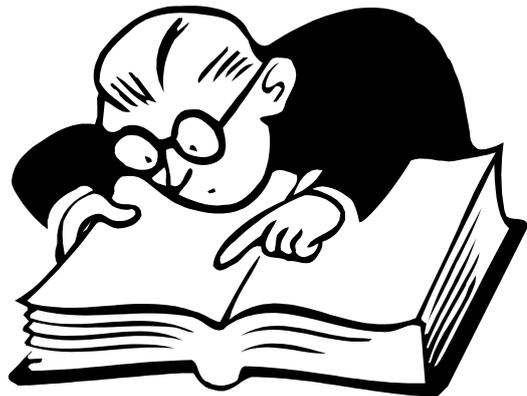
THE GERMAN APPROACH

The German approach to high school education may be a little different from what you are accustomed to. In Germany, classes may be somewhat more informal than you are used to. Students are encouraged to think and participate actively in classroom discussions.

DFSR encourages students to make sure they take whatever courses are required by their schools in their home country, but also to explore some of the elective courses available through their high school.

COURSE OFFERINGS

German high schools vary in course offerings and size, depending on the community and "Bundesland". All schools, however, operate on similar systems. Along with traditional subjects such as math, German, foreign languages, sciences, history and PE, most schools offer "elective" courses in other fields like computer science, music, choir, photography, dance, various sports and arts.



A typical student schedule at a German high school may look something like this:

EXAMPLE:

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
07:45-08:30	Math	Social Studies	English	Geography	History
08:30-09:15	Religion	Math	Geography	Chemistry	Math
09:30-10:15	Art	German	Chemistry	Math	Social Studies
10:15-11:00	Art	History	Religion	French	English
11:15-12:00	German	French	French	German	P.E.
12:05-12:50	French	English	German		P.E.
13:30-14:15	Elective Subj.				
14:15-15:00	Elective Subj.				
15:00-15:45	Elective Subj.				
15:45-16:30	Elective Subj.				

Things You Should Know

MONEY

Although room and board is provided by your host family, you will need spending money. DFSR requires that you have at least € 200 per month available as spending money. No matter how and when you receive this money, you will need to budget. Since transfers of money from your home country take time, please make sure that funds are sent well in advance so they are available when you need them. Host families are NEVER required to provide funds if your money runs out before the next installment. Your spending money is intended to cover school lunches (unless your host family wants to supply you with a bag lunch which is at their discretion), personal needs such as toiletries and an occasional treat like movies, music and outings.

Host families are not expected to supply you with personal items or extras such as shampoo, perfume, candy bars, stationary, stamps, money for books or money for dating. Long distance and overseas phone calls are also your responsibility. We recommend that you and your host family keep a log of your calls so you can pay them back immediately from your funds when one of your phone calls shows on their phone bill.

If you can not manage an extra expense on your monthly allowance, you should contact your natural family and make arrangements for more money to be sent. You can not receive advances on your allowance and you should not borrow from your host family. If you need help budgeting your money, ask your host family or DFSR Coordinator.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation in many urban and suburban areas of Germany is good. Your host family can acquaint you with routes and timetables, usually available free. Talk to your family about their rules concerning public transportation which may be quite different from what you are used to.



SMOKING

In Germany, you must be at least 16-years old

to purchase tobacco products. Many Germans prefer not to smoke and not to allow anyone in the house to smoke. You must follow the rules of your host family in this respect.

DRINKING

DFSR rules prohibit any of its participants, regardless of age, from consuming alcohol or possessing alcohol for consumption. However, by German law it is allowed to drink alcohol at the age of sixteen. We must receive the natural parents and partner agencies written approval or disapproval for their child to drink alcohol.

DRUGS

Possession and/or use of illegal drugs is against the laws of Germany and subject to heavy penalties, including possible prison sentence and/or deportation. It is also a severe violation of DFSR rules and will result in immediate dismissal and return to your home country.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Mutual respect in matters of religion is essential to a successful year. You may choose whether or not to attend church services. We suggest you consider attending your host family's church with them a few times at first. Many German churches have active youth groups and offer many activities for young people. It may provide an opportunity to make new friends. You may prefer quiet time to yourself or you may need your host family's assistance in attending or getting information about the church, temple or synagogue you wish to attend. This is seldom a problem because most host families appreciate and understand your desire to practice the religion of your choice.

PROGRAM END

You must return home within 7 days after the last day of school. After the official program ends, DFSR's liability will cease and your host family's responsibilities to you will end. At that time, you are no longer covered by the program insurances.

Travel

Travel with your host family, DFSR Coordinator, an approved school or church group and your natural parents is permitted. All travel must be chaperoned by one of the above adults over the age of 25. All trips involving an overnight stay away from your host community more than 2 nights will require specific permission by your natural parents, the host family and DFSR prior to the trip. (If you will be missing school you will also need to get the school's permission). For these trips, you must submit a "Travel Release Form" to the DFSR office two weeks in advance of your departure date.

TRAVEL WITH YOUR HOST FAMILY

Notify your DFSR Coordinator by telephone of any trip involving overnight stays away from your host community. For any trip more than two nights, you and your host family will have to complete a "Travel Release Form". DFSR must obtain your natural family's specific permission for each trip through the overseas representative's office. Please make certain the "Travel Release Form" is mailed to the DFSR office at least two weeks before the intended travel date.

TRAVEL WITH YOUR DFSR COORDINATOR

Sometimes DFSR Coordinators arrange special trips for students. Although they are organized by your Coordinator, they are not considered official DFSR trips and DFSR is not liable. If the trip is more than two nights, you must obtain a "Travel Release Form" from the DFSR office.

TRAVEL WITH AN APPROVED GROUP

You may participate on a trip that is sponsored by the school, a church group or DFSR only if it will be chaperoned by an adult over the age of 25. You and your host family must complete a "Travel Release Form" and submit it to the DFSR office two weeks in advance of the departure date. No payment for the trip may be made until DFSR authorization is granted.

TRAVEL WITH YOUR NATURAL PARENTS

Travel with your natural parents is usually permitted only in the last month of the program so that it does not interfere with your host family or school attendance. You will require permission from your host family, school (if you will miss classes) and DFSR. Complete a "Travel Release Form" and forward it to the DFSR office prior to the trip. If you are meeting your parents outside the host community, travel must be directly from your host community to the place where your parents will meet you. No diversions from this direct route or overnight stopovers will be permitted. Visits to or from your natural family during the program are not permitted.



VISA

You will be issued a student visa which gives you the right to remain in Germany as a student for the duration of the DFSR program. Because DFSR is the sponsor of your program visa, DFSR is responsible for you while you are on the DFSR program. Although the stamp in your passport may be valid for 12 months, DFSR will permit you to remain in Germany only while on the official DFSR program. This visa does not give you the right to work in Germany. If you want to travel outside of Germany you have to check with the local bureau of immigration/foreign affairs (Ausländerbehörde) in Germany for permission.

Keys to a Successful Program

POSITIVE ATTITUDE

How do you want to be remembered? What do you want to be remembered for? During the DFSR program you are an ambassador of your home country and DFSR. Your positive attitude at all times will help you to project the positive image you desire. Criticism of Germany, Germans and anything German will anger and insult people, and cause them to look upon you as unappreciative. Keep an open mind about Germans, Germany and the differences in culture, politics, religion, life-style, etc. This will enable you to learn much more from your stay.

MATURITY

Since you have chosen to live as a German teenager for some month, you will be facing many challenges. Many situations will call for your good sense, wisdom and maturity. These qualifications will help you to navigate through some difficult times.

FLEXIBILITY

It is expected that you will encounter many differences in the German life-style compared to that in your home country. Flexibility and tolerance will help you to understand and appreciate these differences and accept them as part of the exchange experience. You will most likely be called upon to make numerous compromises and adjustments in order to successfully integrate into your new life as a German teenager.

COMMUNICATION

In Germany, open, honest communication is expected. When we say open and honest, we do not mean blunt or angry. How you communicate is as important as what you communicate. By sharing your thoughts and feelings, both happy and sad, in a considerate manner, you will develop good relationships with people around you. Do not hesitate to let someone know if you are troubled, before the situation

develops into a major problem. Communicating with your natural family will help shrink the miles. A letter once a week will be greatly appreciated by your parents.

COURTESY & APPRECIATION

Remember to show your appreciation of your host family, Coordinator, school and friends often. "Bitte" and "Danke" are important words in your vocabulary. Consider writing your family a short thank you note, giving them small gifts, cooking them a meal or treating them to a soda or an ice cream. These small gestures will go a long way to making people feel that you are grateful and appreciate their efforts. Always be courteous about letting people know where you are and when you will be home. Be sure to telephone if your plans change.

INVOLVEMENT

Expect to have to make a genuine effort to establish relationships. Both within your host family and at school, you must take the initiative to develop friendships. It is up to you to take that first step. Go out of your way to accept responsibility within the host family by getting involved in their activities and sharing household chores.

GOOD HABITS

Develop habits which include a lot of time for your host family, even after you make your own friends. Good sleeping, eating and exercise habits will also ensure that you stay healthy and strong.





ICH _____, HABE DAS

Deutschland - SCHÜLERHANDBUCH

gelesen und verstanden.

Mit der nachfolgenden Unterschrift bestätige ich die Ratschläge und Empfehlungen in diesem Handbuch gelesen zu haben und zu befolgen. Ebenfalls weiß ich, dass es ein guter Ratgeber in schwierigen Situationen ist, an den ich mich halten kann.

Unterschrift des Teilnehmers _____

Datum _____

ALCOHOL AUTHORIZATION

We would like to point out that it is forbidden by DFRS and our partner agency _____(name of agency) abroad to consume alcoholic beverages while the student is on the exchange program. However, the legal drinking age by law in Germany is 16 years and it is common for young people to drink at family parties for example. Exchange students also often ask their host families if exceptions can be made to the non-alcohol rule. We do not wish our host families to be forced to make the decision to allow or forbid this. Therefore, we ask the natural parents and our partner agency to sign a written agreement with their approval or disapproval of drinking alcoholic beverages.

Please note: If this agreement is broken the student can be sent home.

Natural parents please confirm:

I/We forbid my/our child to drink alcoholic beverages at all while on the German exchange program:

I/We do allow my/our child to drink alcoholic beverages only in the physical presence of the hostfamily.

Signature of Father or Legal Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Mother or Legal Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Partner agency please confirm:

_____ (Name of partner agency) forbids the exchange student to drink alcoholic beverages at all while on the German exchange program.

_____ (Name of partner agency) allows the exchange student to drink alcoholic beverages only in the physical presence of the hostfamily.

Signature of partner agency: _____ Date: _____