
Who needs a Counsellor?

All inbound students are assigned a Counsellor – STEP, LTEP and Inbound Camps & Tours.

What are we looking for?

The Counsellor has the most crucial role in the Rotary Youth Exchange programme.

The wrong choice can be detrimental to the success of an exchange not only for the student but also the host club. It is imperative that the person selected is one who is genuinely interested in young people and appreciates the value of the Youth Exchange Programme. S/he should be able to relate easily to young people so that s/he can gain their confidence and respect and so be in a position to assist and advise them. S/he should fully understand her/his responsibilities and have the time to attend to them. The Counsellor should not be one of the host parents, the student's high school Principal, or the host club President.

A person who has worked or is working with young people in schools or local authority youth service or, someone who has a long and successful track record working with young people in the voluntary sector, or someone who has without problem previously hosted and/or counselled Rotary Youth Exchange students or Ambassadorial scholars is an ideal candidate for the role. It may be that none of these options is available and if so two Counsellors should be appointed, one male and one female or, only if the student is female, two females. It is preferable, but not imperative, that these Counsellors should not be husband and wife or long term partners.

The Right Counsellor for the Programme

Inbound Camps

It is permissible for one person – or maybe one male and one female – is sufficient to act as Counsellor for the limited period of a Camp, beginning with the run up to the event. Given that the dates of a Camp are known well in advance it should be possible to appoint a Counsellor who will be available at the required time. Contact with the student is minimal unless something goes wrong.

STEP

Appointing a STEP Counsellor must wait until a successful placement has been made and the families have fixed the dates of the exchange, so as to ensure their availability before and during the time that the inbound student is in the District. The club will need to have DBS screening in mind so that the exchange is not put in jeopardy by insufficient time to complete this vital process.

LTEP

The role of Counsellor for LTEP is a considerable commitment and can be extremely rewarding and life long. Having monthly contact of a routine kind and other less formal contact can build a bond almost as strong as that with a host family: it is quite normal for a student to stay over at the Counsellor's home and for this reason both Counsellor and partner need DBS Certificates.

A Counsellor is involved formally in an exchange from the time that a student is accepted into the district until that student has returned home, a period of possibly up to eighteen months.