

Youth Exchange Officers network with colleagues across the world all the time, arguably more so than any other identifiable group of Rotarians. The familiarity which arises from this activity builds trust and support and it is so much easier to convince wavering parent that their child will be safe with Rotary when you can say that you will be arranging the exchange with someone you know. It is also part of the pleasure of being a youth exchange officer.

Your support system locally:

Anyone in district who has had any experience of Youth Exchange:
Former DYEEOs - your predecessor and others.
Present and past CYEOs,
ROTEX (*see 'IN4: ROTEX – Alumni of Rotary Youth Exchange'*)
Former Host Parents and Counsellors.

National support:

RIBI Districts Youth Exchange Association

The DYEEO Management Committee and the Multidistrict Specialists in particular provide:

- support for all programmes
- assistance with making contacts abroad
- general guidance in all areas of concern relating to Youth Exchange
- training materials for District YE Team and for their Clubs

Facebook Group 'RIBIDYEA' is a closed networking group intended for DYEEOs, to spread experience and mutual support among members of the Association across the country and to enable everyone to work together as a team. Members can get general advice posted for all, as well as updated information.

The RIBIDYEA Facebook Page is at www.facebook.com/RYEGBandI

Students contribute their photographs and videos, as do DYEEOs on their behalf.

Other Online Networks

International Youth Exchange Message group: yeotalk-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

This is mainly taken up with American concerns but is worth joining for the occasional useful topic and it works as a very impressive network when there is an international disaster. It tends to concentrate on the Long Term programme - bear in mind that in many parts of the world references to 'Youth Exchange' mean only the Long Term Youth Exchange programme. Other programmes are given less prominence.

To subscribe go to <http://www.yeoresources.org/Pages/YEOTalk.html>

Also STEPtalk@yahoogroups.com aims to redress the balance but it has so far not attracted the attention of many subscribers.

International Contacts:

There are two main opportunities to meet fellow Youth Exchange Officers from all over the world:

The EEMA Conference

EEMA is the acronym for 'Europe, Eastern Mediterranean, Africa'. The EEMA Youth Exchange Conference takes place in a different country each year during the first week of September. The four or five day tour after the conference has contributed to the popularity of the event among Rotarians involved in the Youth Exchange programme from other parts of the world. It is now considered by many to be the best opportunity of the year for networking with International Youth Exchange colleagues.

EEMA has now got its own website www.eema.eu.com

Rotary International Pre-Convention:

The conference lasts over two days prior to the RI Convention and attracts YEOs from all over the world. There is sometimes a tour arranged in the week leading up to the Pre-Convention.

There are other Youth Exchange Conferences around the world. The most significant of these are the NAYEN Conference in February (N American YE Network) and the Brazilian conference in November.