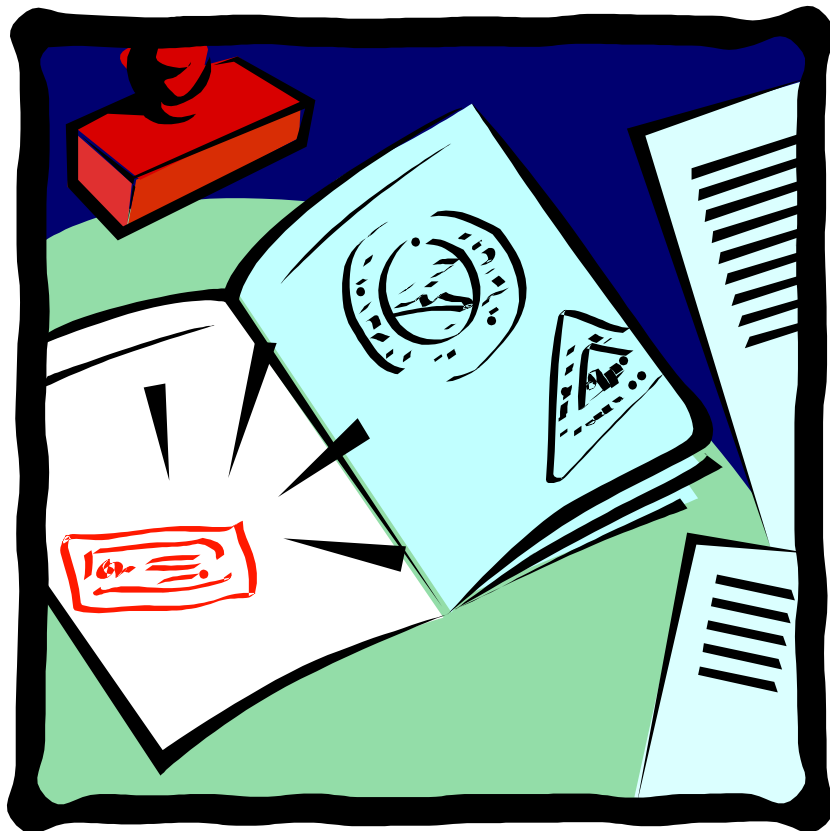




Your Passport to Local Support



Volunteer learning guide

AFS-USA
May 2006

AFS-USA mission

AFS-USA works toward a more just and peaceful world by providing international and intercultural learning experiences to individuals, families, schools and communities through a global volunteer partnership.

AFS-USA core values are

Safety and Welfare - The safety and well being of our participants are our highest priority. In all our actions and decisions we make, this value above all others will always serve as the guiding principle in our work.

Respect - We treat all individuals respectfully, and value each others' unique contributions. We treat each other fairly and are responsive to the needs and requests of others. We are, by our mission and actions dedicated to acceptance of diverse peoples and viewpoints. We believe that the opportunities we offer through our organization and through our programs should be accessible to all regardless of race, creed, gender, nationality, cultural background, faith, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.

Accountability and Commitment - We believe in, and are committed to, the AFS mission and strive to exceed the highest standards in the work we do to enact the mission. We hold ourselves and each other accountable for the attainment of our goals and the demonstration of our values in all the work we do. We are passionate because the real impact of our work is to challenge thinking and change lives —both individual lives and, cumulatively, everyone's lives through effecting the enhanced possibility of peace in the world.

Integrity and Trust - We practice and honor open and authentic communications with each other as members of the AFS-USA community and with all those with whom we come in contact as a result of our work for AFS-We are honest and ethical in all aspects of our work. We demonstrate integrity and contribute to building relationships within an environment of partnership and trust

Continuous Learning and Improvement - We believe that learning, and in particular intercultural learning, is a basis for creating social change for the betterment of a worldwide community. We believe that continuous learning and personal growth must begin with us. We are dedicated to building our knowledge and skills and we will innovate in order to make 'what is' better and to make 'what can be' a reality.

Partnership and Teamwork - We believe to be most effective we must work together as a team in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support. Our personal conduct serves to break down walls and encourage people to work cooperatively to achieve success. Through our teamwork and volunteerism, we work to foster a more civil society.

AFS-USA's vision is

To build a culture of world peace by bringing international and intercultural education to daily life in the United States

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Welcome to volunteering with AFS-USA

On behalf of the Board of Directors, National Council, Volunteers and Staff, welcome to AFS-USA. Thank you for making the important decision to become an AFS Volunteer in your community. The most significant contributions of AFS-USA in action occur through the efforts of thousands of dedicated volunteers in the U.S. who support the AFS Mission of helping to build a more just and peaceful world.

This learning guide serves as your 'passport' to what we hope will grow to become a rich and rewarding experience for you as you work with young people and their families, educators, host families, community leaders, and others on behalf of AFS-USA. An AFS-USA Volunteer is truly an international volunteer. With every conversation you have and connection you make, you will demonstrate how peace is made possible between people.

It's an exciting time to be volunteering with AFS. The world needs intercultural understanding now more than ever. While so many people are asking themselves 'What can I do to make a difference,' you are heeding the call. I have every confidence that you will represent our organization with pride as you continue the legacy of the World War I and II American Field Service volunteer ambulance drivers who founded AFS. They believed, as AFS believes today, that building a more just and peaceful world begins when people from different countries and cultures meet, learn together, and have opportunities to better understand one another.

You are what the world needs now.

Alex J. Plinio

President and CEO
AFS-USA

Welcome to the AFS network and to this learning guide. When we set ourselves the task, back in 1946, of promoting understanding among cultures and helping people develop the knowledge and skills needed to create a more just and peaceful world, we knew that we could not accomplish this from the top down. What we needed then, and what we need even more today, is the commitment of a worldwide body of volunteers to truly make AFS into an organization driven by individuals who believe in our values. Your contributions make our values and goals come alive.

You are a member of a strong and vibrant volunteer community. More than 30,000 individuals like you are working around the world, to create a new generation of responsible global citizens. We dream of a world in which injustice, inequity and intolerance will not impede human progress and we believe that we can make this dream come true if we become a leader in promoting peace and tolerance through intercultural learning. Your contributions are extraordinary and indispensable to the advancement of our mission and our goals. AFS could not possibly exist without you.

Thank you, on behalf of AFS International and its Partners, for your part in making our dreams come true.

Tachi Cazal

President and Chief
Executive Officer
AFS International

Our proud AFS history

During World Wars I and II, young Americans volunteered as ambulance drivers in the American Field Service (AFS). When they returned home, they founded a movement to promote peace through international student exchange now known as AFS. Since World War II, AFS volunteers and staff have been working in partnership to forge international connections and develop intercultural understanding.

Since 1947 AFS has grown to become a yearly global partnership of:

- more than 30,000 volunteers
- more than 11,000 program participants
- more than 50 program partners around the world.

Currently AFS-USA:

- annually places students from abroad with more than 2,800 U.S. families
- has more than 6,000 volunteers to support our programs
- works directly with over 2,300 schools and local communities
- sends more than 1,500 U.S. students to more than 40 countries each year
- annually awards more than \$1.5 million in financial aid and scholarships.



Learn more about our 90 year history on the AFS International Website www.afs.org and launch the interactive timeline.

Learn more about AFS-USA by visiting our website www.usa.afs.org

What does it mean to be an AFS-USA volunteer

When you volunteer with AFS, you are part of a unique worldwide community. Our history, our volunteerism, our global partnership and nearly 60 years of experience in global exchange place AFS as one of the leaders in international, intercultural learning exchange programs. We are recognized as an advocate for world peace.

Volunteering for AFS-USA means that you have the opportunity to:

- be part of a local volunteering community who share your values
- become part of a worldwide network of volunteers, families and young people
- meet with and help support exchange participants from all over the world
- develop your own skills in intercultural learning and leadership
- promote the AFS mission of building, promoting and understanding peace through intercultural exchange experiences that change the world.

As an AFS-USA volunteer you undertake a formal application process including a criminal background check in order for you to be registered to volunteer with AFS-USA. This process reflects AFS-USA's commitment to ensuring appropriate screening and record keeping for volunteers who are engaged in supporting our programs.



What is your “Passport to Local Support” volunteering learning guide

The volunteer learning guides have been developed based on input and experience from AFS-USA volunteers and staff.

Your **Passport to Local Support** has been designed to provide you with information you need as a local volunteer. You will be able to use this guide at any time. It also includes references to additional materials or resources.

- ✓ Included are AFS standards, policies, processes and procedures. This guide will explain why things are done in AFS-USA and provides you with practical strategies to follow.
- ✓ You will be able to reflect on your current knowledge, check on your own learning progress and be directed to further learning, assistance, training and support.
- ✓ At any given time this guide will allow you to provide proactive support in your community.

If you are new to AFS, this guide will enable you to perform your volunteer support role within the AFS-USA framework. If you are an experienced AFS volunteer this guide will assist you in referencing additional resource materials and following AFS-USA policy.

This volunteer learning guide reflects the most current AFS-USA standards, policies and procedures. As an organization that strives for quality and national consistency it is important that all AFS-USA volunteers use only the resources and materials that are referred to in this learning guide.

How do I use the volunteer learning guide

- ☑ Read the overview and introductory pages
 - ☑ Reflect on your current knowledge
 - ☑ Start by reading the sections of most interest to you
 - ☑ Refer to the materials and further reading
 - ☑ Complete the exercises and activities
 - ☑ Talk with other volunteers in your local community, Chapter or Area Team
 - ☑ Ask for assistance from your Regional Service Center
 - ☑ Seek to develop your skills further through training
 - ☑ Apply the skills to your role and evaluate your success
- Check your progress

We have included the following symbols as your guide to learning



Complete the activity



Contact Regional Service Center for help



Interactive learning activity



Go to AFSONline



Materials available separately



Pass it on – share your successful stories with other volunteers!



Support for your role



Visit website

We have left plenty of blank space for you to make your own notes. Materials are cross referenced and a glossary is at the back of this guide at the beginning of the Volunteer Resources Section on page 54.

What is local support

In AFS-USA we use the term "support" to describe this action of ensuring the on-going adjustment and quality. Local support means the proactive guidance, encouragement and assistance that you will provide to:

- ⇒ hosted participants
- ⇒ host families
- ⇒ schools
- ⇒ community groups
- ⇒ candidates
- ⇒ sending participants
- ⇒ natural families.

Throughout our programs, AFS-USA volunteers have a vital role to play in providing proactive support. This ensures a greater understanding of our programs and builds upon the on-going adjustment and quality experience for all involved.

As a local volunteer you can play an active role in helping those that are involved with AFS-USA. You can share your knowledge, understanding and experience to help build better personal relationships that sustain our program quality.

What is my local support volunteer role

Your active involvement in helping to provide local support means your **volunteer support responsibilities could include:**

- ⇒ **helping** candidates to prepare for their AFS experience and become sending participants
- ⇒ **assisting** natural families to understand adjustment issues that they son or daughter may be confronting while abroad
- ⇒ **guiding** hosted participants and host families to deal with adjustment issues
- ⇒ **ensuring** that monthly contact occurs and is documented for our hosted participants, host families and schools
- ⇒ **orientating** and preparing families and participants for their AFS experience
- ⇒ **organizing** activities that help support the process of exchange in your AFS chapter.




As an AFS-USA volunteer, support allows you to guide our participants and families through their exchange experience. Families, both natural and hosting, and participants on an AFS exchange program have the potential to have a life altering intercultural learning experience. As a support volunteer, you help continue the mission of AFS.

A supportive team approach and commitment from AFS volunteers and staff helps to ensure success. The volunteer leaders on the local and area level are available to you and your AFS team, as is the Regional Service Center Staff.



Role descriptions are also available on
AFSONline. www.afsonline.org

Reflecting on my current AFS local support knowledge

Use this table to review and check your AFS hosting knowledge	 I can do this now	 I have some knowledge of this	 I need to learn this
I understand the importance of support			Go to page 10, 11, 13, 17
I feel comfortable in providing proactive support			15
I can explain intercultural learning			19
I understand the challenges of adjustment			20, 23
I know the value of effective communication in providing support			25, 27
I understand the role of orientation in support			29
I am comfortable in supporting teenagers			30, 32, 34
I know the value of support for host families			34
I know when to involve others			39

The importance of support

Support is fundamental to the AFS experience and is a key factor of our operations. In AFS we recognize that providing quality support is a unique feature that distinguishes us as reputable international exchange organization. We actively promote the benefits of our support network and it is the visible guarantee of ensuring quality with credibility.

It is important that AFS-USA maintains a high standard of quality support, because:

- the AFS International Quality Standards – participant support is the responsibility of each AFS Partner Organization
- CSIET and the U.S. Department of State – AFS-USA is required to maintain the accreditation and regulatory standard to ensure continued operations
- the good name and reputation of AFS is maintained – nationally and globally
- responsibility and care to all participants – safety and welfare is a core value for AFS-USA. It is our moral and ethical duty.

As a local volunteer you have a vital role in helping to achieve our consistently high level of support which maintains the good reputation of AFS-USA.

Proactive support

Support is most effective when a proactive approach is used. Your local team should spend some time to think constructively about how you can support hosted participants, host families, sending participants and their natural families in your AFS chapter. This gives you the opportunity to create a structure and framework that you can use throughout the exchange experience. It will also help participants and families to have reasonable expectations about the support that will be provided to them.

Some important things you may wish to consider in providing proactive support:

- reachable** – participants and families need to know how to get in contact with you and when they can contact you
- reasonable and realistic** - establishing the boundaries of what you can provide support for
- caring** – someone who is willing to share and listen to share the joys and excitement
- guidance** – for when things are not going so well
- objective** – not to take sides
- relationship** - of trust, confidentially and care.

In your role of local support you are acting as an advisor for the best interests of AFS. It is important that families and participants understand that you are not a counselor, but are acting as a guide to help them through the exchange experience. In providing proactive support, remember to:

- maintain confidentiality
- be objective
- keep the promises that you make
- respond to questions and calls for assistance
- keep those that need to know informed.

Proactive support checklist

With your volunteer team think about how you can best implement proactive support in your AFS chapter.

- organize activities that encourage candidates and participants to prepare for their exchange experience
- ensure returnees have an active role to play in supporting and preparing participants
- identify opportunities for meaningful orientation
- involve schools in helping with both English, language learning or being a supportive network
- organize social activities to connect all those involved with AFS in your local community
- initiate opportunities for families to share news and experiences with each other
- develop a buddy system for families to better understand and learn from each other
- be proactive by staying in touch, take an interest, share the joys and the lows
- have an email or newsletter list that shares the experiences of exchange
- organize recognition events.

Proactive support has many different dimensions and can involve fun, social events or just ongoing contact. The more methods of support your AFS chapter can provide the stronger your local support structure will be.

Managing support

Your goal as a local AFS volunteer is to help facilitate sustainable relationships that provide proactive support to those who are involved in our AFS programs. In being supportive and understanding you will help participants and their families achieve the best possible exchange experience.

You and your AFS team can achieve this by building supportive relationships and maintaining regular contact throughout the exchange period. In doing so it ensures that AFS-USA is available for our families and our participants. As an AFS volunteer you can provide valuable information, be empathetic to the needs of others and offer your advice and experience.

At times situations may escalate and more support is required that may involve both the AFS sending and hosting country. The needs and requirements of support can vary from each individual and for each family. More support is required when situations are more challenging. Less support is required when things seem to just fall into place. No two support cases are ever the same.

When a support situation has escalated this involves the AFS partner offices and communicating across different time zones. Obtaining the facts and the necessary information can take time and will vary based upon differing realities, perspectives within each country. It is important that those involved understand that answers cannot be immediate but take time to investigate and clarify.

In managing support in your AFS chapter encourage all families and participants to be involved. The more involvement participants and families

What is intercultural learning

The unique experience of intercultural learning is a process that occurs when people are removed temporarily from their home environments and introduced to differing values, ways of life, and patterns of thought in completely new environments. Similar learning often is acquired by others who come into close contact with participants on AFS programs.

Through intercultural learning each individual acquires the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior that is necessary when interacting with different cultures. This knowledge becomes useful throughout their lives as they attempt to cope sensitively and intelligently with the urgent challenges of the world.

Learning through an AFS experience involves growth and change in terms of personal values and skills, interpersonal relationship building, intercultural knowledge and sensitivity, and global issues awareness.



**AFS-USA has many resources on
Intercultural Learning.**

- ✓ Contact your Regional Service Center.

A new way of living - the challenges of adjustment

Living in another country, with a host family, attending school, learning a new language and adjusting to a new culture can be challenging for anyone. It is normal for participants to experience both highs and lows during their exchange. This can be influenced by one factor or a combination of several. For each participant it can be different, but culture shock, homesickness, language difficulties and general adjustment can affect any participant at any time during their exchange period.

Cultural adjustment phases tend to follow a certain pattern with the stages being:

- arrival fatigue – a mixture of powerful feelings, including anxiety, excitement, nerves
- homesickness – faced with an unfamiliar environment, thoughts of family and home
- settling in – discovery of new and exciting things about the host culture
- deepening the relationship – becoming a member of the family, comfort and conflict
- culture shock – real life in the host country begins, longing for the familiar of home
- the holidays – enjoying host celebrations, a little sad and lonely
- culture learning – newly found confidence and ability to face new challenges
- pre-departure – mixed feelings before the return home, excited and sad.

Culture shock

Anyone that is confronted with a new environment that is very different from what they are familiar with can suffer from culture shock. It can affect any person who feels that they have lost their sense of instinctive behavior in everyday living. Culture shock can affect exchange participants, people who work overseas, travelers, migrants or anyone who is living in a new and different country and community. Symptoms of culture shock can vary with each individual and can include:

- mild discomfort
- inability to make an effort
- critical of everything in the host country
- longing for the comforts of home
- physical illness, and
- rarely a total inability to cope.

Suffering from culture shock is legitimate. As local volunteer you can assist:

hosted participants through:

- reassurance - what they are experiencing is “normal”
- encouragement - less stress and more rest
- reaching out – to others for help and seeking new friends
- focusing on an interest – pick a sport, activity or hobby that they have done previously or something new.

sending participants and their natural families by:

- being available to talk things through
- having natural families talk with former natural families who went through the same experience
- encouraging sending participants to contact their support network in the AFS host country
- keeping calm and to take each step slowly.

Helping to understand the differences and values

Local support at times may involve helping others to understand and accept different people and different values. Everyone is different and in AFS, intercultural learning means developing a greater acceptance and understanding about the diversity of culture, race, values, politics and religion.

Not everyone can readily accept another person's differences. At time you may be helping to support someone who could be confused, scared or even angry. They may feel threatened because they have are having difficulty understanding the differences of appearance, values, opinions or cultural beliefs.

In these circumstances, and in your role of proactive support, you can help others by assisting them to learn and accept these differences. This may in turn also help them to better understand or respect these differences. Learning to accept other people's differences can take time.

Remember that different values often mean just a different way of looking at things. Encourage those that are experiencing difficulties by trying to see it from someone else's point of view. It may give them a different insight or a new way of seeing things, that may not have been thought about before. Learning to understand differences, and finding ways to live with them, is a positive step towards better relationships and more successful exchange experiences.

Encourage your participants, families, teachers and members in your local community to talk to your volunteer team if they feel they are having problems understanding another person's difference.

The benefits of sharing

Living abroad, being hosted in the U.S., being a new host family or a sending parent can be challenging at times because it is so different. An AFS program involves change and for some can be stressful at times. By being available for your participants and families so that they can talk frankly increases their understanding of the dimensions of international exchange and intercultural learning.

You can encourage participants and families to ask questions, talk openly about their uncertainties and share their stories to help them to gain a deeper perspective.

Being aware that there is someone who is willing to listen and to talk things through can help them sort out their feelings, clarify uncertainties and make the situation clearer. It can help to prevent the situation from becoming overwhelming. At times you may be able to provide options that provide a different perspective to the situation.

Think about how you can be available to make it easier for those involved in our programs to talk openly and honestly about their concerns. Be open-minded, avoid making judgments and set the boundaries. You will be respecting their need for confidentiality but also stress that you may have to share their concerns if they or someone else is at risk.

Effective communication

Proactive support is significantly influenced by effective communications. Successful communications occur when both parties have reached a common understanding. In achieving this it will help you to build on the relationship between you and the person that you are supporting.

In your volunteer role, you will be working within an intercultural context and need to understand that your own cultural influences and values can influence your own communication. Cultures can differ in the use of eye contact, use of non-verbal behavior and silence. For example:

- Asians may express respect by averting their eyes, lowering their voices or allowing for periods of silence
- Latin Americans may not talk comfortably unless they are at such a close distance that a North American may feel uncomfortable
- Europeans consider that an appropriate greeting even in business, is one peck on each cheek
- North Americans use a handshake as a widely accepted form of greeting but this is not recognized in all other cultures.

By understanding the basics about another culture and what is considered to be appropriate (greetings, physical contact and norms of cultural communication) will help you in your supportive role and communication skills.

In preparing to support an exchange participant, host family or natural family and work in a cross-cultural context, you may wish to consider the following cultural influences:

- each culture has a pattern of assumptions, values, behaviors and practices that work for the people who share it

- we communicate verbally and non-verbally, which varies depending upon our cultural heritage
- our language organizes our thoughts
- much of our communication is organized on tone, facial expressions and mannerisms.

Communicating effectively across cultures means that you understand how you view the world, the background of participants and how they relate to you is influenced by their own cultural diversity.

Learning to speak from both sides of an issue will help you to communicate more effectively in a cross-cultural context.

Building effective communication skills

At times we can all create barriers to effective communication, and for our hosted participants communication can be more difficult in times of stress. In your supportive role you can help to build a relaxing environment that will provide a better environment for communicating.

Think about how you can use your skills of communicating in your support role by:	Which can be demonstrated by:
<i>Being a good listener</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ actively listening to others (repeat back what you have heard) ⇒ giving full attention to the speaker ⇒ having the right setting ⇒ avoiding distractions ⇒ using the right form of communications – think when face to face might be necessary
<i>Being open and honest</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ being clear about your role ⇒ seeking a mutual understanding ⇒ not being judgmental ⇒ providing what happens next information ⇒ providing timeframes
<i>Speaking clearly</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ avoiding the use of slang or jargon ⇒ overusing big words ⇒ using acronyms ⇒ creating confusion ⇒ speaking more slowly rather than loudly
<i>Demonstrating understanding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ providing feedback ⇒ asking questions if you are uncertain ⇒ being alert for confusion ⇒ summarizing the situation
<i>Appropriate body language</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ knowing that body language varies across cultures
<i>Demonstrating respect</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ allowing for points of view and not interrupting ⇒ using the right tone of voice ⇒ understanding when stress might be a influencing factor

Our support network

Who	Helps whom	Supports by
<i>Local or Chapter Volunteers</i>	Provides assistance and support to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Hosted Participants ⇒ Host Families ⇒ Host Schools ⇒ Host Communities ⇒ Sending Candidates ⇒ Sending Families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Monthly Contact ⇒ Proactive support ⇒ Meetings ⇒ Activities ⇒ Open communication ⇒ Documentation
<i>Area Team Volunteers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Local and Chapter Volunteers advising on support issues and assisting with difficult issues and crisis situations. ⇒ Ensures that monthly contact is occurring and that a specific liaison is assigned to each hosted participant and host family. ⇒ Works with the Regional Service Center. 	Area Team volunteers provide local and chapter volunteers with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Meetings ⇒ Training ⇒ Regular contact ⇒ Advice and support ⇒ Coordinates Orientations ⇒ Assists with problem resolution
<i>Regional Service Centers including Participant support Staff, Field Area Manager, Area Team Coordinator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Works closely with Area Team Volunteers in providing assistance and advice. Ensure standards and policies are maintained ⇒ Maintains files and relevant documentation for all participants ⇒ Processes requests for waivers and releases 	Working with volunteers and AFS partner offices. By providing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Training ⇒ Volunteer Contact ⇒ Advice ⇒ Guidance
<i>National Service Center</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Works with Regional Service Centers depending on situation. ⇒ Develops guidelines on Risk Management strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Provides overall coordination of AFS-USA support. Works closely with support staff in the Regional Offices. ⇒ Monitors AFS standards, policies and procedures.
<i>AFS Partner Offices</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Works with natural families and AFS-USA Offices to help resolve participant support issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Provides clarifying information about potential host participant concerns, issues or problems. ⇒ Provides a different cultural perspective

The role of orientation in support

Key in both preparing and supporting participants and families is the process of orientation. Orientation is a continuing process that includes both formal and informal learning.

Formal orientations are organized events and activities that are specifically designed to help facilitate the learning process. They usually combine a range of different activities that are both structured and social.

Informal orientation takes place each time a person comes into contact with AFS. This contact helps to build a greater understanding of the exchange experience.

In addition a wide range of materials are prepared to help:

- sending participants and their natural families
- hosted participants
- host families.

Orientation is a national, international and regulatory requirement. Encouraging all families and all participants to attend and be involved in their organized orientation events will help you to build a more supportive network.

In providing proactive support you should be familiar with the various orientation programs. You may also be involved in some of these orientation events.



You will be able to learn more about the process of orientation from volunteers who have this responsibility in your Area Team.



To access AFS-USA's orientation and preparatory materials go to AFSONline.

Supporting teenagers

The AFS program places high expectations on all participants. While many will appear to have a smooth program from the time they arrive to the time they depart, others will appear to lurch and struggle to get the same sense of success. It is important to remember that we are supporting young people, who are still adolescents that are still developing and are influenced by their own culture and the culture they are hosted in.

Adolescent changes in behavior and development can vary, these can include:

- shifts and changes in emotions
- unpredictable or impulsive behavior
- importance of their peers and choices of friends
- preoccupation of self
- tendency to underestimate risks
- increased physical growth and appetite
- increased hormonal changes.

AFS participants are chosen for their exchange program for range of reasons and it is easy to place the high expectations on hosted participants or believe that our sending participants are able to cope well while abroad. In any given circumstance participants own abilities and characteristics will vary widely. This can include their aptitude at school, ability to learn English or another language, forming friendships or even understanding what might be acceptable behavior.

In participating on an AFS program, participants can go through many challenges of adjustment that help them to better understand their own sense of self and who they are. In your supportive role you can help:

Support for your sending participants and their families

Support for your sending participants commences when they start their application to go abroad. At this time the candidates and their natural family will be looking to your AFS chapter to learn more about the process of exchange and will be seeking support and assistance. You and your team can initiate proactive support from their initial contact and build on this until the participant returns.

Some sending support suggestions:

- establish relationships with candidates and their families early in the application process
- include candidates in your local activities
- encourage candidates and natural families to meet with current hosted participants and their host families
- get to know each of your sending participants
- be inclusive and inviting to the natural families
- be available to answer questions and concerns at any time
- ensure both participants and their families attend orientation
- encourage participants to learn about their host country before departure
- check to ensure that they have received all relevant AFS materials
- keep in regular contact with the natural families while their son or daughter is abroad
- buddy new sending families with experienced sending families
- have a regular newsletter that keeps everyone informed and involved.

Your sending participants and their families need to know who they turn to in times of need. Sending families can be confronted by the unknown when their son or daughter is on exchange and are often seeking empathy and reassurance so that they can better understand the issues. You may be

asked to assist in helping natural families if their son or daughter is experiencing adjustment issues.



AFS-USA has many resources and materials that developed for sending families and Americans studying abroad.

- ✓ Contact your Regional Service Center
- ✓ Visit AFSOnline

Support for your hosted participants and host families

From time to time you may be helping either a hosted participant or their host family. For a hosting experience to be successful, hosted participants and their host families will need to make adjustments. This is normal and occurs as they learn more about each other. Sometimes issues arise due to miscommunication, misunderstandings or from either the hosted participant or the host family having high or unrealistic expectations.

Expectations for hosted participants

Hosted participants from around the world come to the U.S. for their own unique experience. They have dreams, hopes and expectations of what their intercultural exchange will be. In each AFS partner country, every effort is made to ensure that each participant's expectations are managed carefully through orientation and support prior to commencing their exchange.

Part of this support system is the AFS Rules, and the policies and procedures that provide the framework of our operations. These rules and policies also help to guide us in making the appropriate decision when necessary. The AFS Rules are established for the safety and welfare of the participants and to help protect the organization.

AFS-USA has established expectations that provide the framework to help guide hosted participants during their exchange program. It is expected that each hosted participant will:

- make a honest effort to fit into the host family and obey family rules
- attend school regularly and make an effort to the best of their ability
- make a reasonable effort to learn English
- attend orientation and participate in other AFS-USA organized activities
- demonstrate a willingness to share, learn, make friends and adapt to their host environment.

Each AFS participant is an individual and their ability to adapt to their host country and the host culture will vary. In your role of support you will be able to help encourage the hosted participant to benefit from their exchange by achieving these expectations. You may also need to help them modify their expectations if they become unrealistic.

For more information about the AFS Rules, refer to page 44.

Expectations for host families

While host families voluntarily make the decision to host with AFS-USA, we also have in place a framework that helps guide you in your supportive role. It is expected that host families can provide for the hosted participant:

- a safe and nurturing environment that helps the hosted participant grow and develop
- their own bed and coverage for everyday expenses, including school lunches
- a reasonable set of family rules
- transportation to and from school
- reasonable access to extra-curricular activities, friends and host community events
- attend host family orientation prior to the arrival of the hosted participant.

Host families are also asked to be available for regular volunteer contact and support, and follow the guidelines outlined in the “Host Family Handbook”. As part of the host family application process, all host families are required to sign a Host Family Agreement. This agreement outlines their rights and responsibilities as an AFS-USA host family.

Host family environments can vary widely and can sometimes be different to your own usual situation. In supporting the host family, their

expectations or understanding of the program can change or vary. Your role of support may be to help them to clarify these expectations, guide them when they might become unreasonable. At other times it might be that their hosting with AFS-USA needs to be reconsidered.

Relationships with host siblings

Just like natural brother and sister relationships that can involve misunderstandings and tensions, becoming a host sibling can also involve adjustment issues. These sorts of issues can vary widely, but may include:

- settling in
- jealousy or competition
- lack of common interests
- expectations that they should automatically be best friends.

You can help by being aware that host siblings and hosted participants might need assistance and support to help better understand their hosting relationship. It can often be that they are demonstrating normal teenager behavior.



For more information about host families

refer to:

- ✓ Host Family Handbook
- ✓ Host family application and agreement
- ✓ Your passport to hosting

Support for your schools and the community

Schools and other community supporters of AFS need your local proactive support. Schools play a very important role in the AFS-USA exchange program. Often their decision to support sending participants or to accept host an AFS participant can be based upon both the relationships that volunteers have established. The local community will also be more willing to demonstrate their support if you have established mutually supportive relationships.

Supporting your schools and your community means:

- maintaining relationships of quality and value
- keeping those involved informed
- being inviting and inclusive
- listening and acting on their concerns
- acknowledging and recognize their efforts.

Good relationships with your schools and community groups will help you to support our programs and achieve the mission. They are more likely to be involved if your AFS chapter is demonstrating proactive support in your local community.

Participant and host family changes

Host family changes will occur and will happen for a number of reasons. As an AFS volunteer you can assist participants and families by being supportive and understanding that they are trying to cope with what might be a difficult and complex issue.

Reasons for host family changes are most frequently a result of:

- communication breakdown
- the relationship between the host family and hosted participant not developing
- unmet expectations
- a change in the host family's circumstances
- a change in the participant's circumstances.

A change of host family can be a challenging time for all involved. Often there is a reluctance to share their reasons in order to avoid hurt or blame. Your relationship with those involved will be relied upon for trust and understanding to help them through this difficult time and to avoid a sense of failure.

Not all hosting experiences are successful. The demands of being a host parent are often complex, cross-cultural understanding can be difficult and the stresses of trying to understand the needs of their hosted participant can be hard.

If you are involved in assisting with a host family change, handle it well. Being respectful and considerate for all involved helps to quickly resolve the issues and helps them understand why it may have occurred.

When to involve others

Occasionally in providing proactive support, you may become aware of an issue or concern where you will need to involve other volunteers or the Regional Service Center for advice, guidance or reassurance.

These issues may include:

- the need for a school or host family change
- continuing adjustment issues – in the host family or the school
- school issues – poor academic performance, not attending
- a major change in the host family circumstances that could impact on their ability to continue hosting - unemployment, family sickness, family breakdown
- medical issues – accidents, severe medical problems, hospitalization
- violation of the AFS rules
- ongoing homesickness.

If you become aware of the above situations:

For hosted participants or host families:

- in the first instance talk to the Participant/Family Liaison, they may already be aware of the situation and are dealing with it
- you may also need to contact your Area Team Support Coordinator.

For sending participants or their natural families:

- contact your Area Team Support Coordinator or the Participant Support Coordinators in the Regional Service Centers

The appropriate volunteers and staff will monitor the situation and make the necessary decisions of when to involve others if required. In circumstances like this, support needs to be timely and the information that is provided will help guide and manage the expectations of those involved.

Maintaining confidentiality

In your role of hosting support you will be helping hosted participants and host families as they experience both the emotional highs and lows of their intercultural learning experience. It will be during those low times, when there are difficult issues or concerns that both hosted participants and host families will look to you for your confidential support.

Maintaining confidentiality means that you will respect the privacy of the hosted participant and the host family. This means that they will know that they can freely and openly discuss their concerns with you and it will not be discussed elsewhere. In your role of hosting support it is important to establish a trusting relationship that respects the privacy of the individuals concerned.

There will be times when particular situations develop where you will need to share some information further. These may be when:

- the hosted participant's safety, welfare or well-being is at risk
- a potential legal situation
- you require external help in resolving the concern
- the concern impacts other individuals
- threatens or undermines the AFS experience.

At these times you should advise and seek permission from the hosted participant or host family, explaining why it is necessary that other appropriate individuals need to be involved.



For more information about AFS-USA's policy on confidentiality refer to:

✓ Your passport to volunteering



Contact your Area Team Support Coordinator or your Regional Service Center.

Emergencies - when to involve the AFS-USA Duty Officer

All AFS partners are required to maintain an emergency support Duty Officer System. The AFS-USA system provides a professional emergency system outside of business hours that is available to:

- natural families
- hosted participants
- host families
- volunteers
- AFS partner offices.

What is the AFS-USA Duty Officer

The Duty Officer is a staff member of AFS-USA. Staff from the Regional and National Service Centers participates in a roster to be available for emergencies after business hours. The Duty Officer is available after office hours, every day of the year, **for emergencies only**. They are generally not in the AFS-USA office and more often are living their everyday “out of the office” lives.

All assigned staff is trained as Duty Officers and are able to make assessments on the nature of the emergency and the action that can be taken.

What is an emergency

An emergency is any situation (medical or other) where the participant’s safety, welfare or well-being is in a situation of extreme risk. Emergencies may include:

- serious medical illness
- severe accident
- a situation where the participant has been placed in jeopardy
- domestic incident – e.g. natural disasters
- legal problems

- missed or delayed flights connected to the program (not independent travel).

How do I contact the Duty Officer

AFS-USA has a professional answering service who will contact the Duty Officer. The service will ask for the following information:

- the caller's name
- telephone number and where they can be reached
- the nature of the emergency
- full name of the participant, the host family and contact details
- the participant's sending country
- what has happened
- any steps that have been taken.

The Duty Officer will return the call as soon as possible. If the call has not been returned within 20 minutes please call again.

Emergency Phone Number 1 800 876 2376



If you are uncertain about a situation and if it is a valid emergency, contact either:

- ✓ your Area Team Support Coordinator
- ✓ your the Area Team Chair
- ✓ your Area Team Hosting Coordinator
- ✓ or an Area Team Leader

Monthly contact

Maintaining regular (monthly) contact with hosted participants and host families as well as regular contact with schools that host our participants is both an AFS-USA regulatory and AFS International requirement. It also allows for a consistent proactive approach to providing hosting support. It is the responsibility of each AFS partner to ensure that monthly contact is maintained. The method of contact can vary for each AFS partner.

In the U.S., all exchange organizations including AFS-USA are required to ensure that monthly contact is made with each participant and each host family and regular contact is maintained with the schools. Monthly contact is the responsibility of the Student/Family Liaison volunteer. Monthly contact can be made either by phone, a personal visit, a group activity, or another type of social interaction. This contact must be made separately and must be documented. This documentation is retained in the hosted participants file at the Regional Service Center.

In your AFS chapter, ensure that you have appointed a Student/Family Liaison volunteer for each hosted participant and their family.

It is important to remember that local support is about being available and supportive to participants and families and to help them better understand the complexities of intercultural exchange. It is not about maintaining regular monthly contact and should not undermine this process.



For more information about Monthly Contact
please talk to the Participant Support
Coordinator in the Regional Service Center

**In your supportive role and you think that you need to take further
action talk to Area Team Support Coordinator or Participant Support
Coordinator in the Regional Service Center.**

The AFS rules

There are three AFS rules that apply to all AFS participants in every AFS partner country. These rules are in place to look after the safety and welfare of AFS participants and protect AFS as an organization.

- 1. No Driving** – AFS participants will not drive any type of motorized vehicle
- 2. No Drugs** – AFS participants will not use, possess or sell any illegal drugs
- 3. No Hitchhiking**

Breaking of any of the AFS rules will result in termination of the participant's program and will be returned to their home country.

In addition to the AFS rules, each AFS partner has established guidelines to help hosted participants during their exchange program. Participants are provided with specific information prior to them commencing their exchange, which helps them prepare and understand specific issues that can influence their exchange program.

They are developed so that hosted participants understand more about the host country explain cultural norms and detail what is considered to be acceptable and appropriate behavior. These guidelines are usually reinforced at arrival orientations. Specifics of what is acceptable in each host family home will have been detailed in the host family papers.

It is important that all AFS participants and their families are familiar with the AFS rules and guidelines. This is the framework that AFS partners will use to help guide participants during their program and at times will refer to in making decisions.

Contact with friends and family

Through our experience of providing and supporting intercultural exchange, AFS encourages all participants have limited contact with their natural family and friends through telephone or email contact.

You can help participants and families to understand that too much contact can be to the detriment of their exchange. It is easy to reach for the telephone or to send a quick email in times of what seems like immediate need that can often result in panic. Encourage participants to take the time to think things over, talk to a volunteer, friend or their host family before raising panic with their natural family. Often what might seem bad one day, is quickly resolved or forgotten the next. Participants need to be encouraged to take time to reflect and gain perspective.

AFS International quality standards

The Quality Standards are shared by all AFS partners and represent the foundation to our program operations. They are the essential elements that represent:

- the quality of our programs
- our commitment to all participants, host families, schools and natural families
- our Standards, Policies and Procedures.

There are 13 standards in total. The following is an extracted version of these standards.

Program content and development

1. AFS is an educational organization, not a travel organization – providing beneficial opportunities for intercultural learning that benefit all involved
2. AFS will evaluate its programs - identifying areas for improvement

Participant screening, placement and support

3. AFS will interview all participants, their natural families and host families - in accordance with AFS guidelines
4. Participants will receive placement information before departure for the host country – including materials of a practical nature.
5. AFS will provide suitable placement for qualified applicants - but reserves the right to cancel participation if warranted by changes in circumstances
6. To facilitate adjustment and learning for the AFS experience - information about the organization is provided
7. Support from AFS volunteers or staff will be available to participants and host families – throughout the experience as needed
8. Natural parents will be informed by AFS in a timely fashion - of circumstances noticeably affecting the health or welfare of their son or

daughter. In emergency or situations, AFS will use its best judgment to act in the best interest of participants

9. AFS will engage competent carriers for participants' travel

Program fees and finances

10. AFS member organizations are not-for-profit - fees are based on reasonable costs for services outlined in the Participation Agreement. Fees will include the cost of maintaining the support structure and may also contain a contribution to enable diversity. Financial terms will be clearly explained at the time the Participation Agreement is signed. All AFS partners publish reports annually which provide information on the source and use of organizational funds

Conditions of participation

11. Participation in AFS begins the signing of an AFS Participation Agreement – which is identical for all participants on a program from any country
12. AFS may send participants home early - for failure to comply with the terms and conditions as explained in the Participation Agreement
13. AFS will promote a positive learning experience - but cannot guarantee the health and safety of participants, and cannot protect participants from the consequences of a violation of the laws of the host country.

Standards for maintaining a quality program in AFS-USA

AFS prides itself as being one of the leaders in intercultural exchange. This is achieved in our programs by ensuring that we meet a certain number of quality standards. Adhering to these standards, we achieve the mission of AFS, meet the standards of AFS International and CSIET, and adhere to the regulations set by the U.S Department of State.

As a local volunteer, you work in partnership with staff to meet these standards.

Our quality program standards:

- to the best of our ability meet the hosting and sending commitments we set
- maintain positive working relationships with our local schools and community
- completed host family application for all host families prior to the hosted participants arrival which includes;
 - host family screening and interview – (screening includes a national criminal background check for every host family member ages 18 years or older)
 - signed PAF (Placement Acceptance Form) by school
 - signed host family agreement
- host family orientation for all host families prior to a participant's arrival to the family
- participant's attendance at all required hosting or sending orientations
- assignment of a student/family liaison for each hosted participant.

There are several implications for not meeting our quality program standards. One implication is that we are not doing our best to prepare our participants and their families for their AFS experience which can impact the adjustment process. And in some cases, by not meeting these standards we could be sanctioned by either CSIET or the U.S Department of State which would impact the number of AFS participants we could host on our program.

Regulations and standards for international high school exchange in the U.S.

While all partners in the AFS network adhere to the internal standards of AFS International, AFS-USA must also maintain the approval of the U.S. Department of State and the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET).

The U.S. Department of State

- AFS-USA is designated by the U.S. State Department to operate an Exchange Visitor High School Exchange program in the United States.
- This designation allows AFS-USA to supply our incoming participants with the appropriate documentation needed in order to obtain their visa to come to the U.S.
- All AFS-USA participants enter the U.S. with a J-1 visa. This is the only visa which permits international students to attend U.S. high schools tuition free.
- Being designated requires AFS-USA to adhere strictly to the federal regulations governing the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program.



Full text of the U.S Department of State regulations can be found on their website at www.state.gov

The Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET)

- Founded in 1984, CSIET is a private non-governmental membership organization committed to ensuring that high school exchange programs operating in the U.S. offer quality programs for both participants coming to the U.S and those going abroad.
- CSIET requires exchange programs to adhere to a set of operational standards in order to be included in the annual *CSIET Advisory List* of approved programs which is mailed out to all U.S high schools each June.
- Without CSIET listing, high schools in as many as 30 U.S. states can refuse to host our AFS participants, and they will not be comfortable in recommending our AFS programs abroad.

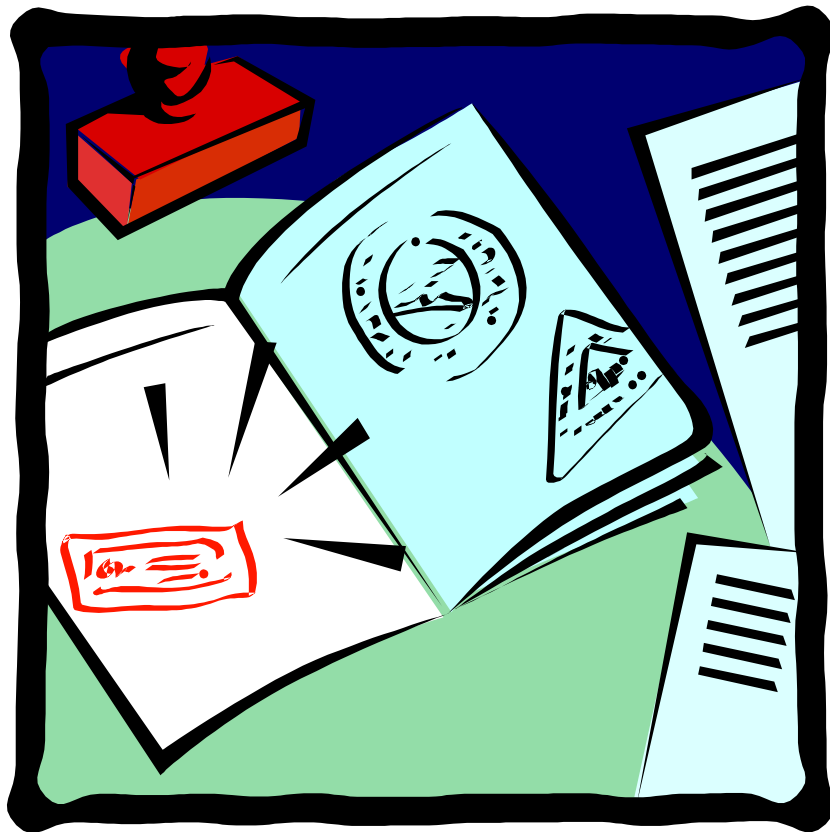


Full text of the CSIET Standards can be found on their website at www.csiet.org

Check on my local support volunteer learning progress

😊 I can	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	👉 I will review
Describe the importance of support for our programs			Go to page 10, 11, 13, 17
Describe intercultural learning			19
Understand the challenges of adjustment and culture shock			20 – 23
Work with participants and families in providing proactive support			15, 16, 24
Understand the value of supporting schools and the local community			37
Feel comfortable in supporting teenagers, natural families and host families			32 - 36
Understand the implications of maintaining confidentiality			40
Understand the importance of the AFS Rules			44
Describe the importance of monthly contact			43
Understand the role of the AFS international standards in our programs			46
Where to seek help and assistance when required			39, 55

My passport to hosting volunteer resources



AFS-USA glossary

Commonly used terminology in AFS-USA	
AFSONline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFS-USA volunteer intranet • Available only to registered volunteers • All hosted participants are listed and can be selected here
AFS Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A country where AFS operates • Sends and hosts AFS participants
Area Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A volunteer group that covers a certain area and consists of local communities and chapters • Specific geographic area in the U.S. • The boundaries of an Area Team are defined by zip code ranges
Area Leadership Team Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The volunteers responsible for the management and coordination efforts of the volunteers belonging to their Area Team
Admissions Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff located in the Admissions Office • Responsible for placing participants for review on AFSONline and processes requests
Bios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted student profiles posted to AFSONline • Available weekly during the hosting cycle
Chapter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A local community group of volunteers who work together to achieve agreed goals for AFS-USA with the Area Team or Regional Service Center if there is no Area Team
CSIET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council on Standards for International Educational Travel • Private, non-profit organization which monitors all exchange programs
Field Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff located in the Regional Service Centers • Directly responsible for assisting volunteers with hosting, sending, volunteer development and training
Field Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff located in the Regional Service Centers • Directly responsible for overseeing a number of teams
Host Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A family or individual who have been screened and accepted to host an AFS participant
Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The volunteer assigned to provide support and guidance to a participant and host family for the duration of their program • Provides documented monthly contact with participant and host family
Natural Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The family who have sent or are sending their son or daughter on an AFS program
NH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Hemisphere (relates to school Year Program) arrivals • Summer arrivals in August
Participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers to anyone (student, educator or other) who is currently on an AFS program either in the USA or abroad
Participant Support Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff located in the Regional Service Centers • Responsible for handling support issues with Area Teams or chapters
Returnee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An American Abroad who has participated on an AFS Program
SH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Hemisphere (relates to school Year Program) arrivals • Winter arrivals in January

Where can I go for help

Volunteer Contact by Position	<i>I would contact this volunteer for questions or information on.....</i>
Area Team Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Area Team structure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Overview of the area and culture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annual plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yearly calendar of events
Area Team Treasurer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Finance and fundraising on area and local level
Area Team Sending Coordinator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sending programs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sending orientations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sending training
Area Team Hosting Coordinator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hosting programs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hosting orientations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application process for host families and participants <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hosting training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Host family recruitment tips
Area Team Support Coordinator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support of the participant, host family or school <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Monthly contact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support and/or liaison training, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participant support crisis situations
Area Team Orientation Coordinator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hosting/sending orientations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Orientation training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Orientation schedule within the Area
Area Team Volunteer Coordinator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Volunteer development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chapter development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Volunteer registration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New volunteer recruitment, orientation and integration
Area Team Returnee Coordinator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Returnee activities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engaging returnees as volunteers
Regional Council Representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Typically the Regional Council Rep also holds one of the Area Leadership Team volunteer positions. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Issues related to the chapter that might impact the region and vice versa.

Staff Contact by Position	<i>I would contact this staff member for questions or information on.....</i>
Regional Field Team Coordinator (located in Regional Service Center - RSC)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Questions about starting a new chapter <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training needs <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hosting materials (applications, marketing materials) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Volunteer development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Host family recruitment tips
Regional Field Team Manager (RSC)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your contact when the Regional Field Team Coordinator is not available
Participant Support Coordinator (RSC)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participant support situations as they arise
Participant Support Manager (RSC)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your contact for participant support situations when the Participant Support Coordinator is not available
Travel and Logistics Coordinator (RSC)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Orientations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arrival and departure information for sending and hosted participants
Admissions Advisor (located in Portland, OR)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Questions about the application process for host families and participants
Volunteer Registration Coordinator (Portland)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Questions about volunteer registration process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AFS online password and id

My volunteer contact file

My local AFS-USA Chapter	
Chair:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Local volunteer responsible for:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Local volunteer responsible for:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Local volunteer responsible for:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Local volunteer responsible for:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
My AFS-USA Area Team	
Area Team Hosting Coordinator:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Area Team Chair:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Area Team Support Coordinator:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Area Team Treasurer:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Area Team volunteer responsible for:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>

My other contacts in my local community	
Name:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Name:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Name:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Name:	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Address</i>
	<i>Email</i>
My Regional Service Center	
Regional Field Manager:	<i>Name</i>
	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Regional Hosting Coordinator	<i>Name</i>
	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Participant Support Coordinator:	<i>Name</i>
	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Participant Support Manager:	<i>Name</i>
	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Travel and Logistics Coordinator:	<i>Name</i>
	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Admissions Advisor:	<i>Name</i>
	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Email</i>
Volunteer Registration Coordinator:	<i>Name</i>
	<i>Phone</i>
	<i>Email</i>

Using AFSONline and the AFS-USA website

AFS Online is our secure intranet that allows you as an AFS volunteer to stay connected by accessing tools, materials and resources for your volunteer role. AFSONline is made available to all volunteers as part of your registration process.

After you are registered you will receive an email with your user id, password and instructions on connecting to AFSONline.

We recommend that you ask an experienced volunteer or Area Leadership Team volunteer to help you become familiar with AFSONline. You can also contact your Regional Hosting Coordinator with questions about how to use and understand the many features available to you.



To get access to AFSONline

AFSONline: www.afsonline.org

For questions contact: Your Regional Hosting Coordinator

Volunteer training

AFS-USA is committed to ensuring that as a volunteer you are well orientated and trained in your volunteer role. This ensures a community of committed and skilled volunteers supporting a quality intercultural exchange program.

AFS-USA has staff who work on training and organizational development in each Regional Service Center. Their role is to support or facilitate the design and implementation of effective training for all AFS-USA volunteers

and staff. They work with a team of volunteer trainers and staff who are available to provide local training.



For more information about available training - please contact the Field Coordinator or the Field Manager in your Regional Service Center.

Publicity and marketing standards

AFS-USA has standards for how we publicize and promote our organization and programs. These standards have been developed by AFS-USA, AFS International and meet the requirements set by CSIET and U.S. Department of State.

The AFS USA Marketing Department develops templates for press releases, public service announcements, letters to the editors, etc., which can be modified to meet your local needs. These templates are easy to use and meet the standards by which we need to market our programs. You can find these templates on AFSONline.



For more information AFS-USA's media policy and procedures - please contact the Field Coordinator or the Field Manager in your Regional Service Center.



Go to AFSONline

You can also go to the library section on AFSONline and search for “AFS-USA Media Policy and Procedures”.

Office contact details for AFS-USA



Call 1-800-876-2377

to reach the **Regional Service Center** nearest you

Admissions Center	506 SW 6th 2nd Floor Portland OR 97204 Phone (800) AFS-INFO Fax (503) 229-0753
Central Regional Service Center	2356 University Avenue West, Suite 424 St. Paul, MN 55114 Phone (651) 647-6337 Fax (651) 647-6628
Eastern Regional Service Center	231 E. Baltimore Street, 15 th Floor Baltimore, MD Phone (410) 539 5997 Fax (410) 539-5636
Western Regional Service Center	506 SW 6th 2nd Floor Portland, OR 97204 Phone (503) 241-1578 Fax (503) 241-1653
National Service Center	One Whitehall, 2 nd Floor New York, NY 10004 Phone (800) 876-2376 Fax (212) 299-9090