

Orientation Advisory Group Meeting Notes: November 2, 2011

- Support Update from Ted
 - A staff member who deals with the AA's will be assigned to our group to help guide us with input from our partner countries.
 - This staff person will also be able to give us input on common problems they face with AA's.
 - Ted also mentioned that the support advisory committee is looking to change the orientations objectives to consider a broader picture.
- PDO Leader's Guide Review
 - AFS & You
 - Nancy did not modify too much of the mandatory sessions.
 - Introduction
 - She recommended to only use one example of the three suggested examples (returnee experiences) or to have a returnee in the session to discuss preparedness.
 - It was also suggested to write and post the norms to help the facilitator throughout the day.
 - Natural Parents Logistics
 - it was suggested to revise this section to only cover logistics and training and to keep the safety portion in the safety section.
 - Perhaps change title to Logistics and Travel to clarify the subject matter of the section.
 - Quiz
 - It was suggested to keep this section in place.
 - One suggestion made was to make the AFS communication chain an active activity by giving the participants cards with the names on it and have them arrange themselves on who to contact when you have problems.
 - Evaluation--take it out of this section and make it separate
 - A suggestion was made to put in the learning objectives at the end of this session.
 - Cultural Adjustment and Coping
 - Host Family Adjustment
 - added sections for making friends.
 - This was a very thorough exercise and was too much for us to evaluate, so Ruth will put all the new sections on google docs for input from the team.

A discussion took place regarding whether to encourage seeking out other exchange students during host year. It was suggested that it should be encourage but in moderation and only in host language.

- Cultural Learning
 - Learning Styles
 - a new activity was made to introduce the idea of learning styles.
 - It helps show the diversity of learning within the group and how that diversity might or may not exist in their host country.
 - A concern was voiced that this was too deep of a subject for a short amount of time.
 - Debate--modified the What would you do activity into a debate
 - Country of Aargh
 - didn't change this activity,
 - it will be suggested to do this activity or the debate depending on time.
 - Cultural Definitions--new activity that defines generalizations and stereotypes and pulls some info from country quotes.
 - Non-verbal communication--slightly modified by adding observing non-verbal communication throughout the orientation and discuss during this session.
- Personal Goals & Expectations
 - Journaling--new activity added to the current activities, tie in with how journaling can help with goals & expectations
 - Work of Art--modify to include just creating work of art without magazines.
- It was suggested that a debrief session might be good to tie back in the learning objectives
- Ruth will post all the docs on google docs.
- Revisions need to be made by Nov 16th.
- Teams need to have full revisions into Ruth by Nov 30th.
- Next call is Dec 7th.

Thanks to Christine for Taking Notes!