



Retention 101: Keeping Students Engaged and Preparing for Take-off



Please join the call by calling
1-800-876-2376
ext. 5552

Connecting Lives, Sharing Cultures

What We'll Cover

- The Ws: **W**ho, **W**hat, **W**hen, and **W**hy of retention
- Retention activities
- Available resources
- Is there anything you'd like to discuss around retention?

Networking
Fundraising
Learning languages
Country research
Mentoring
Pre-departure Orientations
Setting goals
Checking-in
Saying goodbye
Emails
Community events
Personal visits
Phone calls
Excitement
PDOs
Support
Answering questions
Transitioning

What Is Retention?

When Does Retention Happen?

From the time a student's full application is transferred, until they depart for their host countries.

Much of the need for retention arises as students and families await host family information and travel notification.

This is often when some extra support and encouragement is needed to sustain excitement and enthusiasm for the exchange experience!



Why Do We Do Retention?

Support students through the 'waiting game'


Help set realistic expectations for students' experiences abroad

Maintain enthusiasm and interest in program participation

Build the foundation for continued AFS involvement post-program



Retention Activities for Students



Regular
phone or
email check-
ins with
students

Inviting
students to
[End of Stay
Orientations](#)

Individual or
group
[fundraising
activities](#)

Encouraging
students to
start
language-
study groups

Other retention activities
for students:

- Attending [Pre-departure Orientation](#)
- [CultureTrek](#) and [CultureGrams](#)
- Making albums or scrapbooks to share with host family and host school
- Researching host country music, popular culture, history, etc.
- Putting together a recipe book of favorite or special family meals to share with host family (especially if students will be abroad over the holidays)

Making Retention Phone Calls



Prepare

- Pull a list of your current students in Global Link
- Print out or pull up talking points from AFS Wiki
- Set aside some quiet time for making the calls



Reach Out

- Use talking points from scripts posted on the AFS Wiki
- Engage students and/or parents with open-ended questions
- You don't have to know all the answers—it's okay to call back!



Follow Up

- Record your contacts in Global Link
- Research any questions and get back to students



Sample Questions for Retention Calls

How are you doing in reading through your guidebook?

What have you been doing to fundraise?

How are you working with your school counselor to figure out classes and credit?

Have you received an invitation to a PDO yet? Planning to attend?

How are you preparing for the language barrier?

What do you think of CultureTrek and CultureGrams?

Who Does Retention?

Staff

Coordinators and Application Advisors make retention calls and facilitate Country Calls

Marketing staff run regular Parent calls

Volunteer
S

Sending coordinators

Work with sending volunteers to coordinator check-in calls

Sending interviewers check in with students they've interviewed

Sending volunteers invite students to chapter events, fundraisers, etc.

More Resources

- AFS Wiki [Retention Section](#):
 - [Scripts](#) for retention calling
 - [Common questions](#) asked during calls and where to find the answers
- Coming soon: a new Facebook group for students preparing to depart
- [AFS Sending Staff](#): happy to answer questions and provide guidance in addressing common retention topics



Questions?



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