

Outbound Parents:

- Be **Proud!** → Just getting on a plane to go elevates your student above most. They are developing into global citizens and youth ambassadors from our country. They are among a select few who will have this life-changing experience.
- Be **Independent** → Open yourself to new activities or set goals of your own while your student is on their exchange. This may help balance challenging feelings and times.
- Be **Non-Judgmental** → Exchange can produce strong feelings in students and family (pride, jealousy, fear, confidence, uncertainty, ambition, irritability, inspiration and more). RYE offers strategies and support to work through the challenges and capture the incredible benefits.
- Be **Confident and let go of need to Control** → You have raised them well! Let the students work to solve their own problems and master their challenges successfully with the strong team support of Rotary, their host parents, youth-exchange counselors and officers.
- Be **Knowledgeable** → Learn about culture shock and reverse culture shock. Patience is needed as it can take a long time to process the experience and move on to a new “normal”.
- Be **Flexible** → Students are asked to be flexible and you can help model this. New experiences and people are not always good or bad, sometimes just different. Flexibility may be necessary because of RYE rules, government regulations and, most importantly, your student’s safety.
- Be a Good **Listener** → Exchange can be an agent of growth and change for the whole family (even parents). Ask students for their ideas, plans and strategies. This can help you understand where they are and where they are going in their exchange *without telling them where you think they are or should be*.
- Be **Open-minded** → Don’t put your cultural perspective on your child’s experience. Celebrate as many differences and discoveries as you can. Learn along with your student.
- Be **Positive!** → Be aware of your own fears and concerns. Don’t let them transfer to your child. Encourage them because they will need your full support to complete their exchange successfully.
- Be **Ready** → For your student to grow up... a lot! Parents view students as kids and Rotary views them as capable teens. They will grow and change throughout their exchange year.



Outbound Parents: (Potential Deal Breakers for Successful Exchange)

Don't be a Bulldozer → Bulldozer *parenting* attempts to remove all problems before students are able to try to solve the problem themselves. This will prevent growth and independence.



Don't be a Chipper → Expecting or creating daily or frequent communication degrades (or chips away at) your student's attention on essential and full engagement in the exchange. This is especially true in the first few months of exchange. Please don't encourage or demand frequent communication from your student – every other week is generally a best practice.

Don't be a Helicopter → Helicopter *parenting* attempts to fix problems after they have happened. Don't drive your child's exchange with lots of advice and making decisions for them. Encourage them to work through their own problems.



Don't be a Stink Bomb → Don't allow personal or cultural stereotypes to steal the value of your student's exchange. Allow them to form their own opinions about their entire exchange and encourage them to be open minded. Remember, it's not bad, it's not good, it's just different.

Don't be a Panic Button Pusher → Being calm about your student's experiences comes from being knowledgeable about *student exchange best practices*. Connect with other exchange parents and Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE) committee officers and counselors. Don't panic when something isn't going as expected. We're here to help!



Don't Rush the Re-entry process → Your student will come back changed and will keep changing after their return, as will your relationship them. Don't assume your student will or will not experience reverse culture shock. Try to be flexible and understanding.