

# CETUSA

Council for Educational Travel, USA

## **Agent Pre-Departure Orientation Guide**

TO BE COMPLETED AT THE PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION



**“reaching out to encourage a lifelong journey  
of global peace and understanding....”**

Revised Aug 2019

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# Tools and Tips

## Tools:

- Flipchart
- Markers, highlighters, pens
- Name tags
- Pre-Departure Workbooks
- Refreshments
- Sign-in sheet
- Your business card (one for each student)



## Tips:

- Start and end on time
- Provide agenda at beginning of meeting
- Use the flipchart and other visual aids
- Make sure you can be seen and heard
- Make sure lighting and temperature are comfortable
- Encourage all students to participate in discussions
- Ask and answer lots of questions to ensure concepts are understood
- Take breaks during the meeting
- Make it fun!

# Welcome and Introduction

Please refer students to page 2 in the Student Workbook

## Objectives:

1. Welcome all students to the meeting and the program.
2. Review the meeting agenda.
3. Introduce all participants.
4. Engage the students so they will thoroughly understand the information presented.

## Method:

1. Make a brief opening presentation to welcome the students and recognize the exciting time they are entering.
2. Introduce yourself and present your personal dedication to student exchange.
3. Invite each student to introduce themselves.

## Important points to share with students:

- You are an ambassador.
- You represent your natural family.
- You represent your home country.
- You represent \_\_\_\_\_ (overseas agency) and CETUSA.
- Your actions reflect on us as well as yourself, whether positively or negatively.
- Maintain a positive and open attitude throughout your program.
- Maintain a willingness to adjust and apply yourself.
- All of these things will ensure you have a marvelous experience and memories to last a lifetime!

## Notes:

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# CETUSA Overview

Please refer students to page 2 in the Student Workbook

## Objectives:

1. Introduce CETUSA as your partner in this student exchange experience.
2. Give emergency procedure and contact information.

## Method:

1. Share key features about CETUSA.
2. Share your involvement and history with CETUSA.
3. Discuss how CETUSA will oversee the student's programs while they are in the U.S.

## Important points to share with students:

- As your agent is your home country, I am entrusting you to CETUSA. CETUSA is your official sponsor in the U.S. and they are responsible for your well-being while you are on the program.
- CETUSA will provide you with a strong support system. They have full-time staff in two office around the U.S. in addition to your local support team.
- You will have a Local Coordinator. A Regional Director supports your Local Coordinator. You also have access to the Placement Directors as well. Student Services Advisors in the CETUSA Grand Rapids Corporate Office will also help with questions or concerns.
- The CETUSA Office/Emergency number is **1-888-CETUSA1 (1-888-238-8721)**
- CETUSA is a well-respected non-profit exchange organization. It is a small organization offering personalized service and is recognized as one of the most reputable organizations in the U.S.
- You, the student, are CETUSA's primary responsibility. CETUSA is there to ensure you have a successful experience in the U.S.

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# **CETUSA Local Coordinator**

Please refer students to page 3 in the Student Workbook

## **Objectives:**

1. Introduce the CETUSA Local Coordinator.
2. Familiarize the students with the role of the Local Coordinator.
3. Ensure students understand the required contact policy.

## **Method:**

1. Ask students what they feel the role of the Local Coordinator is and write these ideas on the flipchart.
2. Eliminate incorrect ideas and discuss correct ones. Add and discuss any missing information on the Local Coordinator's role.
3. Discuss how CETUSA will oversee the student's programs.

## **Important Points to share with students:**

- Your Local Coordinator
  - Chose to place and supervise students because of his/her interest in working with teens, learning about other cultures and promoting global understanding.
  - Is a liaison between you, your host family, your high school, and the CETUSA office.
  - Will act as your mentor, advocate, and confidant.
  - Has your best interests in mind and will do everything possible to ensure you have a successful program.
  - Has been specially trained to help you with any questions or concerns you might have. You should feel confident that your Local Coordinator and CETUSA staff are there to talk and help you with any concerns you may have during your program.
- You must always let him/her know of any travel plans.
- Your Local Coordinator is required by US Department of State Regulations to speak with you and your host family individually at least once every four weeks.
- Additionally, your Local Coordinator will meet with you personally at least once every eight weeks.
- You may contact your Local Coordinator as often as you wish and should whenever you need assistance with a question or concern.

# Emergencies

Please refer students to page 4 in the Student Workbook

## Objective:

1. Provide students with emergency information.
2. Review situations that are considered emergencies.

## Method:

1. Review CETUSA phone numbers, communication cycle, and identification cards.
2. Discuss situations that may be deemed emergencies.

## Important points to share with students:

1. In an emergency, contact your Local Coordinator immediately. If you are unable to reach him/her, you may call the Regional Director or CETUSA Corporate Office via the 24-hour emergency phone number.
2. This service is to be used only in the case of a serious accident, illness, or emergency which cannot wait until the following work day.
3. Always carry all CETUSA phone numbers and your CETUSA identification card with you.
4. Important numbers you may need during your program:

Grand Rapids Corporate Office – Emergency Line – **1-888-238-8701 or  
(1-888-CETUSA1)**

# Expectations

Please refer students to pages 5-9 in the Student Workbook

## Objectives:

1. Eliminate unrealistic expectations of American culture in the students.
2. Reduce culture shock upon entrance into the American culture.

## Method:

1. Ask students to share their expectations of their host family and school, their stay in the U.S., and American culture. Write these ideas on the flipchart.
2. Discuss the possibility of some of these expectations not being met and how to handle the situation.
3. On a separate flipchart sheet, list common student and host family expectations. Discuss realistic and unrealistic expectations.
4. Work through the worksheet *How Are Our Cultures Different?* (See page 5 of the Student Pre-Departure Workbook and pages 10-11 of this guide). Use it as a tool to demonstrate differences in culture, habits and lifestyle.

## Important points to share with students:

- Forget everything you think you know about the U.S. What you may have seen on American TV is not the true American experience.
  - Just as in your home country, yachts, airplanes, fancy cars and swimming pools are not common possessions in the U.S.
  - Most American homes do not have maids. Family members are expected to help with the cleaning and are responsible for their own belongings.
  - Many American families have pets, and these pets are a part of the family. Dogs and cats often live inside the house, and some families allow them on the furniture. Some people even allow their pets to sleep in their beds. If you are uncomfortable around dogs or cats, ask your host parents to help you become acquainted.
  - Not all areas in the U.S. have high-speed internet access. If your host family does not have internet access in their home, ask your host parents for a scheduled time that you can be taken to the library to use the computers there.
- Your host family has accepted you into their home because they want to share what they have with you.
  - They have an interest in learning about another culture. Share your culture with them, but be careful not to be disrespectful. Making comparisons between your home country and the U.S. can be seen as insulting. Be sure to point out things you like about America.
  - You will stay with an average American family who may or may not have the same background as you. This aspect is part of an exchange program and is an adjustment you will need to make.



## HOW ARE OUR CULTURES DIFFERENT?

*How is life in America different from life in your home country? Complete the chart below by yourself, with a partner or in a small group and then share your ideas with others. Naturally not everyone is the same, so the chart will represent only one possible set of habits. Keep in mind that although your habits at home may be different, you have chosen to live as an American teenager and you will need to face the challenges of handling differences in behavior, lifestyle and habits. It is your responsibility as an exchange student to adapt to the American way of life.*

	<b><i>In the United States</i></b>	<b><i>In your home country</i></b>
<b><i>School</i></b>		
<i>Rules of behavior</i>		
<i>Addressing teachers</i>		
<i>Extra-curricular activities</i>		
<i>Homework and assignments</i>		
<i>Attendance and tardiness</i>		
<i>Role of Guidance Counselor</i>		
<i>Dress codes</i>		
<b><i>Making Friends</i></b>		
<i>Ways to make friends</i>		
<i>Social networking</i>		
<i>Social activities</i>		
<i>Dating*</i>		
<b><i>Eating Habits</i></b>		
<i>Meal times</i>		
<i>Kinds of foods</i>		
<i>Meal-time conversations</i>		
<i>Cleaning up after the meal</i>		
<i>Complimenting the cook</i>		
<b><i>Use of Money</i></b>		
<i>Household budget</i>		
<i>Typical teenager's budget</i>		

\*CETUSA has specific rules regarding dating. Please review them in the Standards of Conduct.

	<i><b>In the United States</b></i>	<i><b>In your home country</b></i>
<i>How to offer to pay</i>		
<i>Who pays when you go out</i>		
<i>Doctor bills and prescriptions</i>		
<i>Talking about money</i>		
<b><i>Transportation</i></b>		
<i>Availability</i>		
<i>Asking for a ride</i>		
<i>Notifying parents</i>		
<b><i>Home life</i></b>		
<i>Number of parents at home</i>		
<i>Parents' work schedules</i>		
<i>Equality of men and women</i>		
<i>Daily schedules</i>		
<i>Showing respect</i>		
<i>Manners</i>		
<i>Internet and telephone usage</i>		
<i>Household chores</i>		
<i>Downloading media</i>		
<b><i>Hygiene</i></b>		
<i>Frequency of bathing</i>		
<i>Frequency of washing hair</i>		
<i>Frequency of washing clothes</i>		
<i>Hair removal</i>		
<i>Use of deodorant</i>		
<i>Dressing appropriately</i>		

# The United States – History, Geography, and Culture

## History of the United States

- Native Americans were the only residents until the 16<sup>th</sup> century when Spain sent missionaries to St. Augustine, Florida.
- The United States is called a “melting pot” for good reason - diverse cultures came from many countries. They came for freedom – freedom of religion and freedom of speech. They came because they were outcasts in their own countries. Later, sadly, many came via the slave trade.
- The United States is made up of 50 states and also possesses several territories. The estimated population is over 310 million people, from every nation, race, and culture.
- Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, proclaiming “all men are created equal” and are endowed with “certain unalienable Rights”. This event is celebrated every year as Independence Day.
- Everything about the United States is diverse. EXPECT and CHAMPION diversity!

## Geography and Climate

- The continental United States (the 48 states other than Alaska and Hawaii) is bound by the Atlantic Ocean to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west, with much of the country's population living on these two coasts. Its only borders are shared with Canada to the north and Mexico to the south.
- The climate is nearly as diverse as the cultures. From the southwest and its famous deserts to the Great Lakes with their warm summers and snowy winters, the U.S. offers every possible weather combination.
- The geography is equally diverse. There are rugged snow-capped mountains in the West, flat plains with gently rolling hills in the Midwest. Each region of the U.S. has its own unique geography.

## Regional Features

### Northeast

Many historic sites

Rocky beaches

Spectacular seafood

Densely populated

Rolling mountains



# The First Weeks

Please refer students to pages 10 in the Student Workbook

## Objectives:

1. Reduce culture shock upon entrance into the American culture.
2. Make students aware of difficulties they might encounter after arrival to the U.S.
3. Provide helpful methods for eliminating difficulties.

## Method:

1. Ask students “How will you handle homesickness?” and have each answer the questions. Give students 10 minutes to write an Action Plan for overcoming homesickness. Ideas: Limit phone calls home; avoid e-mailing home; immersion into school and host family activities; reduce time spent alone or in the bedroom; talk to host family and Local Coordinator about your feelings; join clubs and/or teams.
2. Copy and cut out the cards on pages 24 & 25 of this guide. Invite each student to take a card and present an idea of how the challenge might be faced.
3. Discuss student’s expectations of the first few weeks in the U.S. and how they plan to handle these situations.

## Important points to share with students:

- You will most likely go through a stage of homesickness and feeling of loneliness.
  - It is important to share your feelings with your host family and/or Local Coordinator.
  - These feelings are perfectly natural and will pass.
  - Get involved and stay active. This will help you overcome this difficult period.
- Your positive attitude is crucial to your success. The right attitude will ease making and keeping friends.
- Culture shock may be experienced in the form of anxiety, depression, nervousness or other negative feelings in the first few weeks and at anytime during the program. As you become more involved with your new family and community, you will begin to feel more settled.
- Your new family will have a lifestyle and habits which are foreign to you.
  - Adjusting to this new lifestyle will take some time.
  - Be patient and understanding of the differences.
  - Your family may also have difficulty understanding your habits.
- Talk about these and other issues to prevent anger and disappointment.
- Your American family’s eating habits will probably be very different from yours.
  - Be sensitive and willing to learn and adapt to new ways.
  - Always be courteous and compliment good meals.

- During the first few days, eating light meals may aid your body in adapting to the dietary change.
- During the first few weeks, you will need to visit your high school with one of your host parents to enroll in classes.
  - It is not likely that you will be allowed to graduate.
  - Whatever the school's decision, you may not dispute it. You must accept whatever the school has established as its policy.
  - Take the opportunity to enroll in classes in the U.S. that you have not taken in your home country. Most schools will expect you to take English, as well as U.S. History or Government. In most schools a minimum of four academic classes are required, and these can be selected based on class availability as well as the student's individual capabilities and interests.
- Initial difficulties with language are to be expected. Don't be discouraged by this.
  - Familiarity with the language comes very quickly.
  - Practice your speaking skills frequently and you will quickly become comfortable with the English language.
  - Serious language challenges should be discussed with your Coordinator who may recommend weekly tutoring, usually for 6 weeks.
  - Do not be embarrassed to ask questions! Many misunderstandings can be easily avoided and your host family is there to help you.
- Be active in extracurricular activities.
  - Groups at school, as well as clubs and groups outside school (such as youth clubs and church groups), are an excellent way to make new friends. Be active and take responsibility for your role within the group.
  - Joining host brothers and sisters in their activities can be a good way to build friendships; however, do not depend on them for all of your friendships and social life. Develop your own.
  - Becoming active early in your exchange is the best way to avoid homesickness.
  - Avoid 'clustering' with other exchange students. Get involved with American friends.

**Notes:**

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# Host Family and Student

Please refer students to page 11 in the Student Workbook

## Objectives:

1. Smoothly integrate the students into their American host family.
2. Help the students create realistic expectations regarding their host family behavior, abilities, and interactions.

## Method:

1. Discuss how students can show appreciation to their host families. Some examples are: saying thank you, sharing their experiences and culture, participating in the family's activities, being gracious, helping around the house, small gifts, cards, etc.
2. Discuss how the student can become involved in the family life.
3. Role play situations that might arise during the homestay. During this exercise, pay careful attention to eye contact, tone of voice, and body language. Examples for role play situations:
  - Your host family expects you to eat food you would never eat at home.
  - Your host family will not drive you places whenever you want to go.
  - Your host family expects you to spend all of your time with them.
  - Your host mom acts like a typical nagging mother.
  - You argue with your host brothers and sisters like you would with your own family.
  - Your host family doesn't understand your English.
  - Your host family limits the amount of orange juice you can drink.
  - Your host family expects you to help with things like mowing the lawn, taking out the trash, and other chores you have never done before.
  - Your host family sets a curfew which is earlier than you are used to.
  - Your host family thinks that occasional participation in church activities is twice per week.

## Important points to share with students:

- Your family is a volunteer host family, and receives no reimbursement whatsoever. Define the word volunteer. You should have realistic expectations of your host family's abilities.
- Your family has agreed to provide you with a bedroom (you may share the room with a host sibling), 3 meals per day (these may include meals you will learn to prepare yourself), adequate storage space, and reasonable access to bathroom facilities. Anything above and beyond that is provided at the discretion of the family, according to their capability.
- Your family's lifestyle may be very different from what you are used to in your home country. It is the student's responsibility to adapt to the family's lifestyle.



# Adjusting to Difficulties

Please refer students to pages 12-13 in the Student Workbook

## Objective:

1. Help the students recognize and face challenges they may encounter during their exchange.

## Method:

1. Discuss each of the following difficulties and have students come up with solutions for each matter. Remember to help students recognize reasonable expectations as far as each situation is concerned. Difficulties to discuss: Academics, host families; house rules; making friends; and religions.

## Important points to share with students:

### Academic Difficulties

- You are expected to maintain at least a “C” average in your schoolwork.
  - If you encounter difficulties in school, you are expected to seek help from host family, friends, and school counselors or by hiring a tutor.
  - Contact your Local Coordinator if you have difficulties in school before you have poor grades.
- School attendance and quality work is mandatory.

### Host Family Difficulties

- If you have difficulties with your host family, you should attempt to discuss it with them.
  - If the problem cannot be resolved after discussing it with your host family, or if you are unsure how to discuss it with your host family, contact your Local Coordinator so they can help.
  - Individual conferences with the student, as well as the host family, may be followed by a joint meeting. By doing this, reconciliation is usually possible.
  - Discontent with your geographical location, extracurricular activities at school, or the family’s socio-economic standing is **not** grounds for a host family change.

### Difficulties with House Rules

- You are expected to adapt to your host family.
  - You must conform to their rules and routines.
  - You are expected to perform household chores as a son or daughter would.
  - Don’t wait to be asked or reminded to help around the house.



# Money

Please refer students to page 14 in the Student Workbook



## Objectives:

1. Eliminate confusion over how money is spent.
2. Provide students with a list of the items and situations on which they may spend their own money.
3. Give information on how to handle their money once they arrive in the U.S.

## Method:

1. Discuss how the money the student's parents paid for the program is distributed. For the agent: include air ticket, if applicable, insurance and the cost of processing your application. CETUSA is paid a fee for your placement and supervision. Explain that this fee is then absorbed into the CETUSA operation and covers costs such as postage, printing, toll-free telephone calls, communications with agents, hiring and training of coordinators and supervision expenses. NOTE: Do not discuss actual amounts.
2. Review the *Student Budget* (page 11 of the workbook; page 25 of this guide).

## Important points to share with students:

- Your host family is responsible for your housing and family meals.
- You are required to bring a minimum of \$250 per month in spending money. You are responsible for expenses such as toiletries, clothes, transportation, school hot lunches, entertainment, telephone calls and other personal expenses.
- You will have to budget your spending money carefully.
- If you run short of money it is your responsibility to ask your natural parents to send you more. We do not want you to be a burden on your host family.
- Under no circumstances are students to borrow money from their host families, nor may your host family borrow money from you.
- It is essential that you have a separate account for your money.
  - The best solution for most students is to bring a limited amount of cash as well as a bank debit or credit card with an account that your parents can deposit into and you can use to withdraw money from a bank in the U.S.
  - Do not leave money lying around the house and do not keep it in someone else's bank account.
  - If a host parent has to cosign on your bank account, he/she should not have the right to withdraw money from this account.

# Student Budget

Please refer students to page 15 in the Student Workbook

*We have found over the years that it is helpful for host families to assist students in budgeting their money. This is only a recommended budget and is not all-inclusive. Student expenses will vary from area to area and school to school. This form is intended to be only a guideline for budgeting. Following are potential student expenses.*

Winter Jacket	\$
Winter boots	\$
Winter mittens/hat	\$
Winter formal dance	\$
Sporting events	\$
Prom clothing	\$
Prom dinner	\$
Prom tickets	\$
Prom pictures	\$
Class trips	\$
Medical/Optical/Dental expenses	\$
Tutoring	\$
Telephone expenses	\$
Graduation announcements*	\$
Con-validation expenses	\$
Graduation cap & gown*	\$
Senior/Class pictures	\$

Homecoming pictures	\$
Homecoming dinner	\$
Homecoming clothing	\$
Homecoming flowers	\$
Homecoming tickets	\$
Sports supplies	\$
Yearbook	\$
School lunches	\$
Souvenirs	\$
Senior party	\$
Postage	\$
Christmas gifts	\$
Farewell/Thank you gifts	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$

\*Most schools do not allow students to graduate, however they may be able to participate in the graduation ceremony. This is at the discretion of the school and CETUSA has not control or input in this decision.

**Notes:**

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# Insurance

Please refer students to page 16 in the Student Workbook

## Objectives:

1. To ensure students understand that they have travel insurance policy.
2. To give information on what the insurance does and does not cover.
3. To discuss who the student should contact regarding coverage.
4. To talk about how medical treatment is paid for.

## Method:

1. Discuss the student's insurance. Provide circumstances and have students identify what their insurance does and does not cover. Some examples:
  - Broken eyeglasses.
  - A cavity that must be filled.
  - A sprained ankle.
  - Antibiotics for an ear infection.
  - An emergency room visit after an accident.
  - Pre-existing medical conditions.

## Important points to share with students:

- Each CETUSA student is provided with an identification card with the claims processor's name, address and phone number.
- All questions regarding insurance should be directed to the claims processor, not CETUSA.
- Insurance generally does not cover well care, dental or eye treatment.
- Students should keep an emergency fund in the event a doctor or hospital requires immediate payment.
- Students, alone, are responsible for assuring that all medical providers are paid promptly.

## Notes:

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# Personal Safety, Bullying, and Sexual Abuse

Please refer students to page 17 in the Student Workbook

## Objectives:

1. To give students tips on how to maintain personal safety while being respectful to others.
2. To discuss how students should behave in the case of unsafe circumstances or bullying.

## Method:

1. Discuss Red Flags and Risk Reduction Tips.
2. Discuss how to respond if you or someone you know is bullied.
3. Discuss what to do if you are in an unsafe situation.

## Important points to share with students:

- Use care in choosing your friends. Friends who are your age, active in school and the community, and who do not drink or do drugs are the least likely to get you into trouble or unsafe situations.
- You and other have the right to say 'no' at any time. This must be respected.
- If you are the victim of bullying or sexual assault, report it to your coordinator and host parents.

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# Personal Safety

## Watch For Red Flags

Red flags are small signs in a person's behavior or communication that tell you things are not OK. A red flag is sometimes described as a 'bad vibe' or an 'uh-oh' feeling.

It's a red flag if the person you are with:

- Has a reputation for partying or getting in trouble
- Drinks alcohol or uses drugs and/or tries to get you to use drugs or alcohol
- Tries to touch or kiss you or gets into your 'personal space' without your consent
- Does what he/she wants without asking what you want
- Gets angry or sulks if he/she doesn't get what he/she wants
- Pressures you to be alone together
- Pressures you to have sex

## Be Safe – Risk Reduction Tips:

- It is your body and no one has the right to make you into doing anything you don't want to.
- Get to know people before giving them a lot of information about you or trusting them.
- Avoid hanging out with people who are much older than you.
- Hang out with others who share your values and interests.
- Hang out where there are other people and you feel safe.
- Do not use alcohol or drugs. Not only are they illegal and violations of CETUSA policies, they make it easier for someone to take advantage of you or the situation.
- Discuss with your host parents what to do if you are in an uncomfortable situation, such as being at a party with drugs or alcohol or being with someone with whom you are uncomfortable.
- Don't do anything you don't want to do just to avoid disagreement, unpleasantness or embarrassment.
- You have the right to trust your feelings.
- You have the responsibility to respect other people's right to say no to you.

# Bullying

What to do if you are being bullied:

- Do not be embarrassed. Many people find themselves the victim of a bully at some point in their lives. If someone is bullying you, there is a very good chance he/she is also bullying others. He/she takes advantage of fear and embarrassment to continue the inappropriate behavior.
- Report bullies to your coordinator, host parents, principal, or school counselor.
- Though it is very difficult, do not respond to the bully or let him/her see you get upset.
- If you are being bullied online, print or save the messages, log out, then report the incident to your coordinator and host parents.

Tips to avoid being bullied:

- Do not friend people online that you are not friends with at school.
- Walk with friends or host siblings whenever possible.
- Do not bring expensive items or money to school.
- Develop friendships and stick up for each other. A bully is more likely to leave you alone if you are with your friends.
- Act confident. Stand up straight, hold your head high, and walk with confidence, even if you are not feeling confident. Bullies like to pick on kids that seem insecure.
- Always report any type of bullying or physical threat to your coordinator and host parents.

If you are accused of being a bully:

- Consider the way you speak to others. Often what you think is appropriate can be seen as rude or mean because of the words you choose or your tone of voice.
- If you notice someone seems offended by something you said, apologize and ask him/her what they thought you meant. If he/she misunderstood you, try to say it a different way and/or ask for help finding the correct words or tone of voice.
- Talk to your coordinator, host parents, or guidance counselor about how to get along better with others.
- Do not post pictures without permission or unkind comments about others online.
- Think before you speak. Ask yourself: Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary?
- Understand that bullying is a serious offense and schools have policies which can include suspension and expulsion. Dismissal from school results in dismissal from the CETUSA program, as stated in the Standards of Conduct.

# Sexual Abuse/Molestation/Exploitation Policy

The United States Department of State requires all U.S. J-1 visa student exchange organizations to advise students of the procedures that should be followed in the event you are exposed to sexual abuse, sexual molestation and/or sexual exploitation during your program in the U.S.

Although this is not seen as a widespread problem, CETUSA believes in being proactive. We also believe that any knowledge we can impart to you will be a key to your success on the program. It is our intent that no student should be victimized.

You should be careful and aware, not afraid.

CETUSA takes many cautions when screening Host Families, including:

- An In-home interview of all family members who reside in the home
- A home inspection
- Reference checks
- Criminal background checks of all host family members ages 18 and over
- Approval of the placement by school officials

Definitions:

## A. Sexual Abuse:

1. The forcing of unwanted sexual activity by one person on another, as by the use of threats or coercion.
2. Sexual activity that is deemed improper or harmful, as between an adult and a minor or with a person of diminished mental capacity.

Sexual abuse may include but is not limited to:

- Inappropriate physical contact such as assault, blocking your movement, touching a person in private areas with or without clothing on, kissing, or excessive hugging, patting or stroking.
- Someone inappropriately exposing parts of their body to you.
- Inappropriate photographing of you.
- Inappropriately exposing you to pornography.

## B. Sexual Molestation:

1. To subject to unwanted or improper sexual activity.
2. The act of subjecting someone to unwanted or improper sexual advances or activity.
3. The act of tormenting by continued persistent attacks and criticism.

### C. Sexual Exploitation:

1. The act of employing to the greatest possible advantage: exploitation of children, teens or other persons of diminished mental capacity, for sexual gratification purposes.
2. Utilization of another person or group for selfish purposes: exploitation of unwary children, teens or other persons of diminished mental capacity.
3. Any time an adult has a sexual relationship with someone who is underage, whether there was sexual coercion or not. Sexual coercion alone would more likely apply to a sexual relationship between two teens – one teen pressuring the other into a sexual relationship.

Sexual violence is any verbal and/or physical act that breaks a person's trust and/or safety and is sexual in nature. Victims of sexual assaults are forced, pressured and/or manipulated to participate in an unwanted sexual activity.

#### Safety precautions:

- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Walk/travel in pairs.
- Let your hosts know where you are going and whom you will be with.
- Do not accept rides from strangers. Do not hitchhike. (Hitchhiking violates CETUSA Standards of Conduct).
- You have the right and responsibility to say "no" to any unwelcome, uncomfortable or confusing touch or action by another.
- Do not use alcohol or drugs. Many cases of sexual assault involve drugs or alcohol.

Areas of your body that should not be touched or seen by others may best be described as those areas your swimsuit covers. Likewise, you should not touch anyone else in those areas.

If someone touches you inappropriately (in a sexual way) or asks you to pose without proper clothing, you should immediately report the incident:

- If you are no longer in danger, report the incident to your host parents, your CETUSA coordinator or the CETUSA HSP office.
- If you are in danger, you should dial 911 to report the incident to the local authorities. Your immediate safety should be your primary concern.

Sexual abuse, molestation and exploitation are considered serious violations in the United States and will be treated accordingly by CETUSA and the local authorities. A complete investigation will follow any allegation, and when applicable, prosecution. Consequences for those who are found to have committed such crimes include imprisonment, fines and negative public notoriety.

False allegations of sexual abuse, molestation and exploitation are also considered serious violations. Accusations of sexual misconduct should not be made in retribution for other actions or decisions you may not be happy with.

# What Do You Know About Personal Safety?

## Answer Key

- Teachers and Guidance Counselors don't care if someone is being bullied.....False
- Alcohol and drugs are often involved in cases of sexual assault.....True
- Friends who use alcohol and drugs are good to have so you will be popular.....False
- If someone makes you uncomfortable, you have the right to leave, even if it is awkward.....True
- If you are the victim of sexual assault you should call your coordinator as soon as you are safe .....True
- The way to respond to someone bullying you online is with insults.....False
- If you delete your posts on Facebook or Twitter, no one can find them.....False

## Personal Safety Quiz

### Answer Key

Before leaving my host family home, I:

- A. Get permission from my host parents
- B. Leave, but check back later
- C. Leave a note – they will figure it out

When I leave the house to walk, I:

- A. Walk alone
- B. Walk with a friend or host family member
- C. Let my host parents know where I am going then go alone

If I'm lost, I:

- A. Call my host parents
- B. Keep walking until I find my way
- C. Ask a stranger for help

If I'm out with friends and they are drinking alcohol, I:

- A. Telephone my hosts
- B. Ride home with my drinking friends
- C. Walk home alone
- D. Also enjoy a drink

If I'm at a party and someone offers me prescription or illegal drugs, I:

- A. Take just one and say thank you
- B. Decline but stay for the party
- C. Call my hosts and/or Coordinator to pick me up

If someone touches or photographs me inappropriately, I:

- A. Keep it to myself – it's not anyone else's business
- B. Stay but text a friend – my host parents will be mad if I tell them
- C. Get to a safe place then call my coordinator and/or host parents

# CETUSA Standards of Conduct

Please refer students to pages 18-22 in the Student Workbook

## Objectives:

1. To ensure all students comply with the CETUSA Standards of Conduct.

## Method:

1. Have students complete the worksheet *Do You Know the Facts* from page 13 of their workbook. It is also on page 21 of this guide.
2. Go over the entire Standards of Conduct, pages 22 & 23 of this guide, and ensure that the students have a thorough understanding of what is expected of them.

## Important points to share with students:

- CETUSA has established the Standards of Conduct to provide you with behavioral guidelines, rules and conditions for participation on the CETUSA program.
- Each of the Standards is designed to ensure a positive program experience for all parties involved in the CETUSA-sponsored program including student, host family, school, Coordinator and community.
- If you do not abide by these Standards, CETUSA may issue you a warning, put you on probation or choose to have you return home at your expense.
- You and your natural parent(s)/guardian(s) have confirmed your understanding of and commitment to abide by the CETUSA Standards of Conduct contained in the student application.
- The following information is crucial to your success on the program:
  - DRIVING
    - ◆ Many states no longer allow international students to obtain a driver's license.
    - ◆ Students may not drive any motorized vehicle while on the program except to take an official driver's education and training course.
    - ◆ Natural and host family permission is required for students to enroll in driver's education and training.
    - ◆ Host families may not loan the student a car for training purposes.
    - ◆ If you obtain a driver's license, it must be sent to CETUSA immediately.
  - WORK
    - ◆ The J-1 visa does not allow you to work while in the U.S.
    - ◆ Noncompetitive work such as babysitting, tutoring and yard work for less than 10 hours per week is acceptable.
    - ◆ You are on a cultural and academic program. That is to be your focus.

- SMOKING, DRINKING and DRUGS
  - ◆ Smoking is strictly forbidden. The rules prohibit the purchase, possession and/or use of tobacco products of any kind.
  - ◆ Drinking alcohol is against the law and not permitted on the CETUSA program. The rules prohibit consuming or possessing alcohol for any reason. In the U.S. you can be arrested for consuming or possessing alcohol under the age of 21.
  - ◆ Illegal drugs are strictly prohibited on the CETUSA program. Use, purchase or possession is against the law in the U.S. and has heavy penalties, including possible prison sentencing or deportation.
  - ◆ Students found guilty of any of the above, possession or use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs, will be dismissed from the CETUSA program and returned to their home country at their expense.
- DATING
  - ◆ CETUSA does not prohibit dating. It is, however, discouraged for students to form attachments to a member of the opposite gender or the same gender during the exchange. The exchange is not intended to be a time when romantic entanglements are formed.
  - ◆ The exchange student is an ambassador of their country. Their behavior must be above reproach.
  - ◆ Students involved in a sexual relationship may be returned to their home country immediately.
- TRAVEL
  - ◆ CETUSA prohibits visits by natural family members prior to the end of the program. Visits home by the student during the program are disruptive and not permitted except in the case of an emergency.
  - ◆ Students may travel only with an approved chaperone over the age of 25 and approval from CETUSA.
  - ◆ An approved chaperone is the host family, the CETUSA Coordinator, a school or church group, or a person over 25 approved by the host and natural family.
  - ◆ CETUSA must be informed of and approve all travel over 2 nights.
  - ◆ Special natural parent permission is required for any travel for more than 2 nights.
  - ◆ Long-distance train and bus travel is not permitted except with an approved chaperone.
  - ◆ Flights must be direct, point to point with no connections or layovers.
  - ◆ CETUSA must enforce all these travel policies for liability reasons.

# DO You Know the Facts?

*Do you know CETUSA's program rules and regulations?*

*Take this quiz and find out. Circle TRUE or FALSE next to each statement.*

<b>Insurance</b>	
1. You should give your host family a copy of your insurance information.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
2. You should keep copies of the claim form and identification card.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
3. Your insurance covers all illness and accidents, except pre-existing conditions.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
4. Dental, eye and well-care are generally not covered.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
5. If you have a problem with insurance, you should call the insurance company.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
<b>Religion</b>	
6. You are encouraged to participate in religious activities with your host family.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
7. If you do not wish to participate in your host family's religious activities, it is okay.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
<b>Work</b>	
8. Your J-1 visa does not permit you to work legally in the United States.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
9. You may take unofficial work of less than 10 hours per week.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
10. Unofficial work may include baby-sitting, tutoring and yard work.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
<b>Smoking &amp; Drinking</b>	
11. Smoking is not allowed on the CETUSA program.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
12. Possession or use of tobacco products is prohibited on the CETUSA program.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
13. State law permits student age 21 and under to drink alcohol.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
<b>Travel</b>	
14. If you travel overnight, you must inform your coordinator.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
15. Travel for more than 2 days requires your natural parent's written permission.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
16. Travel with your host family, CETUSA Coordinator, school, church, or a vetted person over 25 years old may be allowed with your host and natural parent's permission.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
17. Travel with friends under 25 is permitted.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
18. Travel by yourself is permitted.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
<b>Program End</b>	
19. The CETUSA program ends 7 days after the last day of school.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
20. You must return home at program end, which is seven days after the end of school.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>
21. 5 month students may decide to stay another semester without prior permission.	<b>TRUE FALSE</b>

# STANDARDS OF CONDUCT (Pg.1)

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CETUSA strives to promote a positive learning experience during the student's exchange program. We, the undersigned student participant and natural parent(s)/legal guardian(s), understand that while on the program and in the hosting country, participants must adhere to and abide by the following Standards of Conduct during the exchange program:

## ACADEMIC AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM

### 1. SCHOOL

We understand that:

- a) The student is on an Exchange Visitor or Student Visa and must attend school regularly and obey all school rules.
- b) The student is expected to show an interest in his/her schoolwork and to fully participate in all classes, completing all coursework in a timely manner.
- c) The student is expected to maintain a minimum of a C average and pass all courses. Failure to do so will result in the student's program being reviewed.
- d) If the school or CETUSA decides the student needs a language tutor to be successful, CETUSA will help to arrange for such a tutor. Tutoring costs will be the sole responsibility of the student and/or natural parents.
- e) If the student is given a failing mark in attitude as an official complaint from the school, their program will be reviewed.
- f) Dismissal from school will result in termination of the program.
- g) The student is on an Exchange Visitor or Student Visa and is expected to attend school. A truancy letter from the school will be grounds for the student's program to be reviewed. Excess absences will also be grounds for a program review.
- h) CETUSA does not guarantee that student will receive a diploma or be able to participate in graduation.

### 2. CONVALIDATION AND TRANSCRIPTS

We understand any and all Convalidation/Apostille requirements are entirely the student's responsibility, including school transcripts and attendance letters, notarization of documents, and all costs associated with the convalidation and Apostille process. CETUSA encourages students to use a service such as Convalidation Services, LLC to assist with this process.

### 3. EXTENSIONS

We understand a student on the Fall Semester Program may transfer to the Academic Year Program by applying and paying the difference in fees plus the established surcharge only if there is no change of Host Family and school. Any student who extends and stays beyond the scheduled return without notifying CETUSA and filling out proper paperwork will be considered terminated from the program. The US Department of Homeland Security will be notified that CETUSA is no longer responsible for the student.

### 4. LEAVING THE PROGRAM

We understand a student may not leave the program without the express written consent of CETUSA. Students are not permitted to return home during their program; doing so will be considered leaving the program. A student may temporarily return home due to a death or serious illness in the immediate family or for other bona fide emergency situations as determined by CETUSA with proper verification. When a student leaves the program, except for emergencies, he/she may not return, and the program is terminated.

### 5. MEDICAL CO-PAY AND OTHER COSTS

We understand that if the student gets ill or requires medical attention, the Host Family will seek medical care for him/her. However, the host family is not financially responsible for this care. All co-pays and medical expenses not covered by the student's insurance program are the responsibility of the student and natural family.

## HOST FAMILIES

### 1. HOST FAMILY REGULATIONS

We understand that each Host Family has rules and regulations which help it to function effectively. It is imperative each student makes every possible effort to understand what his/her Host Family expects and the rules governing the household. Each student must be respectful to his/her Host Family. Disrespectful behavior toward Host Family or repeated violation of their rules may cause the student's program to be reviewed. Furthermore, we understand the student's activities must be approved by the Host Family. At all times, the student's Host Family must know where the student is, with whom and when the student will return.

### 2. MONEY

We understand each student is responsible for purchasing his/her own personal items, including but not limited to clothing, entertainment, etc., and for his/her own spending money. Each student is required to have at his/her disposal a minimum of \$250 each month. CETUSA is not responsible for any lost or stolen money. It is against CETUSA regulations for a student to place his/her money in the Host Family's bank account. Furthermore, no student shall lend to or borrow from any member of his/her Host Family. It is the student's responsibility to manage their own money.

### 3. WORK AND JOBS

We understand students sponsored by CETUSA are in the country on an Exchange Visitor Visa. It is against the law for these students to hold or seek a job. Exceptions may be baby-sitting, lawn mowing or odd jobs offered to the student by his/her Host Family or Host Family acquaintances. Odd jobs must be approved by Student Services staff prior to student beginning the job.

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**PLEASE INITIAL-**    **Student:** \_\_\_\_\_    **Father (Legal Guardian):** \_\_\_\_\_    **Mother (Legal Guardian):** \_\_\_\_\_

# STANDARDS OF CONDUCT (Pg.2) Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. INTERNET AND E-MAIL

We understand that the Host Families are not required to have Internet access. While use of the Internet and email is generally deemed acceptable, it may also be detrimental to a student's program. Therefore:

- a) Students must respect and abide by their Host Family and school rules in relationship to use of computers, Internet and e-mail.
- b) Students are not permitted to download illegal or unauthorized music, movies, videos, games, photos, applications or the like.
- c) If the student downloads such material, any and all costs and fines will be the responsibility of the student and his/her natural family.
- d) Unauthorized or illegal downloads will cause the student's program to be reviewed and may result in termination of the student's program.
- e) During their program, students are not allowed to join or participate on sites such as Tinder, Match.Com, or other online dating sites.

## 5. CELL PHONES

We agree CETUSA has the right to limit cell phone privileges when it is in the student's best interest as determined by CETUSA. Students must not be put on the host family's cellphone plan, and CETUSA will have no responsibility for losses if this should occur.

## TRAVEL AND VISITS

### 1. TRAVEL

We understand that:

- a) Students must travel directly from their home country to the U.S. Host Family home at inception of the Program, without deviation, unless said deviation is for supervised orientation days and is approved by CETUSA no less than one month prior to inbound travel date. No deviation is allowed without approval of Student Services. Host family, natural parents nor coordinator can give this approval. It must come from Student Services in the HSP office.
- b) Students must fly directly from the Host Family's home to their natural family's home at the conclusion of their CETUSA program.
- c) Student must arrive no sooner than 7 days before the school start date and depart no more than 7 days after end of classes and/or graduation.
- d) Students will be permitted to travel while in the host country only with the following conditions:
  - 1) If traveling with the Host Family for longer than overnight, the CETUSA Coordinator must be informed of travel dates and given a phone contact where student can be reached in case of emergency.
  - 2) Travel of more than two nights with the Host Family or for any other travel requires a Travel Release form to be submitted to the CETUSA office at least two weeks before the date of travel to assure all approvals and background checks are done.
  - 3) If travel is with anyone other than the Host Family, the supervising individual on the trip **must be 25 years of age or older**, Host Family must approve, and the same rules listed above apply. Criminal Background Checks will be required for such travel of anyone age 18 or older.
  - 4) School and group-sponsored trips are permitted; but the Host Family must approve, and the CETUSA Coordinator must be notified at least two weeks before the trip so a Travel Release form can be filled out.
  - 5) Students are not permitted to travel independently by bus or train.
  - 6) Students are not permitted to travel independently by air unless on a CETUSA-approved group-sponsored trip.
- e) For travel outside the U.S., the DS-2019 form must be signed by an authorized CETUSA staff member before travel is permitted. This is the student's responsibility and must be done at least 60 days in advance. Refer to your Handbook for details regarding Authorization to travel. Unauthorized travel by a student will result in his/her program being reviewed. Do not purchase tickets prior to CETUSA approval.

### 2. VISITS WITH RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

We understand visits with relatives and friends of the natural family are prohibited except in the last two weeks of the student's program.

- a) Earlier visits by natural family and friends can cause disruption of the student/Host Family relationship.
- b) During their program, students also may not visit or be visited by relatives living in the US.
- c) If such an event occurs, the student's program will be reviewed.
- d) If a student's placement is jeopardized by a visit from natural family, relatives or friends of natural family, CETUSA will not guarantee being able to find a new Host Family placement for them.
- e) Approval by both the Host Family and CETUSA must be obtained prior to any visit, including at the end of the program.
- f) Natural family and friends should not expect the student's host family to accommodate them.
- g) Students cannot stay overnight with natural parents during visits at the end of program. Student must remain in the host family home.
- h) Students are prohibited from returning to their home country for visits during their program.

## LAWS AND STAYING SAFE

### 1. LAW VIOLATIONS

We understand if a student admits to violating a criminal law, is arrested and charged with a violation, or if reliable information is received that the student will be arrested and charged, the student's program will be reviewed, and he/she may be returned to his/her home country as soon as legally possible. Students are expected to obey all laws of their host country, state, city and community.

### 2. DRUGS

We understand the purchase, possession and/or use of illegal (non-prescribed) drugs is forbidden, and no association is to be maintained with anyone involved with drug use in any way. The use of any mind-altering prescription drugs (including anti-depressants, ADD or ADHD medications or any drugs that treat compulsive behavior are also forbidden. Violation of this will result in the program being reviewed. Furthermore, CETUSA reserves the right to conduct drug testing on the student at CETUSA's discretion at any time during the student's program. CETUSA must be informed of any medications, including homeopathic ones, the student brings (or is sent) from home.

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PLEASE INITIAL- Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Father (Legal Guardian): \_\_\_\_\_ Mother (Legal Guardian): \_\_\_\_\_

# STANDARDS OF CONDUCT (Pg.3) Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. ALCOHOL

We understand students are not allowed to consume any alcoholic beverage even if served in the host family home. We also understand the purchase, possession and/or use of alcoholic beverages, including beer and wine, is forbidden and will result in the student's program being reviewed. If a student is in a situation where alcohol is offered to them or is served/consumed by minors, the student must immediately contact their host parent or coordinator to let them know and to make arrangements to be picked up. Failure to do so will result in the student's program being reviewed.

## 4. PORNOGRAPHY

We understand the purchase, possession, viewing and/or downloading of pornography is against the law and is not permitted. If a student is found to have done so, his/her program will be reviewed.

## 5. SEXTING

We understand sexting is a punishable offense in the USA in order to protect children from sexual predators. Teenagers who text nude or partially nude photos of themselves or their friends can be charged with distribution of child pornography. Those who receive the pictures can be charged with possession of child pornography. Sexting is a serious offense and will result in the student's program being reviewed.

## 6. DANGEROUS ACTIVITIES

We understand dangerous activities such as skydiving, hang gliding, glider riding, parachute jumping, parasailing, jet skiing, snowmobiling, motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, bungee jumping, riding in private aircraft, hot air balloon riding, hunting and/or using weapons (**including but not limited to:** guns, rifles, bows/arrows, etc.) are prohibited and participation in them will result in the student's program being reviewed. We understand some Adventure Sport insurance plans may cover these activities, but such coverage does not constitute permission to participate in these dangerous activities. They are prohibited and will result in the student's program being reviewed.

## 7. DRIVING

We understand, due to the danger involved and the lack of liability/medical insurance coverage, a student may not, under any circumstances, drive a motorized vehicle. This includes but is not limited to automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, motor scooters, all-terrain vehicles, golf carts, snowmobiles, riding lawnmowers, etc. Driver's Training is also not allowed. Violations will result in the student's program being reviewed.

## 8. HITCHHIKING

We understand hitchhiking is extremely dangerous. Students are not permitted to hitchhike, either alone or with friends, at any time on their program. Violations will result in the student's program being reviewed.

## 9. TOBACCO USE

We understand the purchase, possession and/or use of tobacco products is forbidden. This includes but is not limited to: cigarettes, chewing tobacco, nicotine patches, vapor or electronic cigarettes, hooka products, snuff, etc. Violations will result in their program being reviewed.

## 10. SEX AND DATING

We understand the exchange experience is not intended to be a time in which romantic attachments are formed. Dating while on the program is subject to the host family rules. Exclusive dating is discouraged. Exchange students are ambassadors of their country; therefore, it is extremely important the students' moral behavior be beyond reproach at all times. If a student is involved in a sexual relationship while sponsored by the CETUSA program, or if it is found a student is pregnant or has caused a pregnancy while on the CETUSA program, the student's program will immediately be reviewed.

## 11. LIFE-CHANGING DECISIONS

We understand students are not allowed to make life-changing decisions while on their program. Decisions such as marriage, engagement to be married, change of religion, acquiring tattoos or body piercings, making body modifications, altering plans for career or for college education, etc. must be put aside until after the student returns home. Violations will cause the student's program to be reviewed.

## DECISIONS AND DETERMINATIONS FINAL AUTHORITY

We understand and agree:

- 1) Students must respect all decisions made by CETUSA and its coordinators or staff.
- 2) CETUSA reserves the right to terminate a student's program if there should arise, in the judgment of CETUSA officials, a condition likely to be detrimental to the health or well-being of the student.
- 3) CETUSA reserves the right to review the student's program if he/she violates the Standards of Conduct or for other disciplinary problems.
- 4) Review of the student's program may result in a decision up to termination of the program and immediate return of the student to their home country.

## AGREEMENT

We, the student and parent(s) or legal guardian(s), have read and understand all of the above rules. We agree to obey these rules, and we understand that disobeying them could result in the student's dismissal from the program and being returned to his/her home country. We also understand and acknowledge that US Host Families are volunteers and are **not** monetarily compensated.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Father or Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Mother or Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Copy, cut out and distribute to students for discussion**

I don't have any friends but I want to go to the ballgame.	I need to go to the store, how do I ask for a ride?
I'm suffering from Jet Lag.	I can't relate to my host brothers/sisters.
My digestive system is having problems with the food and water here.	I'm panicking and want to go home.
I'm overwhelmed by homework.	No one understands what I'm trying to say to them.

## Blank cards for your suggestions
