



Lions Clubs International

YOUTH CAMPS & EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Sponsor Club Handbook

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Introduction

Congratulations for taking on the role of a Lions Youth Camps and Exchange (YCE) Sponsor Club! Being a Sponsor Club to an Exchange Youth for the YCE program is a guaranteed rewarding experience for your club and the youth. This is an opportunity to grant the youth the opportunity to experience different cultures while showing them what Lions Clubs International is all about.

This YCE Sponsor Club Handbook serves as a guide for your club to understand your roles and responsibilities of being a Sponsor Club. This guide includes rules and expectations of all the participating parties in making the YCE experience successful for your club and the youth. It is recommended that your club has open communication with your multiple district or district YCE Chairperson to fully comprehend the necessary Sponsor Club requirements for your local YCE program.

Youth protection

- All participating Sponsor Clubs must strive to create and maintain a safe environment for all youth who participate.
- Please contact your local YCE Chairperson for procedures on reporting and handling incidents, such as allegations of abuse or harassment.
- YCE Chairpersons have the ability to prohibit any volunteer who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise found to have engaged in physical, sexual or emotional abuse or harassment while working with youth.
- YCE Chairpersons can remove any adult with an allegation of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or harassment from all contact with youth.
 - This includes if an allegation has been made during an ongoing YCE program.
- Please contact your local YCE Chairperson for crisis management procedures in the event of an emergency such as a natural disaster and/or civil or political unrest during your program.
- It is recommended that Sponsor Clubs follow and abide by all local laws and regulations regarding youth protection.

Personal data protection

- It is generally recommended:
 - That where personal data about a minor is collected, parental consent should be obtained.
 - That once personal data has been used and the purpose of the information has been fulfilled, the personal information be destroyed, deleted and/or erased to prevent any misuse.
 - The YCE Chairperson should ensure that a standard procedure, such as specific time lengths, is implemented for keeping personal data of YCE participants (youth and adults) after the program is complete. This will minimize the potential for complaints at a later time.
- Consent
 - All application forms should disclose in clear and distinguishable language how and what personal data may be used. As a Sponsor Club, you are responsible for complying with any local data privacy laws and protecting the information that you receive in this role.
 - To post pictures or videos taken during the youth's YCE experience on social media, it is encouraged to obtain written consent from the youth, or if a minor, the parents/guardians.

Rights of data subject

- YCE program participants have certain rights that must be protected, including the right to have their data erased, corrected or to request and receive what data is maintained on them.

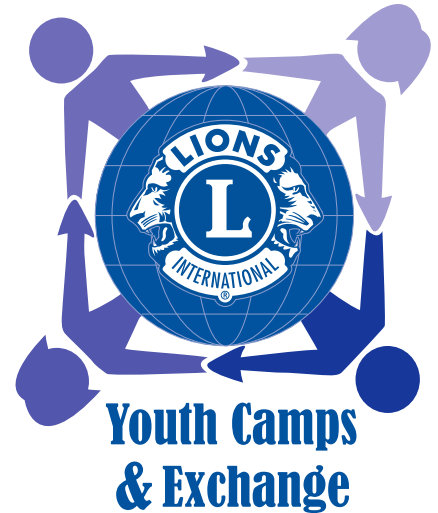
Youth Camps and Exchange

History

The Youth Exchange Program was authorized by the Lions International Board of Directors in early 1961 after a successful summer-long exchange program between Lions in the United States and Japan. Later, the Youth Camp Program was authorized in 1974. Both aspects of the program were established for the purpose of furthering Lions International's first objective of "creating and fostering a spirit of understanding among peoples of the world."

Definition of program

YCE does not involve tourism, academic study or employment. Instead, youth are encouraged to use their travel opportunity to share their own culture while experiencing a new one. The YCE program is comprised of two major parts: international exchanges and international camps.



Roles of a Sponsor Club

General

- Your club is a resource for youth to have a close working relationship with the multiple district or district YCE Chairperson.
 - It is recommended that if your club does not have a multiple district or district YCE Chairperson, your club have your District Governor communicate with the hosting YCE Chairperson.
- Your club must work directly with both your local YCE Chairperson and the YCE Chairperson in the desired host countries to make all arrangements.

Financial responsibility

- Your club, the Exchange Youth, the youth's family or a combination of these resources may pay for the youth's YCE program costs.
 - If you will require the youth to raise funds, provide them with an official acceptance letter and other materials that will help them explain the YCE program to donors.
- In the event that immediate payments have to be made for the youth concerning unexpected or substantial costs, the youth's parents/guardians, the local YCE Chairperson, coordinating Lions and your club will be informed immediately.
 - An agreement should be reached as to how these costs will be covered between your club, the youth, their parents/guardians, the Host Club and the Multiple District or District YCE Chairperson.
- Each youth should have personal funds for incidentals, minor medical costs, souvenirs or possible social activities not planned by the Host Family or Host Club.
- In some cases, Sponsor Clubs choose to sponsor an outgoing youth with the entirety of their YCE program fees (flights, camp fee, etc.). It is the choice of your club to support this type of scholarship program.

Insurance

- Lions International's general liability insurance policy would likely extend to a YCE Chairperson or program participant in the event of an incident arising where they have been deemed legally liable for certain damages or injuries.
- It is the responsibility of your club to verify that the youth has sufficient travel, accident, life, personal property, health and liability insurance to cover any and all contingencies during the YCE program.
 - This is important to determine before the youth travels. Your club, Host Family, Host Club and YCE Chairperson should evaluate whether there is a need for more insurance based on the risks involved with planned activities.
 - It may be in the best interest of the youth to ensure that their travel insurance includes medical transportation coverage in the event that the youth needs to be transferred home due to a medical emergency.
- Regardless of whether or not more insurance is required, the youth must provide your club, Host Club, Host Family and YCE Chairpersons all of the specific details such as phone numbers or local branches of the youth's chosen insurance company in case a claim arises.
- Your club may want to consider securing a release of liability from each youth or, if a minor, from the youth's parents/guardians.
 - This should be part of the youth participant application.

Communication

- Ensure seamless communication between youth, Host Clubs, host families and YCE Chairpersons.

Publicity for program

- Write a press release about the YCE program requesting youth who are interested in the YCE program to contact your club.
- Contact local schools and universities, especially the foreign language or international studies departments, with information about the YCE program to recruit young people.
- See Appendix A for a Sample Press Release.

Fundraising

- Create a 5-10-minute presentation including a PowerPoint with plenty of pictures and stories to inform local Lions clubs and community groups.
- Some YCE programs receive annual donations from each club in a Multiple District or District (this is a requirement in their policies).

Before a YCE program

Specific YCE program rules

- Your club could require more rules and expectations for their YCE Program in addition to those in this handbook.
- Each Sponsor Club must follow the YCE policy.

Exchange Youth recruitment and selection

How to recruit

- Prospective youth are typically found through family, friends, fellow Lions, Leos or from the community.
 - The youth do not need to be Lions or Leo members.
 - The youth's parents do not need to be Lions or Leo members.
 - Ages 15-22 (age requirements vary from program to program).
 - This is a great opportunity to engage Leo Club members in recruiting youth at their schools or within their social circles.
- Qualified youth should have an interest in other cultures.
- The youth should have a good reputation.
- Each potential Exchange Youth should complete an application form.
 - Please see Appendix D for the Youth Participant Application Template
- Following a review of the application, the youth should be interviewed.
- It is recommended to have a waitlist of youth in the event that it is needed.

Screening

Your club is responsible for screening potential youth. Screening items include, but are not limited to:

- Age: Each youth should fit within the age limit of the particular YCE program in which they apply to.
- Education: Youth's educational performance (or record) and special studies should be considered during the screening process.
 - Youth should have a sincere desire to broaden their education through an international experience.
- Language ability: Each youth should have basic communication skills in the official language of the desired YCE program.
- Attitude: Youth should demonstrate maturity, open-mindedness, independence, confidence, commitment and desire to learn about the ways of life in different countries.
- Health: Lions International encourages youth with disabilities to apply for participation in YCE programs. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate disabilities so that the youth may benefit from the YCE experience. Youth with disabilities may be eligible to participate in programs, provided they meet the requirements for that particular YCE program.
 - Your club should know if the youth has particular medical conditions, allergies to certain foods, substances (pollen, dust or fur) or medicines, a regular or potential need for medication and specific requisites of hygiene or diet dictated by religious obligations.
- Special abilities: Certain skills such as musical or athletic ability may be required to gain admittance to a particular camp.
- Character references: Youth should have at least two character references.
 - This is not required for all YCE programs.
- Financial ability: Financial assistance, where offered, should be given to youth with demonstrated financial need.

- Previous attendance: Preference should generally be given to youth who have not already participated in a YCE program.
- Knowledge of the YCE Program: Familiarity with the YCE program, its purpose and objectives, by both youth and parents, is a must.
- Motives of applicant: Youth should have a desire to contribute to international understanding, and a desire to learn about and from other ways of life.
- Parents'/guardians' consent: The youth's parents/guardians must verify, in writing, their complete agreement with the YCE program policy.
 - Parents/guardians must understand that they will bear ultimate financial responsibility for any emergency, illness, accident or unexpected costs involving the youth and not covered by insurance.
- Any special interests should be determined during the screening interview.
 - See Appendix B for Sample Screening Questions
- Your club should not select youth simply to fulfill a quota.
- The youth screening process is a great opportunity to include Leos!

Placing the Exchange Youth and working with YCE Chairpersons

- Your club will work with the youth and the local YCE Chairperson to help place the youth in their desired program.
 - This includes a screening and an endorsement from your club for the youth to participate in the YCE program.
 - The responsibility of the final approval of the youth's participation in the YCE program lies with the local YCE Chairperson.
- Travel arrangements from home to the desired YCE program and back are your club and the local YCE Chairperson's responsibility.
- Your club should familiarize yourselves with the cultures you are working with to better prepare the youth for the YCE experience.

Exchange Youth orientation

Provide a fun and engaging orientation for the youth! Orientation is a way for your club to help alleviate homesickness and get the youth excited about their upcoming experience. Orientation topics can include, but are not limited to:

- Rules and regulations of a YCE program
- Before, during and after the exchange
 - Expectations of the youth
 - How/what to pack
 - Plans for delay in travel or lost items
 - Homesickness
- Travel documents
 - Passports
 - Visas
 - Immunizations
 - Customs regulations
- Cultural preparation
 - Food, religions and culture of host country
 - Have your youth bring a gift for the Host Club and Host Family of appropriate value
- Country presentation preparation
 - While the youth are abroad, they are expected to give a presentation about their home country. Many youth bring small items to pass out to those in the audience such as candy.
 - This presentation should be prepared before the youth depart for their YCE program.

- Roles of all the participants of the YCE Program (Host Family, Host Club, Sponsor Club and YCE Chairpersons, coordinating Lions)
 - Communicating with your Host Family, Host Club and home
- Meeting past Exchange Youth

Communication

With the Exchange Youth

- Facilitate the initial contact between the youth and their desired YCE program's YCE Chairperson.
- Each youth should write a personal letter of introduction to the Host Family, with family photos, containing information on their: interests, studies and hobbies; family members and home community; previous travel; and expectations for the exchange.
- Dates of the visit, travel and program logistics should be agreed on at least six weeks in advance between the Host and Sponsor Clubs.
- Changes to plans should be discussed and mutually agreed upon if at all possible.
 - Last minute unavoidable changes should be communicated immediately to all coordinating parties (the youth, the Host Club, Sponsor Club, YCE Chairpersons, other coordinating Lions and the Host Family).
- See Appendix C for the Sponsor Club Checklist

With the Host Club and YCE Chairperson

- Initial communications between an interested Sponsor Club and Host Club will be through the Multiple District or District YCE Chairperson.
 - If contact information is unavailable for a YCE Chairperson, this communication will be sent to the respective District Governor.
- Travel arrangements should not be made until there has been direct communication and confirmation by a hosting YCE Chairperson or International Camp Director.
 - The Host Family should be secured by the Host Club before travel arrangements are made.
- The YCE Chairperson will give final approval on applications for youth traveling abroad.

During a YCE program

Departure of Exchange Youth

- Depending on the arrangement between the youth and their parents/guardians, your club can send a member to take the youth to the airport.
 - Those responsibilities include arrangements for the youth's return to home, plans for loss of luggage or delayed flights.
 - Your club is responsible for the youth traveling to and from their home country.

Extended travel or personal requests for Exchange Youth

- Extended personal travel or leaves of absence from the YCE program by youth, even if to visit close friends or relatives, are not allowed unless written permission has been obtained at least one month in advance from each of the following parties: parents/guardians of the youth, Sponsor Clubs, sponsor YCE Chairperson, host YCE Chairperson, camp director, Host Club and Host Family (if applicable).
- Personal requests: Youth cannot request to be enrolled in school, training or employment.
- Requests for long-term lodging or the right to operate motor vehicles should also be denied.

Accident/illness or emergencies

- In the event of serious illness or accident, every effort should be made to contact the youth's parents/guardians immediately to provide them with complete information, including a doctor's diagnosis and recommended treatment.
 - All youth participants should include in their application: written permission from parents/guardians for any necessary medical or surgical treatment in the event parents/guardians cannot be reached during an emergency.
- If there is an emergency, the YCE Chairperson should be contacted immediately.

Incompatibility with Host Family or need for removal of the Exchange Youth

- Incompatibility: If relations between Host Family and the youth become extremely difficult, the matter should be handled tactfully by the Host Club and hosting YCE Chairperson. In most cases this means that the Host Club needs to remove the youth from a Host Family, and place the youth in a new Host Family.
 - In extreme situations, it could become necessary to arrange for the return of the youth to their home. Therefore, you will be contacted by the hosting YCE Chairperson, and an arrangement will be made to bring the youth home.

After a YCE program

Exchange Youth survey

- Schedule a time for the youth to come to your club to present about their YCE experience.
- Survey the youth on their YCE experience from start to finish.

Becoming a Lion or Leo member

- Be sure to educate the youth and their family about how they can be more involved in Lions International through becoming a Lion or Leo member.

Thank you!

A roaring “thank you” from the YCE Lions around the world for your participation in this program! Because of you, Lions are one step closer, “to creating and fostering a spirit of understanding among peoples of the world.”

Appendix A: Sample Press Release



(Name of Lions club) seeks Exchange Youth for Youth Camps and Exchange Program

(Name of Lions Club) Lions Club is looking for Exchange Youth in (Name of your town or city) who have open minds and hearts that would like to participate in our Lions Youth Camps and Exchange (YCE) program. The YCE program brings young adults from various parts of the world to further the Lions Clubs International (LCI) mission, "To create and foster a spirit of understanding among peoples of the world."

(Name of YCE Chairperson) currently has (Number of incoming youth) unplaced outgoing exchange spots for this YCE season.

Exchange Youth do not need to be Lions or Leo members. Exchange Youth are responsible for airfare, travel insurance and spending money.

If you are interested in becoming an Exchange Youth, contact:

(District YCE Chairperson) at (Phone Number) or (Email)

Appendix B: Sample Screening Questions for Prospective Youth

Sample Screening Questions* for Prospective Youth

1. What do you hope to achieve by participating in the YCE program?
2. How would you describe your home culture and country?
3. How will this cross-cultural experience help you in your personal development?
 - a. What about your professional development?
4. How will you finance this trip?
5. What are your hobbies?
6. Have you been abroad before? When? Where? How long? Why?
7. Which languages do you speak? At what level?



*Please note that these are sample questions only. These questions may change to accommodate the needs of your specific YCE program.

Appendix C: Sponsor Club Checklist

I have received the following information:

- ☐ Exchange Youth's name
- ☐ Exchange Youth's address and contact number
- ☐ Exchange Youth's travel documents:
 - ☐ Passport number
 - ☐ Travel insurance number
 - ☐ Visa
 - ☐ Other necessary travel documents
- ☐ Travel arrangement details:
 - ☐ Departure date
 - ☐ Flight number
 - ☐ Departure time
 - ☐ Departure train information
 - ☐ Return date
 - ☐ Flight number
 - ☐ Return time
 - ☐ Return train information
 - ☐ Arrival time
- ☐ The District or Multiple District YCE Chairperson is informed of the exchange.
- ☐ The Exchange Youth attended an orientation session on _____.
- ☐ The Exchange Youth has received Exchange Youth Handbook.
- ☐ The Exchange Youth is financed by:
 - ☐ The Exchange Youth
 - ☐ The youth's family
 - ☐ Lions club
 - ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ The parents/guardians have signed the indemnity agreement and a copy was sent to the Host Club.
- ☐ The youth has sufficient insurance for their desired YCE Program.
 - ☐ (Insurance Company Name)
 - ☐ (Policy Number)

Appendix D: Youth Participant Application

		Lions Clubs International			
LIONS YOUTH CAMPS AND EXCHANGE (YCE) YOUTH PARTICIPANT APPLICATION					
This form may be completed by potential YCE participants. It is the responsibility of the YCE Chairperson to maintain records on YCE participants' and parental consent in compliance with local laws and standards. Completed forms should be kept on file with the YCE Chairperson; forms should not be sent to International Headquarters.					
Please attach: • Applicant's recent passport photograph or photo from government-issued ID • Photograph of the applicant's family • Applicant's introduction letter to host family					
I. TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT					
A. PERSONAL INFORMATION					
Name		Date of Birth		Gender	
Address		City		State/Province	
				Country	
Home Telephone		E-mail		Postal Code	
How will this exchange be financed? Be specific.					
Do you reside in a: <input type="checkbox"/> rural area <input type="checkbox"/> small city <input type="checkbox"/> large city					
Have you ever traveled abroad? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no					
Have you ever participated in YCE before? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no					
When?					
What is your primary language?					
Other languages spoken					
What school do you attend?					
Field of study					
Are you a Leo club member? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no					
Do you smoke? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no					
Please list any activity or dietary restrictions you may have as a result of physical limitations or personal beliefs:					
B. DESTINATION PREFERENCES					
1st		2nd		3rd	
<input type="checkbox"/> rural area <input type="checkbox"/> small city <input type="checkbox"/> large city <input type="checkbox"/> no preference					
Preferred dates of exchange: from to					
C. AGREEMENT TO TERMS OF PROGRAM					
I agree to abide by the policies of the Lions Youth Camps & Exchange Program. I understand that unauthorized extended personal travel or leaves of absences during the program are prohibited. My participation is not for tourism, formal education or employment. I will not operate a motor vehicle during my stay in the host country. Any serious violation of the program's policies on my part may, at the discretion of the host Lions officer, result in the immediate termination of my visit at my expense.					
I understand that by participating in the YCE program, I may be filmed or photographed at various meetings, projects and events. Furthermore, I understand that my personal data will be provided to the sponsoring Lions club, host Lions club and YCE Chairpersons for the purposes of administering the program. I hereby consent to sharing the information I have provided on this form for the purposes stated herein.					
Signature				Date	