



Host General Guide

This document contains important information regarding Cultural Ambassadors for the host schools and host families.

Participant Profile

Our Cultural Ambassadors have a strong desire to participate in the program and recognize the experience as an opportunity for their personal and academic growth. They are selected from among a group of applicants.

Each child is required to provide us with recommendation letters from their school principal, school counselor, and English teacher. These letters provide us with a perspective of their academic performance and general behavior. They also require a medical certification and legal authorization to participate in the program.

School

Children attend a U.S. school as visitors and Cultural Ambassadors; they do not earn school credits. During their visit, they are expected to turn in homework, take exams and quizzes, and participate in all school activities along with the rest of the student body. Participants must follow the uniform/dress code as determined by the school.

The grades they receive in the United States during their program will not earn them academic credits at their Guatemalan school. The host school's liaison will complete a document that provides general information about the participant's performance at school: overall attitude, sense of responsibility, and presentation of the cultural projects to the school.

Household responsibilities

The Cultural Ambassadors will participate in all host family activities. They will keep their belongings in order, and, if they have their own room, they will be expected to keep it clean. They will also participate in the household chores.

Communication

The Cultural Ambassadors are allowed to receive weekly phone, Skype, or Facetime calls from their parents. Each child should ask the host family regarding the best time to receive phone calls. They are not to use the host family phone line to make international calls once a week. Participants are not allowed to bring cell phones. They are allowed to bring an Ipad for school purposes. Since students are not allowed to bring cell phones, we would appreciate that families let them use their computers. They are allowed to be in social media for 40 minutes.

Permissions and Rules

The Cultural Ambassadors travel to the United States with the understanding that they will abide by all laws, rules, and regulations of the host home, school, and state. No misconduct will be allowed or tolerated at any time. Children understand that only the host family may grant permission for extracurricular activities and will determine curfew hours.

Restricted Activities

The Cultural Ambassadors are expected and encouraged to participate in school and family activities. However, they are not allowed to:

- Students are not allowed to drive.
- Students are not allowed to drink or smoke.
- Students are not allowed to hunt or handle any kind of weapon.
- Students are not allowed to bring smart phones to the Cultural Exchange Program.

*Students can only use electronics in common areas at home. They may NOT bring the devices to their bedrooms. *



Dating

For high school Ambassadors, dating while in the United States is prohibited by the **Faces & Our Cultures Program** as it could distract them from achieving the main goal of the program.

Meals

Food is very similar in Guatemala and the United States. Children will adapt to meals and schedules both at home and at school. The only basic difference is that dinner in Guatemala usually takes place between 7:45 – 8:30 pm, so they may ask for a snack before bedtime; however, they must adjust to your meal schedules. The lunch program at school will be covered by the program.

Money

Ambassadors prepare themselves throughout the year for this cultural experience. This preparation includes saving money to be able to enjoy their stay in the United States and have some pocket money to spend.

Shopping

Children always have expectations regarding shopping in the United States, particularly girls. There are many things in the United States that are either not available in Guatemala or may be less expensive in the States. Program coordinators emphasize that shopping is not the purpose of this exchange program. Shopping excursions will be at the discretion of the host families.

Insurance

Every participant is covered by full international medical and travel insurance. Cultural Ambassadors will bring their insurance ID cards. Host families will receive this same information via email on a form that includes all pertinent contact information.

Logistics and Support

Children arrive in the United States with the group and leave with the entire group. They are not allowed to stay longer under any circumstances or get picked up by their Guatemalan families without the program's authorization.

During the first week, as participants are adjusting to their surroundings, **Faces & Our Cultures Program** coordinators will stay in the area and visit schools and participants to help them have a smooth transition process. We will support Cultural Ambassadors, schools, and host families in any way necessary during the duration of the program.

Faces & Our Cultures Coordinators escort the Ambassadors to the United States and stay in the area for approximately two weeks to help with the transition process or any other aspect that the school, host families, or children might need. Coordinators return to the United States in December to escort the participants back to Guatemala.

Preparation Course

Students are required to participate in various workshops during the year, prior to leaving Guatemala, to prepare them to be successful Cultural Ambassadors in the United States.

Thank you so much for participating in this cultural exchange experience, and please feel free to contact us at any time.

Spring & Summer Program

We offer an optional spring and summer program at a private school in Guatemala. Participants will live with a host family and take part in social, educational, and sports activities. For more information, U.S. families can contact their school's liaison. If you would like to get more information regarding the reciprocal program, you can contact your FACES Coordinator or email Roxanda Reiche at roxanda.reiche@facesandcultures.com.