

AFS Orientations for Host Students

- Throughout the year, AFS students **must** attend five (5) AFS Orientations.
- The orientations are designed to address the following topics.
- Host families are encouraged to discuss these topics with your student as well.

1. Arrival (usually upon arrival in the US, must be within first week of arriving)

- discuss laws, cultural attitudes, and common behaviors around alcohol, drugs, smoking and other health issues within their home and host culture;
- practice refusal skills they can use to stand up to peer or adult pressures to engage in situations that put them at risk;
- identify sources of support and contact information for help in difficult situations while abroad;

2. Post-Arrival (4-6 weeks after arrival)

- convey to AFS volunteers the personal contact and support they have received to date (written form);
- identify challenges they may face in their exchange experience that could affect their health, safety and ability to stay on the AFS Program
- identify warning signs that may indicate that they are encountering an inappropriate situation;
- identify strategies for avoiding and getting themselves out of situations that put them at risk;
- create a personal safety plan that will guide them through challenges they may face.
- share their success stories and experiences
- discuss their cultural values and their host family's values.

3. Mid-Stay (usually in January or February)

- convey to AFS volunteers the personal contact and support they have received to date (written form);
- describe cultural differences and intercultural conflict styles.
self-assess their experience so far and brainstorm ways to achieve their personal goals.

4. Pre-Return (2-6 weeks before departure)

- discuss how they and their values may have changed/remained the same.
- brainstorm ways to make the most of their remaining time in the US
- discuss ways to handle the transition from the US back to their home country.

5. End-of-Stay (day before departing the host community)

- identify healthy ways to handle the re-adjustment process and reverse culture shock.
- Reflect on what they learned about themselves, their host family, the US, and their home culture's values.