



Proactive Support

Expanding the AFS Effect
Baltimore, MD
November 5, 2016

- In this session, we will
 - Identify different stakeholders and resources involved in the support process
 - Become familiar with basic support structure of AFS-USA – on the volunteer and staff levels
 - Gain a basic understanding of existing support tools
 - Become familiar with several proactive support strategies
 - Learn what to report to whom (and how) when support situations come up

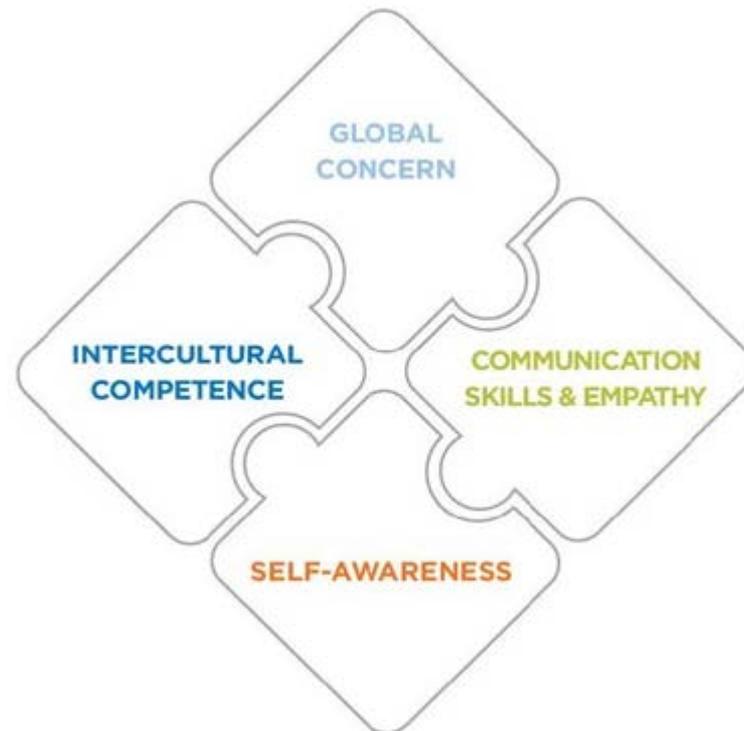


AFS Participant Learning Objectives

- Personal Development
- Interpersonal Relationships
- Intercultural Knowledge
- Global Awareness

Participant Support Philosophy at AFS-USA

We **transform** challenging experiences into learning opportunities



A graphic of several interlocking puzzle pieces in shades of brown and tan. The pieces are arranged in a way that suggests a larger whole, with some pieces missing or slightly offset. The text 'Stakeholders & Resources' is overlaid on the puzzle pieces.

Stakeholders & Resources

What is a Liaison?

- First point of contact for participant and host family
- A trained “first responder”
- An objective ear
- A facilitator of healthy relationships, problem-solving, and learning
- A mediator of interpersonal conflict
- A documenter of Monthly Contact reports for student, host family and school

What is a Support Coordinator?

- An experienced volunteer – many have been with AFS for decades
- A resource for liaisons
- The link in the chain of communication between liaisons and Support staff
- Often wears many hats – doing Support, organizing events/orientations, finding host families and recruiting participants

What is an Associate Support Coordinator?

- An extra layer of trained support volunteers within a team between the Support Coordinator and Liaisons
- Usually assigned to a chapter or smaller region within the Area Team
- A resource for liaisons
- Works with liaisons, host families, hosted participants, Support Coordinator, and staff

What is a Participant Support Specialist?

- AFS-USA staff
- Works with several volunteer teams
- Works with both Sending and Hosted participants
- Hosted: Facilitates communication between local Support volunteers and partner staff
- Sending: Works directly with natural families
- Other roles include
 - Works with TDS and volunteer team to link liaisons to hosted participants
 - Facilitates Intercultural Learning
 - Collaborates with other AFS-USA departments (Travel, Compliance, etc.)
 - and more

What is a TDS?

- Team Development Specialist
- AFS-USA staff in the field
- Each TDS has one, two or three Area Teams in the same geographic region
- Stakeholder in the Support process when a move is needed
- Roles include
 - Recruiting liaisons
 - Recruiting host families
 - Developing school relationships
 - and more

What is a Duty Officer?

- AFS-USA staff person
- Responds to emergency situations during nights, holidays, weekends
- Every AFS partner country has a D.O. system
- AFS-USA volunteers should use the AFS-USA D.O.
- 1-800-237-4636, ext. 9
- 212-299-9000, ext. 9

AFS-USA Participant Support Department Structure

WEST TEAM

EAST TEAM

Director

Regional Travel
and Logistics
Coordinator

Manager

Senior Participant
Support Specialist

Participant Support
Specialist

Regional Travel
and Logistics
Coordinator

Manager

Senior Participant
Support Specialist

Participant Support
Specialist



Participant Support Team

West

Working hours: 10-11 am to 6-7pm EST

Işıl Nart-Alexander
Manager, West



Barbara Telser-Gadow
Director



Ian Loumos
Sr. Specialist



Adriana Miladinovic
Specialist



Kendra McKechnie
Specialist



Maria Feliciano
Specialist



Anjanae Wilson
Specialist



Rebecca Oswalt
Specialist



Sarah Tice
Regional Travel
& Logistics
Coordinator

East

Working hours: 9-10 am to 5-6 pm EST



Candace O'Malley
Sr. Manager, East



Diana Sarabia
Sr. Specialist



Veronica Lorya
Specialist



Mia Oliveri
Specialist



Thomas Quinn Smith
Specialist



Amanda Brown
Specialist



Roslyn Randall
Specialist



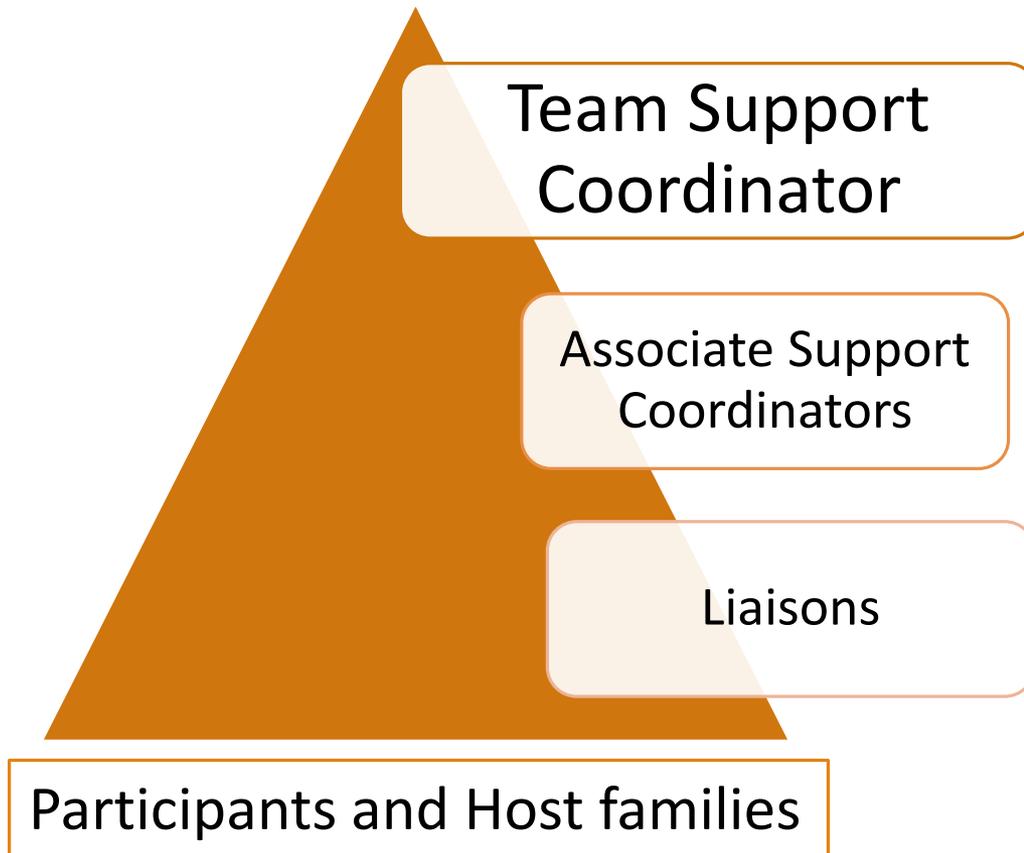
Julie Ball
Regional Travel
& Logistics
Coordinator



Area Team Support Structure

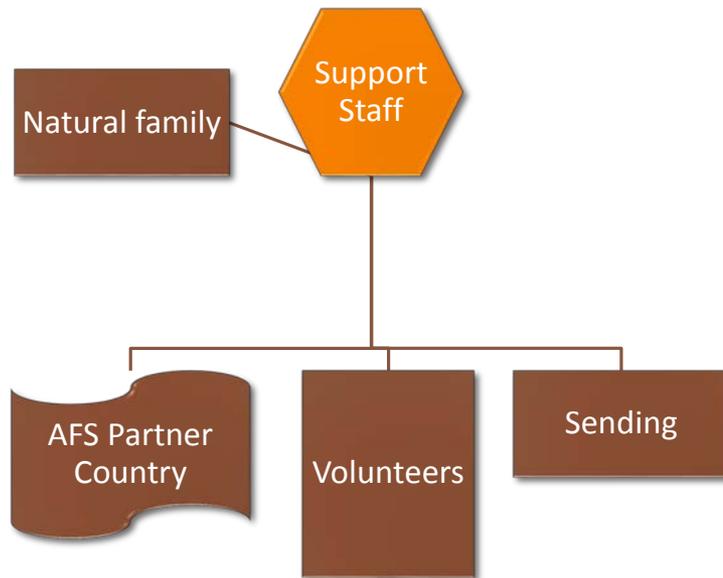
Others:

- Participant Support Specialist (staff)
- Team Development Specialist (staff)
- Area Team Chair
- School Staff

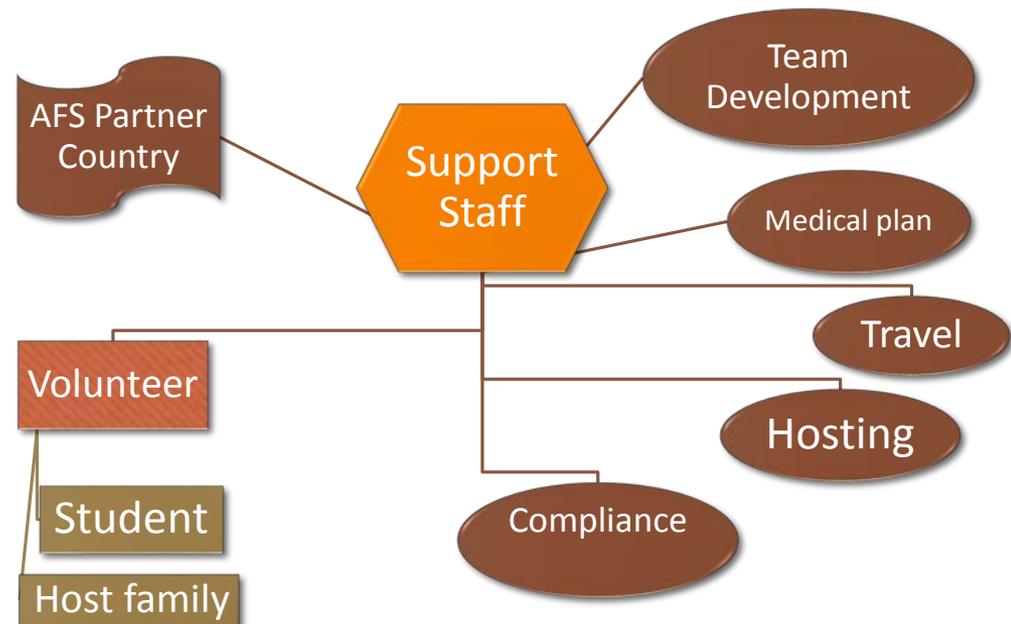


Support Structure

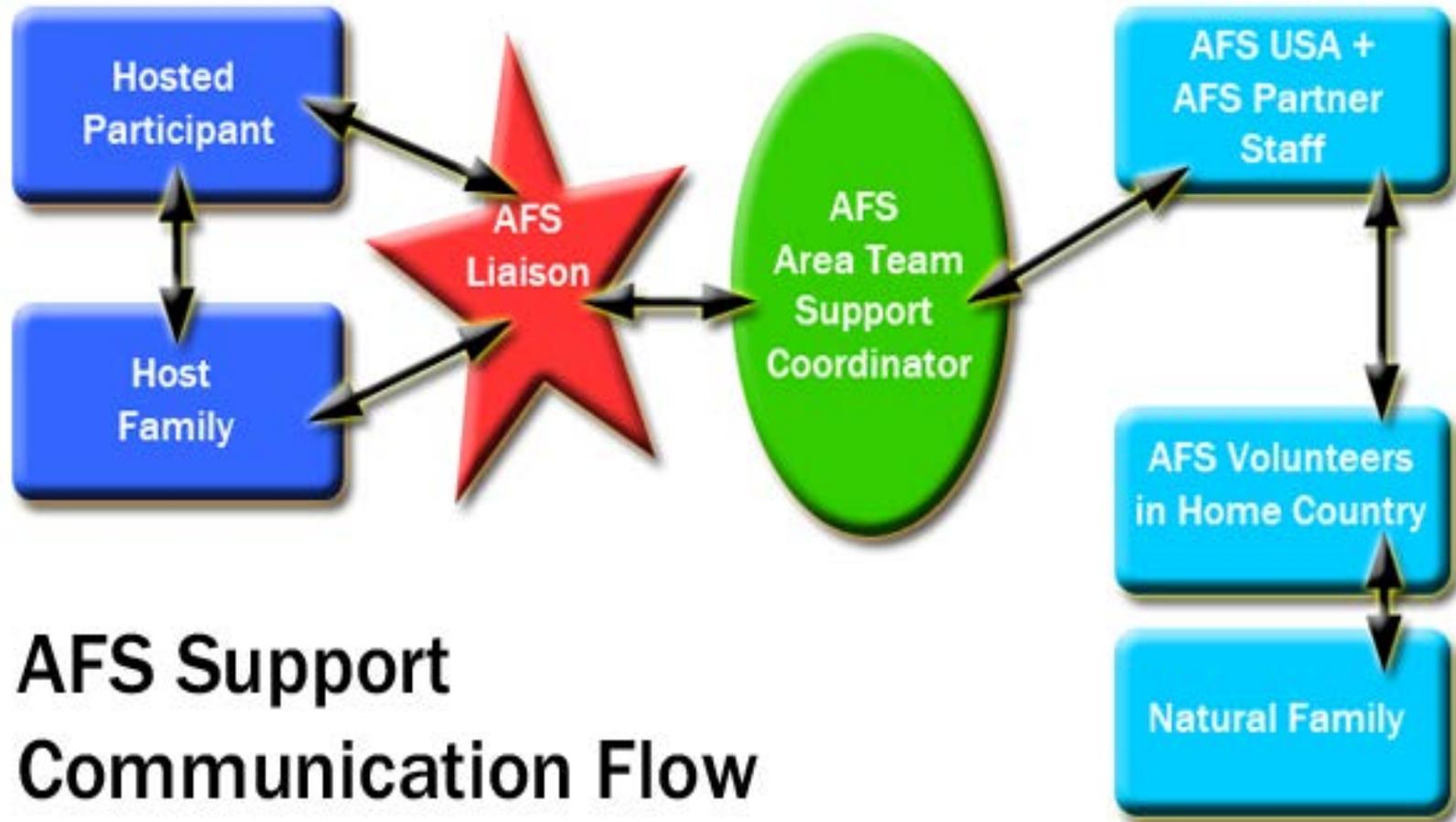
- Sending Perspective



- Hosting Perspective



Communication Flow (Hosting)





When a dialogue could improve the experience, a Liaison will...

- Obtain multiple perspectives from all parties involved:
 - Host family
 - Student
 - School
- Collaborate with the Support Coordinator and other volunteer stakeholders
- Facilitate a Support Meeting
 - Have separate conversations with the participant and the host family
 - Meet with the participant and the host family together
 - Encourage host family and participant to explore cultural factors that could be influencing the situation
 - Report the outcome of the meeting
- Document all actions taken in a timely, factual, objective manner



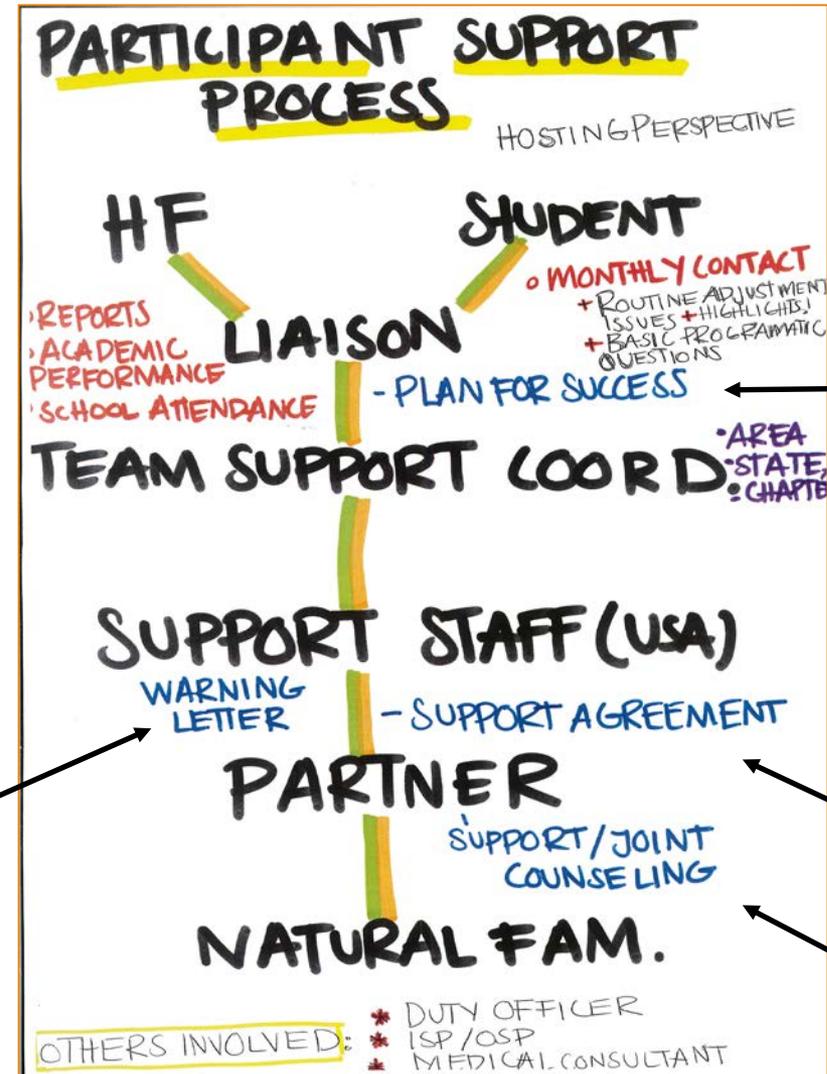
Understanding Department of State Regulations

- Dept. of State issues J-1 visas
- Dept. of State regulates
 - Screening of host family and school placements
 - Placement deadlines
 - Student moves
 - Monthly contact requirement
 - Incident reporting
- Liaison must be within 120 mile radius

Participant Support Process

Communication Chain and Support Tools

- Host Family Questionnaire
- Reflective Essay
- Plan for Success
- Support Agreement
- Warning Letter
- Joint Counseling Call





Explanation of Support tools

Host family rules outlined in the Host Family Questionnaire

Orientations Arrival, Post-Arrival, Mid-stay, Pre-Return, End-of-Stay

Support Meeting a dialogue between the student and host family facilitated by the Liaison and/or Support Coordinator

Cultural Exploration Tool to identify cultural factors influencing a Support issue

Reflective Essay for the student's perspective in his/her own words

Plan for Success a collaborative document including guidelines, expectations, and action items for the student and host family

Support Agreement for Support issues that could jeopardize the placement and/or program

Warning Letter last chance before an Early Return

Joint Counseling Call with partner staff and participant

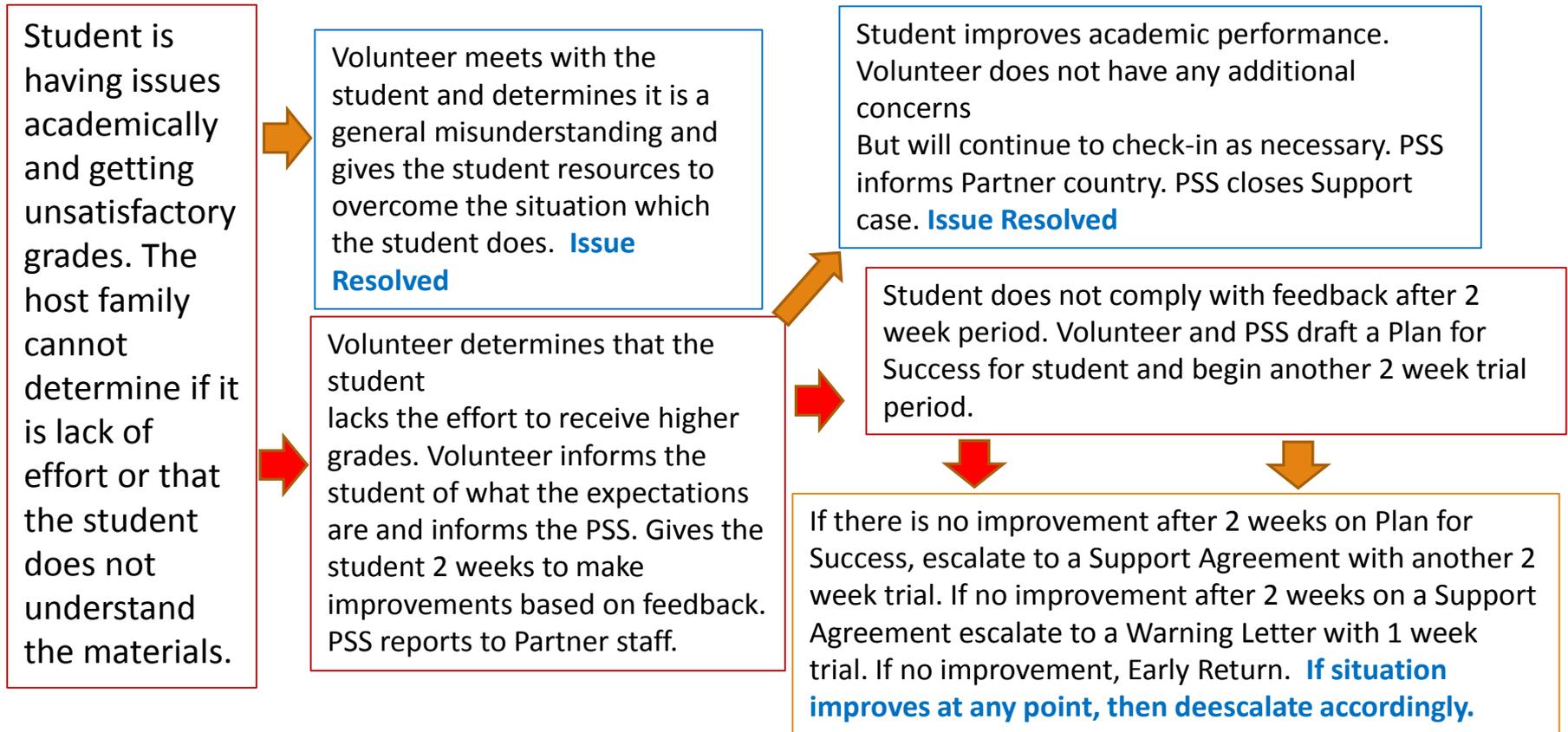
Case Studies



Case Study Directions

1. Elect one person in your group to be “reporter” and one person to be “recorder”
2. Read the case study
3. Discuss these three questions:
 - What are the cultural factors that may be playing a role?
 - What proactive measures could have been taken?
 - What are the next steps?

Support Reporting Example



Support Resources on the Wiki: www.afswiki.org

Support

The Support Tool Box

The Support Tool Box *(an alphabetical list)*

Support Overview

- [Support Aspects Overview](#)
- [AFS Learning Objectives](#)
- [Plan for Pro-active Support](#)
- [Chain of Communications for Support](#)

- [Orientations - table listing materials available](#)

Handbooks Used in Support (primary users listed)

- [Hosted Participants - Welcome to the USA, pre-arrival handbook](#)
- [Hosted Participants - Safety Tips for the USA, pre-arrival handbook](#)
- [Hosted Participants - Orientation Student Handbooks for Hosted Participants](#)
- [Orientation Presenters - Orientation Leaders Guides for Hosted Participants](#)
- [Liaisons - Student Family Liaison Guide](#)
- [Host Families - Host Family Handbook](#)
- [Sending Families - AFS Guide for Families of Participants](#)

Support Structure

Primary Volunteers

- [Team Support Coordinator](#)
- [Associate Support Coordinator](#)
- [Support Family](#)
- [Liaison](#)

Support Case Resources

- [Support Counseling for a Continuum of Issues](#)
- [Support Counseling Plan for Success](#)
- [Support Agreement](#)
- [Joint Staff Counseling Call](#)
- [Warning Letter](#)

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- [Guidelines for Specific Support Situations](#)

- [Effective Communication techniques for Support](#)
- [Clarifying a Problem](#)
- [Having Difficult Conversations with Participants and Families](#)
- [Format for Reporting a Support Situation](#)

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- [Emergency procedures](#)

Other Support Documents and Guidance

- [A Guide to the Grieving Process](#)
- [Culture/Country Specific Information](#)
- [Cultural Negotiation Styles by Country](#)
- [Common concerns from host students & host families](#)
- [Books for Sale - Host Family Survival Kit & Exchange Student Survival Kit](#)

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- [Medical Claim Form](#)
 - [Print a Temporary Student ID Card](#) or [Print a Temporary Medical ID Card](#)
 - [Activity Waivers](#)
 - [Hosted Participant Travel Guidelines - updated November 2014 \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Independent Travel Guidelines](#)

Thank you!

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Central California Coast

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Support Coordinator, Dallas