

YOUR ROLE AS A HOST FAMILY

While waiting for your student to arrive, it is important to remember that he comes to learn how to live in our country, to get to know its positive aspects and those that could be improved, the language, customs, attitudes, school system, beliefs... To a large extent, the impression of Italy that he will take with him to his country will be formed through his relationships with your family. The same thing applies to the perceptions that you will have, which you will know through living with the foreign student.

The purpose of this shared experience is not to convince the student that Italy is better, but the main goal is to develop mutual respect and understanding. Knowing how to accept that "different" does not necessarily mean "better" or "worse" and not making value judgments will help create mutual respect and allow you to understand each other better. The behavior and communication of both parties should not be influenced by stereotypes of their respective cultures. Avoiding prejudices and striving to understand the reason for differences helps to open the mind, to look at what might have previously seemed strange or even wrong from a different perspective and prepares the ground for an interesting, pleasant and affectionate experience.

This experience will allow you to discover new horizons and different perspectives, it will make you reflect, observe yourself through the eyes of a new member of the family, appreciate your role as educators in a different way. The beginning can be difficult, but you can always count on the support of Victoria Languages and Cultures. We hope that you will be able to create an affectionate relationship and have new opportunities to meet and get to know each other.

At the beginning there may be insecurity and shyness on both sides, difficulties of understanding given by the language barrier, but patience, observation and communication will allow both of you to adapt to the new family situation in the best possible way. A good sense of humor, warmth, understanding, together with good teamwork, will make this experience unique and unforgettable.

Remember that your student will have to learn about different customs and traditions, daily routines that you take for granted, but that are not for him/her: table manners, way of showing affections, return times... infinite cultural diversities that, if considered with an open and curious attitude, will allow you to broaden each other's horizons. A practical example: in other countries there is not always the habit of eating meals together with the family; Eating quickly and retiring to one's room is therefore not always to be considered as a lack of respect, but simply as a different habit. It is useful to point out and explain what ours are, from using the bathroom to how and when to wash your clothes. A clear and friendly conversation can avoid misunderstandings and nervousness. The trust you place in the student may depend largely on this communication and the consequent behaviors. Clear and spontaneous communication from the beginning will contribute to mutual confidence and at the same time allow for more delicate discussions, if and when they are necessary.

Goal: To develop mutual respect and understanding

Respect and understanding

Count on the support of the staff Victoria Languages & Cultures

Open and direct communications will allow you to address any topic with serenity

It is important for the student to know the family's habits

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Let your student know what your typical day looks like: when you get up, when you go to bed at night, meal times, and how your schedule and activities change on weekends and/or during periods when you are busiest with your work. Think about how you expect the student to adapt to your pace of life.

As a member of the family, the student should participate in both the mutual pleasures and duties of the family group. You have the same authority over him as you do over your children.

The family rules also apply to the foreign student

Let your student know how you expect them to contribute to family duties, such as tidying up and cleaning their room, participating in weekly cleaning... involve him and this will help him and yourself to abandon the idea of the guest in the house, relationships will gain in naturalness and spontaneity, the commitments related to the house and the family group will help to bring you closer to each other, being able to relax more easily and enjoy each other's company.

Involve the student in the Daily activities of the family

Agree

- On travel: if your children, for example, go to school by bicycle, even the student, after he has learned to use it and has become accustomed to our roads, will go to school by bicycle, or by bus or on foot as our children do.
- on the care of linen: (in foreign countries children often wash their clothes and do not always iron them) Sometimes, precisely because they are not used to seeing the mother of the house carry out this service for everyone, they are not able to fully appreciate it as we would expect if it were offered to them.
- on the use of the bathroom: often in other countries people have different habits regarding their personal hygiene. Let your student know yours, so they know how to organize. In the United States, for example, people take a long shower every morning and this is not necessarily a habit suitable for your family.

Transport

*Cleaning clothes
Who is entitled to it?*

*Personal hygiene
and order*

on the use of the telephone, computer...: as with your children, you will also have to set rules with your student regarding the use of the computer, the volume of music, the use of lights... The phone calls and related expenses are the responsibility of the students, in particular long-distance calls (usually, the students arrive with their calling card for international calls).

*The phone, the
computer...*

on exits and returns: explain to your student the rules of your family regarding outings, return times...

Outputs

on expenses: the personal expenses of the students are at their expense. It is good, however, to also address the topic of "expenses" with them. For example, if the family goes on a trip, it is not certain that they will also have to bear the expenses for the student.

Personal expenses

In the event that the student has to share a room with a "brother" of the same sex and more or less the same age, it is good to have clarified with the Italian students what this situation will entail and to be sure of their full availability; Also remember to find a solution that allows everyone to have a few moments of personal relaxation and privacy.

*Sharing the room...
And privacy?*

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If your student's religion is different from yours, mutual respect is important. It may be interesting for both of you to learn about different customs, but without any attempt to convert to the other religion.

Religion

Always remember that it is important to have the desire and willingness to confront a different sensitivity, to be natural, affectionate, serene and intellectually open.

*A learning
experience for
everyone*

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