Thank You!
Thank you for choosing to be a host family for our visitors from all over the world. We know this can be a wonderful experience for you and your family as well as our guests. This *Handbook* was developed to assist host families in making this a positive and memorable experience for everyone involved.

The purpose of host families in 2022 is to provide emergency shelter and care in case the campsite must be evacuated in an emergency, such as a wildfire or hurricane. Please read all the sections so that you will be fully informed.

Why Host?
Hosting CISV Step Up delegates is a CISV experience that the entire family can share. It gives you and your family a sense of what CISV is about: learning from each other and sharing our cultures to achieve a more harmonious world.

Every delegate that you have the opportunity to host is a unique individual, and yet they are not much different from you or me. Delegates will share with you and your family aspects of their own unique family and culture. But each one is a young person like any other. Delegates will want you to like them. They will miss their families. They will be excited to be here, and yet afraid that you’ll feed them something awful. They will want to be on their own and yet need to be reassured and comforted. They like to laugh, to have fun, to show you what they brought from home, to experience a USA grocery store and to eat at McDonald’s. Delegates that you host before the Step Up begins will be tired and experiencing jet lag. They will look at you like strangers but trust you to take care of them like family.

If you don’t get the opportunity to experience any other CISV program, don’t miss this one! It will leave you with a happy heart and a smile on your face.
Responsibilities of Host Families
1. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of the delegates at all times.
2. To provide adult supervision at all times. Keep in mind that some of the delegates are not accustomed to too much freedom and independence.
3. To help the delegates feel comfortable and enjoy a positive family experience.
4. To share your culture (family meals, family activities, sports, games, etc.).

Step Up Emergency Hosting
1. **NO PHONE CALLS/E-MAILS HOME!** Since the Leaders are in contact with the parents throughout the Step Up, it is recommended that your guests NOT be allowed to call or e-mail home during the homestay. You should contact the parents of the children you are hosting and send them photos of their children during the host stay.
2. Emergency calls are not permitted without the prior approval of the delegation Leader in consultation with the Step Up Staff.
3. You will receive information telling you the delegates’ names, country, and how to either pick them up at camp or at a location in Jacksonville.
4. At the pick up spot, displaying some form of identification, such as a T-shirt, flag, or CISV sign, will be helpful and reassuring to the delegation. Please take a photo of your delegates with the sign at the pick up spot and send it to the chapter if safe under the circumstances.
5. Keep in mind the delegation’s luggage and make any necessary arrangements to transport both the delegates and their luggage to your home.
6. Allow plenty of time to rest, provide plenty of drinks, and avoid over-planning activities.
7. Prior to the Leader’s departure for the Step Up site, make sure you obtain from him/her each delegate’s Health Form and Legal Information Form, as well as any special medical/dietary instructions.
8. For safety reasons, always verify each of your delegates’ ability to swim/dive before letting him/her into the water.
9. You may be asked to transport the delegates to the Step Up site at the appointed times.

Helpful Hosting Hints
1. Follow CISV covid protocols, which may require testing of the host family members as well as the Step Up delegates, masking, social distancing and limiting contact with third parties. We are trying to maintain a Covid bubble.
2. Don’t expect delegates to like all the food you prepare; accept their likes and dislikes. You may want to have food from the delegates’ home country or visit an ethnic restaurant in your area. You may want to take the delegates to the grocery store with you.
3. Don’t feel slighted if the delegates talk among themselves in their own language.
4. If hosting non-English speaking delegates, communicate carefully and clearly. Sometimes it is helpful to give important information in writing, as it may be easier to understand than the spoken language. Use the translate functionality on your phone or computer.

5. If you are hosting the USA delegation, remember that this is a special adventure for them, too. They are just as excited and possibly as homesick as delegates from other countries.

6. Some of the delegates may want to attend religious services while they are staying with you; others may not want to attend. These services may be of their own faith or they may want to experience services of your faith, if it is different. Check with the delegates and Leader to see what they are expecting. Please respect the delegates’ wishes.

7. Please make sure the delegates do not get sunburned. Many visitors are not aware of how quickly they will burn in some areas of the US.

8. Offer your address to the delegates for future correspondence. It is a nice gesture to send mail to the delegates’ parents letting them know how great their child is and that he/she is doing well and is happy. Or send a picture of the delegates. The parents will appreciate hearing from you.

9. Sleeping accommodations can be a bed, a couch, or the floor with a blow up mattress and a sleeping bag. It is best to keep two guests of the same sex together in the same room.

10. Subject to Covid protocols and applicable weather conditions, you may plan some activities but don’t feel you need to entertain the delegates every minute. Delegates may be going on excursions to some places of local interest. Be sure to check with the Step Up Planner and Staff for a list of planned excursions and don’t take your delegates to these locations. We are taking them to the zoo.

11. Examples of possible activities may include museums, amusement parks, mini-golf, baseball games, the zoo, grocery stores.

12. Taking the delegates on long car trips is not permitted for emergency host families. As soon as the emergency is over, we plan for Step Up participants to return to camp if time permits. If you plan to leave the immediate area, you must advise the Step Up Planner, the Homestay Chairperson and the Leader.

13. Extended shopping trips are not necessary, but delegates are often interested in visiting a grocery store or discount-type department store. Please adhere to the Leader’s wishes regarding the amount of money the delegates are allowed to spend.

**House Tour and Rules**

Give a tour of the home upon arrival and review your household rules. Household rules address:

- Which areas of the house may they go into
- Is there an alarm system
- Do you keep your doors/windows closed or locked
- Who to talk to if there is a question, concern, problem
- What to do if you feel sick
• What to do when parent(s) are working or on the phone

Privacy:
• Where is the delegates’ personal space especially if sharing a room
• Are there specific places or times where privacy is expected

Kitchen:
• Specify drinking water vs. washing water
• When are meal times
• Who cooks
• Where are the glasses/plates/silverware
• Where is food allowed
• What to do with dishes/silverware/glasses after their use
• Is it okay to help themselves to what’s in the fridge or cabinets
• What to do when done eating

Bathroom:
• Where are the bathroom locations
• How to work the shower (this should be done on the first day)
• Where to store their personal bathroom needs
• Where to get shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothpaste, lotion, towels, etc (clarify which items are for what if your guest does not speak English well)
• **How to flush the toilet and that it is okay to flush toilet paper down the toilet** (Chinese and possibly other cultures throw toilet paper into the trash can)
• Clarify what to do with feminine hygiene products to female delegates.
• Is there a hair dryer he/she may use?

Bedroom:
• Sleeping time and location
• Where to put their hanging and folded items
• What to do with dirty laundry
• How to turn on/off lights
• Is it okay to open the windows (many countries don’t use air conditioning)
• What to do if cold or hot

Technology:
• Which devices may be used
• How to turn them on and off
• Delegates should not have telephones. If they arrive with phones, please inform their leader and hold the phone for the child until you take the children to camp.
• If your child has a phone, pay attention to the time that your child is with the other delegates to be sure your child isn’t ignoring the children you are hosting while on an
electronic device.

Bikes/personal items:
- Which can be used
- Does the delegate need permission to use the bike or personal items

Homesickness
Homesickness may affect some delegates. Each homesick delegate may display different symptoms. The symptoms may be both physical and emotional. Sometimes even the delegates may not know that what they are feeling is homesickness. If one of your delegates is suffering from homesickness that is severe enough to keep him/her from participating in activities or if he/she is unable to sleep or eat, do not hesitate to call one of the persons listed on the contact information list at the end of this Handbook.

Here are a few suggestions that you might try to help your homesick delegates feel better:
1. Keep them physically busy.
2. Encourage them to talk about their family and country.
3. Offer hugs and tell them you understand.
4. Reassure them that you are confident they can do this.
5. Encourage them to keep a journal and to write about their feelings. Sometimes writing about their emotions can help them identify the causes and enable them to find their own solutions.
6. Take them to a grocery store and let them pick out what they want to eat, or try to find a restaurant that carries food with which they are more familiar.
7. DO NOT let them call home; many years of CISV experience tells us this will only make things worse.

Emergencies and Accidents
Host families must use common sense, act responsibly, document events and ask for assistance in the event of an incident. If such a situation arises:
- Inform the leaders of ANY health or safety incident, no matter how trivial.
- If you need to seek medical assistance, have the leaders accompany you if possible.
- If medical expenses are incurred, obtain a detailed, itemized list of services and charges and ensure all health insurance documents and receipts are obtained.
- Assist the leader in completing a CISV Incident Report Form.
- Carry copies of your visiting delegate’s Health and Legal/Insurance Forms with you on all outings.
| **CISV Step Up**  
| **CONTACT INFORMATION**  |
| --- | --- |
| **Step Up Planner Phone** | Kerri Napoleon: 904 525 3447  
Tara Ondish: 904 294 6258 |
| **Step Up Camp Address** | Camp Suwanee  
Advent Christian Village  
10680 Dowling Park Dr  
Live Oak, FL 32060 |
| **Step Up Camp Director Phone** | Reggie Agulto: 904 903 1578 |
| **Step Up Staff Office Phone** | Jamar: 904 240 9920  
Gabby: 904 728 1616 |
| **Step Up Pediatrician/Doctor Phone** | Prasanthi Reddy: 904 343 4818  
Gauri Dalvi: 319 400 3149 |
| **Step Up Homestay Coordinator Phone** | Beth Rasch: 904 477 3048 |
| **In Case of Emergency:** | Call 911 |
| **Chapter Crisis Team Coordinator Phone** | Karen Lee-Duffell: 904 571 0789  
Cathy McQuade: 904 607 4813 |
Cultural Sensitivity Appendix

Defining Culture

Just as 90% of an iceberg is out of sight below the water line, so 90% of culture is out of sight to the casual observer and out of the conscious awareness of persons from that culture.

What is Cultural Sensitivity?

Cultural sensitivity is a state of mind and attitude. To be culturally sensitive means that we are aware that other cultures exist, that they are as valuable as our own and that we can learn from them. Cultural sensitivity means having respect for customs, values and traditions that differ from our own. By valuing the diversity of cultures, one can begin to explore ways to improve working relationships by using these differences as strengths, not weaknesses.

Why is Cultural Sensitivity Important?

One of the main goals of CISV is to help participants become culturally sensitive. This is achieved through living with and participating in activities with people from different cultures. Through celebrating the diversity of all the individuals in programs, we can help our delegates learn to appreciate both the similarities and the differences of the various cultures of the world.
Awareness of Our Own Ethnocentricity

From birth onward, each child is encouraged to be ethnocentric – to believe that their homeland, people, language, is not only different but also superior to that of other people. “In other places, they (barbarians, foreigners) follow a strange way of life. Ours is the culture; theirs is a culture.”

Before we can learn and be sensitive to other cultures, we need to make sure we understand and are aware of our own culture. Our interpretation of what we perceive when we observe other cultures will always be made within our own cultural framework.

An Asian View of Cultural Differences

This poem helps show an alternative view to cultural diversity and differences

We live in time. You live in space.
We are always at rest. You are always on the move.
We are passive. You are aggressive.
We like to contemplate. You like to act.
We accept the world as it is. You try to change it according to your blueprint.
We live in peace with nature. You try to impose your will on her.
Religion is our first love. Technology is your passion.
We delight to think about the meaning of life. You delight in physics.
We believe in the freedom of silence. You believe in freedom of speech.
We lapse into meditation. You strive for articulation.
We marry first, then love. You love first, and then marry.
Our marriage is the beginning of a love affair. Your marriage is the happy end of a romance. It is an indissoluble bond.
Our love is mute. Your love is vocal.
We try to conceal it from the world. You delight in showing it to others.
Self-denial is a secret to survival. Self-assertiveness is the key to your success. We are taught from the cradle to want less. You are urged every day to want more.
We glorify austerity and renunciation. You emphasize gracious living and enjoyment.
Poverty is to us a badge of spiritual elevation. It is to you a sign of degradation.
In the sunset years of life we renounce the world. You retire to the fruits of your labor & prepare for the hereafter.

Dr. Mai Van Trang, as quoted in Dr. Carolyn Williams, *Reasons for Living and Hoping*, ICCB, 1990.
Gestures
People all over the world use their hands, their heads, their eyes and their bodies to express emotions and communicate. We use gestures on a daily basis. As we travel the world we soon become aware that what may be a polite gesture in one country can be a grave insult in another. While trying to remember all the gestures to avoid, there is one gesture that is known the world over. It is rarely misunderstood whether used by a politician or a child. As you travel the world, this gesture can help you get out of some tough spots. What is this universal miracle gesture? It is the smile. Use it freely and use it often.

OK sign
The “OK” sign in some areas of Latin America is the equivalent of giving someone “the finger.” In France, this means “zero” or “worthless.” In Japan, this is a symbol for money (making the shape of a coin with your thumb and forefinger). Just imagine the difficulty you could run into by simply letting someone know that everything is “OK!”

Thumbs-up sign
Pilots do it to signify that everything is OK, but watch out! In North America and part of Europe, hitchhikers commonly use this signal. However, in Nigeria it is a very rude gesture. In Australia, the thumbs-up sign accompanied by a slight jerk upward is generally used to signal “up yours!”

V for Victory sign
The “V for Victory” sign, with an innocent twist of the wrist so the fingers face inwards could, in England, mean “up yours!” So if you’re not careful with the way you turn your wrist, flashing a peace sign could mean precisely the opposite!

Crazy sign
Rotating the finger around the front of your ear has two entirely different meanings. In Canada and the USA it is usually used to mean that someone or something is crazy. Yet in Argentina, it can be used to indicate that you have a telephone call.

The beckoning sign
When beckoning someone in Canada or the USA, the hand may be raised and the index finger curled back and forth. Yet, in places like Hong Kong and Australia this is used only for calling animals and to do this to a person would be very insulting.

The crossed-fingers sign
Crossing your fingers is used for a sign of good luck in North America and many parts of Europe. However, in Paraguay this can be considered offensive.

The sole of your foot
Showing the sole of your foot in places such as Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Singapore is very offensive. The foot is considered the lowest and dirtiest part of the body. In Thailand, be cautious not to point with your toes, for the head is considered the most sacred and the toe the most inferior.

Personal space
In normal social situations, North Americans generally stand about 75 cm apart from one another. That’s considered the personal comfort zone. In contrast, Latinos and Middle Easterners stand much closer, sometimes even toe-to-toe.