



TOMODACHI–NAJAS Grassroots Exchange Program

Fukushima Youth Cultural Exchange Program

Host Family Application Guide

The Fukushima Youth Cultural Exchange Program is organized by the Japan America Society of Southern California (JASSC), thanks to a generous grant from the TOMODACHI–National Association of Japan-America Societies (NAJAS) Grassroots Exchange Program. JASSC's partners are Living Dreams in Japan.

The program is funded by TOMODACHI's Fund for Exchanges through generous contributions from Toyota Motor Corporation, Mitsubishi Corporation, and Hitachi, Ltd.

What is expected of a host family?

Each host family will host up to two children, within the ages of 13 and 18, from Fukushima Aiiikuen (FA), Aoba Gakuen, Iwaki Ikueisha, and Aizu Jidoen children's homes (orphanage) for the duration of their ten-day visit from July 19 to July 29, 2015.

A host family should be prepared to take care of essential needs that the children will need. Essentially, you will have the responsibilities of two more children in your household. The children are expected to participate in the host family's home life the same as the other children. You can give them light chores to do and rules to follow.

You will need to be willing to provide a safe and friendly environment for the children. Make every effort to ensure that the children feel welcome and are part of the family, with the same privileges and obligations of other family members. Think of how you would like your own child to be treated on an international exchange, and use these ideas in your home.

Host families will provide the two children their own beds to sleep in. The children may share a room with another child, as long as they are of the same gender and approximate age. It is best to try to have the children experience your normal daily life. Please introduce them to family outside the home, friends, neighbors, and with groups you regularly interact.

Host families should explain their rules to their students upon arrival to make sure there will be no problems in understanding and following the rules. Please do not hesitate to contact Japan America Society of Southern California if they are having behavioral issues, communication problems, homesickness, illness or difficulty adapting to your home life.

Help the children explore as much of our culture as you can. Also, encourage them to share their culture with your family.

Specific obligations of host families

- Due to confidentiality concerns, host families are not allowed to post images of their exchange students on any online social website, or to email any images of their students to anyone. Furthermore, host families will strive to ensure other people do not take photos for use on social websites. You are welcome to take photos for your family's personal photo albums or memory, you simply cannot email or post them electronically.
- In choosing host families, the Fukushima Youth Exchange Committee will give priority to families with at least one family member who can speak Japanese. The Committee will also give priority to host families with children of the same gender and age range.
- To ensure the safety of the children, all members of the host family over the age of 18 and living in the host family home must sign a consent for a background check. This background check will be conducted by LA Global Security (<http://laglobalsecurity.com/>). This background check will include the national sex offender registry and public criminal records.
- Host families will be asked to provide meals for their students. Some sponsors or venues we visit may provide meals for lunch or dinner. However, all remaining meals will be provided by the host families.
- Host families will provide transportation for their students.

Are host families paid?

A \$250 stipend is provided to host families by the TOMODACHI–NAJAS Grassroots Exchange Program grant. This stipend will be provided prior to the students' arrival in Los Angeles.

What rules are exchange students expected to follow?

Students are expected to:

- Learn and follow the host family's rules.
- Follow local laws.
- No smoking, illegal drug use or alcohol consumption.
- Not drive a motorized vehicle.

What challenges might the student experience during the exchange?

- Homesickness
- Language difficulty
- Difficulty interpreting culture-specific social cues
- Host-family conflicts
- Different rules and expectations from their home
- Various emotional difficulties

If you experience any of these problems and are unable to resolve them on your own a member of Japan America Society can help.

If you have any further questions on what to expect as a host family, please feel free to contact Kay Amano, Programs Director at Japan America Society of Southern California at (310) 965-9050, ext 104 or amano@jas-socal.org.

Please completed return application form to Japan America Society of Southern California. You may deliver it in person, by fax or by email.

Japan America Society of Southern California

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