

# ASHS NATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE



Australian Stock Horse

## GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH AMBASSADORS

All youth ambassadors are required to understand the objectives of the ASHS National Youth Exchange Program. In 2016 the Board of Directors of the Australian Stock Horse Society Limited adopted the ASHS National Youth Exchange Program. It is part of the Society's ongoing commitment to the ASHS Youth Development Program.



### The aims and objectives of the Youth Exchange Program are:

- Promote and build the profile of Australian Stock Horses and the ASH Society.
- To offer Youth Members the opportunity to take part in a unique experience.
- To develop sportsmanship, leadership and horsemanship skills and build friendships through sharing family and community life with members of the Society from other parts of Australia.
- To promote understanding and goodwill throughout the ASHS world.
- To provide an opportunity for Youth members to be exposed to different equine disciplines & competitions.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

You have been selected to be a youth ambassador in the ASHS National Youth Exchange Program. While on exchange you must at all times behave in a manner that will in no way bring discredit. You will be living with, and treated as part of a family during your stay. You are to be courteous and respectful at all times.

On your application form you may have requested to be hosted in a particular town or state. Wherever possible, your request will be given consideration; however placement is governed by availability of host families. No guarantees are given as to the location of your exchange or that your first choice will be met.

It is recommended you maintain a folder to file the information you will receive from the ASHS National Youth Exchange Committee. All correspondence must be read, understood and where necessary responded to promptly. All travel documents, fare concessions, ambulance and health insurance needs to be copied and a copy sent to your Host Family, the ASHS Youth Exchange Coordinator. Make sure your parents or guardian also retain a copy. These documents and other relevant information are the responsibility of the exchange youth ambassador. Your travel documents are important documents and should be treated as such. If any of these documents are lost while on exchange you must report it immediately to your host family and notify your parents or guardian.

Any delay in responding or returning required documents may lead to a delay in finalising the exchange. Please be prompt to advise of any change to your primary contact details including your email address as this is the main method of communication. If there are any details you require concerning your trip you should enquire through the Head Office of the ASHS.

### PREPARING FOR THE VISIT

Once you have been accepted to take part in an exchange you will be provided with the details of your Host Family as soon as that information becomes available. As soon as you have this information, you should commence communicating with your hosts. Do not forget to buy small gifts for your Host Family. Something made or produced in your area would no doubt be appreciated.

Your Host Family will be interested in where you live so it is advisable to have some photos to show your host family. It is also a good idea to brush up on your general knowledge about your town and district as it is likely your Host Family will be keen to learn about your home.

Once you are accepted into the exchange program it is advised you know what to expect regarding the climate in the region that you are going to and you will need to pack accordingly. Remember that the climate can vary considerably within Australia and within states.

You will need to confirm exactly what gear you will be required to take i.e. saddle, competition saddlecloth etc. If you are flying and you are required to take your saddle please check with the airline in relation to restrictions on weight and oversize baggage.

**Youth ambassadors are required to supply their own safety equipment including a current Australian Standard Approved (or recognized equivalent) helmet and riding boots. It is your responsibility along with your Host Family that these are worn when required.** Further information can be found through the following link to Horse Safety Australia: <http://www.horsesafetyaustralia.com.au/standards/>

If you intend buying clothes, souvenirs etc. while on exchange it is advisable to remember that if you have travelled by plane to your destination you need to be aware of luggage restrictions. On most domestic flights the Checked Baggage Allowance is 1 piece with a maximum weight of 23Kg while carry-on baggage is usually limited to 7kg.

You are encouraged to wear your uniform while travelling which includes the Youth Exchange Polo Shirt and softshell jacket, along with respectable jeans or trousers and covered shoes. The uniform helps your Host Family to identify you once you arrive at your destination.

Once you are accepted to the Youth Exchange program an order form for the uniform will be sent to you. Send the form back to the Program committee immediately to allow time for the shirts and softshell jacket to be ordered and embroidered and to allow time for the uniform to be sent to you by post.

### Money - How Much Do I Need? How should I take it?

In general, everything is paid for in advance – transport, ASH Event entries and your food and accommodation is provided by the Host Family. Essentially, all you need money for is for personal needs, gifts, snacks, outings like movies etc. Depending on your travel arrangements/itinerary there may be a need for food on stop-overs. We recommend a combination of cash and debit cards as usually the safest.

### **Your travel expenses are the responsibility of you and your family.**

- Please be aware when booking flights that you understand the regulations and age restrictions for children flying unaccompanied.

### DURING THE VISIT

On your arrival at your destination you will be met by your Host family.

Your Host Family has probably spent a great deal of time preparing for your visit. Be courteous and show interest in whatever they have planned for you. You must be willing to adapt to the family's routine. While you are with your Host Family, you should be careful to avoid any negative comments about their home, their horses or any other comments they may cause offence.

Keep an open mind, there are usually two points of view on most issues; try to see the other side even if you do not necessarily agree. Above all, be tactful and diplomatic when your host expresses views opposed to your own.

Do not neglect to contact your family and the Exchange Coordinator to advise of your safe arrival. Contact should be kept to a minimum. Too much contact with home and friends can contribute to homesickness and may infringe on time that should be spent with the family. Be mindful of using electronic devices as they can often be seen as anti-social.

When you leave your Host Family, do not forget to thank them for having you. Sometimes, in the excitement of going, young people forget this very important courtesy. Sometimes it is useful to buy a couple of cards prior to going on exchange that you can use as a quick thank you to present the family when you leave.

### AFTER THE VISIT

Upon returning home you should send a thank you note to your Host Family. If you have not been asked to address your local ASHS Branch please think about contacting the Branch to let them know you would be happy to share details of your Youth Exchange by addressing the Branch. It is also advised that you write a letter of thanks to any person who supplied a reference or helped you either prior to or during the exchange. Your ASHS Branch may ask for your help in reaching other youth for the Youth Exchange Program and the ASHS would appreciate it if you accepted the invitation to help promote and increase awareness of the Youth Exchange Program.

## CHECKLIST

### Preparing for the Visit:

- Do I understand the purpose and aims of the Program?
- Am I co-operating with ASHS National Youth Exchange Committee?
- Have I sent copies of all necessary insurance to the ASHS Youth Exchange Coordinator?
- Have I completed and returned all necessary documentation as requested by the ASHS National Youth Exchange Committee?
- Are all my travel arrangements confirmed?
- Have I confirmed my drop-off and pick-up details both leaving on and returning from the exchange?
- Have I written or communicated with my Host Family?
- Have I organised a gift for my Host Family?

### After the Visit:

- Have I written a thank you letter to my Host Family?
- Have I written a brief report & included photos on my exchange and completed the evaluation questionnaire, and forwarded it to the ASHS Youth Exchange Coordinator?

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For further information and enquiries please contact:

ASHS Youth Exchange Coordinator

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