

Cyprus Friendship Program

HOST FAMILY HANDBOOK

A Guide to an Enjoyable Summer

Revised 6/13/2018

Cyprus Friendship Programme, an organization of volunteers cooperating from both the north and south sides of Cyprus, and the Cyprus Friendship Program, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in the United States, share the mission to promote peace and understanding in Cyprus by bringing together teenagers with leadership potential from both sides of the divided island, encouraging lifelong friendships among them, and extending these friendships to their friends and families.

BACKGROUND OF THE PROGRAM



Children's Friendship Project for Northern Ireland, Inc.

The Cyprus Friendship Program is based upon the successful all-volunteer Children's Friendship Project for Northern Ireland, Inc. American, Peggy Barrett, with support from her husband, Jack, founded CFPNI in 1987 based upon the simple vision that the divisions in Northern Ireland could only be overcome by building understanding, trust, and friendships between the teenaged leaders of the future from the two communities. Friendships would be supported by Americans who would host a cross-community pair of teens and who would continue to support their friendships in the future.

CFPNI ended after the summer of 2007, only because the situation in Northern Ireland had improved to such a degree that bringing teens from the two communities to the U.S. was no longer needed for them to build friendships. Over its 21 years, CFPNI brought teens from more than 2,000 different families in Northern Ireland and hosted them in about two-dozen different areas of the United States. An enormous network of friendships that were formed through the program remains today.

Several of CFP host families and U.S. coordinators were active in CFPNI. Peggy's vision lives on, and she had a chance to meet all the 2009 CFP teens, when they were in the U.S.



HasNa, Inc.

While the Cyprus Friendship Program is based upon the Children's Friendship Project for Northern Ireland, it was founded in 2009 by HasNa, Inc., a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C. HasNa promotes understanding and economic empowerment in culturally divided areas of the world and encourages individuals and communities in such areas to work together toward peaceful coexistence. More information about HasNa may be found at hasna.org.

From Pilot to Full Implementation

HasNa founded CFP in January 2009, kicking off a two year pilot program. In the summer of 2009, 10 pairs of teens were hosted in the Washington, DC area. In 2010, the program had seven pairs in the DC area and two pairs in New Hampshire. In 2011, the first year of the official program, CFP hosted thirty pairs of teens in seven states: New Hampshire, Connecticut, New York, Maryland, Washington, DC, Virginia, and Oregon.

In 2012, through a mutual agreement between the boards of both HasNa and the Cyprus Friendship Program, we became our own 501(c)(3) nonprofit. We remain grateful to HasNa for sharing and supporting the vision of the Cyprus Friendship Program.

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

While the time the Cypriot teens are in the U.S. is extremely valuable, it is by no means the beginning of the program. Teens interview and are selected in March. Immediately, the Cypriot coordinators organize events for the teens, both social and leadership training activities. By early spring, the teens are paired and soon after their families begin to meet with each other. By the time the teens reach the United States, they have been participating in the program for several months as a group and are poised to deepen the friendship with their matched partner from the other side of the divide.

After their return to Cyprus, there is a graduation ceremony held over Columbus Day weekend in October in Nicosia, the divided capital, to which all host families are invited. This ceremony is a rare gathering of over 400 people from both sides of Cyprus in one place, celebrating the friendships formed over the year. But, more than that, it is the beginning of the next phase of the peace-building process for these teens. The ceremony itself is a commitment of the group to work together for the next year to promote peace and understanding between the two communities, by continuing the work they have begun and by helping to promote the program for next year's group of CFP teens.

CYPRUS

Since 1974, the island of Cyprus has been divided between the Greek-speaking side in the southern part of Cyprus and the Turkish-speaking side in the northern part of Cyprus. The history leading to this division is long and complicated.

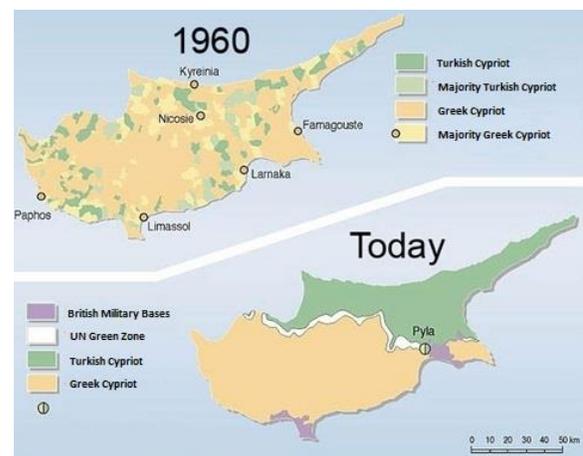
Briefly, Cyprus is located on the eastern side of the Mediterranean Sea, approximately 50 miles west of Syria, south of Turkey and north of Greece. It was settled in pre-historic times, and the Museum of Cyprus contains artifacts believed to be up to 10,000 years BC. Due in

large part to its location, Cyprus has been infused with many cultures over its history, including invasions by many empires and countries. (Too lengthy to relate here, the history of Cyprus is worthy of research for interested host families.)

In 1878, the Ottoman Empire ceded Cyprus rule to Britain, and the British controlled Cyprus until 1960—first as a protectorate and then as a colony.

Following independence from British rule in 1960, the Republic of Cyprus was established. The joint republic collapsed in 1963 and tension between the Greek-speaking and Turkish-speaking communities intensified. In the ensuing years, hostility between the two sides increased and a physical barrier called the Green Line was erected in 1964. It separated the island into two parts “from Morphou through Nicosia to Famagusta” and is still patrolled by troops from the United Nations (Housden 2004).

In July 1974, a Greek engineered coup took place on the island and, in response, Turkey landed troops on the island with the intention of protecting the Turkish-Cypriot community (BBC Cyprus Timeline 2009). Not long after, fighting between the two sides broke out, and about 160,000 Greek-Cypriots fled to the South. A year later, 50,000 Turkish-Cypriots fled north. Eventually, in 1983, Turkish-Cypriots unilaterally declared their independence and established



the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which today is only recognized by Turkey (Housden 2004). Turkish troops still maintain a sizeable presence on the island to this day (Reuters 2008).

Ever since 1974, there has been a series of failed plans and initiatives to negotiate an agreement to reunify the island, mostly under the guidance of the UN. In 2004, United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, drafted the 2004 Annan Plan intending to reunify the island. The northern Turkish-Cypriots accepted the Annan Plan with 64.9% voting in favor; however, 75.8% of Greek-Cypriots rejected it. On May 1, 2004, Cyprus as a divided island was offered entry into the European Union without resolving the conflict (Jenkins 2009). Following the Annan Plan, Mr. Mehmet Ali Talat was elected the new Turkish-Cypriot leader in 2005 (BBC Cyprus Timeline 2009). With his election came a new effort for the reunification of the island and on July 8, 2006, both sides issued a joint statement committing to the resumption of negotiations.

In February 2008, Demetris Christofias won the election for president in the southern part of Cyprus and a new series of peace talks followed in September of that year (Jenkins 2009). The talks between Cypriot president Demetris Christofias and the Turkish-Cypriot president Mehmet Ali Talat began with a great deal of optimism. "There is a common will and a common desire and a common effort to achieve this target," Christofias stated in reference to the peace process (BBC 2008). These leaders achieved some significant progress including the opening of several crossings of the Green Line.

However, in April 2009, parliamentary elections took place in the northern part of Cyprus shifting power from Mr. Talat's party, the

Republican Turkish Party to the National Unity Party. The National Unity Party favors a two-state settlement rather than the federal model which was being discussed between Mr. Christofias and Mr. Talat (Hadjicostis 2009).

Negotiations have continued with periodic interruptions to the present. The current leaders, Mr. Nicos Anastasiades, president of the Republic of Cyprus and Mr. Mustafa Akinçi, president of the northern part of Cyprus, had the most hopeful round of negotiations since the Annan Plan, but these collapsed in July 2017.

Cyprus remains a divided island, with the Turkish-speaking community in the northern part of island and the larger Greek-speaking community in the southern part, separated by UN Peacekeepers. Each community has its own version of history and is familiar with the suffering that it has experienced at the hands of the other. There is a serious divide and contact between the two communities is still limited. Teens in each community, indeed anyone born after 1974, have grown up with little, if any, contact with anyone from the other community.

Even those teens willing to explore a friendship with a teen from the other community have little ability to do so. While it is possible to pass through one of the few checkpoint crossings separating them, when they do, they enter a land that uses a different language, where they know many are unfriendly to them. Their cellphones do not work on the other side. And, they have no place to go where they know there will be counterparts from the other side who might have an interest in meeting them. So, CFP provides a rare, safe opportunity for them to meet one another.

THE CFP TEENS & THEIR COMMUNITIES

CFP teens are chosen equally from both communities. **CFP teens are selected from the full spectrum of economic backgrounds.**

All of the teens have been affected in some way by the civil unrest and tension of the 1963 and 1974 events. Some of the teens have “missing relatives” from the 1974 war.

Since the island is divided by the Green Line, the two communities spend their free time mostly within their own community. However, many people cross the borders every day. Nearly all children attend school in their own community. While the formally used language in the northern part of Cyprus is Turkish and in the southern part is Greek, many Cypriots can communicate well in English.

Thus, there have been two different cultures since 1974 with minimal interaction.

Schooling in Cyprus

Both communities have their own public and private schools.

In the last year of primary school, children take tests to determine which post-primary school they will attend, either a high school or a technical school. At age 18 all pupils take exams in a wide choice of subjects such as A-levels at their existing school or have private lessons to get prepared for A-levels.

Students apply to universities during their final year of school and are told by the university what A-Level results must be achieved for acceptance. A-Level exams are taken at the end of May and in early June.

Many Greek Cypriot students pass the exams and enter universities in Greece or in Cyprus, or they may go abroad, usually to the UK or the U.S. Turkish Cypriots enter universities in Turkey or in Northern Cyprus, or similarly they may go to the UK or U.S.

Depending upon the age of your teens and their school program, you may have teens entering their final A-level year with very important exams facing them in the spring.

BEFORE THE TEENS ARRIVE

Pre-summer Teen Activities

The CFP coordinators in Cyprus hold multiple meetings with the teens from March to June before their trip to the U.S. These meetings are designed to be both social and community-oriented. At least one of the meetings includes the teens and their families. Before the trip to the U.S., the CFP Executive Director or another U.S. CFP Officer attends and participates in a briefing of teens and parents held the weekend before the teens travel to the U.S. At this briefing, an overview of American life is presented, the program concept is reinforced, rules of conduct are restated, and any last minute questions are answered.

Your teens were paired in March (by selecting their own partners) and, when possible, they have visited each other's homes, which involve crossing the border. They are participating in CFP sponsored activities in Cyprus. The friendship has started before they arrive in the U.S., or at least it has been determined by both the teens and the Cypriot coordinators to have a viable chance of forming.

HOSTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Before the teens leave Cyprus

Contact each family in Cyprus before the teens arrive. Reach out via email, chat, Skype and/or telephone. Please arrange to speak to both the teens, as well as their parents. It will provide comfort to the parents and offer the teens a chance to ask questions. If possible, try to maintain contact after the initial call; this additional contact can help reduce the possibility of homesickness once the teens arrive.

Most Cypriots have access to computers, so email, Facebook, and Skype are likely options for communication with them. While the teens speak English, be sensitive to the possibility that their parents and family members may not be comfortable speaking English.

Note: If you need help with the technical aspects of email, Skype, and Facebook, please speak to your local coordinator. To dial from the U.S., dial 011 followed by the number as listed on the teens' applications.

Parents of the Teens

Participating in CFP can be an act of courage and trust on the part of the Cypriot families. Many of them have never been to the United States. Moreover, they are taking a risk in their own communities by participating, as there are extreme factions on both side of the divide who do not wish to see peace-building programs succeed.

We cannot emphasize too strongly the benefits of getting the parents involved. This should start with your first phone/Skype call, letter or e-mail.

Most families will immediately express their gratitude at your willingness to host their children. Even so, it is a big step for these parents to entrust their children with you.

Please assure them that their children will be well supervised and in a supportive neutral home. Please also assure them that they are going to a safe environment. The impression of the U.S. in Cyprus may be that we are a much more violent and crime-ridden society than they. Many parents may have concerns about the safety of their child.

Please contact your area coordinator, if you have difficulty reaching your teens' families prior to arrival.

GETTING STARTED

Flight information (e.g., flight numbers, times of arrival and departure) will be sent to you in early June. Please be at the airport to meet your teens when they arrive.

Make sure that your area coordinator knows when the teens have arrived at the airport and are in your custody. They will make sure that the information is provided to the Executive Director, who will relay the information to the Cypriot Coordinators.

In addition, have each teen call home as soon as they reach your home safely. Their parents will be waiting to hear from them no matter how late it might be there (+7 hours from the East Coast, +10 hours from the West Coast). Use email or text messaging if a telephone is not possible.

Either you or the area coordinator should take their passports, airline tickets (if provided), medical insurance forms, parental permission forms and instructions for safe keeping. Both the area coordinator and the host parents should have either the original documents or copies of them whenever they are with the teens in case a medical issue arises. It is strongly advised that only copies of passports be carried in order to ensure the originals are not lost.

PLEASE CARRY A PHOTOCOPY OF THE INSURANCE INFORMATION WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES IN CASE OF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY.

Establish House Rules

It is extremely important to discuss any House Rules and expectations that you have in the first few days that the teens are with you. Hold a family meeting to go over any ground rules, such as television viewing, curfews, food rules, as well as any chores you may like to have them perform while in your home, such as making their bed, cleaning up their dishes, laundry, etc. As discussed later, it is important to understand that many Cypriot teens are not expected to do chores at home, so your requests may sound strange or even off-putting. It is CFP's experience that part of the success in building friendships is to immerse the teens into key aspects of American culture and that teen chores are considered as part of teens adopting increasing responsibilities as they grow up. It is also important for the teens to understand that shared chores avoid burdening one family member with all the chores. The area coordinator will also discuss this with the teens in their welcome gathering during the first week the teens are here.

The teens will be wearing a CFP T-shirt when they arrive. **Tell the teens that their T-shirts are not to be modified by writing on them or cutting them at the neckline, etc.** Please make sure they are wearing it at public events, weather permitting, and definitely on their return flight. We rely on others to escort them at airports. T-shirts are crucial for identification and assuring that the teens are accounted for and met at their destination.

This is also a good time to remind them of the "no emailing or posting messages on computers" and no cell (mobile) phone policy. Also, remind them of the limited telephone calls home:

- Individual call on arrival at host family
- 3 individual calls (approx. 30 mins.

each)

- Optional: 1 group family call by teen pair with both families (approx. 1 hr.)

In the Event of Any Problem

If you or either of the teens is experiencing any problem, either you and/or the teens should contact your area coordinator. No problem is too small. Many times a call from a U.S. or Cypriot coordinator can be helpful to assess a situation, resolve a misunderstanding, or change a behavior. Our coordinators are experienced and willing to help. We do not want unhappy teens. We also do not want unhappy hosts. This experience may be as much of a cultural shock to you as it is to your visitors.

Let your CFP coordinator know if you have any reason to believe that the two teens are not pursuing a friendship or if either seems not to subscribe to the program's goals.

Homesickness

It is best to plan only light activities for at least 24 hours after their arrival. Aside from cultural and family adjustments, there is a seven to ten hour time change, depending on their destination. In addition, many of the teens are so excited about the trip that they may not sleep for a day or two before leaving. Thus, many teens experience a few days of "jet-lag."

Occasionally, homesickness occurs among the teens, particularly during the first week to ten days. For some, it may strike later, such as when they receive a letter from home. **The more contact the teens have with you before their arrival, the easier the adjustment.**

IMPORTANT GROUND RULES

Our overriding concerns are that the teens be safe and that they be treated equally, with their differing views respected.

Child Protection

CFP is committed to the protection of the teens in the program and has defined the CFP Child Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedures. CFP takes measures to minimize the chance that we will have issues of abuse.

Hosts should be careful to avoid situations and actions that would leave them open to accusations of abuse. Similarly, hosts should make sure that CFP teens don't get into settings where they may be vulnerable to abuse by others, including U.S. teens.

CFP's Child Abuse Prevention Policy and Procedures are attached to this handbook

Health Issues

The teens come with health insurance. Hosts should review these medical forms carefully upon the teens' arrival. In the event of an illness, obtain appropriate medical care. In the event of a medical emergency or if you need a form or have questions about our insurance, contact the Executive Director. CFP covers the deductible; send the Executive Director a copy of the bill for reimbursement. Complete insurance instructions are provided under separate cover.

Other Emergencies

In the event of some other type of emergency, contact your area coordinator immediately. If you are unable to reach them, contact the Executive Director. Either will help contact Cyprus and assist you with any questions.

Traveling during the summer

Let your area coordinator know when you are going to be away from home for more than 24 hours, where you are going to be, and how you can be reached. This is important, so that the teens can be contacted in the event of an emergency back home.

Handling the Teens

Treat the teens equally in every respect.

You are encouraged to discuss with the teens their lives in Cyprus, i.e. their families, schools, friends, towns, interests, etc. Asking them to discuss the reasons for their participation in CFP is also welcome, as long as the teens feel the conversation is neutral, non-judgmental and safe. Allow the teens to initiate with you any conversation about the conflict or the peace negotiations. They may have deeply felt opinions, and we do not need to get them into a heated debate. These discussions may already be taking place outside of your earshot. The goal of this program is to build lasting understanding and friendship between each pair during the U.S. stay. It is up to them when they feel safe enough with each other to discuss the conflict directly. They need to find what they have in common. They likely have strong opinions about what divides them. Please discourage your friends from raising subjects related to the conflict but encourage them to ask the teens about their lives. These are very sensitive issues and must be treated with great respect, neutrality, empathy and care. If your teens bring up the conflict with you, it is important to listen and ensure any questions or comments you make are neutral and sensitive to both teens.

Your area coordinator is your resource for any questions and will organize a group conflict resolution workshop which should facilitate these types of discussions.

Contact with the Media

Contacts with the press and media are encouraged and should be coordinated through your area coordinator. A question on the teen parents' portion of the application asks if they consent to their child being interviewed by the media. Rarely is there an objection. If your teen's parents objected, you will be notified by your area coordinator.

Dating, Driving and Other Activities

CFP does not allow the teens to date. Only group activities are permitted. Discourage anything that will separate them. If they go out, let it be with other youth in the area with adult supervision. Have them always go everywhere together as a pair. Even if the Cypriot teens have driver's licenses, they are not allowed to drive cars or other motor vehicles in the U.S. during their four-week stay and they should not ride with drivers under the age of 18 unless an adult is also present. At no time are the teens allowed to ride on the backs of motorcycles or other motorized, open vehicles (other than cars).

The teens are not allowed to drink any type of alcohol – even if they say that they do so at home. The teens are not allowed to smoke cigarettes, cigars, or partake of recreational marijuana, even if your state permits. Finally, the teens are not allowed to buy any cigarettes, cigars, marijuana or liquor to take home.

The teens should not travel to see others in their family or their Cypriot friends in the U.S. Similarly, such individuals should not be allowed to cause one teen to have advantages over the other (e.g., be taken separately to events or to receive gifts).

The teens are not to go off alone. They are not American street-wise. Remember that Cyprus has a population of one million and the cities and towns are not as complex as ours. Also, the teens will not have cell phones to call should they get lost. Similarly, the teens are not to be left alone at home for extended periods of time. However, leaving them while you take a quick trip to the store is no problem, assuming you feel they are safe.

You should encourage the teens to be active. As soon as insurance has been set up, each area coordinator will notify you with the list of activities not covered. Beyond this list, we hope that teens can stay active and engaged.

Telephone/Skype Calls

Telephone or Skype calls can be a big issue. It is your telephone/computer and the teens should seek your permission to use them.

Each teen is required to telephone his/her parents upon their safe arrival. The parents will not mind the call in the middle of the night. The teens' families are asked to Skype no more than once a week, except in the event of an emergency. These calls may include 3 individual calls each, no more than 30 minutes long. We encourage one group call of the teen pair speaking with both families together if possible – no more than one hour long. This is a total of 4 individual phone/Skype calls home each over the four weeks with one possible group call. **We recommend one per week per teen. The group call is additional and may not be replaced with an extra individual call.**

In setting these communication restrictions, the program seeks to balance several different factors. CFP wants the parents of the teens to know that their children are doing well. Calls are restricted to allow the teens to spend their four weeks together, getting away from everything going on back at home.

International calls should *not* be made to or received from non-family members. Host families are encouraged to send private e-mails to the parents of the teens on a more frequent basis. The parents will very much appreciate it.

Teens are prohibited from bringing over cell phones, or purchasing them while in the U.S. If your teen does bring his/her cell phone, we ask you to confiscate it from the teen and turn it over to the area coordinator until departure. Contact your coordinator if you have concerns.

Use of technology

Internet use is allowed only under your supervision for purposes such as to show you information about Cyprus or topics being

discussed together. Internet use involving any social media is prohibited for the teens during their stay in your home. For example, the teens may not post comments, photos, or status changes on Facebook during their stay. We strongly ask for host family cooperation in enforcing this policy.

Although the policy may seem overly strict to you, it is based on past experience and seeks to address two concerns.

- 1) *That the relationship between each pair of teens remains the primary focus of the month.* They return to their social media upon their return. We have found that social networking, emailing and text messaging between teens and friends back home or other teens on the program can tend to draw the focus away from their partner.
- 2) *That the host family and the pair of teens have an adequate chance to adjust to each other and that their relationship has a chance to grow.* What we have learned from experience is that, when teens are allowed to “compare notes” on their experiences while in the U.S., either directly with other teens in the program or indirectly through relatives in Cyprus, extra pressures can damage the bond with host families if the teens somehow feel short-changed. These are unnecessary distractions to our mission.

Please note that in the past some host families have allowed their teens to e-mail home, only to regret that decision!

The teens already have been participating in a group Facebook page. Under your supervision at the family computer, the teens may find it a valuable tool to explore each other’s different online social communities. They may find many commonalities. **What they are asked not to do is comment or post to avoid all contact and misinterpretations with their friends at home.**

If you are not around to supervise, please do not allow them access to the computer. Setting password protected access on your computer will be helpful.

Religion

The teens will likely be either Greek Orthodox or Muslim, and may or may not practice their faith.

There is a question on the parents’ portion of the application asking if there is any objection to their child attending religious services of other religions. As with the case of contact with the media, most parents have no objection. Your area coordinator will inform you if your teen’s parents object. **We require that host families respectfully honor this request.** Should your teen request to attend their faith’s services, feel free to make the necessary arrangements and contact your coordinator if you need help. On the other hand, if the parents or teens don’t object, you can expose the teens to the religious diversity in the U.S.

Under no circumstances, should there be any effort, by anyone, to change or challenge the religious beliefs of either of the teens.

Firearms

It is CFP policy that the teens should not come in contact with any type of firearm during their visit. We extend this to include toy guns, rifles, etc. If you have firearms, please keep them locked up and unloaded during your teens’ stay.

Movies and videos

Hosts should exercise discretion about what movies and/or videos the teens are allowed to view. Please consider the movie's rating as you would for your own children and be aware of the movie’s content before allowing teens to view it. Politically, racially and religiously sensitive films should be avoided.

American cable and satellite television can be a source of endless interest. Please keep the use of television, downloaded movies and videos in proper proportion to more active, relationship building or educational activities.

Responsibility

Please understand that you alone are the guardian of the teens while visiting. They must be under adult supervision. Your residence is registered with the American embassy as their temporary address. Please do not allow the teens to stay overnight with someone else, unless that stay is specifically cleared with your area coordinator. Similarly, it is not advisable to have them attend a camp, unless it is discussed with and cleared with the program.

Treat them as family, not tourists, as you would want your children treated in a foreign country.

CFP Leadership Program

The teens' stay in the U.S. is referred to as the U.S. Residential portion of the CFP program. It plays an important part in CFP's goal of not only developing friendships but also developing the next generation of leaders. To that end, during their stay in the U.S. the teens will participate in a 4-part Leadership Program. The program has group activities to build teamwork skills, peacebuilding skills, sustainability awareness, and community service. CFP will endeavor to have one of these required group events during each week of the teens' stay, but, due to scheduling commitments beyond our control, this may not be possible.

The Leadership Program is a key component of their stay. Should your family commitments preclude the teens from attending an event, please contact your area coordinator to discuss the situation and see if other arrangements can be made or if the teens can be exempt from the event. To the greatest extent possible, area coordinators will try to accommodate family vacations to enable the teens to participate in

all four leadership events. Transportation to some of the events should not put undue stress on the hosts. Please request assistance and seek carpooling when possible.

We recognize the need for host families to be able to set their own family's schedule for the summer. We will announce scheduled events prior to the teens' arrival in the U.S. and will do so as early as possible.

Money

Our money system will be foreign to your two visitors. It is advisable to supervise their first purchases. Some teens will have worked very hard to earn their spending money, and many will have received money from relatives for the trip. They are instructed to bring not more than \$500 and will expect to buy souvenirs for themselves as well as gifts for parents and friends.

Host families are expected to cover their general living expenses and the costs of any special events you choose to organize for them, including event tickets, meals, etc.

If the teens ask to attend a non-group activity which you would normally not undertake, you may ask them to cover their own expenses while you cover yours. Always feel free to decline such a request, especially if it imposes a burden on you or your family.

Encourage them to leave the shopping for gifts until late in the visit when they will have a better idea of which optional group activities they should like to attend requiring self-pay (see below), as well as what is available for purchase and the relative cost of various gifts. The area coordinator will discuss at the welcome gathering the importance of budgeting. Please help them evaluate the condition of their budget before buying souvenirs and gifts. Please also be sure the teens put aside money to check their bags on their return flight to Cyprus unless they are

flying on a carrier which does not charge for checked luggage. They may not bring credit cards or ask for additional money.

[Note: the program recognizes that \$500 is a large sum, larger than many would allow their own children to have or to spend over a month. The limit has been set, however, in recognition that this may be the only chance for the teens to visit the U.S., that they may wish to participate in the optional group activities or that they will wish to purchase gifts. It is also interesting to note that prices in the U.S. may be lower than at home.]

If you buy something for one teen, please do the same for the other, so that there will be no inequities or misunderstandings.

Some hosts have found that they can reduce their costs of hosting by informing businesses, churches and civic groups about the teens and the program. Many are willing to donate non-cash items such as event tickets or meals. Your area coordinator has materials describing the program that you can use. **At no time should the host families solicit or accept cash gifts or donations to support host families or their teens.**

Optional social group activities organized by the area coordinator may involve costs such as transportation, tickets, food, etc. If your teens choose to participate, they can pay the costs.

As the CFP program has grown over the years and the teens returning to Cyprus have compared their experiences, new teens coming to the U.S. may have expectations of what they will do and where they will visit that differ from their host families. **The teens are here on a peace mission—not on a vacation**—and should not make their host families uncomfortable by asking for extra trips or experiences. Our hosts are not tour guides and are not expected to fund the teens’ desires. Your area coordinator will set expectations with the teens at the welcome gathering. If your teens become

demanding, feel free to contact your area coordinator for advice or intervention.

THE BOARD OF CFP, INC. HAS VOTED TO DISALLOW TRIPS TO NEW YORK CITY BY AREA GROUPS OR BY HOST FAMILIES IN RESPONSE TO PAST PRESSURE EXERTED BY THE CYPRIOT TEENS ON THEIR HOSTS. THIS TRIP HAS BECOME A DISTRACTION TO OUR MISSION.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Personalities

Please remember that the teens may take some time to adjust. Do not treat them like guests. Make them part of your family. Give them chores to do – making their beds, doing dishes, washing the car, etc. However, they should not be treated as nannies, gardeners or other home professionals.

Some teens are more articulate or expressive than others. So, it is possible that, despite four weeks of hosting, you will not be able to learn the importance of what you have given to these two young individuals and to the future of Cyprus. Please be assured that you are making an extremely important contribution to peace, friendship, and understanding at a crucial period of time for Cyprus and its two divided communities. Many CFP alumni have continued to be involved in peace efforts through their schools and universities, careers or volunteering. The Cypriot families often continue their relationships with the families of their teen’s partner. These relationships are not only important in building peace but also in a post-peace environment.

Cultural Immersion

A key part of CFP and its peace building mission is to encourage the teens to immerse themselves into American culture as much as practical. Programs which place students abroad recognize the value and importance of building understanding between countries.

Immersing in another's country also may open their minds to accepting differences between their communities or to recognize that their two communities are more similar to each other than to the U.S. All of this may help them bridge the divide in Cyprus.

In contrasting American life to Cypriot life, the teens will experience many similarities and many differences. Among the differences is that many Cypriot children are not expected to participate in chores. When you communicate the rules of the house, including chores, explain the reasons underlying why American children have chores—chores help us take responsibility in the family and ensure that no one person has to do the majority of chores. Similarly, the U.S. has a much greater commitment to volunteering for a good cause than does Cyprus. Help them to see and understand this important aspect of our culture and remind them there will be an area group activity to benefit the local community. Also explain the importance in this country to support diversity of race, national origin, religion, gender, sexual preferences, economic and other differences and how our laws offer equal protection.

It is also important to note that thanking others is not generally part of the Cypriot culture. In that culture, one is less expected to thank than to reciprocate—usually at a higher level than was given. If your teens do not thank you, you can explain how important the custom is and how and why it is expected. Also know that, if you visit Cyprus, their families will expect to honor you with dinners in their homes and may even invite you to stay with them.

Food

Cypriot teens are no different from many U.S. teens in the types of food they enjoy. Each has specific likes and dislikes. Most large towns in the southern part of Cyprus have fast food places, so your teens may be familiar with some American fast food restaurants. Exposing the

teens to a variety of foods available in the U.S. can enrich their experience. Yoghurt is a very popular component of the typical diet in Cyprus. Albeit an island in the Mediterranean, Cyprus is surrounded by water too warm for most fish. While fish is served in Cyprus, it is not local, and many Cypriots often eat meats and poultry. In the north, many Cypriots do not eat pork for religious reasons; however, some teens may feel comfortable eating it here. Please check if there are foods to avoid for allergies or religious purposes. Otherwise, please expose them to a variety of foods you normally eat.

Do not make each meal a guest meal. Serve what you normally do. They should be encouraged to try everything. Encourage your teens to work together to plan and prepare meals of their choosing. At the farewell gathering prior to their departure, teens are often asked to prepare and bring a Cypriot dish to share at the gathering.

Rooming Arrangements

It is required by CFP that both teens share a room by themselves while staying with you. Ideally, each will have his or her own bed. Boys probably won't, but girls may be comfortable sharing a queen bed, if this is necessary. This is where they talk together and become friends.

Environmental Differences

Mosquitoes and ticks are not common in Cyprus. While here, ensure your teens are protected with proper clothing, lotions and itch medicines. They will learn to make adjustments just as we have. The key is to teach them what is necessary. Bug bites can become infected. Be sure to monitor the itching and seek medical attention if necessary.

They will not have seen fireflies and many other forms of wildlife native to your area.

While the climate varies greatly in the U.S., wherever you might be, it may be completely

different from what they are used to. Theirs is a hot, dry Mediterranean climate with average high temperatures in the summer of 97 degrees Fahrenheit. Cypriots use the centigrade system. Most modern thermometers have dual scales that offer an easy conversion.

These are differences they will enjoy, but some caution is in order. Cyprus does experience thunder and lightning, but not with the severity of summer storms in parts of the U.S. They may need to learn how to prevent undue danger. You are encouraged to read CFP's description of the environment in your area and discuss it with the teens and their families before they pack.

Swimming

Please make sure that swimming is supervised. Not all teens are strong swimmers, making supervision important in swimming pools, fresh water lakes and salt water. Additionally, some of our oceans have much higher waves and stronger tides than in Cyprus. It is important to educate the teens about water safety.

Other Suggestions for Activities

Feel free to take the teens with you when shopping and doing errands and other household activities. They often enjoy the contrast and similarities in grocery stores, malls, and other aspects of daily life.

Show them how things work in your home, where to put dirty laundry, etc. They may live out of the suitcase if you do not tell them where to put their clothes.

Each teen will have a limited number of clothes. Talk to them about doing laundry and linen changes. If you want them to do their own, let them know from the outset and teach them how to use your washer and or dryer.

Like most teens, they enjoy amusement parks and water slides. But don't forget low cost outings, picnics, little league games, etc.

Consider:

- Having the teens jointly prepare a presentation about Cyprus and CFP for delivery to church, civic groups and/or the farewell gathering
- Having the teens perform together musically
- Having visits, picnics or other shared activities with families who may be interested in hosting in the future
- Visiting the zoo
- Letting them cook dinner
- Hosting all CFP teens located near you for a movie in your home
- Hiking
- Visiting museums

Photos

Encourage your teens to bring cameras, not including their cell phone cameras. They can record their own experiences and even post them on Facebook after returning to Cyprus.

We also encourage host families to take photos of the teens, family times with you and their other activities. Your area coordinator can ensure that at least some of these are posted on the CFP Facebook page during July. Teen parents, other family members and friends will check the CFP Facebook page to follow what their children are doing.

Bi-Communal Follow-up

CFP is focused on friendship, understanding, leadership, and peace for the next generation in Cyprus. Do not allow the four weeks to become merely a summer holiday for the teens. We seek for CFP to be a springboard for future cross-community workers and leaders in Cyprus. Over the four weeks please encourage the teens to work together and think about bi-communal activities they may pursue after graduation through the CFP Alumni program. Help them realize that they can help change the attitude of their generation in Cyprus.

Language

Some of the most natural uses of language and most innocent topics in the U.S. about Cyprus, Cypriots, Greeks and/or Turks are not neutral there. The teens have been warned to expect such instances and to disregard them as non-political statements made out of ignorance. However, the more that they can be avoided the better.

Be sensitive to biased references to Cyprus. Perhaps the most neutral way to refer to Cyprus is as *the northern part of Cyprus and the southern part of Cyprus*.

The teens view themselves as *Greek Cypriots or Greek-speaking Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots or Turkish-speaking Cypriots*. **Avoid the terms “Greek” or Turk” in referring to them or their families.**

Cities in Cyprus can have three names: Greek, Turkish and English. Try to refer to Cyprus cities with the English terminology used by tourists such as NICOSIA, KYRENIA, FAMAGUSTA, LIMASSOL, and PAFOS.

The Greek and Turkish Cypriots use many English words due to the fact that Cyprus was a British colony for many years. So when they say football, they all understand soccer. Both sides have their own teams that they support.

Please also recognize that the two communities have different views of history that have been passed down from generation to the next and through their school systems. Cyprus is a conflict area and historical bias helps to maintain the conflict. CFP is helping the teens to understand the full picture of their history.

Other Things of which to be Aware

Please ask the teens to be ready before the time you will leave the house for an outside activity.

When you offer something to them (i.e. a drink, food, gift), they may refuse because they feel that it is impolite to accept it straight away. If you would like to offer something to them, make it clear that you mean it and offer it more than once.

Teens may not be used to housework, but through this program they may have the opportunity to learn how to take care of themselves.

They are not used to wearing seatbelts in the backseat of the car, so please insist they do. Most host families ask the teens to sit together in the back. If you invite one teen to sit in the front seat with the driver, be sure that the other teen has equal turns in the front seat. Try to avoid any situation which suggests preferences.

PREPARING FOR DEPARTURE

The last week before they return home is the hardest on both the host family and the teens. Everyone is tired and regrets seeing the adventure ending. The area coordinator will plan a farewell gathering for all host families and teens. You may want to save one special family activity for the end of the last week before the packing and the emotional farewell.

Teens are told to bring one large suitcase with enough room to pack items they may buy while here and one piece of hand baggage suitable for carry-on. Baseball bats, fishing rods and other items of unusual shape cannot be carried on the plane. Any such items must be able to be packed in the suitcase. No guns or knives are permitted. If there is any question about an item being carried on, check with your local airport for regulations covering international travel. Airlines will charge the teens for overweight baggage. Be sure to check the weight of the bags before departure day, if you think it will be close. (Area coordinators will communicate the details of the return a week

before the trip.)

CLOSING NOTES

We hope that this background information will give you additional insight into your teens, their backgrounds, and lifestyles. Do not be intimidated by the words of caution. We try to cover as many eventualities as possible. Plan for a fun filled four weeks with two young friends.

The website (www.cyprusfriendship.org) has videos of past summers and the teens' impressions of their time here. We hope these will both inspire you and allay any anxieties you may have. You can also see the difference that CFP has already made. We invite you to view it yourself and to share it with others.

Know that your hosting will forever change the lives of these two teens, their families, and friends. The tolerance, understanding, and friendships developed with you will very possibly make a real difference in the prospects for peace in a very important part of the world.

**RELAX AND
ENJOY YOUR JULY!**

The Cyprus Friendship Program Child Abuse Policy Guidelines and Procedures

The Cyprus Friendship Program (CFP) is dedicated to the health and wellbeing of all the youth participating in the program. CFP has officially adopted the following child abuse guidelines and procedures.

Definition:

Child abuse refers to any act committed by a parent, caregiver or person in a position of trust (even through he/she may not care for the child on a daily basis) to a person who is less than eighteen years of age, which is not accidental and which harms or threatens to harm a child's physical or mental health or welfare.

Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse includes physical injury, threat of injury or creation of a real and significant danger of substantial risk of death, disfigurement or of bodily functions. Such injury or threat of injury, regardless of intent, is inflicted or allowed to be inflicted by non-accidental means. Examples include but are not limited to: asphyxiation; bone fracture; brain damage; skull fracture; subdural hematoma; burns and scald injury; cuts; bruises; welts; abrasions; internal injuries; poisoning; sprains; dislocations; gunshot and stabbing wounds.

Physical Neglect:

Physical neglect includes the failure to provide food, clothing, shelter, or supervision for a child if the child's health or safety is endangered. Types of neglect include but are not limited to: abandonment; inadequate clothing; inadequate shelter; starvation and malnutrition.

Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse includes any act that is committed, or allowed to be committed, upon a child by a parent or other persons responsible for the child's care. Examples include but are not limited to: sexual exploitation; sexual

molestation; intercourse/sodomy and other sexual abuse.

Medical Neglect:

Refusal or failure by the caretaker to obtain and/or follow through with a complete regimen of medical, mental or dental care for a condition, which if untreated, could result in illness or developmental delays.

Mental Abuse:

A pattern of acts or omissions by the caretaker that result in harm to a child's psychological or emotional health.

Bizarre Discipline:

Any action in which the caretaker uses eccentric, irrational or grossly inappropriate procedures or devices to modify the child's behavior.

In an effort to create the safest possible environment within our program, several abuse prevention measures will be utilized. These measures include:

1. New Host Family Screening and Approval

- A full application will be filled out by new host family adults that will include a check off space where each adult will agree or not agree to a criminal and sexual offenders background check.
- All applications where any host family adult refuses to have a police check will be automatically eliminated from the program.
- Each host family will write a letter of introduction to be reviewed by the Director and Cypriot Coordinators.
- Each new host family will have three (3) letters of reference sent to CFP directly from the reference individuals/families.
- Each new host family will be visited by an area coordinator.

2. Criminal & Sexual Offenders Background Check

- Each CFP officer and coordinator in the U.S. and Cyprus and each adult member of a new host family household will submit to a criminal and sexual offenders background check.
- Background Checks will be reviewed by a designated CFP officer and any potential problems discussed with the Director.
- Any applicant with a record of physical, sexual or mental abuse, or violent criminal behavior will be eliminated from consideration.

3. Teens in the U.S.

- Each Cypriot youth will be given phone numbers for the youth to call with concerns and problems.
- There will be a male CFP officer for males to call:
 - Don Guziewicz
 - Executive Director
 - 570.350.2009
- There will be a female CFP officer for females to call:
 - Tammy Haas
 - Executive Director-Elect
 - 360.907.6991

4. Briefing for Cypriot Youth and Families

- The Executive Director or designee, will explain the emergency contacts at a meeting for all youth and parents in Cyprus, and will explain to all the youth how and when to use them.

5. Reporting Abuse:

- Cypriot youth should call to report any allegation of abuse to one of the two CFP officers designated by CFP while in the U.S.
- While in Cyprus, concerned youth or adults should report any allegation of abuse to either of the two principal coordinators.
- Other concerned youth or adults in the U.S. or Cyprus should report any allegation of abuse to either Don Guziewicz, Executive Director or to Tammy Haas, Executive

Director-Elect.

- The Officers and the Director will follow CFP's established follow-up procedures to respond to any allegation(s).