

Canadian/Japanese Exchange Program

Host a Japanese Student

Expand your 4-H experience - host a Japanese student for one month! Many 12-18 year olds would like to experience Canadian 4-H family life from late July to late August. For best choice apply before May 15, but inquiries will be accepted year-round.

Host a Chaperone Instead

If you can only host for two weeks, ask for an adult chaperone. You can learn a lot about Japan from "tutors" who are similar to 4-H club leaders. For best choice apply before May 15, but inquiries will be accepted year-round.

Learn Japanese

Nihongo (language) Exchange, a three-week Japanese immersion course, is offered starting in late June. Live with a family in Tokyo, attend classes and practice what you have learned downtown! Then start the summer exchange. Apply by February 1.

Visit Japan

Canadian 4-H youth and adults have been exchanging to Japan since 1990. You, too, can take part in this exciting inter-cultural exchange and stay with a Japanese family for four weeks from mid-July to mid-August. To travel with the group, apply before March 1.

Internships

Work a year in Japan for one of the Exchange Partners! Applicants must have traveled to Japan on a summer exchange, be 18-24 years old and preferably have had one year of post-secondary education. Reasonable wages, wonderful experience!

THE HOST FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Can't find the time and money to travel? Enjoy the exposure to different cultures which traveling brings? Looking for a low-cost project or experience in which the whole family can participate and grow together? The Canadian/Japanese Exchange Program allows families to gain the benefits of international travel right here at home by hosting an exchange student from Japan. Families often find they are drawn closer together and see their lives in a whole new perspective as they welcome a new son/brother, or daughter/sister into their circle.

Japanese Month-Long Student

Japanese students aged 12-18, visit from mid-July to mid-August. They are members of a Japanese organization devoted to the study of foreign cultures and languages. Students are placed in homes where there is a host sibling of the same age and gender.

Japanese Adult Chaperones

Adult chaperones accompany the month long delegation. Adults stay two weeks with two different families during the exchange.

The Canadian/Japanese Exchange Program is looking for all types of families to give exchange students as broad a perspective as possible about life in Canada. Urban families, rural families, single-parent families, older couples, singles, couples without children, and families with various religious and ethnic backgrounds all have something to offer visitors from other cultures. Families do not necessarily have to be 4-H members.

The only requirement is that for the Month-Long Program, the host family must have a child the same age and gender as the exchange student.

Being an international host family is easy, inexpensive, fun, rewarding and educational. Just welcome the exchange student into your home and treat him or her like one of the family. The student will want to join in everyday activities, help with the chores and otherwise fit in to the family. No special activities need to be planned, although most families and visitors enjoy the opportunity to take occasional sightseeing trips to local attractions and landmarks during the visit.

Host families appreciate the chance to develop friendships that reach around the world. They find that the exchange student teaches them to not only to understand other ways of life, but to understand and appreciate their own way of life as well.

Expectations of host families are:

- Have fun!
- Provide the exchange student with meals and lodging.
- Include the student in all family activities.
- Read the materials sent by the exchange co-ordinator.
- Attend an orientation session in the spring or early summer.
- Contact your regional or provincial exchange co-ordinator immediately in case of illness, problems or major concerns.
- Be flexible, patient and able to communicate, both verbally and non-verbally with your exchange student. Most will have limited English communication skills.
- For the month-long program, the host student must make sure the exchange student feels comfortable around friends and is included in activities.

If your family would like to host a Japanese student or adult, please complete the Host Family Application and send it to your regional co-ordinator, who will schedule an interview with your family. Two personal references are also required. Early applications will have the most choices for matching student and family interests. However, applications will continue to be accepted until all students are placed. Returning the application does not obligate your family in any way, nor does it assure assignment of an exchange student.

Families are matched as soon as applications are received and accepted, to give as much time as possible for exchanging letters and pictures before the student arrives.

Host families will receive a CD and booklets of information about the student and Japan, as well as guidelines for hosting. Families are required to attend an orientation, and are encouraged to learn about Japan, its culture, foods, family and living, before the student arrives.

Arrangements for students to travel to and from host families are made on an individual basis. Families rarely have to travel more than an hour or two to pick up and drop off their students.

The hosting experience doesn't end when the students return home. Often the friendships last a lifetime! Some host families find that the exchange student really does become a member of the family, and sometimes are able to visit the family again. Many Canadian families have members who visit their student in Japan, either on an exchange or privately. For host families, the world suddenly becomes smaller!

Canadian students ready to depart for Japan from Vancouver airport

