



Global Families, Global Impact: The Experience of Host Families in International Youth Exchange

A Report on a Global AFS Host Family Survey

Developed by AFS Intercultural Programs, 2024



Executive Summary

The “Global Families, Global Impact” report by AFS Intercultural Programs explores the experiences of host families involved in international youth exchanges.

With over **75 years** of expertise, AFS has engaged nearly **500,000 families** in more than **90 countries**. Annually, around **8,000 students** and families participate in these transformative exchange programs. This report is based on a large-scale global survey conducted from April to December 2023, targeting former AFS host families. The survey gathered responses from over **3,000 families** across **76 countries**, with significant participation from countries with substantial AFS activities.

The study’s findings and recommendations demonstrate the significant community impact of exchange programs. Host families play a crucial role in fostering active global citizenship for exchange students and themselves. By participating in international youth exchange experiences that provide them with the necessary resources and support, host families can have more impactful experiences and be better equipped to contribute to a more just, equitable, and sustainable world.

Key Findings



Hosting Transforms Lives through Cultural Exchange and New Family Bonds. The survey revealed that host families consider the primary benefits of hosting to be cultural learning and exchange (76%), cultural sharing (60%), and the expansion of the family (58%).



Host Siblings Thrive with Enhanced Socio-Emotional Learning as a Result of Hosting an Exchange Student. Host siblings gain significantly from the hosting experience, families noted increased curiosity about different cultures and languages (60%) and enhanced social-emotional skills such as communication (47%), responsibility (26%), and confidence (21%).



Hosting Fosters Global Citizenship and Personal Growth to All Family Members. Host families reported improved adaptability, open-mindedness, valuing differences, and empathy as a result of hosting. These improvements align with AFS’s educational framework and highlight the transformative potential of the hosting experience.



Continued Engagement with AFS Maximizes the Benefits of Hosting for Families. Families who stay engaged with AFS after hosting experience report higher levels of personal growth and development. Continued involvement with AFS, through volunteering or hosting multiple times, enhances the long-term benefits of the experience.

Contents

2	Executive Summary
3	Contents
4	Introduction
6	Methodology & Dataset
9	Impact of Hosting on Families
11	Main Benefits of Hosting
15	Benefits to the Hosting Siblings
19	Personal Growth and Development as Global Citizens
23	Effects of Continued Engagement with AFS
27	Conclusions and Recommendations
28	Challenges of Hosting
28	Improving Host Family Experiences
29	The Value of Global Families
30	References
31	About this Report

Introduction

As defined by the United Nations, family, in its various forms, is recognised as a fundamental group unit across societies (UN, 2019).

Families function as groups of individuals united by enduring bonds of commitment who provide a supportive network for each other and their local communities, including for achieving more sustainable and inclusive societies (UN, 2017). These broad notions of family apply to host families participating in youth exchanges, who foster global citizenship by inviting international students into their homes and lives.



With **75+ years** of experience in offering homestay exchange programs for youth, [AFS Intercultural Programs](#) has gathered countless stories from host families who see themselves not only as those who receive young foreigners as guests in their homes but also as integral parts of their exchange students' lives – oftentimes considering them as new members of their families. These stories also mention the mutual learning and growth that benefit not just the exchange student but all host family members.

Most AFS exchange programs are long-term (lasting three months up to one year) in which high-school students aged **14 to 18** live with a local family recruited and supported by trained local AFS staff and volunteers. Currently, AFS has about **8,000 students and families** participating in these exchange programs annually and to date, it has reached nearly **500,000 families** in more than **90 countries** worldwide.

A core goal of the AFS hosting experience is for host families to become **Global Families**. By bringing culture, diversity, and different perspectives into their homes, we aim for AFS host families to deepen their insight into the world, engage in transformative intercultural understanding and be inspired to take action on behalf of the planet and its people.



While previous research initiatives have analyzed the impact of youth exchanges and mobility programs, few studies have focused exclusively on their effects on host families (Castiglioni, 2012; Weidemann & Blüml, 2009; Grove, 1984). This study contributes to this field as the first large-scale global survey to target host families to understand their perspectives on the impact of the hosting experience.

Based on insights from **over 3,000** former AFS host families, this report presents key findings on how the hosting experience impacted them and the critical personal learning outcomes they perceived. This report also includes testimonials and examples from former host families, showcasing their unique role in building relationships across differences while supporting the growth and development of individual exchange program participants. Through their participation in international youth exchange, host families help advance the AFS mission — to create a more peaceful, just, equitable and sustainable world.

Methodology & Dataset

The global AFS host family survey, conducted between April and December 2023, gathered insights from families worldwide who hosted AFS exchange students in their homes.

This **online survey** included 34 questions – 30 closed-ended and four open-ended – covering demographics, perspectives on the hosting experience, information about the connection with host students after the experience, and continued engagement with AFS.



To ensure broad accessibility and participation, we offered the survey in **13 languages**, including Arabic, Czech, English, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Latvian, Malay, Slovak, Spanish, and Turkish, with the support of AFS offices across our global network for translation. We distributed the survey via social media and email using availability sampling to target willing participants.

The survey achieved a robust response rate, collecting **3,266 submissions** predominantly from nations with substantial AFS host activities, such as Germany (733 responses), the United States (410), Japan (383), France (313), and Argentina (252).

Regarding respondents' roles in the family, the majority (83%) acted as host parents. Among those with multiple roles within a host family (8%), this primarily represented individuals who were once host siblings and, in later years, hosted as parents. For instance, of those who were host siblings between 1947 and 1984 (76 responses), 37% (28) later hosted as parents.

Regarding family composition, the majority of respondents (80.5%) identified as households with different-sex parents, followed by single-parent households (9.4%) and extended-family households (6.8%). Same-sex couples households represented under 3%. On average, families had 3.8 members at the time of hosting (for example, two parents and about two children). At the time of hosting, families had an average of 1.2 children. 74% of families had at least one adolescent child aged 13-18, while 40% of families had at least one child between the ages of 0 and 12, which indicates that families are more likely to host when their children are close in age to the hosted students.

The frequency of hosting among respondents varied: 51% hosted once, 30% hosted two to three times, and 18% hosted four or more times, with 3% of total families hosting more than ten times! Most responses (3,167) came from families that hosted between 2011 and 2023, followed by a significant number (645) of families that hosted between 2000 and 2010. Notably, records from 2000 onwards are more likely to include active email addresses from individuals who opted to stay in touch with AFS. Although fewer in numbers, we also received responses from families that hosted an AFS student as early as 1947. With almost half of the families opting to host more than once, the data underscores the perceived value of the hosting experience.

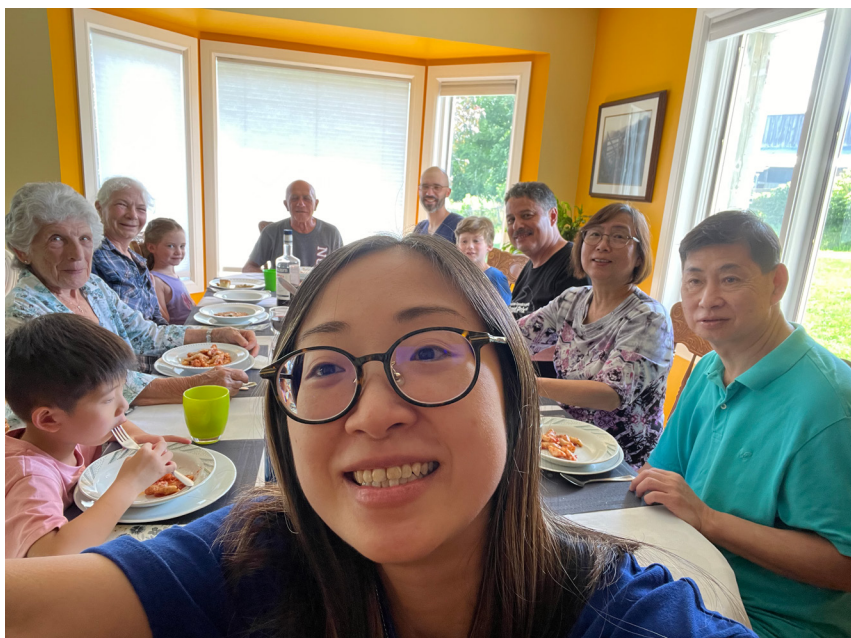


Figure 1.

Key Numbers



3,266
TOTAL RESPONDENTS



76
COUNTRIES

Respondents' Roles in the Host Family



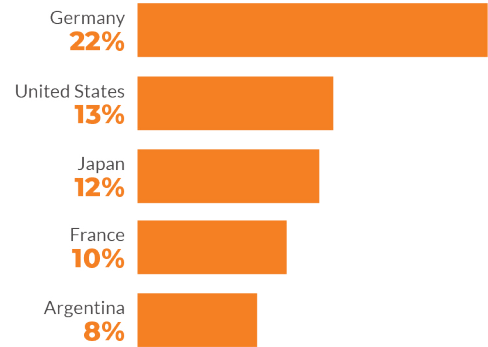
83%
Host Parent Only

8%
Multiple Roles

7%
Host Sibling Only

2%
Other

Country Distribution — Top 5



Family Composition



81%
Different-sex parents household

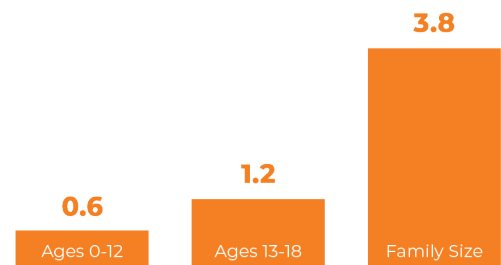
9%
Single-parent household

6%
Extended family household

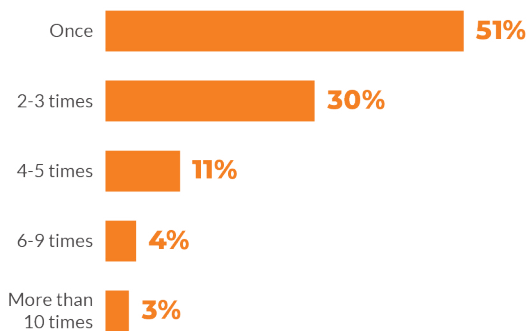
3%
Same-sex household

1%
Other

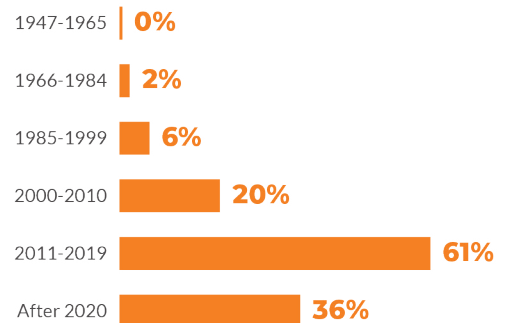
Average Family Size and Children's Ages at the Time of Hosting



Frequency of Hosting



Hosting Period



Impact of Hosting on Families

Hosting an exchange student has the potential to impact host families profoundly.

As they interact closely with students from different cultural backgrounds, families can learn about new customs and perspectives. Previous research with host families has identified enhanced appreciation for cultural diversity and personal growth due to hosting an international student (Sustarsic, 2020; Castiglioni, 2012; Weidemann & Blüml, 2009; Grove, 1984).



At AFS, we view the hosting experience as a transformative educational program for families. Based on a robust educational methodology developed over 75+ years of expertise in intercultural exchange, the [AFS Host Family Learning Journey](#) is a curriculum designed to engage host families with content related to intercultural learning at every step of their experience, preparing them to embrace individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and build their intercultural awareness and understanding every step of the way. Additionally, one of the key promises of the AFS hosting experience is that it will foster lifelong connections and allow the student to leave the experience as a family member.

As we set out to investigate what former host families identified as the main impacts of their hosting experience, we prioritized gathering input on their views of the primary benefits of hosting and gauging their perception of personal growth and development as global citizens. Their responses provided us with insights into the heightened benefits, learning and growth attributed to their experience as host families.



Main Benefits of Hosting

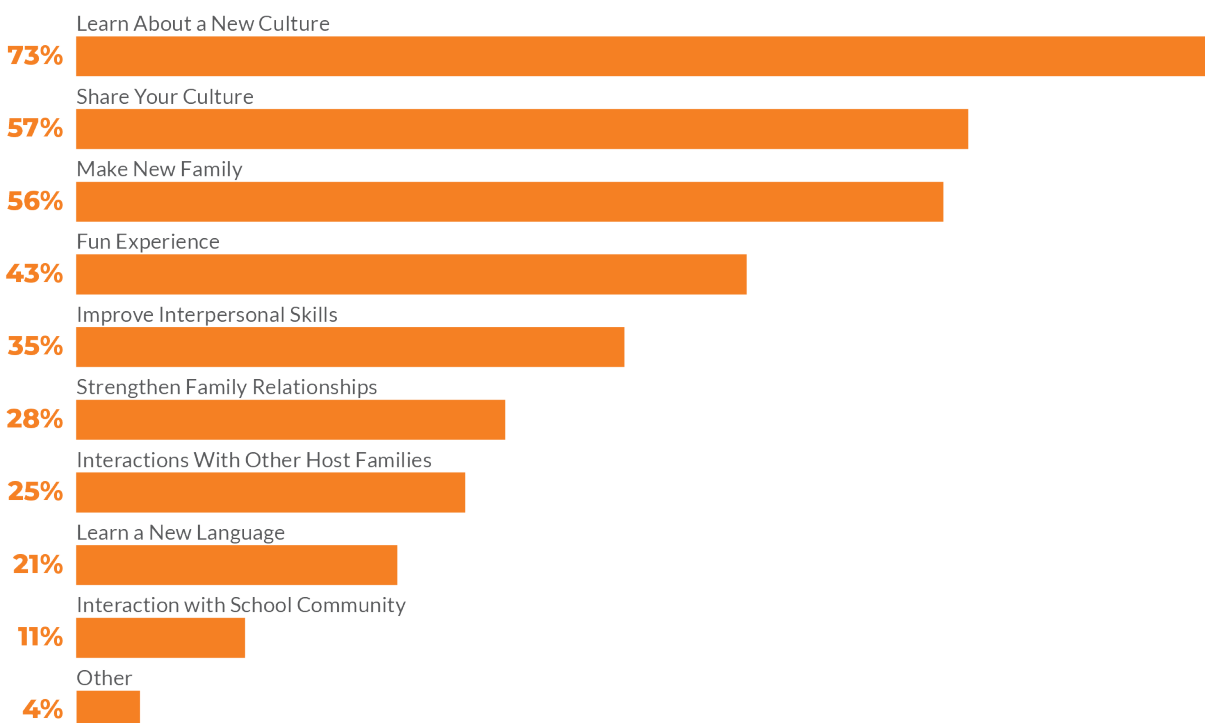
Our survey asked families to select from a list of benefits they gained as a result of the AFS hosting experience, allowing for multiple selections.

Figure 2 summarizes the responses received. The top three were:

- **Cultural Learning and Exchange:** Most families (73% of respondents) identified the primary benefit as the opportunity to **learn about and experience a different culture and way of life**.
- **Cultural Sharing:** The second most common answer (57% of respondents) indicated they benefited from **sharing their culture** with the hosted student.
- **Expansion of the Family:** The third (56% of respondents) believed they benefited from having **new extended family members**. As described in the open-ended responses, the family grew by adding the host student as a new family member, and often, their home families are considered extended family members by the host family as well.

Figure 2.

Main Benefits of Hosting



These findings underscore the alignment between the perceived benefits of hosting and the core objectives of our hosting programs. Notably, two of these also align with two of the three primary goals of the Peace Corps, an independent U.S. government agency that deploys volunteers to deliver development aid internationally. As described in the Peace Corps mission¹, these are: “To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.” and “To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.”

“Amazing family relationships created and still lasting. Regularly talk or visit our host children and their families. Love those strong relationships and seeing our “children” become amazing adults all around the world.”

– *Anonymous, Host Parent from Australia*



Although Peace Corps programs are for adults, homestays with volunteer host families are a core part of the cultural exchange experience. Peace Corps participants often live with a host family for several months before living independently. In certain countries, participants live with host families for the duration of their service – which is 27 months long. One of the first studies about host families, conducted by Raymond Gordon in the 1970s in Colombia, investigated families in Bogota that hosted U.S. Peace Corps volunteers and university students. Gordon’s research identified numerous minor cross-cultural misunderstandings that, surprisingly often, significantly damaged the relationships between the young American adults and their hosts in Bogota (see Gordon, 1974).

In contrast to Gordon’s study, the first research conducted with host families hosting AFS high school students concluded that personality factors influenced student-host family relationships more heavily than minor cross-cultural misunderstandings (Grove, 1984, p. 25). This insight emerged from an initial focus on the impact of individual temperaments and interpersonal styles. However, it later shifted into recognising the relational differences that could be at play due to the age group of AFS students (Grove, 1984).

That is, the age group of our exchange students, typically between 15 and 17, could explain the profound sense of family connection expressed by AFS host families. This age is part of a stage of development that is particularly formative, often marked by a search for identity and a desire for deeper connections outside their immediate family circle (Steinberg, 2014). The experience of being welcomed into a host family can provide these young individuals with unique insights into different cultural norms and family dynamics, which influence the development of strong bonds with their host families, especially as they navigate the challenges and rewards of intercultural exchange together.

¹ Source: The Peace Corps Mission. Retrieved from peacecorps.gov/about

Additionally, many respondents indicated that they valued the hosting experience for its enjoyment factor, with 45% describing it as **a fun experience**. At AFS, we encourage participants — host families and students — to embrace playfulness and curiosity. We believe in making learning experiences fun and meaningful, combining the socio-emotional and cognitive aspects of human development. This feedback from families validates our approach and underscores its importance.

“Being a host family was a positive experience that is maintained and developed over time. The ties created have been maintained with the family of origin of the Australian student who shared our life for a year. We have visited them in Australia and they visited us in Chile in 2019.”

— *Luisa Labra, Host Parent from Chile*

Finally, an additional insight emerged when sorting this data by geographic region. While additional benefits of hosting (such as improved interpersonal skills, strengthened family relationships, interactions with other host families, and learning a new language) were mainly distributed evenly across most regions, there was a notable exception. In Asia, 43% of respondents ranked language learning as one of the main benefits of hosting, three times as high as other regions. This suggests an emphasis on linguistic development by host families from that region, highlighting the potential for acquiring new languages or enhancing their language skills through the hosting experience.





The experience was wonderful not only culturally but also on a family level. I am a mother of 4 children and 3 grandchildren and being able to host a boy who came from Italy exceeded all our expectations as parents. Today, it has been 4 years, the contact, the chats, the video calls are always there and we feel as parents and family that today we have one more child despite the distance.

– Ana Luz & Joaquin Perez,
Host Parents from Argentina

Benefits to the Hosting Siblings

Based on our longstanding experience, many families frequently choose to host when their children are teenagers, typically at the age of the hosted student.

With this in mind, we wanted to explore the perceived benefits of hosting specifically to the host siblings.

“Being an only child, I was able to learn about different cultures’ ways of thinking, how others think, and how to relate to others.”

— *Anonymous, Host Sibling from Japan*

In line with our questions about the general benefits of hosting, our survey asked respondents to select from a list of benefits from the AFS hosting experience they believed their children had received (or they had received as children if they were host siblings when the family hosted).

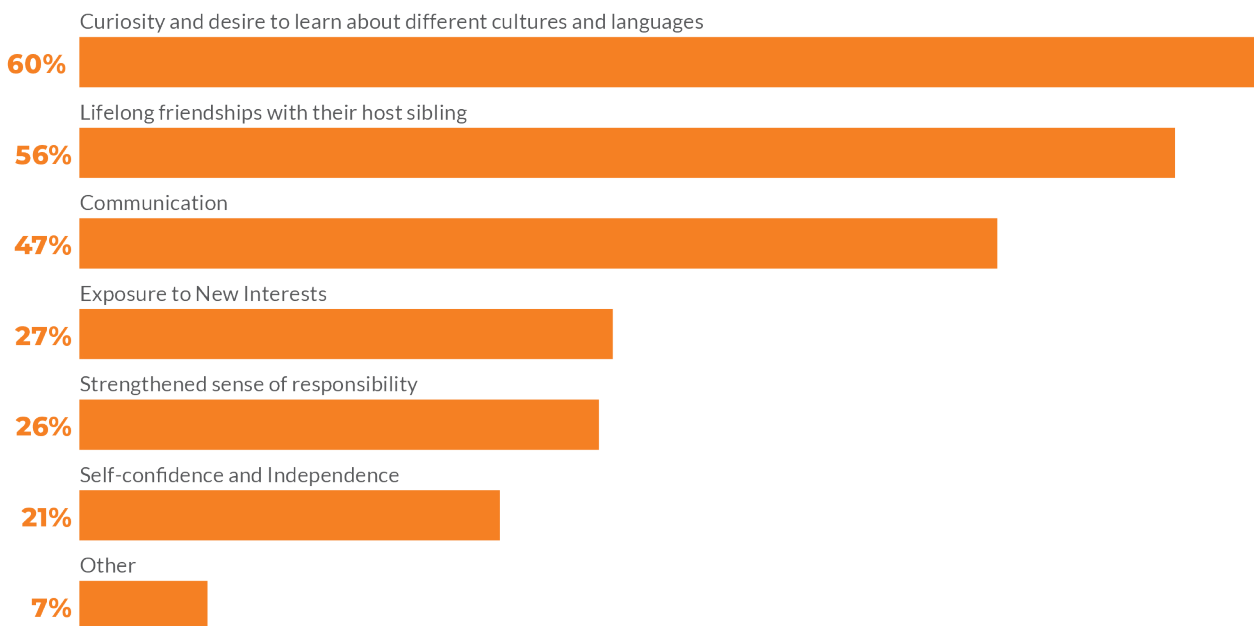


The results mirrored the main benefits reported for hosting in general (Figure 3). Specifically:

- **Cultural Learning and Exchange:** Most respondents (60%) believed that the AFS hosting experience fostered curiosity and created a desire and opportunity for their children to learn about different cultures and languages.
- **Formation of Lifelong Bonds:** Similarly, a significant proportion (56%) indicated that the AFS hosting experience brought host families and participants together so profoundly that they concluded the experience as genuine family members.
- **Development of Social-Emotional Skills:** Furthermore, a substantial number of respondents reported their children gaining additional socio-emotional skills such as **communication (47%), responsibility (26%), and confidence (21%).**

Figure 3.

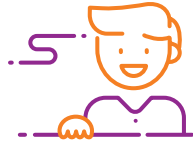
Benefits to the Hosting Siblings



These findings reinforce the notion that a bidirectional learning process takes place during a host family-based youth exchange program. While the hosted student gains the most evident benefits from immersion in a new culture and language, the host family, in general, and the host sibling in particular, also benefit from the sustained interaction, if not immersion, with another culture within their household. However, to what degree these learning outcomes can be comparable requires further research.

“Hosting an AFS student was a great experience for us. The good times we spent with my AFS brother and the things we contributed to each other are many. Even though I was an only child, I really felt the feeling of brotherhood.”

— Anonymous, Host Sibling from Turkey



Additionally, as in the general benefits section, while the expectation was that respondents would report benefits related to cultural exchange and learning for their children, the extent to which they emphasized the **lifelong friendships** formed with the host sibling was surprising. This finding highlights the significant and often unexpected impact of hosting an exchange student on family dynamics, particularly in fostering deep and lasting relationships between the exchange student and host siblings. Such relationships underscore the value of the hosting experience in terms of cultural exchange and building enduring personal bonds that reinforce a sense of valuing and belonging to a common and diverse world and their ability to understand and relate to others across cultures. We also explored potential regional differences related to the benefits of hosting siblings, but no significant differences stood out.





Hosting has been so good for our family. It changes our dynamic in a positive way to have another teenager in the house bringing a different global perspective. It also helps my husband and I as parents remain intentional in the way that we run our household during years that I think a lot of families start to disconnect with busy schedules and independent needs.

– Christina Wood,
Host Parent from the USA

Personal Growth and Development as Global Citizens

The hosting program offered by AFS extends beyond the benefits mentioned so far. It serves as a platform for personal growth and fostering global citizenship.



In addition to the general benefits of the hosting experience for the families and their children, we also asked families to rate their learnings in terms of specific skills and attitudes that we want learners of all ages to develop as a result of their engagement with an AFS program. These abilities derive from our [educational framework for active global citizenship](#). They include:

- **Adaptability:** Understanding situational cues, as well as different norms and behaviors, and adjusting accordingly and effectively.
- **Critical thinking:** Being able to look at things from different perspectives and challenge one's assumptions and beliefs before acting or making a decision.
- **Self-awareness:** Being aware of one's feelings, thoughts and behaviors and understanding how these have been influenced by the cultural groups that one belongs to.
- **Open-mindedness:** Being open to considering ideas and opinions that are new or different to one's own.

"Hosting broadens horizons and helps to overcome prejudices and 'the taken for granted,' which in other cultures is not taken for granted. It also allows for deep reflection on the values of one's own and other cultures because the meeting clash is daily and enriching."

— *Anonymous, Host Parent from Italy*

- **Valuing difference:** Appreciating diversity and displaying respect for people with diverse backgrounds, attitudes, opinions, lifestyles and values.
- **Effective Communication:** Conveying ideas, opinions, and feelings effectively and appropriately, as well as accurately interpreting what others communicate.

- **Empathy:** Developing a more profound concern and sensitivity for others by understanding and relating to their feelings, needs and experiences.
- **Global awareness:** Taking a broad view and using a global lens when approaching issues, being aware of the local implications of global challenges and vice-versa.
- **Changemaking:** Having a sense of co-responsibility and taking action to have a positive impact on one's community and the world.

Our survey questionnaire asked respondents to rate their perceived improvements related to these abilities on a 1-5 scale (with 1 being no improvement and five significant improvement). For instance, families rated a high average of 4 for increased curiosity about other countries and cultures due to their experience as a host family. Average ratings ranged from 3.3 to 4, indicating positive improvements across all these abilities. See *Figure 4*.

Figure 4.

Personal Growth and Development as Global Citizens

My Family's Experience as a Host Family...



“I was able to come into contact with diverse cultures from diverse countries, experience them firsthand, and think more deeply about what it means to understand and accept diversity. It also made me think about the cultural differences and conflicts that exist even within Japan.”

— Kaori Sakurai, Host Parent from Japan

The improvements reported by our host families match those seen in the ratings reported by AFS exchange students. This finding reinforces the notion that host families are also actual participants in educational exchange programs, reporting learning outcomes similar to those of our exchange students. Despite these positive findings, we identified areas where host family growth could be improved compared to our students. According to the AFS Framework for Active Global Citizenship (Figure 5), program beneficiaries (students, host families, etc.) can expect to improve in four areas of global citizenship: 1. value and belong, 2. inquire critically, 3. understand and relate, and 4. take action.

Figure 5.

AFS Framework for Active Global Citizenship



Developed by AFS Intercultural Programs

Based on current findings, while host families report growth in categories like ‘value and belong’ and ‘understand and relate,’ they show less progress in ‘inquire critically’ and ‘take action.’ These limitations present an opportunity to focus on enhancing how we support host families’ development in these areas, equipping them to further thrive as active global citizens and better fulfill the mission of AFS.



We believe that it is an experience that makes the family grow in tolerance, patience, understanding and broadens the outlook towards others. Helps create lasting bonds. However, for this to happen, the family must be aware that it is a difficult challenge and must prepare for it, understanding that the host student is not a guest or tourist but rather another “son”, a member of the family. If you live like this and if you get the young person to join this community effort, the experience is more than enriching and fruitful, that’s how we have lived it.

**– Anonymous,
Host Parent from Colombia**

Effects of Continued Engagement with AFS

One of the core guiding principles in developing and implementing all AFS educational programs and offers is an emphasis on ‘becoming’ and lifelong personal transformation towards active global citizenship.

We define active global citizens as people whose informed, compassionate, and ethical compass that drives them to lead lives and make decisions that contribute to a more just, equitable, peaceful and sustainable world (AFS Intercultural Programs, 2024).

“Hosting has become a family tradition for us. It’s an incredible experience that brings so much! Not only bonds of friendship with people from all over the world but also the discovery of another culture, another way of living, and ways of expressing themselves. All the young people who we host have so much to teach us about their country, and it is a superb experience to make them discover what surrounds us and what we are so used to seeing.”

– Anonymous, Host Parent and AFS Volunteer from France

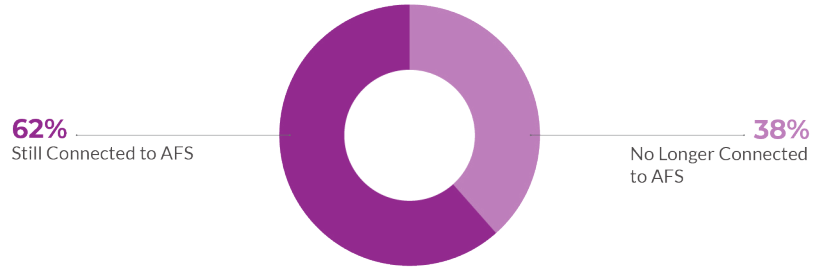
As a result, developing such a compass is more than showcasing knowledge about the world or having a skill. It is about becoming a kind of person – socio-emotionally, cognitively and ethically – able to make “good” decisions, keeping others and the planet in mind. This goal cannot be achieved by participating in one program or learning experience only; it is something that needs to be continuously developed through in-depth and extensive engagement with differences.



This commitment to lifelong learning and personal growth is a vital aspect of the AFS experience, and many of our participants continue to engage with our programs and initiatives long after their initial hosting or exchange experience. Considering this, we also explored whether families who remain in touch with AFS after their hosting experience reported any additional benefits or learnings. Most respondents (62%) reported that they were still in touch with AFS, while the other respondents (38%) indicated that they had lost touch with AFS.

Figure 6.

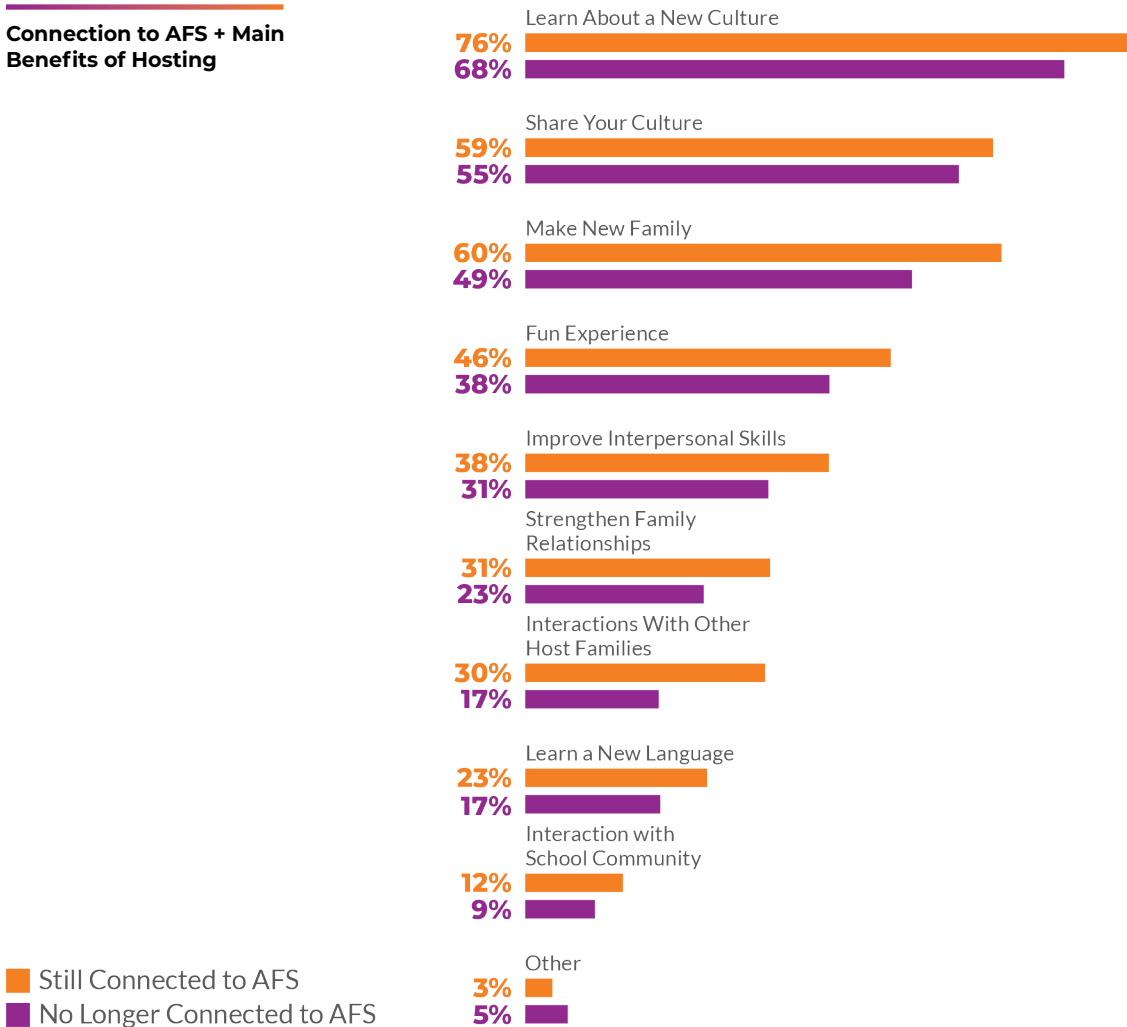
Connection to AFS



As expected, the impact observed in families still connected to AFS was notably higher than in families who have lost contact. Despite the difference in impact between the two groups, the experience was reported as generally positive for both sets of families. This is especially notable when looking at the families who have distanced themselves from AFS, highlighting the consistent benefits that all host families receive from the experience.

Figure 7.

Connection to AFS + Main Benefits of Hosting



Similarly, when looking at their reported learning in terms of personal growth and development as global citizens, families who are still connected to AFS rate their families' improvements significantly higher than the ones who are no longer connected to AFS.

Figure 8.

Connection to AFS + Personal Growth and Development as Global Citizens



"After hosting, I was an AFS volunteer for about 8 years, taking on various roles in my local chapter. I also went on an 18+ exchange program with AFS myself to the UK, which greatly contributed to my profession as an educator. I believe in the mission of AFS and was very happy and fulfilled throughout all my experiences."

— Christine Keller Toniolo, Host Parent and former AFS Volunteer from Brazil

These findings emphasize the relevance of maintaining contact with host families to maximize the benefits and learnings of the hosting experience. Efforts to encourage continued engagement with host families — as alumni, volunteers or simply members of the AFS community — in ways that provide them with in-depth and extensive engagement with differences can further enhance the enduring impacts of the hosting experience and its outcomes for families.



Hosting offers a valuable opportunity to gain a different perspective on the world through direct contact with people rather than relying solely on the media. I was also impressed by the intensive training and education the volunteers who supported our family and our host student received. This is one of the reasons I decided to become a volunteer myself.

– Anonymous,
*Host Parent and AFS Volunteer
from Germany*

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study reinforces previous findings about the positive impact of hosting international students on host families while contributing new insights to the field.

As noted in earlier research (e.g., Castiglioni, 2012; Weidemann & Blüml, 2009; Grove, 1984), host families benefit from increased cultural awareness, personal growth, and forming lifelong bonds. Our survey of over 3,000 AFS host families confirms these benefits, highlighting how hosting fosters deeper intercultural learning and growth associated with active global citizenship.

A key new finding from our study is the significant role that host siblings play in shaping the overall experience. While previous research focused on relationships between host parents and students, our data suggests that bonds formed with host siblings are equally, if not more, influential in determining the success of the exchange experience (Grove, 1984). These relationships often lead to lifelong friendships and enhance the socio-emotional learning for all involved.



Additionally, our study underscores the importance of continued in-depth and extensive engagement with differences. Families who remain connected with AFS opportunities after their initial hosting experience report higher levels of personal growth and development as global citizens. This ongoing engagement facilitates a continuous learning process, reinforcing the transformative impact of intercultural programs.

Challenges of Hosting

While hosting an international student can be immensely rewarding, it has its challenges.

In the responses to our open-ended questions asking for additional comments related to families' satisfaction with their hosting experience, some respondents highlighted intercultural misunderstandings, relationship difficulties, and financial strains as part of their experiences. In our analysis of the comments provided, we identified that respondents reported these challenges due to differences in cultural norms, communication styles, and the added financial costs of having an additional family member.

Nevertheless, even respondents who commented on having faced substantial challenges reported that the benefits, including personal growth and forming meaningful relationships, far outweighed the difficulties. This resilience and positive outlook among host families indicates the transformative potential of the hosting experience, even in the face of adversity. Additional qualitative research is needed to help expand the understanding of these challenges and how families address them.

Improving Host Family Experiences

Our study also identified areas where AFS could improve the support provided to host families.



Although the primary focus was not on host family satisfaction with AFS services, feedback from the open-ended questions also revealed several opportunities for enhancement. For instance, several respondents expressed a need for more structured learning activities and better support throughout the hosting period.

In response, AFS is currently enhancing its training and support tools, including online resources, to better prepare local volunteers and staff to deliver the AFS Host Family Learning Journey curriculum. These improvements aim to provide host families with more comprehensive support, ensuring they are further equipped to navigate the challenges of hosting and maximize the benefits of the experience.

The Value of Global Families

Host families play a crucial role in fostering active global citizenship, both for the exchange students and themselves.

By welcoming students into their homes, families can engage in meaningful intercultural exchange, have a deeper understanding of global issues, and become more open-minded. This process can transform them into active global citizens, capable of contributing positively to their local communities and the broader world.



The findings and recommendations from this study are relevant not only to AFS but also to other organizations working with host families. Hosting an international student is a transformative experience that offers significant benefits and poses particular challenges. By addressing the identified gaps and improving the support of host families, we can enhance the positive impact of youth exchange programs and foster a network of global families committed to making a difference. As the concept of global families continues to evolve, supporting these families in their role as active global citizens is essential. Providing the necessary resources and support can help host families take action and contribute to a more just, equitable, and sustainable world.

References

AFS Intercultural Programs. (2024). Developing Active Global Citizens: A Framework for Active Global Citizenship.

Retrieved from: <https://d22dvi4j4pfop3.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/27/2024/05/17123305/AFS-Framework-White-Paper.pdf>

Castiglioni, Ida. (2012). Intercultural learning of hosting families.

Intercultura 65, 2012. Colle diVal d'Elsa: Fondazione Intercultura

Gordon, Raymond. (1974). Living in Latin America: A Case Study in Cross-Cultural Communication.

Skokie, IL: National Textbooks.

Grove, Curtis Lee. (1984). Dynamics of international host families.

New York: AFS Intercultural Programs.

Steinberg, Laurence. (2014). Age of Opportunity: Lessons from the New Science of Adolescence.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston, MA.

Sustarsic, Manca. (2020). The Impact of Intercultural Exchange on Secondary School Exchange Students and Their Host Families.

Journal of International Students, 10 (4), 912–933. doi: 10.32674/jis.v10i4.1042

UN Women. (2019). Families in a Changing World.

Retrieved from: <https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Headquarters/Attachments/Sections/Library/Publications/2019/Progress-of-the-worlds-women-2019-2020-en.pdf>

UN Women. (2017). A contemporary view of 'family' in international human rights law and implications for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Retrieved from: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2017/12/a-contemporary-view-of-family-in-international-human-rights-law>

Weidemann, Arne & Blüml, Frances. (2009). Experiences and coping strategies of host families in international youth exchange.

Intercultural Education, 20(sup1), S87–S102. doi: 10.1080/14675980903370912

About this Report



This report and survey were developed by an expert team at AFS Intercultural Programs between March 2023 and May 2024. In addition to the key contributors listed below, we would like to acknowledge the support and insights of staff and volunteers across the global AFS Network who helped us translate and distribute the survey. Special thanks to our colleagues at AFS-USA for supporting us with the initial design and piloting of the questionnaire and to AFS National Organizations in Canada, Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Germany, Honduras, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Malaysia, Slovakia and Turkey for helping us with the translations.

Thank you to 3,266 Global Families who answered the survey and to 1,945 (60%) families from 66 countries who gave us permission to use their quotes and photos. All photos were submitted by families participating in the Global AFS Host Family Survey, 2023.

Research and Content

Ana Carolina Cassiano

Head of Education Development at AFS Intercultural Programs

Andrew Menges

Specialist for Data and Analytics Management at AFS Intercultural Programs

Text and Layout Editing

Federico Larriera

Branding & Design at AFS Intercultural Programs

Kristina Shumilina

Marketing Intern at AFS Intercultural Programs

Project Oversight

Andreza Martins

Deputy Chief Programs Officer at AFS Intercultural Programs



AFS is an international, voluntary, non-governmental, nonprofit organization that provides intercultural learning opportunities to help people develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to create a more just and a peaceful world.

Become an AFS Host Family at [afs.org/host-an-afser/](https://www.afs.org/host-an-afser/)

Connect with us:



5 Hanover Square, Suite 1402, 14th floor,
New York, NY 10004, USA.

+1(212)209-0900 | info@afs.org.



© 2024 AFS Intercultural Programs, Inc. All Rights Reserved.