



## Connecting Lives, Sharing Cultures

Dear exchange students,

I hope you are all well! It's time to remind you about few important things while on exchange.

### Be present

Remember to be present in daily life in Finland. Do not use your days and nights keeping contact with family and friends back in home country. You are now here – cut the weekly contact to your home country and start living your AFS year here. Be in the Finnish time zone.

We recommend you keep contact with home country once in about two weeks. Do NOT keep contact daily. Otherwise you will miss important part of your life in Finland. Put your mobile phone away and spend time your host family and Finnish friends.

Making friends is up to you: smile and say hello to new people. If Finnish people see you with your mobile and/or headphones on, they will not bother you and will not talk to you.

### Go to school

School is very important and obligatory part of the exchange year. All the exchange students are required to attend at least 25 hours of school lessons a week. Go to school according to the time table and do not skip lessons. If you fail three courses due to the unauthorized absences/undone assignments you will be send home. We don't expect you to get the best grades but we do expect you to show motivation and do your best in school. Appreciate that your host school has accepted you as a student there.

### Appreciate your host family

Have you ever stopped to think about what your host family gets from hosting you? They get you –nothing else: just you (and some extra costs to pay because they have one extra member in the family). Would you like to host you? What does it feel like to host you? Does someone have to constantly remind you to go to bed, to get up, to go to school, etc. Or does your family get something extra, some new happy experiences in their life because they are hosting you? Do you have nice talks, good walks, happy moments of sharing different lifestyles and ideas.

### Update your contact information

Please send AFS Finland office ([suvi.turunen@afs.org](mailto:suvi.turunen@afs.org)) your correct email address and a Finnish phone number so we are able to reach you if necessary. It's important that you check your emails at least twice a week.

We would like to encourage you to keep calm and enjoy your time in Finland. During November it is very important to get up and go out! (here some say "ylös, ulos ja lenkille"! ) It is dark and cold, but when you dress correctly and get some fresh air you will get more energy. Go and try! We challenge you to enjoy the unique time of the year.

Best regards  
Suvi & Susanna