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Host Family Survival Kit: A Guide For American Host Families



Synopsis

Each year thousands of families throughout the United States and the world open their homes and hearts to international high school exchange students—sharing their own culture and learning about another. As these families face the challenges and joys of hosting, Nancy King's and Ken Huff's Host Family Survival Kit will provide them with valuable information and advice to help ensure that their experience will be a success. Authors King and Huff provide an overview of hosting, defining the role that exchange students play in the host family, outlining the skills needed by host parents and discussing the effect of culture on the host family/exchange student relationship. They then divide the hosting experience into nine stages, making recommendations on what to expect and how to handle day-to-day situations. Throughout, they include insightful quotes and pertinent examples from experienced host families. In this second edition, they have made major revisions to all of the original chapters. In addition, they have added two new chapters and three new appendices. The Host Family Survival Kit is an indispensable guide to the hosting experience, and will leave readers both excited about and well prepared for their role as host parents.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Nancy King and Ken Huff have many years of experience in the fields of intercultural training and international youth exchange and have worked in private practice as counselors and consultants.

This is a great book with some very useful information on the 9 stages of adjustment. However, I

found it to be a bit outdated (it seems to have been most recently published in 1997). With the new technology (cell phones, smart phones, tablets, laptops, etc) that have come out since then- many of these areas need addressing such as snap chat, face time, Facebook and other social media. One section talks about using a phone card and LAN line (who does that anymore?). There is no real mention of online communication with family back home at all. I would love to see an updated version of this to include all the aforementioned items.

Love it!

I am a seasoned host mom as well as a new coordinator for an exchange organization. I read this book with the intention of giving it to new host families as a gift. I would agree with the reviewers who disliked this book. I am definitely glad I never read this before hosting or I never would have tried it. While no host experience is perfect, they aren't nearly as negative or intimidating as this book leads you to believe, and yes we have had 2 horrible experiences. I also think they spend way too many pages on their timeline....while every student adjusts differently I do not have students adjusting like they suggest 5-6 months after they arrive.

When I purchased this book, it was with the intention of giving it to my Host Families prior to their student's arrival. I expected it to have the students' 9 stages with suggestions on how to help them through each one. Well, the author does do that, but also prepares host parents for the probability that they will begin to rationalize their own culture! High school exchange students arrive loaded with questions about the American lifestyle, and it is their innocent yet intense questions that provoke us to recognize that almost every thing we do is based on our learned culture. The author prepares us to recognize our students' and our own strange reactions as ignorance of each others' cultures, not rudeness or even anger over simple things like refusing a special dessert. I have put this book on my "Must Read" list for prospective host families. Reading it can definitely prevent huge misunderstandings and enhance the experience for everyone involved in the adventure of a lifetime. Not only is it a "Must Read", I will also refer to it frequently during my Orientation Meetings with both Host Families and Exchange Students.

I am an exchange student coordinator for students that come from very different cultures from the United States. This book was somewhat helpful to me in discovering different ways to explain to families concepts such as "unspoken rules" or how to treat an exchange student within your

household, as well as cultural differences. This book does help families understand their undetected cultural biases in a way that I haven't seen in other publications. Not all host families work out and I intend to use this book as a resource for families that are having challenges arranging to life with an exchange student. I have directly supervised 9 students over 1.5 years and indirectly with hundreds more.

The book "Host Family Survival Kit: A Guide for American Families" was an informative book, but a little hard to read. It also seemed to discuss a lot of negative things that many happen to a host family. The book was not uplifting, and read a lot like a high-school textbook. The book is also very out-of-date, even though it was only published 15 years ago. This book provides adequate information for a prospective host family, but not a must have.

Although some of the information is a little out of date, I found plenty of useful tips in this book. We had a foreign exchange daughter who ended up leaving because of "culture shock". My copy ended up underlined and highlighted in several places. I feel like we could have helped her more with some of the information I learned. Definitely helpful for someone contemplating hosting.

I read this book a month or so before our exchange student arrived and, although I didn't believe at the time that it had all the answers, I was not prepared for how utterly useless it was for our family. In contrast to the timeline given in the book, our student seemed to adjust quickly and well, then things got progressively worse as he became more and more comfortable in our home. He started out on his best behavior and ended up completely ignoring our house rules and the cultural norms of the school and community. I'm seriously considering writing my own book and calling it "The Alternative Host Family Survival Guide".

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