

Look at [www.afsnorth.org](http://www.afsnorth.org) for pre-departure materials. Read and discuss these with your students before they leave, and ask them to send me an email to let me know that they read them.

If there is any problem with dropping off your student on Monday, please let Mary know as soon as possible. Call my cell phone at 218-343-3196.

Miscellaneous end-of-stay ideas/thoughts for host families:

1. Does your host son/daughter have:
  - a. address/emails of family and friends (also birthdays)
  - b. pictures of common things – the house, school, town etc.
  - c. transcripts and necessary school documents (many countries require a seal or stamp to have them be “official”)
  - d. a list of people to thank/say goodbye to that aren’t in the close family/friend circle (remember that they are an ambassador for themselves, their country and for future foreign exchange students) Thank you notes would be appropriate.
2. Packing HAS to be done ahead of time. Extra items need to be shipped (compare prices – land prices are less expensive) and careful suitcase measurements and weights MUST be followed for the flight home. Packing at midnight on the last day will make for stress and use up valuable family/friend time.

The following are suggestions from the Host Family Survival Kit by Nancy King and Ken Huff. These are their main points:

1. Recognize your feelings. Acknowledge that you may be experiencing a lot of different emotions about the departure of your host student.
2. Accept feelings of loss. You will be losing a family member. When your student leaves, the experience of lifestyle sharing will also end. However, a friendship has been formed.
3. Letting go. You’ll need to start relinquishing your responsibility as a host parent and return that role over to the natural parent. This will also help your student accept the return.
4. Prepare your student for reverse culture shock. Your student will be returning home but that “home” will not be the same anymore because they have changed. Acknowledge that they have concerns about the upcoming return. Talk about this.
5. Saying goodbye. Don’t wait until the last day to say goodbye and express how you feel about your AFSer.
6. Talk about how you will communicate with each other. The host parents must let go and establish a different type of long-distance relationship with their AFSer.

AFS is only surpassed by the Red Cross in the number of volunteers in the organization. Your experience cannot happen if people like you don’t give back to AFS. Without volunteers, there is no AFS. Ask how you can help.