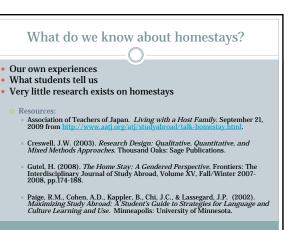
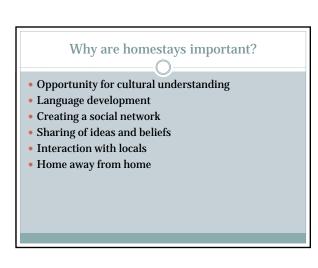
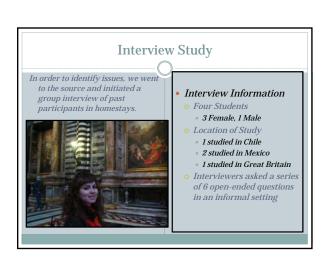
Gaining a Family: Homestay Issues and Advising JANNAN POPPEN AND MARILYN POIRIER CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PRESENTATION TO NAPSA REGION 11 OCTOBER 28, 2009

Introduction Why do some students have positive experiences living with families while others have negative experiences? Is it possible to prepare students to have a positive experience in a homestay? If it is possible, how can we prepare students effectively? Overview of Session Opening a Homestay What We Already Know Overview of Interview Study Discussion of Themes Guidelines

• A home stay is typically defined as a period of time in which a person resides with a family in a home located outside his or her country of residence (Gutel, 174).







Group Interview Questions

- Describe your living situation while you were abroad.
- Describe your relationship with your host family. Did you have different relationships with various members of the family?
- How could the Center for International Education have better prepared you to live with a host family, if at all?
- How could you have better prepared yourself, if at all?
- Were you surprised by anything about the experience?
- Do you feel differently now than you did during the homestay, or right after the experience?



Advantages and Limitations of the Study

Advantages

- o Participants can report on past experiences
- Researcher has control over the questions
- o Students can learn from other students' experiences
- o Outlet for students to talk about experiences abroad

Limitations

- $\,\circ\,$ Participants may experience bias on the part of the researcher and/or other participants
- o Individuals are not equally "articulate and perceptive" (Creswell, 186).
- Perspective of the experience may change over time

Identifying Issues

What issues can you identify in th participant responses? In a group of two or three, please review the responses and discuss what issues you identify





Participant Responses

- Some families are in it for the money.
- It was a Bed and Breakfast-type mentality. There was no bonding.
- My family was my real family. They treated me like a daughter. I miss them a lot.
- They really were like my family. They took me to family parties and weddings. They even had a party on the first day I arrived from the States. I was not expecting to have a celebration after a long day of traveling.

Participant Responses

- We were given false information at first. We were told there would be a man, woman, and their daughter, but we got there and there was no man. It was very awkward.
- It was awkward at first, but then I realized I just had to be myself and it clicked.
- It will be uncomfortable.

Participant Responses

- I was definitely self-conscious and nervous. I know it was my fault that I didn't make more of an effort to get to know my family. I hated not being able to speak Spanish and not being able to express myself. I felt like I couldn't be myself.
- My friend never tried to befriend our host mom. She never put forth the effort.
- Some families are just different. You have to go out of your way to make an effort.
- You should go into it with an open mind and have the attitude that you just want to take it all in.
- Take advantage of your time there. Throw yourself out of your bubble.
- I don't think the language had anything to do with it. You just have to be willing to make mistakes.
- You have to be open to learn. I think so much of it is up to individual personality.

Participant Responses

- I wish I'd gone by myself instead of with my best friend. I
 wish I'd been able to do things myself and do what I wanted to
 do. It was definitely cliquey among the Americans. They
 always did everything together and without locals.
- I felt tied down by my friend. I had to hold his hand, so I
 eventually had to sit down with him and talk to him about it. I
 don't think he was prepared mentally or emotionally.
- It would have been a better experience if I didn't live with English speakers.
- Think twice about living with a friend.
- My host cousin was my best friend. I just needed the one 'in' to make a Chilean friend group.
- It helps to create a tie in the country.

Themes

- Families are different.
- The experience may be awkward or uncomfortable at first.
- Advisors should make every attempt to provide accurate information.
- The personality of the student affects the experience.
- Living with friends or other Americans tends to affect the experience in a negative way.

Clear Gaals* What would you add or change to these guidelines? What would you add or change to these guidelines? Provide Realistic Information It is OK to say, 'Some families are in it for the money.' Provide accurate information when possible Facilitate Opportunities for Self-Awareness Cultural Awareness/Value Charts* Clear Gaals* Willingness to Reduce Expectations* Understanding of your own cultural* Eagerness to Learn* "(Paige, 59-73.) Libicourage Students to Live with Friends Ask students to think about how their friendships might change. Should a policy be made on discouraging this practice?

Conclusion

- It is a challenge to prepare students for particular issues they may or may not face.
- Understanding what issues can arise is an important part of preparing students effectively.
- We can facilitate opportunities for students to be aware of the issues they may face and address those issues themselves.



Questions or comments?