

Global Family Alliance Host Family Information

Thank you for your interest in hosting a child through Global Family Alliance. This letter describes the steps in the host family selection process and discusses other aspects of the hosting experience. Please remember that the parents of these children are entrusting their children to complete strangers. These children are God's treasures. It is your responsibility to provide an environment that provides the child with an opportunity to have a safe, happy, and successful visit.

Filling Out the Application

The application is required to help Global Family Alliance evaluate prospective host families. We hope that filling out the forms will stimulate discussion, planning, and dreaming within each family. This process will help you decide whether you can provide for a child's needs and also whether hosting is a good fit for your family. A non-refundable registration fee of \$50 must accompany the application.

State Patrol Background Check

Global Family Alliance requires that all persons living in your household, who will be fourteen years of age or older, on or before June 17, 2009, undergo a State Patrol background check, which is conducted by Global Family Alliance. This also applies to all persons who will have unsupervised access to the visiting children. The results of the background check will be kept in strict confidence.

In Home Interview

After the background check has been completed, and if you have not hosted a child in the past, you will be contacted for an in-home interview. Veterans of the hosting process will visit your home to ensure that your family will be able to provide a suitable environment for the visiting children. They will also discuss what is in store for you as a new host family. This will provide a final "reality check" for families and give you an opportunity to ask any questions you may have about the hosting experience.

Hosting Payment

Global Family Alliance does its best to keep costs down and raises funds to reduce costs to host families. Many families raise part of their money through their own fundraising efforts. Costs for 2009 are \$1450 per child. Applications and a \$50 registration fee are due March 10th. \$450 is due March 10th, another \$550 is due April 10th and the final \$450 is due April 30th. If registering after March 10th, please contact Sherry Smith at 360-452-7977 or sherry@globalfamilyalliance.org for payment deadlines.

Financial Aid

We understand that the costs of hosting can be burdensome. Furthermore, we do not want to exclude a potential host family due solely to financial purposes. With that in mind, we offer financial assistance in the form of a reduction of the hosting fee. To apply for a reduction in your host fee, you will need to submit a financial aid application. All information will be held in the strictest confidence. Applications are available at: http://www.globalfamilyalliance.org/forms/GFA_Financial_Aid_Application.pdf.

Expenses

Frequently, the children arrive with only the clothes they are wearing. Between purchasing clothing for your child, extra food, family gifts for your child to take home, and cost of outings, some families have spent several hundred dollars. These children are accustomed to not having many special things; therefore expenses can be reduced by shopping at discount stores and spending family time at parks, etc. Host families are encouraged to have a somewhat “normal” summer and are not expected to spend a lot of extra time or money on extra activities.

Dental and Vision Expenses

Global Family Alliance provides a medical insurance policy that covers most emergencies, however, dental and vision coverage are not provided. Most of the children will require extensive dental work. We have found that your family dentist and optometrist are the best sources of donated dental and vision care. Approach them well in advance about donating their services and make several appointments prior to the child's arrival. Your interpreter will contact you to schedule time to accompany you to your appointments. You will be responsible to provide transportation for your interpreter to your child's appointments.

Arrival of Children

At least one week before the children arrive, you will be given the time and location to pick up your child. We have currently projected the dates to be early July arrival with a mid August departure. Dates are subject to change.

Immunizations

Children from Belarus are routinely immunized in their schools with DPT, MMR and Polio vaccines. Most of the children will not be immunized to Hepatitis B, as that series is done after age 12. No immunizations will be done while the children are here in the US, due to governmental restrictions. If you have concerns about a possible infectious illness in your hosted child, a GFA board member should be contacted immediately.

Safety

While the children are here, you are responsible for their health and safety. The children are required to wear seatbelts in all cars, helmets when riding a bike, life vests in all boats, and all other reasonable precautions necessary to protect your child from harm. An adult should always be in or near the water while your child is swimming. Many children have no fear of water yet cannot swim. No child under the age of twelve should sit in the front seat of your vehicle.

Travel

If you plan to take your child out of state on vacation, you will be required to get written permission two weeks in advance from Global Family Alliance. You may not take your child out of the USA under any circumstances (requirement of Belarus Government). When you plan to travel overnight with your child, complete a Travel Notification form online at <http://www.globalfamilyalliance.org/travel>, or you can download a paper copy at http://www.globalfamilyalliance.org/forms/GFA_Travel_Notification_Form.pdf.

Interpreters

You will be able to utilize interpreters to resolve problems over the phone and you will be able to take an interpreter with you on doctor, dentist, and eye appointments. Please schedule your appointments for your child well in advance of the children's arrival.

Website & Email Alerts

Global Family Alliance provides a website at www.GlobalFamilyAlliance.org. The website contains useful information about Belarus, the Chernobyl accident, the hosting experience, and contact information. In addition, your email address will be added to our list and we will email you on occasion with relevant information.

We are looking forward to working with you to make this experience successful and we pray this will be a great adventure for your family. If you have any questions regarding hosting a child or need assistance with completing an application packet please contact Sherry Smith at 360-452-7977 or sherry@globalfamilyalliance.org.