

Semester Students

Talking points for potential host families

What is an AFS semester student?

While most AFS Exchange Students come to the U.S. for a full academic year, others can only participate for a semester. For many, the semester option allows them to take part in a life-changing experience that would otherwise not be available to them. Many may have a school year that starts at a different time, while others cannot miss too many classes or required exams.

What are the benefits of hosting for a semester?

The added flexibility of being able to host for five months rather than ten can mean the difference between having to pass on the experience and opening one's home to the world. It also helps enrich the AFS hosting community, accommodating families who split their time between locations, have seasonal interests, or just aren't quite ready to sign on for a full year.

Where are these students from?

Argentina, Austria, Belgium-Flanders, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Guatemala, Latvia, Paraguay, Switzerland, Slovakia, Turkiye, and more!

When do they return home?

Between mid-December to mid-January.

How do semester host parents feel about the experience?

"I always knew I would host... I just didn't figure it would be as an early-30s single woman!" said host mom Leigh Roberson of South Carolina. "Then, along came Henrique from Brazil, my first AFS 'son.' I [initially] signed up as a welcome family. Henrique chose to stay with me for the entire semester, and we had a great time together. I now count him among my family."

Will these students still have a full AFS Experience?

Of course! They'll have the chance to discover American life and share their culture with you. "I personally think that going to the U.S. was one of the best decisions I ever took in my life!" said Maite Urruspuru, an AFS Exchange Student from Argentina hosted for a semester by the Halpert family. "My host family was amazing and made me feel at home from the very beginning; and besides that, I made lots of friends who I'm still in touch with!"

For complete Host Family FAQs, visit afsusa.org/host