



Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange Program: Parent FAQs

What is the CBYX Program?

Established in 1983, the CBYX Program is a fully funded, State Department sponsored student exchange program between Germany and the United States. The U.S. Congress and the German Bundestag (Parliament) sponsor the scholarship, which has supported the exchange of more than 22,000 German and American high school students and young professionals over the past 30 years.

Each year, the program allows 250 American high school students to live and study in Germany for one year. At the same time, 285 German students come to the United States. CIEE selects 50 of the 250 total American high school students from the Southeast United States and Puerto Rico to participate each year. Our partner organization, Experiment e.V., then places and supports these 50 students in German host families and schools.

The program aims to foster cultural understanding and diplomacy, while promoting German and English languages. As a CBYX scholarship recipient, your son or daughter will be regarded as a youth ambassador of the United States.

What can CBYX provide for my son or daughter?

The CBYX scholarship includes international airfare to and from Germany, a pre-departure orientation in Washington, D.C., a three-week language and cultural immersion camp, two 5-day CBYX-focused seminars in Germany, a host family stay, enrollment at a German high school, regional supervision and 24-hour emergency assistance, and private health and accident insurance. However, the benefits of participating in the CBYX program extend far beyond the components of the scholarship itself.

Participating in the CBYX program is truly a life-changing experience. Year-long cultural and language immersion programs like CBYX can foster a deeper intercultural understanding and build stronger relationships than short-term programs. CBYX recipients have the opportunity to fully immerse themselves in a new language and culture, all the while developing their personal character and academic and professional interests.

Demonstrating global experience and knowing a second language are invaluable in today's job market. As a recipient of a highly competitive State Department sponsored program, your son or daughter can speak directly to having international experience when applying for college or jobs, and can utilize an extensive online network of State Department alumni when applying for future positions.

What steps are in place to ensure my student's safety?

Students' safety and wellbeing are our top priorities in administering the CBYX program. The scholarship includes an extensive private program health and wellness insurance that covers your son or daughter for the duration of the program year. Should any urgent issues arise, you and your student will have access to an emergency phone number accessible in both Germany and the U.S. 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. These phones are staffed only by trained CIEE and Experiment e.V. employees, not a third-party service. Students are registered with the U.S. Embassy and their placements in host families and schools are monitored by the U.S. Department of State.



Finally, CIEE and Experiment e.V. have created a close-knit support network around each and every student. Each student is assigned to a Local Coordinator, an experienced Experiment e.V. volunteer in a host family's region, who is trained to support students throughout their experience. Local Coordinators serve as an additional resource for students as they settle into their communities, and act as a liaison between students, host families and Experiment e.V. staff to address and resolve any issues that may arise during the program year. Local Coordinators and CIEE staff also conduct periodic interviews and surveys with students to provide another outlet through which to share about their experience. At any point in the program year, students are welcome to directly contact Experiment e.V. staff members who specialize in student safety and support.

CIEE and Experiment e.V. staff are in close contact each day to monitor students' wellbeing on the program. CIEE staff immediately contacts students' parents with any concerns regarding a student's health or wellbeing. Of course, students' parents are welcome to contact CIEE staff with questions or concerns at any time.

Can I visit my son/daughter while he/she is on the program?

Yes. However, student travel and visits to the student by family members/friends from the U.S. are only approved during the second half of the program year. By postponing travel and/or having visitors until the later half of their experience, students are able to integrate more quickly and fully into their host communities.

2014-2015 Alumni Parent Testimonials

"The opportunity to learn a new language, experience life in a different culture, and grow intellectually and emotionally helps bring more understanding of others to the individual and our country. And our world needs much more understanding and care for others."

"This was an amazing experience for my daughter. What she gained simply can't be replicated by anything we have in place in the school system here in the states. I truly feel she is much better prepared for college as well as being a much better person overall."

"Professional communication, coordination and training from all aspects of the experience, from the application process, to the interview, to the parent/student orientations. Two of my children have participated and we have embraced both German families into our family. Both boys continue to communicate with their German friends...which helps them keep their language skills and relationships."

"It is a complete life changer and amazing opportunity! The program itself is expertly run and is such a well-oiled machine! The staff is incredible and I always felt like my child was in good hands! I seriously can't say enough about this program!"

"The experience was invaluable. My daughter's world opened up - her confidence improved - she became world citizen which we were hoping her to become."

"Short term study abroad is often the only option for high school students. CBYX is an excellent exchange program for the student who feels s/he can be away for close to a year and has the maturity to embrace a new culture, a new language, a new family and community, and be mindful of rules that are often vastly different than those in the US. CIEE administered our child's experience perfectly, and the communication, guidance, and support from the CIEE staff in the US was truly excellent."

"This was an amazing experience for my daughter. What she gained simply can't be replicated by anything we have in place in the school system here in the states. I truly feel she is much better prepared for college as well as being a much better person overall."

"It's so hard to encapsulate in words the amazing affect this program has had on our son! Because of his experience in Germany, he is not afraid to take a path less traveled and his dreams and hopes have been broadened! The sky is his limit!"

Council on International
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