



## CONGRESS-BUNDESTAG YOUTH EXCHANGE (CBYX) PROGRAM: PARENT FAQs

### What is the CBYX program?

Established in 1983, the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) Program is a fully funded, U.S. Department of State 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 24,000 German and American high school students and young professionals over the past 30 years.

Each year, the program sends 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 100 of the 250 total American high school students from 18 states, Puerto Rico, and Washington D.C. to participate each year. Our partner organizations, Experiment e.V. (East Coast) and Partnership International e.V. (Mid-West) then support and place students in German host families and schools.

The program aims to foster cultural understanding and diplomacy, while also 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 is included in the CBYX scholarship?

The CBYX scholarship includes:

- International airfare to and from Germany
- A pre-departure orientation in Washington, D.C.
- A four-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
- 24-hour emergency assistance
- Private health and accident insurance

### What are the benefits of participating in the CBYX program?

CBYX, a year-long cultural and language immersion program, fosters deep intercultural understanding and helps participants build strong international relationships that often last a lifetime. Participants also 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. Why is this so important? Because demonstrating global experience and knowing a second language are invaluable in today's job market. After the program ends, participants can also utilize an extensive online network of U.S. Department of State and CBYX alumni.



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

Student safety and wellbeing are our top priorities in administering the CBYX program. The scholarship includes extensive private health and travel 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 in both Germany and the U.S. 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. These phones are staffed by trained CIEE and Experiment e.V. or Partnership International e.V. employees. Students are also registered with the U.S. Embassy and their placements in host families and schools are monitored by the U.S. Department of State.

CIEE and our German partners have created a close-knit support network that operates on a local basis. Every student is assigned to a Local Coordinator – a professional and highly trained German volunteer that lives in the same regions as your student's host family. Local Coordinators are trained to support students throughout their experience. Local Coordinators also serve as an additional resource for students as they settle into their communities, and act as a liaison between students, host families, and overseas staff to address and resolve any issues that may arise during the program year. Local Coordinators and CIEE staff conduct periodic interviews and surveys with students to provide another outlet through which to share their experience. At any point in the program year, students are welcome to directly contact the German partner office staff members who specialize in student safety and support.

Finally, CIEE and our partner 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 student during the program?

Yes. However, student travel and visits by family members/friends from the U.S. are only approved during the second half of the program year. This makes it easier for students to integrate more quickly and fully into their host communities.

## 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!”*



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