



PROGRAMMES D'ÉCHANGE D'AMITIÉ DU SPORT DU CANADA

CANADA SPORTS
FRIENDSHIP EXCHANGE PROGRAMS

**RECIPROCAL CULTURAL EXCHANGES
FOR YOUTH BETWEEN THE AGES OF 12-17**

APPLICATION GUIDE

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Canada

LIVE, LOVE, AND PLAY THE CSFEP WAY!

The Canada Sports Friendship Exchange Programs (CSFEP) exchanges are aimed at promoting friendship, respect and a better understanding and appreciation of each other's language, culture, and Canadian heritage.

They are modeled for Anglophone and Francophone youth groups, consisting of girls and boys between the ages of 12 and 17 years, across Canada; to open the lines of communication, connection, cooperation, and community involvement among the Canadian youths.

In our reciprocal home-stay exchanges, the participants apply as a youth group unit, and are paired with another youth group with common interests and participants of same age group, but from a different province in Canada. And the participants from each group take turns staying in their twinned participant's home.

At CSFEP, our exchanges are for a period of 7 days, which includes the travel time and a minimum of 5 activity-filled days. And from the pre-planning stage to the hosting of the twin group, our exchanges allow the participants to be involved according to their different capacities, in the communities of both youth groups.

The transportation cost for all eligible participants and group organizers are paid by the Government of Canada through the CSFEP. However, each group fundraises in their community to cover the local transportation and other activity expenses incurred when hosting their twin group.

In summary, the CSFEP exchanges are geared towards providing the participants with the opportunity to strengthen their national identity, to personally experience new cultures, learn new languages, to connect and form new friendships, and in all to develop a better and more practical understanding of their Canadian history and heritage.

Our application form can be found on our website, at www.csfep.com.

Objectives of the CSFEP:

1. To give young Canadians the opportunity to personally experience and learn about the history, geography, industry, institutions, cultures, communities, languages and other facets of Canada, thereby enhancing their knowledge and understanding of Canada;
2. To connect young Canadians with one another, creating linkages between youth groups across the country, thereby strengthening the fabric of the Canadian society;
3. To help the young Canadians appreciate their uniqueness as Canadians as well as their mutuality with other Canadians, thereby developing a Canadian identity and a sense of belonging to Canada.

When submitting an application for an exchange with CSFEP, the organizer must include plans that inculcate the afore-mentioned objectives, in their itinerary. In other words, ***at least a third of the activities and places to visit included in the group's daily exchange itinerary must outline their area-historical or geographical landmarks, promoting an increased knowledge and appreciation of Canadian history and heritage.***

The CSFEP also aims at involving youth exchanges with participants from all walks of life, and encourages underrepresented youth groups, such as youth with disabilities and special needs, visible minorities and Aboriginal youths to apply.

At the CSFEP we adopt Special Measures to support exchanges that involves and encourages the participation of youths from low-income families, visible minorities, official language minority, Aboriginal youths, youth with special needs or disabilities and youths from rural or isolated areas. Bilingual exchanges are also encouraged.

Participants in the CSFEP can go anywhere in Canada. They can discover a rural area or a city; a French-speaking, English-speaking, or a Bilingual community; and even a province on the other side of the country or the ones closer to home.

Under no circumstance will host teams be permitted to include in their host itineraries trips from Canadian border towns to the United States. These are Reciprocal Cultural Exchanges for Canadian youth to learn about each other and their country.

SPECIAL MEASURES

Certain measures have been adopted in the CSFEP to encourage the participation of all Canadian youth, with special consideration for groups that include the following participants:

Youth from Low-Income Households

A person who lives in a household earning less than the low income cut-off as defined by Statistics Canada is considered to be from a low-income household.

Aboriginal Youth

A person is considered aboriginal where he or she is a member of a First Nation, a Métis or Inuit peoples.

Youth with Disabilities or Special Needs

A person with disabilities or special needs is defined as a person who has difficulties with daily living activities, or who has a physical, mental condition or health problem reducing the kind or amount of activities they can do.

Youth from Rural or isolated Areas

A person, who lives in a community that has a population of less than 10,000 residents, is considered to be from a rural or isolated community.

Visible Minority Youth

A person is considered a visible minority where the individual is a non-Indigenous person; is non-Caucasian in race, and/ or is non-white in color.

Special Measures may be requested for a group with participants in the above mentioned circumstances. The CSFEP staff will assist in finding the best way to meet the particular needs of the group.

Where local community resources are not available, additional financial support may be requested to ensure accessibility. The CSFEP staff will evaluate the needs and resources on a case-by-case basis.

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

Yes, if you meet the following requirements:

- The exchange group must comprise of youth participants between the **ages of 12 and 17**, who are **Canadian citizens**, or **permanent residents**; and adult chaperones of **ages 21 or older**.
- The group is comprised of a **minimum of 10** youth participants with one (1) chaperone; or a group of 11-20 youth participants with a minimum of two (2) chaperones; or a group of 21 to a **maximum of 25** youth participants with a minimum of three (3) chaperones.
- Ensure that participants are from a school related group; sport team; or a youth group affiliated with a recognized community organization.

Groups are eligible to re-apply for another exchange, but with a different group than they did in the past or previous exchange.

COSTS:

The CSFEP funds:

- The 2-way Air, Train or bus travel cost (between provinces) for all eligible participants and their chaperones (with 1 chaperone for a group of 10 participants, 2 chaperones for a group of 11-20 participants, and 3 chaperones for a group of 21-25 participants); and
- Financial assistance for Special Measures that may be granted. Speak to the CSFEP staff for more information.

Please note that the mode of transportation and itinerary are determined by CSFEP based on distance and budget.

The Exchange Group funds:

- The registration fee of \$635 per group;
- The local transportation cost, activity cost, and other expenses while hosting the twin group.

Please note that when a visiting group is in the hosting province, it is imperative that their participants do not pay out of pocket expenses for meals, entrance fees to visited sites, etc...

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR HOSTING ORGANIZERS

The following are important guidelines that group organizers wishing their team or students to participate should bear in mind:

- Your application should be sent in **as soon as possible**, so that CSFEP can find a group that shares your group's objectives and interests, in time to meet your preferred hosting and visiting dates, if possible.
- If however, you wish to request a twinning with a specific group or a specific location, both groups must apply separately to CSFEP indicating that they wish to be twinned with each other.

Please Note:

All groups applying to the program are considered individually for their eligibility.

CSFEP must respect established provincial/territorial quotas to ensure the equitable national distribution of funds allocated to this exchange program.

Requests for specific twinning groups/locations are considered in light of these provincial /territorial targets and available budget once the eligibility of both groups has been determined.

- The travel and the hosting dates are at both group organizers' choice; however, they are subject to flight availability and prices. All travel and hosting activities must take place within Canada.
- You are responsible for the selection of the participants, and for ensuring that the selected participants and their families are aware of their roles and responsibilities throughout the exchange.
- Both organizers together, are responsible for the matching/pairing of the participants; and the participants are twinned with a youth approximately their own age. Their families act as hosts during the exchange. (Camp-stays are also possible).
- Each host family must successfully complete a host family screening process, after which, the organizer will receive and verify, before endorsing the necessary screening materials.
- You are responsible for ensuring that all participants (youth, parents or guardians, chaperones or other organizers) are informed and fully understand what the principal aims and goals of the exchange are.

It is strongly recommended that the organizers hold multiple information sessions with youth, parents or guardians and communicate with their twin group organizer.

- You should carefully plan the exchange to include a tentative 5 days itinerary of hosting activities outlining your area's geographical landmarks, or historical, or social highlight, which must accompany the Exchange Application Form.
- You must ensure that a **minimum of 30%** of the exchange activities is aimed at allowing the participants explore, learn and appreciate an aspect of Canadian history and heritage. Your exchange activities should also include **Non-competitive** friendly and fun activities and games which will be played between cultural exchange partners.

Please note that all participants, organizers/supervisors must fully understand that they are not competing in a tournament or a must win situation. CSFEP exchanges provide a cultural exchange experience, not a win at all cost scenario.

- You must ensure that all parents or guardians of the participants understand and agree that their child may be billeted (hosted) in a home with an exchange partner.
- You must make sure the parents are aware that adult supervision is required in the host's home, while hosting a twin, and that youth participants should not be working while they are hosting.
- A registration fee of \$635 per group will be required to process the application. In the event that an exchange does not take place because the CSFEP does not find a proper match, this registration fee will be reimbursed in full.
- However, if a group cancels an exchange that has been approved and matched, the CSFEP will retain the full registration fee for administration costs.
- In addition, should a group decide to pull out while the CSFEP is actively searching for a match, then 50% of the registration fee will be retained by the CSFEP.
- Once your application has been approved and you have been matched with another group for an exchange, a \$100.00 deposit is required for the Government-issued questionnaires, which will be refunded in full once the CSFEP receive the completed questionnaires in our office after the exchange is completed.
- Organizers and participants are required to raise funds to cover the registration cost, cost of activities and local transportation incurred in the host community. Fundraising events are an excellent way for participants to learn to cooperate with others and become involved in their community.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ORGANIZERS:

- Submit the completed application form and communicate with the CSFEP staff.

After Approval:

- Read the organizer's manual sent to you after your application has been approved.
- Fully organise the exchange experience to include activities before, during and after the exchange, that are in line with the Exchanges Canada and CSFEP objectives.
- Select the individual youth participants; being up front with the participants and parents regarding what they should to expect and what would be expected of them, especially in the planning and execution of the exchange.
- Raise awareness of the exchange throughout the community using local media, school forum and other youth involved forum/network. Information sessions should be organized with parents and guardians.
- Set up committees for host family screening, fundraising, activity planning, organizing, conducting meetings, media coverage, and for other aspects of the exchange.
- Assign tasks to set committees and individuals (ASAP), ensuring youth and parent's involvement with the planning and organization of exchange activities; also so everyone knows their responsibilities and understands that the organizer is not solely responsible for every aspect of the exchange.
- Conduct the mandatory screening of host families, taking appropriate measures to ensure participants' security; Make sure that the participants are adequately insured, making note of any medical conditions that the participants may have and ensure that the host families are aware.
- Develop a budget; Organise fundraising activities and establish partnerships with sponsors such as businesses and community organisations, or you can even contact the MP and/or Mayor for assistance.
- Work with your twin group's organizer to match the youth participants; Communicate frequently with the twin organizer, youth and parents; also encourage the participants and parents or guardians to communicate with the twin family prior to travelling.

- **Send in the required deposits and fees, as well as all the exchange forms and required documents to the CSFEP office, by the established deadlines.**

CSFEP office address: -5555 Westminster, Suite 209, Cote St.-Luc, QC. H4W 2J2

During the Exchange:

- Coordinate the hospitality for the visiting group with participants and their families, including local transportation, meals and accommodations according to the guidelines provided by CSFEP.
- Organizers must be satisfied with the home environment in which each participant is being hosted. Please use discretion in dealing with host family situations, bearing in mind that the safety and well-being of the participant is of primary importance.
- Ensure all airline, train or bus tickets are stored properly for safe keeping until you return.
- Take responsibility for the group at all times while staying in the host community. Check in on your youth on a regular basis to ensure their level of comfort and their conduct.
- If the host parents' work, make alternative arrangements for the visiting youth, like the visiting participant can attend school with the host participant.

After the Exchange:

- Both organizers and participants must evaluate their experience using questionnaires, which will be mailed to you before the exchange. And ensure the completed questionnaires are returned by mail to the CSFEP office after the exchange.
- Encourage the youth participants to share their experiences with other youth groups.
- Encourage continued communication / interaction between the two groups in order to promote lasting friendship, better understanding and respect for one another's language and culture. Communication is the key for a successful exchange.

- If an MP or the mayor visited your exchange, please indicate it when submitting your final evaluation report to the CSFEP. Also ensure you mail in the final exchange forms to the CSFEP office.

YOUTH PARTICIPANTS:

- Must participate fully in all activities during both legs of the exchange.
- Take an active role in the exchange experience: in the planning, organization and in the post-exchange activities, including the evaluation (questionnaire), under the supervision of the group organizer.
- Share their experiences of the exchange with other youths, schools and community at large.

Please not that during each exchange, the program requires all group participants to attend a Drug and Alcohol, Teenage Peer Pressure and Crime Prevention Lecture conducted by the RCMP whenever possible.

Any participants in the exchange found using drugs or having them in their possession will immediately be disqualified and expelled from further participation in the program and sent home at their own expense.

PARENTS:

- If your child requires any special needs while on the exchange, please fill out the appropriate medical forms provided from the group organizer, speak with group organizer about your child, and speak with the family who will be hosting your child.
- If you have been selected to host a child with special needs, please speak with the parents or guardian of that child. Develop a strong rapport with the family. Implement all the safety measures, to ensure that the health and safety of that participant takes the first priority.
- Previous years experience has shown that some parents may also like to benefit from the cultural exchanges; therefore we recommend that both groups contact each other to inquire as to how many parents may be accompanying the group.

- However, it must be clearly understood that visiting parents will under no circumstances be allowed to interfere with the itinerary and/or the host family.
- If the mode of transportation is bus and there is ample room for parents, they may travel with group.
- In the event that some parents decide to accompany their child's group to benefit from a cultural exchange experience, they must first acquire permission from their child's group organizer who will inform the CSFEP.
- We also encourage the host parents to welcome their visiting parents, and arrange to meet with the visiting parents, have coffee together to exchange cultural information about each other, their community and their children which could make the exchange between their kids more enjoyable and establish parental friendship as well.

THE CSFEP IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Evaluating the group applications
- Facilitating the twinning of the groups.
- Coordinating the travel arrangements between the two provinces of the twinned groups.
- Supporting the group organizers by answering their questions, and helping them solve problems; providing all the necessary tools to assisting in the execution of the exchange; Ensuring that all aspects of the exchange are well planned.