

People to People Sheboygan-Esslingen Middle School Exchange Program

Information for Interested Students and Parents

The Sheboygan Chapter of People to People International has been sponsoring an annual exchange with Sheboygan's sister city, Esslingen, Germany, since 1970. Since that time over 170 Sheboygan County high school students have participated in this unique program. Many have made lifelong friendships. Esslingen is a charming city of about 100,000 located in southwestern Germany on the banks of the Neckar River, near Stuttgart. In 2006 we began offering the short term exchange in hopes that the student will develop a love for another culture through this experience.

Applicants must be in 7th or 8th grade. Applications should be returned by November 15 each year, and the selection of students, which will include a family interview, is usually completed in December. The Sheboygan students arrive in Esslingen during the third week of July and stay three weeks. Then German students will travel back to your home in August for three weeks.

American families selected for the exchange are expected to:

1. Provide the visiting student with his or her own bed—preferably in a separate room.
2. Spend time with their German student and include him/her in family social activities and show him/her places of interest in and around Wisconsin.
3. Participate in People to People activities and gatherings for exchange families.
4. Provide transportation for the student.
5. Provide parental supervision at all times.
6. Share family meals together.
7. Meet the Esslingen student on arrival at airport and transport to airport for departure.
8. Join the People to People Sheboygan Chapter. (Annual membership: \$35 family)
9. Exchange student and parents support the People to People Brat Fry by selling tickets before the event and working the day of the event. This fund raising event financially supports the program.

Costs

The cost of the program includes the round trip airfare and the personal expenses of the Sheboygan students while in Germany in addition to a \$250 administration fee. Plane ticket costs change from year to year and are currently around \$1500. The expense of having another member in the family for three weeks is offset by the fact that there will be one less family member at home while your student is in Esslingen.

Other questions

You may have other concerns about having an unknown person in your family for a time. If your student is selected to participate, the exchange committee will provide more information and suggestions. However, we know that you might want some of your questions answered before you decide to proceed! The advice that has worked for many others is to treat the student as you treat your son/daughter—it is just too difficult to have a guest for three weeks. An advantage to this program is that your student will be going

to live in your German student's home, so the exchange is really between families. The committee uses the application information to make the best matches possible.

The German students will arrive here with at least two years of English, so communication is not a big problem. You may have to speak a little slower at first and explain some slang. There is no need for anyone in your family to have knowledge of German for this program.

You may have many more questions as you try to decide if you want to apply. Please feel free to call and ask questions—we've been in the same place!

Jon Keckonen, Student Exchange Committee Chair
920-457-4318
jkeckonen@charter.net