

Go Happy, Come Back Safely

Guidelines for International Travel with Youth Theatre Groups

Developed by the National Association for Youth Drama



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Introduction

International exchanges offer a rich source of cultural and artistic experience to youth theatre groups. A new country, a new language, a new culture and probably a whole new way of looking at theatre are all out there to be encountered. With the right balance of planning and enthusiasm, an international exchange can be the highlight of the youth theatre year.

Exploring the Idea

Ask yourself the following questions: (taken from the **Irish Youth Theatre Handbook 2000**)

- * What exactly is an exchange?
- * What does it involve?
- * What themes or issues are of interest to us?
- * Is there a particular drama project that we want to do with another group?
- * Do we want to explore a particular way of working?
- * What country would we like to work with? Why?
- * Who would be a suitable Partner Organisation? How do we find them?

What is an exchange?

(taken from the **Léargas International Youth Exchange Guide**)

- A developmental instrument through which to work with young people.
- A challenge for young people, which can promote personal development, self-awareness and self-confidence.
- A way of broadening horizons, facilitating the learning of new skills and raising awareness of new possibilities.
- A means of enhancing teamwork resulting in a sense of personal and group achievement .
- A tool that can promote tolerance and understanding and challenge prejudices.
- A mechanism that develops relationships within the group, the local community and beyond.
- An instrument to help young people to learn about themselves; their history, culture and country.

What does it involve?

*** Time**

In the *Irish Youth Theatre Handbook* the time scale stated is 8-9 months. However, numerous things can affect this. Is your group already in existence? Will it be the group's sole project for the coming months? How much time can the leaders / co-ordinators give to the project? When are the funding deadlines? Is there full-time staff involved? How quickly does communication happen with partner countries?

*** Energy and Enthusiasm**

As preparation takes place over a long period of time, a steady level of energy and enthusiasm are needed to keep the momentum going.

*** Money**

There's no escaping this one! Applications for funding, fundraising, sponsorship, participants' contributions – money is needed. Be cautious when budgeting, err on the side of having too much rather than too little.

*** Organisation**

Someone will have to take responsibility for the co-ordination of the exchange. Does your group have a willing and competent person who has enough time to devote to this project?

Choosing the Team

Decide what roles are needed to help make both the preparation process and the exchange itself an enjoyable experience for all. The size of the exchange i.e. number of young people, length of exchange, financial commitment etc. will determine the size of the team.

Who should be on the Team?

Sending Organisation

The Sending Organisation is the youth theatre, organisation or agency that is sending a group abroad.

Co-coordinator

This is a designated person within the Sending Organisation. His/her role is to oversee the co-ordination of the entire project including the preparation, the exchange itself and the evaluation. This person is the point of contact for all involved in the project and must be informed of any major decisions made by anyone else on the Team.

Artistic Leader*

The Artistic Leader may be someone from within or outside the Sending Organisation. He/she will be responsible for any artistic input required for the exchange.

Welfare Leader*

This may be someone from within or outside the Sending Organisation. He/she will be responsible for the welfare of the young people when abroad and will make sure that all welfare issues are addressed during the exchange.

Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer should be someone from within the Sending Organization. He/she will be the point of contact at home for the group while they are abroad - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and for a week following the group's return, if necessary. This role may be covered by a number of persons on a rota depending on the length of the exchange.

The Group

The group of young people involved may already be members of an existing group and may take on some of the responsibilities in the organisation of the exchange.

If the young people chosen are not a pre-existing group, please see **Choosing the Group**

Partner Organisation

The Partner Organisation is the youth theatre, organisation or agency that will receive groups from abroad into their country. This can also be referred to as the **Hosting Organisation**.

*** Ideally the Leaders should be one male and one female. If this is not possible then the two leaders should be female.**

Choosing the Welfare Leader and Artistic Leader

- * Applicant leaders should provide a C.V. detailing their experience of working with young people and, in the case of the Artistic Leader, theatre, drama and workshop experience.
- * Applicant leaders may be required to meet with representatives of the Sending Organisation for an informal interview.
- * All references must be checked.
- * Chosen leaders should be available prior to travel to allow time to get to know the group.
- * Chosen leaders should be free for up to 48 hours after the scheduled return of the trip, to cover any unforeseen difficulties at the end of the trip. A daily fee should be negotiated for any additional days a leader has to work in response to an emergency.
- * Chosen leaders should be available to attend an Advance Planning Visit (APV) if necessary.
- * Chosen leaders must be willing to take part in any evaluation process needed for funders or for the Sending Organisation on their return.
- * Chosen leaders should sign a contractual agreement.

Qualities of a Leader: He/she should:

- * Be able to identify with young people.
- * Be open-minded and a good listener.
- * Be a realist.
- * Be able to say no and be consistent in that decision.
- * Have a lot of energy.
- * Enjoy spending lots of time with young people.
- * Be interested in the young people from the host country.
- * Be someone the young people feel comfortable with.

Choosing the Liaison Officer: He/she should:

- * Be contactable 24 hours a day for the duration of the group's stay abroad and at least one week after the scheduled return of the group.
- * Be good at dealing with bureaucracy, and link with embassies, consulates and Department of Foreign Affairs if applicable.
- * Have access to phone, fax and email.

Choosing the Group

How you choose the group is entirely up to you. If there are more young people interested in the exchange than places available you may have to have a selection process. This may be an audition, or a call for letters of interest from the young people. It could depend on the young people's commitment to their youth theatre; attendance, enthusiasm or participation in previous events. It could be names out of a hat. Deciding factors could be the target age-range or the gender balance. It is important to try to maintain a gender balance and a compatible age-range. This should be decided in conjunction with your partner organisation.

The 'Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector – Code of Good Practice' states:

*'The minimum adult / youth ratio in any group should ideally be **one adult per group of eight plus one other adult**, and allowing an additional adult for each group of eight thereafter. Local circumstances, the ages of the [young people], the experience of the volunteers and the staff should be taken into consideration. Safety, ability / disability of young people and the nature of the activities being undertaken may require that these ratios be considerably lower.'*

Choosing a Partner Organisation

It is important to choose an exchange partner appropriate to your group's profile.

How do we do this?

First of all, who are your group members? What is their age-range? What level of experience in youth theatre do they have? Is it a mixed / all-girls / all-boys group? Does the group have any specific area of interest i.e. process drama, theatre, mime, dance, multimedia etc?

What are we looking for?

An appropriate exchange partner should have a similar group profile to yours.

Where can we find them? (Irish Youth Theatre Handbook 2000)

- * Contact NAYD. They may have details of groups interested in organising exchanges.
- * Keep an eye on 'Intermission', NAYD's newsletter features exchange opportunities regularly.
- * Contact Léargas - the Exchange Bureau.
- * Talk to other youth theatre leaders who may have contacts with organisations abroad, they may also be able to offer valuable advice if they have organised an exchange themselves.
- * Is your town / village twinned? If so, find out whom with – there may be valuable connections there.
- * If any of the group members have been previously involved in an exchange they may have made connections that they would be interested in pursuing.
- * Think back over previous conferences / seminars that you or the group has attended, do you have contacts already?

Communicating with the Partner Organisation

The contract of the exchange is very important; it is about negotiation the whole way. When you have found your Partner Organisation it is important to set up parameters for planning, scheduling and communication. Firstly, identify the person responsible for all communications regarding the exchange in the Partner Organisation and choose the common language for communication. * Then, in consultation with the person responsible, decide when and how communications are going to happen. Decide dates to meet face-to-face prior to the exchange, the exchange itself and evaluation deadlines. Be aware of funding deadlines when deciding these dates. It is important that both your group and the Partner Organisation outline the expectations and aspirations for the exchange early on so that any discrepancies can be addressed.

The Partner Organisation may be dealing with more than one visiting group and will have a lot more organising to do on the ground so be efficient in both providing and requesting information.

Initial information they will need:

Numbers of people traveling / Breakdown of the group i.e. leaders, young people, ages, gender, dietary requirements, special needs/ Date, time and point of arrival and departure.

Initial information you will need:

Exact location of the Exchange / Location of workshop space in relation to accommodation / nearest port of arrival i.e. Airport, stations, port, etc / Are you being collected?

**At the initial stages it may be worth getting someone who speaks the Partner Organisation's language i.e. a local schoolteacher, so that important organisational details are thoroughly understood by both parties.*

Meeting your Partner Organisation

Depending on location, cost and funding, it may be possible to meet your partner organization on two occasions, firstly to assess compatibility and feasibility and secondly to cement to plans prior to the exchange.

It is *strongly* recommended that you meet your partner organization at least once prior to the exchange.

Feasibility Visit

A feasibility visit would allow partners to assess the likelihood of a practical and successful exchange between organizations. If compatibility is likely, initial decisions may be made i.e. time frame of the exchange, initial artistic ideas or themes, nomination of contact persons etc.

Planning Visit

A planning visit would happen closer to the exchange. It may be used to cement plans and iron out any details, including working out respective financial commitments in advance, welfare issues, logistical issues, artistic or work practice issues and issues of language or communications.

Meeting your Partner Organisation

Whether you meet for a feasibility or planning visit, it is important that you experience your Partner Organisation in person. Even one face-to-face meeting can make communications clearer and easier. There is a greater opportunity for misunderstandings of language, culture or artistic approaches to be tackled in a productive way. Using email, letter or phone does not always allow for this.

It is important that any meetings are held in the same place in which the exchange is to be hosted. There are no advantages to meeting halfway as some of the knowledge needed is experiential. Accommodation, workshop areas and production venues should all be checked out. If there is travel between the accommodation and work areas, will this raise issues of health and safety or infringe on the working timetable?

If this is your first time to work together, check out working practices. Where possible, experience your Partner Organisation's approach to theatre and to young people. Sometimes a conversation may not clarify work practice. See if it is possible to take part in a workshop or attend a theatre performance of the Partner Organisation. If not, they may have examples of their work on video or DVD, or references from other groups with whom they have worked especially previous exchange partners.

Meet with the actual individuals who will be involved in the exchange. This provides a great opportunity for you to double-check that the groups and leadership teams are compatible. If you discover that your Partner Organisation is not really a suitable partner for you – don't go ahead with your exchange. Better an awkward conversation at that stage than a disastrous exchange.

Use any meeting to preempt as many potential problems as possible. Prevention is half the battle.

Bring photographs, programme details and excitement back to those that did not travel.

Responsibilities Prior to Travel

It cannot be stressed enough that the success and quality of the experience for both the young people and the leaders is rooted in the planning and preparation stages of an exchange. Good planning involves time and hard work but is always well worth the effort.

Co-ordinator

The Co-coordinator must ensure that the following tasks are completed. Depending on personnel available, these may have to be done by the Co-coordinator him/herself. If there are more people involved in the planning at home the Co-coordinator should assign the following tasks accordingly.

- * **Choose the Leading Team** – the Artistic Leader and the Welfare Leader.
- * Choose the Liaison Officer.
- * Introduce and brief all personnel on their **roles and responsibilities** in regard to the exchange.
- * Arrange a meeting with the Partner Organisation for the relevant personnel of the organisation/group and/or the leading team. If it is not possible for the leading team to attend, they must be informed of any information received at the meeting.
- * Organise the **selection of young people** travelling - with input from the leading team. It is necessary to involve the leaders in the selection of participants so that they have the opportunity to get to know the young people prior to travel.
- * Organise a meeting day for both the participants and leading team. This may consist of an information session providing information on travel plans, the exchange itself, information about the Partner Organisation, group and country. There may also be a workshop session to 'bond' the group. Parents should be invited to the information sessions, especially in the case of younger children. The Liaison Officer should be present to meet with the parents and participants also.
- * Organise travel arrangements including **Travel Insurance**
- * Design, distribute and collect **Parental Consent Forms**, to include extraordinary programme activities (i.e. gymnastic, circus skills, scuba diving) and inform the parent that in the event of an emergency that renders the young person unable to travel home with the group the parent / guardian will be required to travel to the host country
- * Collect relevant data and distribute to relevant personnel
- * Investigate different medical/travel entitlements and requirements of different nationalities in the host country and brief the leading team of findings. Don't assume that your entire group carry Republic of Ireland Passports. Investigations should be made on behalf of all nationalities travelling as part of your exchange group.
- * Research and inform the Welfare Leader of the laws of the host country that are relevant to the young people i.e. legal age to drink, healthcare etc.
- * Research and inform the Leading Team of the international contact number for airline / transport companies.
- * Communicate with the Partner Organisation on behalf of the group until such time as the leaders and young people take on relevant communication responsibilities.

Artistic Leader

He/she should:

- * Run a workshop(s) to allow the group to get to know each other.
- * Prepare the group for the type of artistic approach that may be used during the exchange.
- * Prepare any artistic work to be shown at the exchange.

Welfare Leader

He/she should:

- Organise a welfare meeting with the young people and their parent/guardians in conjunction with the co-ordinator
- * Inform the group and their parents/guardians of the practical travel arrangements – times, dates, cost, travel insurance entitlements and information required for same.
- * Remind parents/guardians that in the event of an emergency that renders the young person unable to travel home with the group the parent / guardian will be required to travel to the host country.
- * Provide a checklist of Things To Bring for the group.
- * Impart appropriate knowledge from the APV.
- * Create Group Rules with the young people, addressing the behaviour expected of them while on exchange from their organisation's point of view, with regard to issues such as alcohol, drugs, smoking, sex etc. These rules should be age-appropriate and formalised by a contract or agreement signed by the young people and their parents/guardians before travel.
- * Parent/ Legal Guardian permission must be obtained for all activities, travel and the exchange itself.
- * Prepare the group for the country they are travelling to i.e. social etiquette, culture, and weather.
- * If there is more than one partner country, the Welfare Leader must prepare participants for different world views, different social etiquette etc.
- * Clarify data collected on a regular basis to ensure that updates or changes are communicated immediately.

Having met the group, the Welfare Leader should take on the responsibility for communication between them and the Partner Organisation. Approximately a week before travel he/she should confirm the travel arrangements and times by both phone and letter with the group and their parents/legal guardians.

Parent/ Legal Guardian Responsibilities

They should:

- * Inform Sending Organisation of any relevant medical information i.e. a pre-existing medical condition.
- * Ensure that if on medication the young person brings an adequate supply and has a backup supply to be given to the Welfare Leader. A prescription for this medication in international generic form is to be given to the Welfare Leader on departure also.
- * Inform the Sending Organisation if the family would expect a priest/minister/other to be called in event of a serious medical emergency.
- * Sign and return the Parent/Legal Guardian Consent Form.
- * Ensure that the young person attends all preparatory meetings.
- * Ensure that the young person arrives in time for departure and collect them from the port of arrival on return.

Participants' Responsibilities

They should:

- * Question any information of which they are unsure.
- * Discuss and keep to the Group Rules for the exchange.
- * Be open to meeting their fellow exchangees.
- * Be prepared to work on any artistic input needed.
- * Be prepared to take on any organisational task assigned.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is **ESSENTIAL** when taking a group abroad. However, not all travel insurance policies are the same. Examine your travel insurance policy very closely to check what is covered and - more importantly - what is not covered. This is essential when taking a group of young people away, since your usual travel insurance is probably not sufficient to cover eventualities specific to a child/young person travelling abroad without a parent. For

example, will your policy cover the expense of flying a parent out to be with their child in an extreme medical emergency?

Here are a few basic guidelines:

- * Read through your policy carefully to check what's covered (adventure activities, emergency assistance, loss of passport, missed departure, etc.)
- * Consider paying the excess waiver, if available.
- * Make sure the name of each 'policy holder' (i.e. each member of the group) is spelt correctly on the policy / receipt and correlates to their passport name
- * Declare all pre-existing medical conditions to the insurance company, and obtain any medical certificates necessary - failure to do so might render the policy invalid.
- * Ask for the contact details of each group member's GP - in case of a medical emergency, the insurance company may insist on a GP's declaration before dealing with the case.
- * Your policy should include additional organisational expenses incurred i.e. in case of emergency, to a specific limit.
- * Shop around! Remember, you don't have to buy your travel insurance and flights from the same company.

NB:

Travel insurance policy should cover the cost of parent / legal guardian / near relative travelling to the destination within 24 hours of an incident, to be with the injured party for the duration of their illness or stay in hospital and to accompany them home.

Companies such as USIT will tailor their insurance policy to suit your group's needs. There are three levels of cover, so read through your options carefully. Tel: 01-6021600 or check out www.USIT.ie for more details.

Before departure the **Co-ordinator and/or Welfare Leader** must check that all travel and health insurance documents, including E111 forms are valid, in date and showing correct passport version name of each group participant. Passports expiry dates should also be checked. All of these should be crosschecked.

Last Minute Checks

First Aid and Medical Care

The **Welfare Leader** must be supplied with a first aid kit. The destination of the exchange should be taken into account when putting together a first aid kit e.g. Insects, weather, jelly fish, tics etc.

First Aid Kit Suggestions

- * First Aid Manual
- * Latex gloves
- * Scissors
- * Antiseptic dressings, plasters, swabs and strips
- * Tweezers
- * Thermometer
- * Hospital or 100% cotton wool
- * Sanitary products (towels/tampons)
- * Vaseline
- * Insect repellent
- * Sunscreen

It is recommended that you receive **Parent/Legal Guardian Consent** to administer any of the following:

- * Paracetamol or mild painkillers
- * Antacid for upset stomach
- * Oral hydration salts
- * Travel sickness tablets
- * Tablets to treat diarrhea/constipation
- * Creams/Gels/Sprays for treating wounds, burns, rashes etc.

The first aid kit should be brought on any site visits or social activity and must be readily available during workshops.

In addition, the **Welfare Leader** should ensure that young people requiring medication provide the Welfare Leader with a back-up supply and an internationally generic prescription, including for inhalers. The Welfare Leader should carry these on any trips the group may make during the exchange. He/She should also carry a back-up supply of medication and an internationally generic prescription, where applicable, for the Artistic Leader.

The **Artistic Leader** should carry a back-up supply of medication and an internationally generic prescription, where applicable, for the Welfare Officer.

Checklist of Documentation

Data Pack

The Co-coordinator should ensure that a copy of this pack is distributed to the Welfare Leader, Artistic Leader and Liaison Officer.

- * Copies of passports.
- * Copies of private health insurance.
- * Copies of European Health Insurance Cards where applicable. **(From 1st June 2004, the EHIC replaced the E111 and a number of other 'E' forms. Contact your local Health Service Executive Area for details.)**
- * List of emergency contact numbers to include: Liaison Officer, parents / guardians, young people's GPs, insurance company.
- * Participant details to include: religious denomination / citizenship / medical requirements / dietary requirements / special needs.
- * Phone numbers and addresses for embassies/consulates for all nationalities travelling and for all countries in which the group will stop or stay
- * Copy of Travel Insurance Certificate and booklet.

Welfare Leader Extras

In addition to the above, the **Welfare Officer** should have:

- * Complete contact details of the Liaison Officer – home phone / mobile /email. If this post is being covered by a group of people then the Welfare Leader should have a copy of the rota and relevant contact details for all those involved.
- * Emergency monies for unforeseen situations.
- * Originals of passports, EHIC (**see note above**) and travel tickets. *
- * Any booking reference numbers and the travel itinerary.
- * Mobile phone with roaming facility with a phone charger and adapter plug. An International Call Card should be brought as back up.
- * Maps of the country and cities the group are travelling to and stopping in.
- * A more detailed map of the area the group are staying in with accommodation, workshop area and relevant areas marked. This can be requested from the Partner Organisation.

***Store originals and copies separately**

Liaison Officer Extras

In addition to the above, the **Liaison Officer** should have:

- * Contact details of the leaders, their next of kin, GP details, nationality, and religious denomination.
- * Copies of travel tickets / booking reference number / travel itinerary.

Young Person – *the young person should carry the following at all times:*

- * Mobile phone number of the Welfare Leader.
- * Phone number and address of their accommodation.
- * An **Emergency Card** with the Welfare Leader's mobile contact number, the accommodation address, phone number and name of contact person there, and a short explanation written in the host country's language to be shown only to a police officer or person of authority.
- * Map of the area in which they are staying with the accommodation clearly marked on it.

***They should provide the Welfare Leader with a second supply of any medication and an internationally generic prescription.**

All Systems Go ... You Are On Your Way!

Responsibilities while the Group are Abroad

Co-ordinator

He/she should:

- * Have all contact details of the nominated Liaison Officer(s).
- * Ensure that in the event of a rota of Liaison Officers being in place that each Officer has a copy of the rota and that all follows it.
- * Be available to respond immediately to any contact from the Liaison Officer(s).

Welfare Leader

He/she should:

- * Maintain a support role for all young people on the exchange.
- * Organise a designated time and place to meet with the whole group each day for a feedback session.
- * Bring back-up supplies of medication whenever the group leaves the accommodation and on all day-trips.
- * Contact the Liaison Officer to inform of the welfare of the group at pre-arranged times i.e. on arrival, midway through the exchange etc.
- * Inform the Liaison Officer of any matter arising pertaining to the welfare of the group.
- * Provide support to a sick/traumatised young person.
- * Deal with the system, bureaucracy and culture of the foreign country.
- * In the event of a high level emergency he/she should provide 24-hour cover until a family member arrives to take the young person home.

Liaison Officer

He/she should:

- * Have access to phone, fax and email.
- * Be contactable 24 hours a day for the duration of the group's trip and at least one week after the scheduled return of the group.
- * Maintain contact with the Welfare Leader.
- * Provide support to the Welfare Leader.
- * Retain all documentation and data relevant to the group
- * Determine the level of response required to each situation as it unfolds.
- * Answer calls from parents about their child's general welfare.
- * Maintain contact with the parents in times of emergency.
- * Maintain contact with the leader's families if necessary.
- * Ensure that the insurance company is prioritising the Sending Organisations case if applicable.
- * Arrange travel for a family member to the host country in the case of a serious emergency.

Line of Communication:

Welfare Leader

Liaison Officer
ordinator

Co-

Artistic Leader

The Artistic Leader is responsible for the artistic workshops and any other artistic input for the exchange. He/she should not be expected to step in a welfare role unless it is absolutely necessary.

Welfare Situations / Emergencies Abroad

Levels of Emergency

*** Low Level**

Routine trips to the doctor / homesickness / lost luggage / lost documentation / travel delays.

*** Medium Level**

Precautionary Hospital stays / a member of the group sick / minor difficulties with the law / bullying or harassment of any members of the exchange group.

*** High Level**

Seriously ill or injured person / more than one person injured / Welfare Leader ill / Disclosure/ Death.

*In the interest of the young person, any information regarding the young person should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. The **Welfare Leader** should make a decision on this as they see fit and relevant personnel in the Partner Organisation should be notified as appropriate.*

Responsibilities at each Level

Low Level

- * The Welfare Leader manages the situation with advice or moral support from the Liaison Officer if necessary.

Medium Level

- * The Welfare Leader informs the Liaison Officer.
- * The Welfare Leader and Liaison Officer work as a team to manage the situation.

High Level

- * The Welfare Leader provides 24-hour cover until a family member arrives.
- * The Liaison Officer maintains contact with the parents during the emergency.
- * The Liaison Officer maintains contact with the leaders' families, if necessary.
- * The Liaison Officer deals with bureaucracy, and links with embassies, consulates and Department of Foreign Affairs where applicable.
- * The Liaison Officer ensures that the insurance company is prioritising the Sending Organisation's case where applicable.
- * The Liaison Officer should arrange travel for a family member to travel to the host country where applicable.

The X-Factor ... Expecting the Unexpected

* *What if agreed Group Rules are broken?*

Prevention - 'Threats' should not be made that are impossible to carry out. Decide where possible what consequences are applicable to certain actions prior to travel i.e. a phone call will be made to parents/legal guardians if the young person drinks alcohol. There is no point in saying they will be sent home if you or another cannot travel with them.

Reaction - If an action arises that has not been discussed before travel or if it is an unforeseen situation, the action taken should be in proportion to the infraction – it could be just a chat with the young person(s) involved, it may be that the action taken is on return home. You may want to discuss it with another leader but use your discretion. It is important that whatever is decided there is consistency involved.

* *What if another group has different rules?*

Prevention – Welfare and work codes should be discussed with all participating groups before travel. Ideally there will be common rules for all groups and the APV provides a good opportunity to discuss these. The common rules should be explained to the group in advance. However, if it transpires that each group has different rules it is important to explain that this is the case to your group before travel. If the common rules contravene the laws of the home country or the guidelines of the Sending Organisation the group must follow the pre-arranged Group Rules. This should also be made clear to the group prior to travel.

Reaction – see previous.

* *What if the accommodation is unsuitable?*

Prevention - If it is not possible to attend an APV, ask the Partner Organisation to send information and photographs of the proposed accommodation.

Reaction - If by some chance there has been miscommunication in the planning stages and the accommodation is not what was initially offered, the Leaders should challenge any living arrangement they feel creates a welfare issue or presents a danger to the group. If it is impossible to change the living arrangements, it should be discussed with the Liaison Officer how best to deal with the situation.

What is suitable accommodation?

Sleeping areas for males and females should be separate. There must be a leader in the sleeping area to supervise e.g. on the same corridor, floor etc. Leaders should be respectful of the privacy of young people in the dormitories, changing rooms, showers and toilets. It is recommended that when present in such areas leaders do not spend unnecessary time alone with the young person. If this is unavoidable, inform another leader where you are and the reason. If possible leave the door open.

* *What if the programme is exhausting the young people?*

Prevention – Examine the programme thoroughly during planning and be realistic. Discuss with the young people what is expected of them in relation to the programme, emphasising that they should take part fully in the programme as it is offered. Explain that it is a good idea to take advantage of rest periods – staying up all night is great fun, but will take its toll on the next day's workshops.

Reaction - Negotiation continues during the exchange. There should be regular Leaders' meetings and Leaders should challenge any activities, areas or equipment they feel create a welfare issue or present a danger to the group. The programme is not set in stone and if the young people are exhausted, the project work and their experience will suffer.

* *What if the workshop space is unsuitable?*

Prevention – If it is not possible to attend an APV, ask the Partner Organisation to send information and photographs of the workshop spaces and their location in relation to the accommodation. On arrival, ask to visit the workshop space before the first workshop.

Reaction – At the Leaders’ Meeting state your fears or concerns if the workshop space creates a welfare issue or presents a danger to the group. Make the area as safe as possible. Workshop spaces should be as clear as possible and should have non-slip floors.

* ***What if baggage is lost?***

Prevention – Ensure that all baggage is clearly tagged with the address and phone number of its owner and destination, both on outgoing and incoming journeys. Data packs, first aid and additional important documents and equipment should be brought on as hand luggage.

Reaction – Should baggage not arrive, report it immediately to the airlines service desk in the baggage hall. Keep in touch with the airline to ensure they are doing all they can to locate the missing luggage. Missing luggage should be covered by insurance.

* ***What if passports are lost?***

Prevention – Do not leave passports down especially during check-in and boarding. Keep copies of passports and Irish Embassy/Consulate contact details separate to the originals. If there is no Irish Embassy/Consulate it is usually the British Embassy you would contact, but check this before you go.

Reaction – Contact the Irish Embassy/Consulate immediately. Bring the photocopy of the original, as this will speed things up for you.

* ***What if money is lost?***

Prevention – Keep money in a safe place. Do not bring more than is needed and do not ‘flash’ it about. A dummy wallet in an obvious place for potential pickpockets is a good idea.

Reaction – If money is badly needed, fund the young person or Leader from the emergency monies.

* ***What if the food is inadequate?***

Prevention – Research the dietary needs of your group and communicate them to the Partner Organisation. Maybe you could request a sample day menu from the Partner Organisation before travel. Discuss with the group what kind of food to expect – there may be local dishes and no McDonalds!

Reaction – If there is not enough food, the Welfare Leader should state their concerns at the Leaders’ Meeting. Keep an eye on the group and make sure that everyone is eating enough. Have a discreet chat with individuals who may not be eating – they may be homesick. Maybe use the emergency money to treat the group to a group meal during free time. If your group is divided during the day it is nice to bring them back together.

* ***What if love happens?***

Prevention – There is no real preventative measure for this! However the young people should be made aware that they should not go beyond the accommodation or workshop venues without the prior permission of the Welfare Leader.

Reaction – If the Welfare Leader is concerned about an individual, they should have a quiet word with that young person. Check that they are alright and that they are not putting themselves in a vulnerable position. i.e. lonely places etc.

Evaluation

‘Evaluation is the process of finding out what is happening or what has happened on the exchange. The purpose of evaluation is to improve the remainder of the exchange or to make a better exchange in the future.’ Léargas – ibid.

Though there should be regular Leaders' meetings, both welfare and artistic, time needs to be given to evaluation at some time **during** the exchange. Evaluation should be timetabled into the programme. In the Léargas *International Youth Exchange Guide*, it is suggested that a couple of hours should be given over to evaluation **mid-way** through the exchange and that another evaluation session is held at the **end** of the exchange. Usually, a follow-up session is held a couple of weeks after the exchange.

To get a true evaluation everyone involved in the exchange should be consulted.

- * All Partner Organisations
- * All participants
- * All Leaders
- * Your Co-Coordinator
- * Your Welfare Leader
- * Your Artistic Leader
- * Your Liaison Officer(s)
- * Your exchange group

Try to make the approach to evaluation appropriate to the different levels of involvement. Léargas suggests that evaluation sessions be participative and creative.

It should also be decided who will be responsible for collating the information gathered and with whom the information should be shared i.e. funders, Partner Organisation, Sending Organisation etc.

Sample Questions:

- * Did the exchange meet with expectations and artistic aspirations?
- * Were new artistic approaches discovered that could be further developed at home?
- * Did any welfare issues arise? How were they handled?
- * What would you do the same / differently next time?
- * How will this evaluation inform future exchanges?
- * How will these findings be communicated and to whom?

Bear in mind that the evaluation process is the stepping-stone to the next exchange.

Prevention - Precaution - Reaction:

If everyone is clear on what is expected of them and of the exchange, then hopefully you and your group will go happy, come back safely and enjoy the bit in between!

SAMPLE ONLY

Accident and Incident Report Form

Details of Accident/Incident

Date occurred: _____ Time occurred: _____

Location: _____

What happened?

Were there any witnesses?

Name: _____ Tel: _____

Name: _____ Tel: _____

To whom was the incident/accident reported? _____

Did the incident/accident cause illness/injury? To whom?

Name: _____

Surname: _____

Home Address

Home Tel: _____ Mobile _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____ Male ()

Female ()

Treatment Details

None () First Aid () Local GP/Clinic () Advised to see own GP on return ()

Hospital ()

Hospital Stay () In the case of a Hospital Stay - Length of Stay: ____ days

Date of Admittance: _____ Time of Admittance: _____

Date of Discharge: _____ Time of Discharge: _____

Details of Person completing this Form

Name: _____ Role or relation to injured/ill party: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

Home Address:

Signature: _____ Today's Date:

SAMPLE ONLY

Acceptance Form

I, the undersigned, accept a place in the group traveling to (*name of place*) from (*day, date, month*) to (*day, date, month*).

I will also attend the preparatory workshops on: (*dates*)

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Mobile _____

Signature _____

Dietary requirements? Yes () No () If yes, please state what: _____

Allergies? Yes () No () If yes, please state what: _____

Medical requirements? Yes () No () If yes, please state what: _____

Currently on medication? Yes () No () If yes, please state what: _____

NB! Please insure you have an adequate supply of any medication for the duration of the exchange. You will also need a second supply and an international generic prescription for your medication, which will be kept by the Welfare Leader for the duration of the exchange.

Parent/Legal Guardian Consent

I, _____, give my consent to allow _____ to travel to (*place*) from the (*date*) to (*date*) and to take part in all activities organised as part of this event. I will ensure that he/she will be at the meeting point at the designated time and will collect him/her at the point of arrival.

In case of emergency, I am free to travel to (*place*) if my presence is required.

Signature _____

Date

(parent/ legal guardian)

Please enclose:

- * Photocopy of passport showing photograph and passport number.
- * Written evidence of medical insurance (VHI, BUPA, EHIC) if applicable.

Please return to (*Name and Address*) by (*Day and Date*).

Useful Addresses

- * National Association for Youth Drama
34 Upper Gardiner Street
Dublin 1

Tel: 01 8781301

Fax: 01 8781302

Email: HYPERLINK <mailto:info@nayd.ie> info@nayd.ie

Web: HYPERLINK <http://www.youthdrama.ie> www.youthdrama.ie

- * Léargas-The Exchange Bureau
189-193 Parnell Street
Dublin 1

Tel: 01 873 1441

Fax: 01 873 1316

Email: HYPERLINK <mailto:youth@leargas.ie> youth@leargas.ie

Web: HYPERLINK <http://www.leargas.ie/youth> www.leargas.ie/youth

Further Information

- * **Irish Youth Theatre Handbook** 0-9540953-0-8 Available from the National Association for Youth Drama
- * **International Youth Exchange Guide.** Available from Léargas - The Exchange Bureau
- * **Child Protection for The Youth Work Sector - Code of Good Practice.** Dept. of Education and Science 2003. Available from Youth Affairs Section, Dept. of Education and Science, Marlborough Street, Dublin 2.
- * **Irish Fundraising Handbook.** ISBN 1-869895-06-1 CAFÉ publications available from CREATE
Tel: 01 4736600

Useful Websites

- * Department of Foreign Affairs (ROI): HYPERLINK
<http://www.irlgov.ie/iveagh/> www.irlgov.ie/iveagh/
- * Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK): HYPERLINK
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/> www.fco.gov.uk/
- * US State Department Travel Warnings: HYPERLINK
http://www.travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html
www.travel.state.gov/travel_warnings.html
- * HYPERLINK <http://www.lonelyplanet.com> www.lonelyplanet.com
- * HYPERLINK <http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk> www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk

Disclaimer

Go Happy, Come Back Safely are a set of Guidelines and checklists developed by the **National Association for Youth Drama (NAYD)** to assist youth theatres and other youth arts organisations in organising international exchanges. The **National Association for Youth Drama (NAYD)** accepts no responsibility for those organisations and groups who use these Guidelines in planning and undertaking an International exchange.

Please be advised that they form no legal framework or contract with the **National Association for Youth Drama (NAYD)** and should be used only as a checklist in advance of any travel abroad with a group.

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Compiled by Anna Galligan, NAYD Development Officer