

ACADEMIC YEAR IN AMERICA (AYA)

About the program

The American Institute For Foreign Study Foundation's Academic Year in America program is one of the nation's most respected cross-cultural educational exchange programs. The program enables high school students from more than 35 countries to visit the United States and live with American families while attending high school for a semester or an academic year.

Academic Year in America (AYA) has been in operation since 1981. The program is sponsored by the American Institute For Foreign Study Foundation, a not-for-profit educational organization founded in 1967 with the assistance of the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy, to promote worldwide understanding through cross-cultural exchanges. The Foundation has been designated by the U.S. Department of State as an Exchange Visitor Program authorized to issue the DS 2019 form, which enables qualified participants to apply for a J-1 exchange visitor visa from the nearest U.S. consulate or embassy.

Would you recommend the AYA program?

based on responses from 580 AYA students



AYA overall evaluation

Methods used to further evaluate the program are:

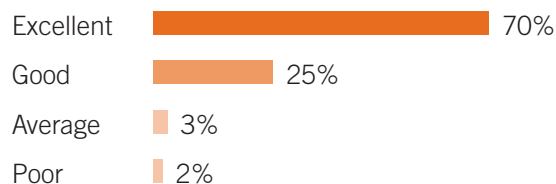
Board of Trustees

The Board meets regularly to review the effectiveness and quality of the Foundation's Academic Year in America program to ensure that standards of excellence are being met. The Foundation is governed by a Board of Trustees that includes prominent educators and international business leaders.

Responses from AYA students

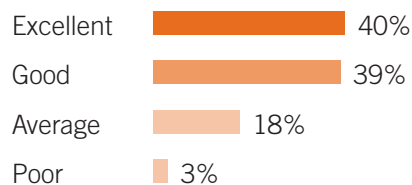
Overall Experience

based on 580 responses



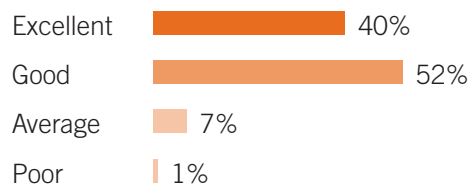
Staff Service

based on 580 responses

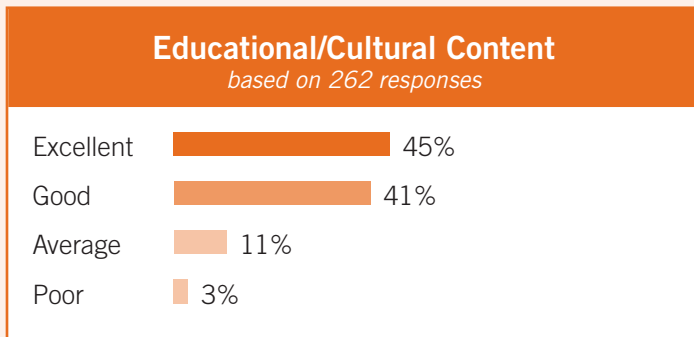
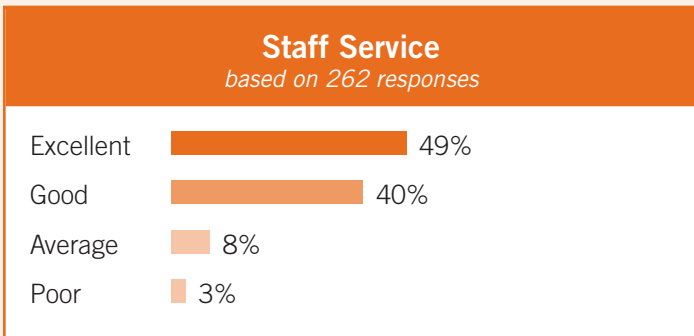
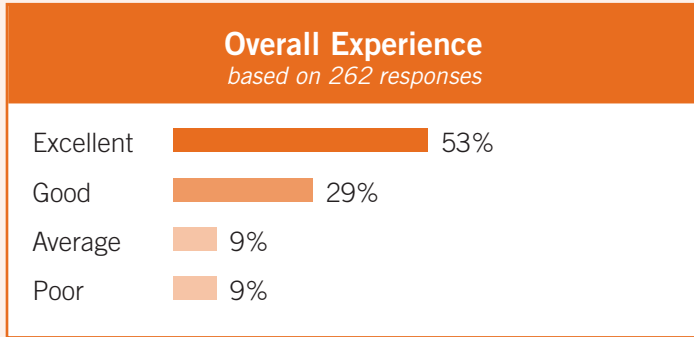


Educational/Cultural Content

based on 580 responses



Responses from AYA families



Student, host family and school surveys

Each survey is carefully reviewed by AYA staff who ensure that all questions are answered and necessary follow-up action is taken. The input from these surveys assists AYA in the planning and operation for the next year's program.

Student reports

In September, November, January, March and May of each year, AYA Local Coordinators compile a progress report on each student based on monthly discussions with the student, high school and host family. Regional Directors from the national office review these reports and follow up as necessary. Reports are then copied for the student file and forwarded to the overseas partner and the student's natural parents.

Daily communication

The AYA main office maintains daily contact with its overseas offices regarding specific student adjustment issues. By identifying potential difficulties early, the staff can prevent situations from becoming major problems.

National Meeting

Each year AYA convenes a national meeting for Local Coordinators. The purpose of this meeting is to communicate with and personally train field staff through large group meetings as well as small break-out sessions and workshops. New topics have included overseas partner relations, school relations, risk and liability issues, the importance of documentation and counseling skills for cross-cultural work with teenagers.

