



Ulster Project Cincinnati

Ulster Project Cincinnati
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ulsterprojectcincinnati.org
creating unity amidst diversity

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Why is there a need for the Ulster Project?

Northern Ireland has experienced centuries of political and religious-social conflict between Catholics and Protestants, and the conflict escalated in the 1970s and 1980s. Since then, the Ulster Project has fostered peace, reaching one person/family at a time. As a nonprofit, volunteer organization, the Ulster Project aims to prepare and strengthen whole families to stand for peace.

How does the Ulster Project work?

The program is designed to expose Northern Irish teens to a lifestyle that accepts cultural and religious differences. A group of Northern Irish teens spend the month of July with American teens and their families. To promote tolerance, peace, and team building, we plan a program that includes community service, shared worship, recreation, and "Discovery" sessions that focus on leadership, conflict resolution, peace-making skills and understanding.

Are the activities chaperoned?

All Ulster Project Cincinnati activities are chaperoned by two American counselors and two Northern Irish counselors, host parents and/or Ulster Project Cincinnati board members. The Ulster Project has rules and policies for all events. Each host family and teen will receive a copy of these policies and all are expected to abide by them.

Will my family have responsibilities before the Project begins?

Before the Northern Irish teens arrive, the American teens will be required to attend three to five meetings for training, orientation, and group bonding. In addition, American host parent(s) will be required to attend at least two orientation sessions.

Are the Northern Irish teens covered by insurance?

Yes. The Northern Irish teens arrive with medical insurance. Parents will discuss this issue further at orientation meetings.

What financial responsibilities will we be expected to assume?

There is no fee to participate in Ulster Project Cincinnati. The Project will pay all fees for official scheduled events for both your Northern Irish guest and your host teen. Local transportation, food, family activities, and incidental expenses are the responsibility of the host family. The Northern Irish teen will arrive with some spending money for souvenirs and incidentals. If the host family chooses to take a trip with the guest teen during Family Weekend, the family will pay the guest teen's expenses, just as they would do for their own teen or other family member.

Who can drive the Northern Irish teen and my host teen?

Any adult or family member who is 21 or older, has a valid driver's license, and has current car insurance covering passengers is permitted to drive the Northern Irish teens. For the safety of everyone, we strictly enforce this rule.

What is expected of host parents and families during the month?

Host families are expected to provide a safe, secure, loving, and supportive home environment for their guest and ensure that the policies and standards of Ulster Project Cincinnati are fully met during the guest's stay. The host family provides room and board during a teen's stay. Host teens and Northern Irish teens are encouraged to share a room. Northern Irish teens bring their own spending money for extras. The cost of field trips and official scheduled activities for the host teen and the guest teen are paid for by the Project. Host families and teens attend several orientation meetings to prepare for the month, and families meet and send off the Northern Irish teens at the airport. Host families also attend opening and closing Ulster Project services and one parent attends weekly meetings (usually on Tuesday or Wednesday evenings). Host parents and families are expected to help chaperone two-four activities during the month, and may plan or assist with additional activities (such as private pool parties) if they choose. Families will be asked to contribute to occasional pot luck meals as well. Because experiencing unity in worship is a cornerstone of the project, host families are expected to participate in Sunday worship services with the Project teens. Perhaps the largest commitment of host families is to provide transportation to and from Project events each day.

What is expected of host teens during the month?

The primary responsibility of American host teens is to be gracious and thoughtful hosts. Host teens must take care to show the Northern Irish teens that they are glad to have them here and are interested in learning about them and Northern Ireland. Host and guest teens are expected to participate in all official scheduled activities of the Ulster Project. The schedule involves a nearly daily commitment for at least half a day, often more. It is a lot like going to a month-long "summer camp" but without leaving home!

How can we learn more about the scheduled activities?

The website includes a sample calendar based on activities in past years. A tentative calendar will be available during May orientation. The calendar will be finalized by the last meeting (late June) before the teens arrive. It is best to clear as much of your July calendar as possible.

Will the host family get a chance to know the guest teen outside of group activities?

Absolutely. We include blocks of Family Time on the calendar specifically for this purpose. A three-day Family Weekend provides an excellent opportunity to show your teen our city or go on a short trip together.

Can the host teens see their friends during the month?

Yes. The official schedule is busy, however. Friends may visit host teens (and guest teens) during Family Time/Weekend and during unscheduled blocks of time. We expect host teens to include guest teens in all activities with friends.

Can the host teens participate in outside activities during the month?

To a limited extent. The host teen is expected to participate in all scheduled activities, but Ulster Project Cincinnati recognizes that some extracurricular activities for teens may be scheduled during the summer. For these occasions, accommodations may be made with the approval of the Ulster Project Cincinnati Board. If a host teen must miss a scheduled event, the guest teen is expected to attend.

Does the host family have obligations after the conclusion of the host month?

The Cincinnati Ulster Project asks host families to fill out an evaluation near the end of the host month and to attend a short meeting after the teens depart. At least one parent should attend a follow-up meeting in September. As a volunteer organization, Ulster Project Cincinnati asks host parents and teens to help with plans for next year's activities.

For further information, go to www.ulsterprojectcincinnati.org