

Section 1. Introduction

The AFS Center for the Study of Intercultural Learning is a function of the International Administration of AFS Intercultural Programs. The goal of the Center is to conduct research and provide information and educational materials to support and enhance AFS Programs worldwide. The Center's activities and publications are coordinated by Dr. Bettina ("Betsy") Hansel.

AFS/CSIL had its roots in the Program Development Department of AFS International, later called the Research Department. This department was staffed from 1980-89 by Dr. Neal Grove and Betsy Hansel, who worked extensively with scholars from a variety of universities to produce several publications series and reports for distribution within the AFS system. Since Neal's departure from AFS in 1989, Bettina Hansel has assumed responsibility for the AFS Center for the Study of Intercultural Learning, working closely with various members of the International Administration.

Research continues to be an important function of AFS/CSIL, and publications in the near future are expected to focus on reentry adjustment, understanding participants' expectations, and moni-

An Overview of AFS Research: 1980-1993

AFS Center for the Study of
Intercultural Learning

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toring a decentralized placement process. As always, AFS/CSIL focusses on applied research with a direct potential benefit to AFS Programs.

Mindful of the consistent staff and volunteer turnover in AFS worldwide, I have taken on the task of summarizing the knowledge we have gained so far from the efforts of AFS/CSIL.

Betsy Hansel

Section 2. Impact of the Exchange Experience

The AFS Impact Study measured the extent of change that AFS students experience during the course of their program. Both Year and Short Program students were

included in the study, and showed significantly greater increases in 10 out of 17 variables measuring learning and personal growth.

Probably the most well-known research conducted by the AFS Center for the Study of Intercultural Learning, the Impact Study was begun in 1980 and completed in 1985. It is probably the largest and most thorough piece of research completed by AFS. Findings of the study have been produced by AFS in several formats, from Betsy's doctoral dissertation of over 275 pages to a small brochure with chart and photos. Three outside journals have also published articles based on the Impact Study.

The study involved thousands of AFS Year and Short Program students and measured the students' average self-reported change along 17 variables created with input from

AFS students around the world. In the main part of the study, US students assessed themselves before and after their AFS experience, and these results were compared with a group of about 130 US students who had applied for AFS for the 1981-82 programs, but who ultimately did not participate in AFS for a variety of reasons.

Five of these ten variables were found to show an especially strong relationship to the AFS experience. These variables are measures of personal characteristics related to the development of an international perspective, generally more measures of the values, perspectives, and attitudes of the adolescents than a test of their factual knowledge. The five areas of learning that seem to be most strongly associated with the culture immersion experience are described below:

► **Understanding Other Cultures.** A characteristic typifying an international perspective is one that in this study was termed "Understanding Other Cultures." The returnees who helped develop the measure defined this characteristic to be: "interest in learning about other peoples and cultures; ability to accept and to appreciate their differences." As this definition indicates, this scale measures motivation to learn about other cultures, and acceptance of other cultures, rather than

the possession of factual information. AFS students on both Year and Short Programs showed much greater increase in this item than those who did not participate.

► **Awareness and Appreciation of Host Country and Culture.** Probably the most obvious objective of an AFS sojourn in another country is to learn about that country and its people. The definition of "Awareness and Appreciation of Host Country and Culture" is as follows: "considerable knowledge of the people and culture of my host country, and an understanding of that country's role in world affairs." Average scores before departure were lower on this item than for any other on the questionnaire, reflecting the participants' admitted lack of knowledge about other countries in the world. Those who did not go abroad, and therefore had no "host country," were told to rate themselves with respect to their knowledge of and interest in the country they had hoped to visit on AFS. While they began at virtually the same level as those who did participate in AFS programs, those who did not go abroad seemed to have had little incentive to improve their understanding of a country that they had wanted to visit.

► **Foreign Language Appreciation and Ability.** Language requires practice to learn and in this case, AFS

students must use the language of the host country in order to communicate with their host families and others they meet while abroad. This characteristic was defined as "ability to communicate with people in a second language and thus to take advantage of opportunities and alternatives resulting from bilingualism." AFS students, especially on the Year Program, showed tremendous increases in this characteristic, while those who did not go abroad *showed a marked decrease* on the scale, even though they may have continued studying a foreign language in school. This self-rating should be seen more a measure of the students' attitude toward foreign language learning than a measure of actual fluency in a foreign language. The immersion in a foreign culture has altered the world view of the AFS students; by experiencing the need to communicate in another language they have come to recognize language learning as an important skill. It is a tool necessary for them to learn and to survive in the new place in which they find themselves.

► **International Awareness.** The AFS experience seems to break down parochial attitudes and generate interest and concern for other peoples. "International Awareness" was seen as a clear outcome of this experience, and was defined as "an understanding that the world is one community; a

capacity to empathize with people in other countries; an appreciation of the common needs and concerns of people of different cultures." In theory, it does not take a trip abroad for a person to become interested in international events and to understand that people in various parts of the world have common needs. However, among the adolescents who responded to this questionnaire, those who did not participate in AFS programs did not show any real increase in "International Awareness" while those on AFS programs showed marked average increases in this item.

►**Adaptability.** If understanding is the goal of student exchange, "Adaptability" is an essential skill for meeting this goal. Adaptability was defined as the "ability to deal flexibly with and adjust to new people, places, and situations; willingness to change behavior patterns and opinions when influenced by others." Adaptability does not necessarily increase as a person matures; older adults may sometimes find it harder to adjust to new circumstances than children and young people; but it is an important skill necessary for successful experiential learning. The AFS experience leads to increased adaptability because it is a survival skill, and one which promotes further learning in other areas.

The AFS experience also seems to help students become **less materialistic, more independent in their thinking, more aware of their home country and culture, better able to communicate with others, and better able to think critically.** These areas reflect changes in values as well as the development of skills that are important to culture learning. Students who did not have an opportunity to go abroad showed very little learning if any in these areas, and seem to have had little opportunity in their normal life and studies in the United States to develop the sort of international perspective that is suggested by these variables. Both the AFS participants and those who remained in the US reported personal growth in such areas as self-confidence, general maturity, and in personal relationships. While the AFS participants tended to believe that their personal development in these areas was an outcome of their exchange program experience, it seems that students who remain home also find maturing experiences, but don't find the experience they require to develop an international perspective.

Numerous publications emerged from the Impact Study, including the following:

Why an AFS Experience Accelerates Learning and the Growth of Competence, *AFS Research Report No. 25*, 1984.

Literature Review: Studies of the Impact of a Travel-Abroad Experience, *AFS Research Report No. 28*, 1984.

"Learning by Doing," *The Journal of College Admissions*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1985.

The AFS Impact Study: Final Report, *AFS Research Report No. 33*, 1986.

"International Student Exchange Programs — Are the Benefits Real?" *National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin*, Vol. 70, No. 487, 1986.

"Developing an International Perspective in Youth Through Exchange Programs." *Education and Urban Society*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 1988.

Section 3. Selection and Placement Issues

A high priority during the early and mid-1980s was to improve the organization's understanding of the selection and issues that might adversely affect participant adjustment. The AFS Center for the Study of Intercultural Learning (then known as the Research Department) conducted a number of studies to learn more about the process of selecting and placing students with the aim to minimize serious counseling problems and early returns.

To some extent, the assumptions of that time — that there would be a sizeable pool of

both candidates and host families from which to select and make placements, and that placements would generally be done at a national level — seem unrealistic or at least optimistic in today's exchange program market. However, AFS did identify several important characteristics of the selection and placement process that affect student and host family adjustment.

Family Characteristics Study, 1981

One of the earliest studies commissioned by AFS Center for the Study of Intercultural Learning (then known as the Program Development Department) was the Family Characteristics Study. Based on a pilot project conducted in St. Louis by AFS volunteer Nancy Painter the AFS Family Characteristics Study, begun in 1978, hoped to help AFS find ways to improve host family selection and placement by looking at similarities in certain host and sending family characteristics, in particular, the nature of religious practice, home-centered vs. community centered family lifestyles, and the education of the parents.

Over 400 host families and students were surveyed to measure the similarity or difference between the host and sending family on over 30 family characteristics including demographic information from

the applications, a measure of social class based on the parents' education levels and occupations, and self-assessed measures related to lifestyle, communication patterns, attitudes, and beliefs.

AFS discovered no meaningful connection between the satisfaction of the student and host family and the extent to which the host and sending families were similar on any of the variables studied, including the measure of social class. Nor was there a correlation between student learning and the level of similarity or difference between host and sending family in any variable. However, **four variables measuring host family characteristics were shown to be significantly correlated with placements that broke apart.** US families that were involved in unsuccessful placements tended to be . . .

- more oriented toward "liberal" politics than moderate or "conservative" politics (as seen in the context of the USA in 1978).
- less likely to give teenagers independence.
- more likely to be concerned with organizing their time and being prompt.
- less likely to be actively involved in sports.

A second motive for the study was to compare the outcomes

of placements made at the AFS US National Office in New York with those made regionally by volunteers. **The study found no significant difference in the success of placements made regionally and those made nationally.** However, it should be noted that **late placements (considered to be those made after June 15) had a significantly lower rate of success (25% of these students changed host families, compared to 16% of those placed before June 15).**

Early Returns Study, 1984

From 1981-83, AFS/CSIL (then known as the Research Department) systematically documented every case of students returning early or released from the year program. USA programs were studied for two years, while MNP programs were followed for one year. To provide some basis of comparison for the results, AFS/CSIL conducted two parallel studies of two groups of year program students: one group included students whose background information alerted the US application readers of a possible concern about the student (in most cases this was a difficult home situation or some aspect of their personality that seemed inflexible or difficult). The second group was selected purely at random from the students hosted in the USA.

The cases of these students were monitored and any counseling problems that came to the attention of the national office were documented.

On the basis of these cases, the causes for early returns were categorized as follows:

- external requirements, such as the need to return early for university exams
- illness, injury, or death of others back home
- medical and psychological problems, including pregnancy, stress-related medical symptoms, depression
- enforcement of rules (driving, illegal drugs)
- non-adjustment (as in unrealistic expectations, inability to adapt, or problems in the placement)
- counselling problems, such as ineffective or inappropriate counselling

Overall, around 220 cases of early returns were found out of a total program volume of over 8,000. Early returns that fell into the first category were fairly common, and were known frequently well in advance of the student's return. Unlike today, these early returns seemed at that time to pose only slight difficulty for AFS, and the Research Department did not focus much attention on them

as problems. Also not considered something that could be prevented were the 15% of the cases in the second category, where students on the program returned home because of the serious illness or death of someone in their family or very close to them.

The other categories of early return were those considered the most damaging, both to AFS and the student. In most cases, an individual student's reasons for returning early overlap into several of these categories. Fortunately, AFS counseling efforts for almost all of these students provided the positive side of the experience; in only about 3 cases documented was counseling part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

Otherwise, the most preventable type of early return concerns students who have an overly difficult placement and are under enormous strain in their efforts to adjust. When these efforts are ultimately unsuccessful, the students lack the energy or courage to attempt another placement. Early support and intervention by the AFS organization can either help these students make the necessary adjustment without as much stress, or if needed, can help the student move to another family before the stress becomes overwhelming.

From this investigation, AFS was able to make a number of concrete recommendations regarding student and family selection and placement. These, combined with others, led to the "Theory Into Practice" documents, which will be discussed later.

Matched Pairs Placement Study (Random Placement Study), 1984

One of the questions to emerge from time to time in AFS is whether arbitrary or random placements might be just as successful as the time-consuming process typically involved in carefully reading student and family applications and trying to make the best possible placements. Two "random placement" studies conducted in the 1970s (one in Europe and one in the US) seemed to suggest that there was very little difference between the success of a random placement and that of a more conventional placement. However, some questions remained because either the students or the families were pre-selected for random placement because they were perceived as being stronger candidates or less restrictive families.

The "Matched Pairs" Placement Study" was an attempt to test this theory without seriously risking the experi-

ences of large numbers of students. In this study, 11 pairs of US Year Program applicants were identified who were closely matched in terms of age, sex, family background and demographics, academic ability, and special interests (e.g., animals, sports, religion). For each pair, one student was placed in the traditional manner, which at that time meant being placed in the New York office by AFS International program staff. The other was placed in the country of his or her choice if possible, with the first family on the stack. The placements were not entirely random. The family's restriction on the sex of the student and on smoking were considered in making the placement, and the randomly-made placements also were first reviewed by international program staff who in fact rejected three of the tentative placements as too risky. These students were replaced randomly.

The outcome of these placements suggests that there were problems in both groups, though the randomly placed group fared worse than those placed by program staff. One of the randomly placed students rejected her placement and asked for another one; another randomly placed student withdrew. Six more of this group had host family changes — one was even brought to the National Office for counseling. Only two students in the randomly

placed group were entirely satisfied with their placements. In the other group, five of the eleven reported having successful placements while four students changed families because of problems in their placement.

The students and National Directors involved identified several factors that affected the outcomes of these placements. These were:

- **Emotional factors.** Students with successful placements appreciated the warmth and openness of their host families and the fact that they were included as part of the family. Conversely, several students felt that their families were cold and not interested in them; these students felt uncomfortable and dissatisfied with their families and most eventually changed host families.

- **Communication.** Open communication between the AFS student and the family was critical to placement success. While several students attributed the success of their placement to the open communication established with their hosts, the importance of this factor was even more obvious when it was absent.

- **Independence and Trust.** As suggested in the findings of the Family Characteristics Study, students here also tended to fare better in

families that did not have many strict rules, who were seen as accepting and tolerant, and who allowed teenagers some independence. This does not mean that students were given complete freedom, but that the limits set were seen by the student as fair and reasonable, and that the student felt respected and trusted by the family.

- **Conflict.** Pre-existing conflict and tension in the host family, such as marital problems or ongoing conflict between the parents and the teenagers in the family, tended to be exacerbated by the hosting experience and made the placement difficult for the student as well as the family.

- **Values and Beliefs.** It seems to be very important in a placement for the student to respect the beliefs and values of the host family. Young people who are dogmatic in their idealism may be especially prone to find flaws in their host family's value system and see them as "hypocrites" or "immoral."

- **Activities and Interests.** Students who felt they had similar interests to those of the host family also felt that this was a desirable aspect of their placement, but common interests — even strong ones — did not ensure a successful placement. A family's involvement in sports or outdoor activities seemed to be related

to the development of a positive relationship with the student, again supporting the finding from the Family Characteristics study.

● **Other Factors.** The success of the placement also was affected by the level of maturity of the student, the expectations of the family and students, the local AFS support, and a number of factors related to the school and community.

Although many of these factors typically remain hidden from those not in the immediate family, understanding these factors may help some to improve the chances for making a successful placement. Prospective host families who understand the importance of these factors may be able to better assess themselves before they commit to taking a student. In 1993, the placement process is very different from that of 1981 when this study was conducted. Nevertheless, the results of these placements are still instructive for those who recruiting and placing families in their communities.

Theory into Practice Series, 1984-87

The findings of these research studies should inform the way AFS operates in terms of sending and hosting participants. AFS Center for the Study of Intercultural

Learning used the study results to make a number of recommendations which were published as the "Theory into Practice" series. Three numbers were produced and distributed:

1. Assessing the Candidate. This booklet features nine "qualities" that successful candidates for participation in AFS programs should possess to some extent. In each case, the quality is described and those who judge candidates are given specific advice about "what to ask about and look for." Also discussed is the overall goal and the process of screening candidates.

2. Placing the Participant With the Host Family. This set of guidelines includes 16 specific recommendations regarding placement organized under the following headings: "Independence and Authoritarianism," "Participants and Host Siblings," "Socioeconomic Differences," "Emphasis on Academic Excellence," "Compatibility of Interests," and "Host School and Host Community."

3. Assessing the Host Family. Drawn from the research results of these studies and the Host Family Dynamics Study described below in Section 4, this booklet specifies eight desirable characteristics of host families and deals with topics such as the goal of assessing applicant families, methods of obtaining informa-

tion about families, and the description of families for placement purposes.

These three publications have been included in the AFS International Manual, "National Office Sending and Hosting Procedures."

Section 4. The Hosting Experience

In light of the Impact and the Selection and Placement Studies, AFS International was interested in learning more about the hosting experience, both in terms of the benefits it could provide for the host family and to gain an understanding of the motivations of hosts in order to improve host family recruitment. While the in-depth investigation of 15 US host families throughout their experience did not provide much insight about their motivations to host — few had very specific or clear motivations — it did provide a great deal of information useful in understanding the hosting experience, the issues that emerge as problems in a placement, and ways in which host families could benefit most from orientation and ongoing AFS support.

Three general types of hosting experiences were identified, which did not necessarily

parallel the adjustment cycle of the student in the family: those that remain uniformly positive throughout the year, those that face a mid-year crisis period but emerge as satisfying for the host family, and those that end with the family feeling unhappy about the experience. The second type, with the mid-year crisis, was the most common type among the families studied.

The dynamics that emerged from this research were:

- Cultural differences can be bridged by many families and students who respect and are interested in each other. When there is disrespect or a lack of communication between hosts and students, the differences between them seem larger and are less likely to be solely the result of cultural differences. The attitudes of the students and their hosts, which may be related to a number of factors not specific to their cultural background, are more critical to the relationship than the differences or similarities between the cultures.

- Power struggles between the students and the host family were found whenever one of the host parents assumed an authoritarian attitude toward the student and attempted to change or control the student's behavior. Host parents who had less need to manage or control the student had fewer conflicts in this area, were

happier with the student's behavior, and had better hosting experiences overall.

- The relationship between the AFS student and the siblings is often more important to the success of the experience than the student's relationship with the host parents.

- Students who continued to depend on advice and support from their families back home were less likely to make a successful adjustment to the host family. Typically, this took the form of frequent and extended telephone conversations with family members in the home country or elsewhere in the United States.

- Several placements were improved when the student temporarily left the host family to stay with someone else for a few days. This type of break seemed to provide a crucial resting space or cooling off period when tensions had erupted between the student and family. It also seemed helpful for minor cases of the student and family "getting on each others nerves."

The 15 case studies used for the Dynamics of Hosting study along with real cases from other countries were used as the basis for an orientation workbook developed by Neal Grove for AFS/CSIL, *A Rose by Any Other Name*. Following the pattern of a cultural assimilator, the workbook

presents anecdotes from these cases and helps host families discover how they might best handle a similar situation.

Some of the Publications emerging directly from this research included the following:

The Study of the Dynamics of Hosting Reports, Phases 1-3, *AFS Research Report No. 7, 13, and 30, 1982-85*

Dynamics of International Host Families, *AFS Research Report No. 27, 1984*

A Rose by Any Other Name, 1991.

Section 5. Volunteer Study; Volunteer Development

Motivated in part by the need generally to recruit more volunteers, students, and host families, AFS/CSIL proposed a massive, three-part research project to take place in several countries. Recognizing that our volunteers were essential to the recruitment of students and host families and the delivery of program support and service, AFS determined that we needed to focus first on our volunteer force. Because we actually knew very little about the motivations of our volunteers in each country, a naturalistic and exploratory research method was used. With the aid of independent researchers hired in each

of eight countries, AFS/CSIL began the Volunteer Resources Study.

The goal of the project was to understand as much as possible about volunteers — their motivations for volunteering, the nature and organization of volunteer work, the role of volunteering in the society at large — in each of the participating countries: Australia, Canada, Germany, Ecuador, Jamaica, Japan, Spain, and the United States.

While the contexts in which volunteering operates are considerably different in each country, the study's findings suggest that many of the same key factors operate in all these countries, though their importance may be prominent in some countries while seldom recognized in others. By describing these factors as they are manifested in one or two of the countries studied, the researchers attempt to convey a better understanding of the role these elements may play in volunteer activities in any country or region, particularly in those places where these elements are frequently overlooked by those working with volunteers.

The Context of Volunteering

In several countries researchers found negative attitudes toward volunteering that may have an impact on AFS's ability to attract volunteers from the general population.

Volunteering is often seen as charity by the upper and middle-classes toward the less fortunate, or in some cases as community development work with disadvantaged groups. Volunteers are often thought of as being housewives with time on their hands. Where these are the prevailing views, volunteering for AFS may not be understood, especially since AFS students are seldom "needy" in this sense.

Organized volunteer activity always relates in some sense to government. The initiative of individual citizens to organize themselves for a specific purpose can be threatening to a government, especially if the volunteer organization's purposes run counter to those of the government. Even when the government cooperates with and encourages volunteer organizations, the government still seeks some type of controls on the organization. While AFS has rarely been seen as a threat to a government, we are increasingly burdened by government regulation of exchange programs and restrictions that limit our ability to place students in the schools or to attract students who may need to fulfill national educational requirements. On the other hand, certain types of volunteer activities may be encouraged by governments because the volunteers provide services that the government cannot or will not provide. Governments may exempt certain

organizations from taxes and may even provide funds for specific programs. Since governments are seldom in a position to directly operate student exchanges, AFS has benefitted from government grants when the needs of the government matched those of AFS.

The relationship between governments and volunteer organizations affects the public's perception of voluntary organizations. In some cases, volunteer organizations are seen as allowing the government to shirk its service responsibilities, and as providing free labor in place of a workforce paid for by the government. In some countries, for example, unemployed professionals are encouraged to volunteer their services in the hopes of securing a permanent job. This can create tension between volunteers and those who are employed in the same line of work.

Volunteer Motivation and Commitment

Volunteers are attracted to their work by a mixture of factors that range from altruism to self-interest. Religious motivations, a desire to help others, or the pursuit of social change were among the more altruistic factors. At the self-interest end of the continuum were the desire to support programs that help one's children, the desire to meet new people and have

something to do, the hope of gaining skills or contacts that will be useful in one's own career, or the desire to assume power and leadership. In between are the need to fulfill one's obligations or duties, the desire to participate in the community, and an interest in learning and personal growth.

However, these motivations are not the same as the commitment that led volunteers to stay with an organization. Those who volunteer for a long time are often less clear about specific reasons for being involved, but their commitment seems to depend more on the work itself and the organization. They *stay* involved when there is mobility within the organization, the chance for them to move up in the hierarchy, or to gain a greater level of influence. They *stay* if there is a diversity of work and they are not stuck with doing the same job year after year. They want the chance to try out new types of work (and they want to be able to succeed in what they do). Related to this, they *stay* if there are opportunities for ongoing learning. They will *stay* as long as they feel their contribution and effort mean something, but they will *leave* when they feel their efforts are useless or unappreciated. Much of this is related to the organizational "climate" — how things are run.

A volunteer's commitment can be to the organization itself, but is more likely to be a commitment to clients (in our case, to the AFS students), to the group of volunteers with whom they work, or to a mission they believe they are serving through their volunteer work. The direction of the commitment influences how the volunteer will react to changes within the organization. For example, volunteers who are committed to the students may not want to work with adult participants. Those who are committed to their local chapter group may resist efforts to have that chapter split in order to expand programs in their area.

Organizational Dynamics

The vitality of a volunteer organization depends on the composition of the group, its focus, and the style of its leadership. A dynamic volunteer organization needs diversity in its membership to take advantage of different skills, ideas, and perspectives. At the same time, diversity is difficult to achieve and maintain. Many volunteer organizations faced "generation gaps" between older (or more experienced) and younger (or newcomers) volunteers, making it difficult to organize activities of interest to both groups. Perhaps as a result, AFS organizations in some countries tend to depend on more mature adult chapters while in other countries

almost all the volunteers are young students and returnees. In some cases, separate organizations are maintained for younger and older volunteers. Similarly, many organizations have been unable to build a membership base that crosses social class, ethnic, or racial divisions, even though they may wish to do so.

Volunteer organizations can be community-based or interest-based. This often depends on the leadership style that attracts the volunteers as well as the nature of the organization's purpose. Generally, community-based groups have more charismatic leadership, attract larger groups, but have less staying power. Interest groups tend to be smaller, more likely to be organized at the national level rather than at the local level, and more likely to attract a middle-class constituency. This has some interesting implications for AFS's efforts to decentralize its leadership from the international and national levels to the local communities.

Burnout and Frustrations

Volunteers cannot be considered "free" or "cheap" labor even though they receive no money for their work. Like employees, volunteers need information and resources, which includes training. They need to know what their job entails, the extent of their responsibilities, and what authority they have to act

under what circumstances. As mentioned above, volunteers who stay with an organization want ongoing opportunities for learning. What is needed is not a one-time training event but ongoing communication to build relationships among each other and with the staff.

Volunteers in this study were frustrated when trying to work without adequate information, when the staff seemed disorganized and inefficient, and when their efforts were duplicated by staff or other volunteers or otherwise unrecognized or unused. Lack of recognition for their work was probably the main source of frustration for volunteers and a strong motivation for leaving an organization. Typically it was not so much the special plaques or public honors that volunteers were seeking, though these were sometimes appreciated. The kind of recognition that all volunteers wanted was to be heard and to be taken seriously, to have their ideas put to use, and to know that their work made a difference. Volunteers also worried about being "abused" by the organizations they served, which was another way that volunteers felt a lack of recognition for their work. Some volunteers found the organization did not appreciate the amount of work they did, but always expected them to do more.

Another frustration faced by volunteers were conflicts

within the group. The process of making decisions in a group or committee is especially vulnerable to conflicts. Destructive power struggles were found in a few cases where there were two or more individuals were seeking to control the decisions of the group, but all groups seem to have some difficulty reaching agreement. In addition, the leaders of a volunteer group want recognition for their work as much as other volunteers, and need support from their team. Yet when they are unable to delegate responsibility to the volunteers, they often face resentment instead of appreciation for their work.

Summary reports of the AFS Volunteer Resources Study are available for each of the eight countries. In addition, the findings have been reported in the *AFS Know How* series, No. 3, 1991, "I'm a Volunteer. Listen to Me!"

In addition, AFS Center for the Study of Intercultural Learning produced the *Volunteer Development Discussion Paper* series with three numbers, all in 1990.

Section 6. Orientation Evaluation

Research and orientation have gone hand in hand at AFS. The AFS Center for the Study

of Intercultural Learning is responsible for the development of a number of orientation programs and handbooks including the six volumes of the AFS Orientation Handbook, which led to the *Orientation Handbook for Youth Exchange Programs*, published by the Intercultural Press, 1989. To a large extent, the research efforts described here have been undertaken for the purpose of improving AFS orientation and program quality. The "Montréal Workshop" recommendations and the "Integrated Orientation Project" were built on much of the research work done by AFS International.

In addition to the development of orientation material, AFS/CSIL has also worked with outside researchers to develop and evaluate AFS orientation programs. These studies include:

Determining the Worth of an Orientation: Findings from AFS/Australia. Jennifer Noesjirwan, Ph.D., *AFS Research Report No. 31*, 1985.

Re-Entry Leadership Workshop and Evaluation. Linda Landry, M.A.; Bettina Hansel, Ph.D., 1990.

Evaluating a Culture-General Assimilator through the Orientation of Students to New Zealand, Kenneth Cushner, Ph.D., *AFS Research Report No. 34*, 1987.

Section 7. Miscellaneous

Student Evacuation & Replacement: Bolivia, 1980

From time to time the need unfortunately arises to evacuate AFS students from their host countries. Such was the case in 1980 in Bolivia.

At that time, the decision was made to replace these students in other Spanish-speaking Latin American countries. At the end of the year, almost all of the students originally hosted in Bolivia were interviewed to determine how this situation might be better handled if AFS again faced the need to evacuate students.

Adjustment Problems

Many of the students reported encountering problems in adjusting to their second host country. Their problems fell into three categories:

(1) Many students had problems adjusting to their families. Of the 19 students originally placed in Bolivia, nine changed host families and three others believed that they should have changed families. Still another student returned home early because he could not adjust to the new host country. The students generally believed that the host families had been selected too hastily. (2) A

number of students had difficulty entering school during the middle of the year. Some lost the opportunity to gain academic credit for their work. Two students dropped out of school entirely in their second host country.

(3) Students were upset and offended to find that people in their second host country had a low opinion about Bolivia.

Logistics and Support Recommendations.

1. Students were critical of the manner in which they were informed of the need to leave Bolivia. Some were led to believe that they could choose to remain in Bolivia and later learned that they actually *had* to leave. Learning that a move was *possible* only provoked anxiety. Students recommended that AFS in the future make sure that students are only given notice of a definite move, that such information be given through official channels, and that if possible students will have about 5-6 days notice.

2. The National Office staff in the receiving countries felt that they could have done their job better if they had received some information in advance about the students who were coming.

3. Students and staff recommended an interim period for reflection, sharing, and orientation between leaving the first host family and arriving

at the home of their new host family.

4. Staff members noted that students coming from another country in mid-year are exceptional in terms of their expectations and potential problems; such students need to be placed in areas where local support is exceptionally strong.

Since the evacuation of students is by nature an emergency situation, it is not always possible to follow these recommendations. This perhaps makes it all the more important to recognize the needs implicit in these recommendations. Since the Bolivia evacuation, AFS has faced similar emergencies a few times, and has found the report results invaluable in dealing with these situations.

Work of Other Researchers

AFS/CSIL has over the years joined with the efforts of a number of student and professional researchers who were interested in studying the AFS experience. Most of these efforts have been reported in the AFS/CSIL series, *Occasional Papers in Intercultural Learning* or in the *Research Reports* series.

Among these are:

Cultural Adjustment Difficulties of Japanese Adolescents Sojourning in the USA. Elizabeth Ann Hartung,

M.A., *Occasional Papers in Intercultural Learning No. 5*, 1983.

The Impact of a Homestay Abroad on Relationships at Home. Judith N. Martin, Ph.D., *Occasional Papers in Intercultural Learning, No. 8*, 1985.

Self-Concept and Adjustment in International Exchange Students. Suellen Crano, Ph.D., *AFS Research Report No. 32*, 1986.

A catalogue of all AFS/CSIL publications currently available is produced biannually under the title, *AFS Center for the Study of Intercultural Learning Publications in Print*. At this time, the most recent edition is 1991.

In addition, an ongoing function of the AFS Center for the Study of Intercultural Learning is to review the work of other researchers in the Intercultural field and report the findings most useful to AFS partners around the world.

Section 8. Current Work and Next Steps

The research efforts of the past dozen years or so have been incorporated into a variety of publications, orientation manuals, policy guidelines, and training materials as the research function has become more integrated with program operations at the international level. AFS has made a con-

scious effort to make better use of the knowledge we have collected through our own intercultural research and that of various scholars around the world.

The most recent product of AFS research is the publication of *Exchange Student Survival Kit*, by Bettina Hansel. This book follows the course of adjustment and learning that is typical of an AFS Year Program and offers it as a guide book for secondary school exchange students. It was published in 1993 by the Intercultural Press of Yarmouth, Maine.

Efforts will continue to gather relevant research findings, to conduct special intercultural learning projects, and to assist AFS partner organizations wanting to conduct intercultural research and evaluation. Topics likely to be addressed in the future include updated information about studies of the impact of exchanges and study abroad programs, research on the reentry adjustment of students, and recent trends in research about intercultural learning. Most important, even greater efforts will be made to inform partners of research findings and help them find ways to deal with the implications of these findings.