



# Handbook for Host Families of Pakistani Participants



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	1
Pakistani Culture Quiz.....	2
Answers to the Pakistani Culture Quiz .....	3
Foreword .....	4
Overview .....	5
A Brief History .....	5
Climate and Geography .....	5
Map of Pakistan.....	6
Culture .....	7
What is culture? .....	7
The Cultural Iceberg .....	7
Generalizations and Stereotypes .....	8
Culture and Perception.....	10
Family Life .....	11
The Family Structure.....	11
Marriage.....	11
Family Reputation .....	12
Family Roles .....	12
Decision-Making.....	13
Chores & Household Help.....	13
Money Management .....	14
The Bathroom and Hygiene .....	14
The Kitchen .....	15
Bedrooms.....	15
FOOD AND MEALS .....	16
Halal foods .....	16
Alcohol .....	17
Pakistani Meals and Meal Times .....	17
Table Manners.....	18
Food Preparation.....	18
Ramadan .....	19
Food packaging.....	19
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS.....	20

Family.....	20
Family Friends .....	20
Friendships .....	20
Maintaining Relationships Back Home .....	20
Making Friends .....	21
Diversity and Acceptance.....	21
Sex and Relationships .....	22
Sex and Intimacy .....	22
LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) .....	22
Dogs and Pets.....	23
RELIGION.....	24
Denominations .....	24
Discussing Islam.....	24
Other Religions.....	24
Prayer.....	24
Halal Food .....	25
Muslim Holidays .....	25
Non-Muslims .....	26
Modesty Dress.....	26
Physical Contact .....	26
Dogs .....	26
EDUCATION .....	27
Rote Learning verses Critical Thinking.....	27
Public Speaking.....	27
Extra-curricular activities .....	27
Plagiarism.....	28
After-school Help.....	28
COMMUNICATION STYLES .....	29
Indirect versus Direct Communication .....	29
Interacting with the Host Family .....	29
Interacting with Non-Family Members.....	30
Please and Thank You .....	30
Concept of Face.....	30
Discipline.....	31
Refusals .....	31

CONCEPT OF TIME .....	32
CONCEPT OF SPACE .....	33
Space at School .....	33
Space in Public.....	33
Greetings.....	33
Alone Time .....	33
Appendix A – References and Further Reading .....	34
Appendix B – YES Cultural Tips Sheet .....	35
Appendix C – YES Program Overview .....	40
Appendix D – DECODING PAKISTAN WORDS.....	41
Appendix E – Food & Recipes.....	42

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# PAKISTANI CULTURE QUIZ

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Perhaps you are already familiar with Pakistani culture. Or maybe you only know only a little. In either case, you should find the following questions interesting. After responding to these questions, check the answers that follow. Whether you got the answers right or wrong, you will want to read the sections referenced in the answer sheet.

- 1. T or F**      The Muslim month of fasting when observers don't eat or drink from sunrise to sunset is Muharram.
- 2. T or F**      Halal is the one word name for the Muslim laws not to eat pork or pork products and to only eat meat killed in an Islamic prescribed manner.
- 3. T or F**      A Pakistani student will not generally need any instruction on how to use a U.S. kitchen.
- 4. T or F**      Flat roti bread is a common staple in a Pakistani diet.
- 5. T or F**      Pakistani students are typically very involved with school sports.
- 6. T or F**      Pakistani teenagers tend to be very decisive when making decisions.
- 7. T or F**      Pakistanis tend to live in the present.
- 8. T or F**      Pakistanis are not accustomed to very much physical contact with others in public.
- 9. T or F**      When your Pakistani student is hungry s/he is likely to tell you directly.
- 10. T or F**      A wet bathroom is considered a clean bathroom in Pakistan.
- 11. T or F**      Alcoholic beverages are forbidden in Pakistan for Muslims.
- 12. T or F**      The mother is the main authority in a Pakistani family.

## ANSWERS TO THE PAKISTANI CULTURE QUIZ

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- 1. T or F** The Muslim month of fasting when observers don't eat or drink from sunrise to sunset is Muharram.  
**False.** Ramadan is the name of the month during which Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. For more information, see the Religion section beginning on page 24.
- 2. T or F** Halal is the one word name for the Muslim laws not to eat pork or pork products and to only eat meat killed in an Islamic prescribed manner.  
**True.** Find out more about Islam in the Religion section on page 24.
- 3. T or F** A Pakistani student will not generally need instructions on how to use a U.S. kitchen.  
**False.** Pakistani children are not commonly taught to cook or do chores around the house and may need considerable explanations of what is expected of them in your home. For more information, see page 13.
- 4. T or F** Flat roti bread is a common staple in a Pakistani diet.  
**True.** For more about Pakistani food, see pages 16 and 42.
- 5. T or F** Pakistani students are typically very involved with school sports.  
**False.** Although Pakistani kids might play sports informally, formally organized sports and other extra-curricular activities are not found in public schools in Pakistan. See page 27 for more information.
- 6. T or F** Pakistani teenagers tend to be very decisive when making decisions.  
**False.** It is very common in Pakistan for parents to make decisions for their child. Having a lot of choices might be overwhelming for a Pakistani student. See page 13 for more information.
- 7. T or F** Pakistanis tend to live in the present.  
**True.** Planning ahead and scheduling is not as highly prioritized in Pakistan as it is in the United States. See page 32 for more information.
- 8. T or F** Pakistanis are not accustomed to very much physical contact with others in public.  
**False.** Although physical contact between men and women is not allowed in public, friends of the same sex commonly hold hands or put their arms around each other. See page 22 for more information.
- 9. T or F** When your Pakistani student is hungry s/he is likely to tell you directly.  
**False.** Pakistanis tend to communicate very indirectly. See page 29 for more information.
- 10. T or F** A wet bathroom is considered a clean bathroom in Pakistan.  
**True.** Bathrooms differ greatly between Pakistan and the United States. Visit page 14 for more.
- 11. T or F** Alcoholic beverages are forbidden in Pakistan for Muslims.  
**True.** See page 17 for more information.
- 12. T or F** The mother is the main authority in a Pakistani family.  
**False.** Traditionally in Pakistan, the father is the main authority and provider of the household. See page 12 for more information.



# FOREWORD

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Thank you for volunteering to welcome a young student from Pakistan into your home, family, and community. The coming months will present a multitude of learning opportunities for you and your participant.

## *Objective of Handbook*

This Handbook for Host Families of Pakistan Participants is made exclusively for you, the host family. You represent one of the most indispensable ingredients required for an international exchange program to be successful. The information contained here will also be shared with exchange program support volunteers so that they too will better understand the Pakistani student's worldview and will be able to provide culturally sensitive and appropriate support to both the hosted student and the host family.

Awareness of the existence of cultural differences and how to deal with these differences can have a profoundly positive impact on the quality of your relationship with your participant and on the entire host family's experience. To this end, this handbook is designed to help you learn about the cultures of both Pakistan and the United States by examining a number of topics in contrast with each other. We hope that you find these topics to be interesting and informative.

- Predominant communication styles in the United States and Pakistan;
- Pakistani family life and relationships;
- Pakistani cultural norms regarding personal appearance and religion;
- Key differences between U.S. and Pakistani school systems;
- The general Pakistani and U.S. American views on concepts such as time and space.

Of course, you are not expected to read through this entire handbook in one sitting. At first you will want to familiarize yourself with its contents. Read intensively those areas that are relevant and of special interest to you, and then, during the coming weeks, continue to refer back to the various topics as situations occur. We hope that you will enjoy yourself as you and your family members join together with your Pakistani student in this cultural exchange.

Throughout this handbook, you will find helpful tips indicated by a light bulb icon. Quotations from previous host parents of Pakistani students offering advice and examples of their experiences are indicated by the speech bubble icon. Remember that every individual is different, so although this book can be used as a resource for learning about Pakistani culture in general, it is likely that some of this information may not apply to your student. Talk to your student to learn about his or her cultural realities.



## *Participant Selection Process*

The Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (K-L YES) Program is a scholarship exchange program funded by the U.S. Department of State (see page 40 for more details). Your K-L YES student was recruited by the organization iEarn Pakistan. You, as a host family, may be participating through one of several placement organizations. Students apply from all over Pakistan. Admission to the program is very competitive and only a limited number of students are selected. Selection is based on a written assessment and personal interviews.



# OVERVIEW

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Pakistan, a country with rich history and colorful culture, is spread along either side of the River Indus, making its way from the mountain valleys of the Himalayas and stretching down to the Arabian Sea. It is known for its stunning landscapes, customs, and traditions. Life in the cities is fast and modernized, but there are many smaller towns and villages that still enjoy a more traditional way of life. Only 34% of Pakistanis live in the metropolitan areas and the remaining 66% live in rural communities.

Islamabad is the capital of the country, but the city of Karachi is considered the cosmopolitan center in Pakistan. The city of Lahore is viewed as a museum of an enriching culture and lifestyle.

Islam is the national religion of Pakistan, and its influence touches most aspects of everyday life, from art to architecture to music. However, there are other minority religions such as Christianity and Hinduism that add their own distinct traditions to the country's rich tapestry.

Pakistani culture is full of color, from the fiery hot and spicy food to the traditional clothing. Pakistani weddings are a lavish display of both: beautiful clothing, expensive embroidery, heavy jewelry, songs, dance, and the henna painted hands of the girls and bride. Of course, no celebration in Pakistan is complete without an enormous, aromatic meal followed by sweet desserts. Weddings are the most popular and important occasions for socializing in almost all subcultures of Pakistani society.

In addition to the plentiful Islamic art and architecture in Pakistan, one of the most prominent and unique displays of art can be found on the roads in the form of vibrant and colorful buses and trucks, decorated with drawings and poetry.

The folk music of Pakistan is very famous, as are ghazals, qawalli (devotional), and classical music. However, much of the younger generation enjoys an array of rock and pop.

## ***A Brief History***

Pakistan has a complex historical and cultural background. Although it is a newer country politically, it is culturally ancient. Its cities flourished before Babylon and ancient Greece.

The region traces its history back to at least 2,500 BCE, when a highly developed civilization flourished in the Indus Valley. Many different groups experienced periods of power throughout its long history including the Persian Empire, Alexander the Great, the ancient Greeks, Huns, Turks, and many more. All left distinct cultural influences such as Hinduism and Buddhism, traces of which remain visible in present-day Pakistani culture. In 712 A.D., the Arabs landed near present-day Karachi and ruled the lower half of Pakistan for two hundred years. During this time, Islam took root and influenced the life, culture, and traditions of the inhabitants of the region.

During British power in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, present-day Pakistan was a part of the British Indian Empire. Separation occurred in August 1947 following political strife, and The Islamic Republic of Pakistan emerged as an independent, sovereign state. At the time of separation, Pakistan and Bangladesh were a single country. Bangladesh became a separate state in 1971.

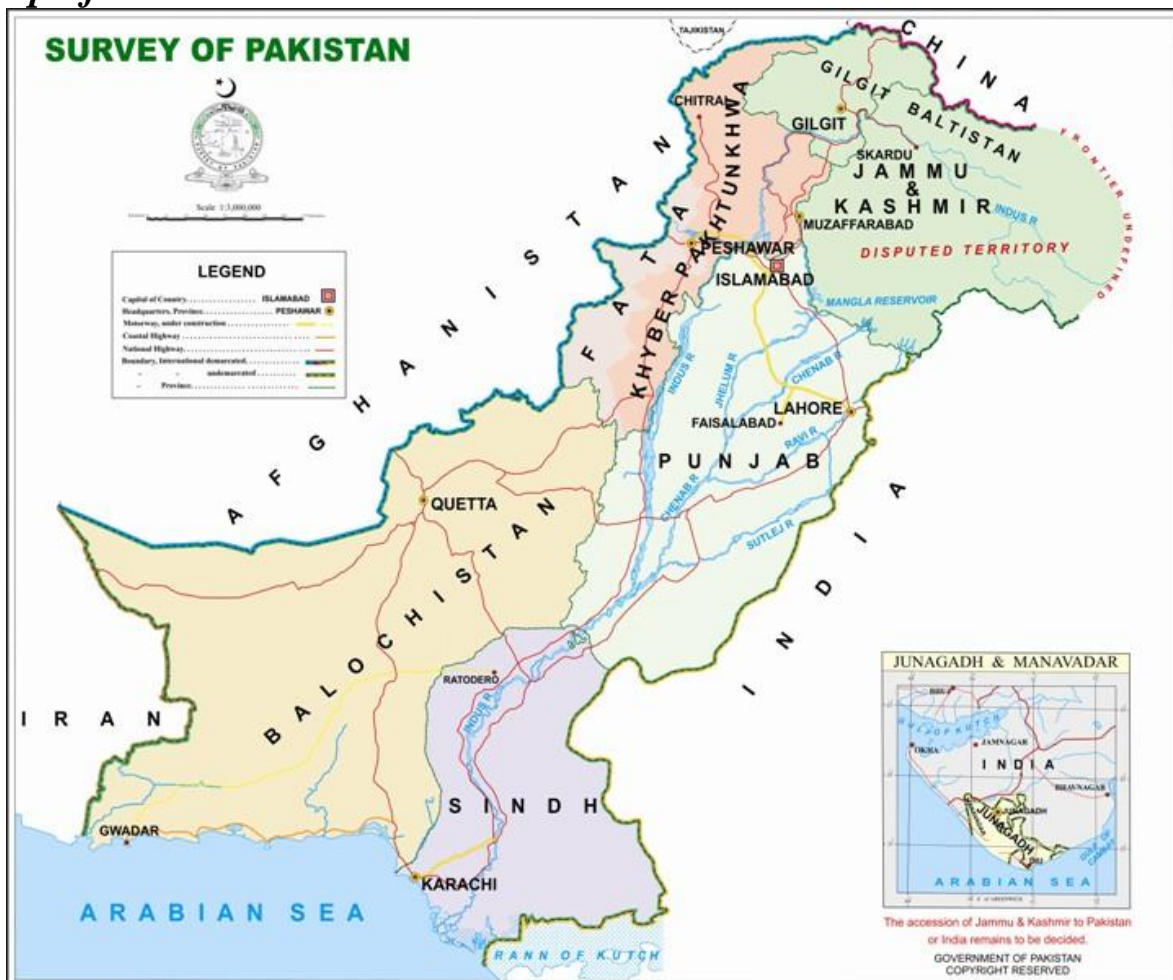
## ***Climate and Geography***

The climate of Pakistan varies by region, but by and large the country experiences four seasons. Winters are typically cool and dry; spring tends to be hot and dry; summer is considered the rainy season that brings monsoons that cools the weather down once more.

Pakistan is bordered by India to the east, China to the northeast, Afghanistan to the northwest, Iran to the southwest, and the Arabian Sea to the south. The terrain throughout the country is diverse. The northern mountains include the second-highest mountain in the world known as K2. In the east lay fertile lands along the rivers, barren deserts in the southwest, stony plateaus in the west, and the Arabian Sea to the south.

Pakistan is comprised of five provinces: Baluchistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwan, Punjab, and Sindh. Each province has its own unique way of life. Urdu is the National language, but Punjabi, Baluchi, Sindhi, and Pashtu are the regional dialects.

## *Map of Pakistan*



YES Students come from all over Pakistan.

Image Source: <http://www.surveyofpakistan.gov.pk/>

# CULTURE

Understanding your student's distinct culture and how it relates and contrasts with your own is a key to a successful hosting experience.

## *What is culture?*

Culture is a set of behaviors, values, and beliefs created by groups of people, giving them a sense of community and purpose. You can belong to any number of cultures, for example: workplace culture, faith culture, generational culture, or geographically defined culture. We often follow rules of culture without even knowing it.

## *The Cultural Iceberg*

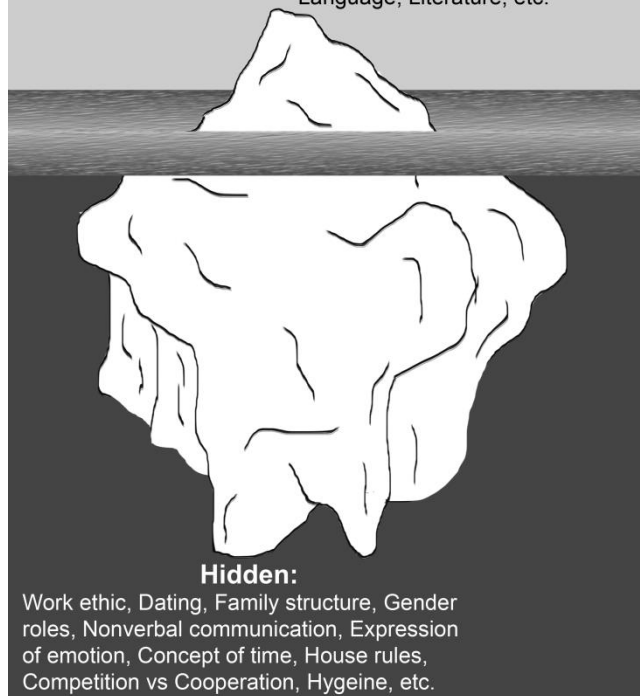
One way to understand the various parts of culture is by thinking of culture as if it were an iceberg.

The iceberg shows that some elements of culture are above the surface of the water and are visible. We are aware of these aspects of culture because they are reflected in our **behaviors**. Other aspects of culture lie under the water and are invisible. These aspects of culture aren't obvious to us and include our **values, norms, and beliefs**.

### The Cultural Iceberg

#### Visible:

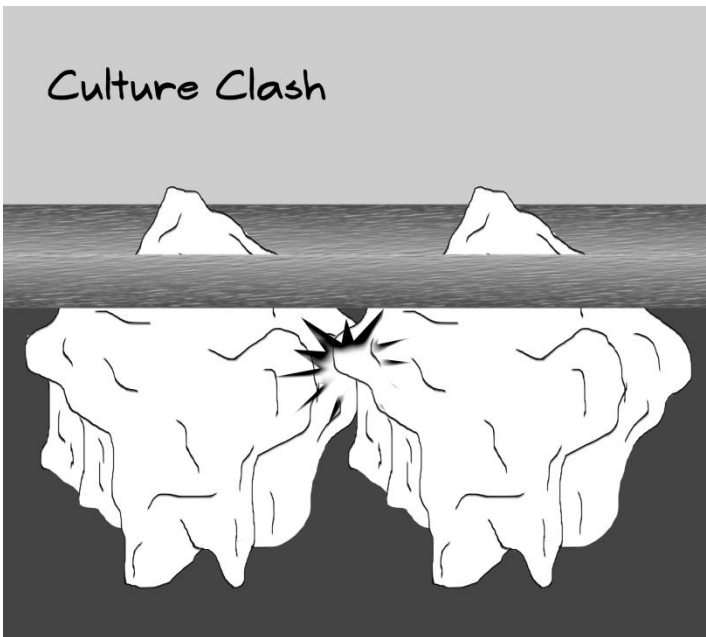
Food, Clothing, Music, Art, Sports, Language, Literature, etc.



#### Hidden:

Work ethic, Dating, Family structure, Gender roles, Nonverbal communication, Expression of emotion, Concept of time, House rules, Competition vs Cooperation, Hygiene, etc.

### Culture Clash



The visible and invisible parts of culture interact with each other in ways that you probably don't normally stop to consider. For example, a common nonverbal behavior such as waving goodbye is visible, but what that gesture means is invisible. In one culture it could mean "goodbye", in another "come here", and in another "go away."

When two cultures, like two icebergs, collide, the real clash usually occurs not in the visible differences, but rather, below the surface, where values, beliefs, and thought patterns conflict.

During the hosting experience, you and your hosted participant may feel uncomfortable with a situation but won't quite know why. Chances are good that you are experiencing

cultural differences "below the surface of the water." Being aware of this dynamic and the potential for learning what exists within it are huge parts of the cultural learning process.

You may be wondering, “How can I learn about myself through contact with someone different from me?” It is most often through the contrast between the two that new awareness and knowledge arise. In other words, you may not be aware of your own values, beliefs, and customs until you come into contact with someone whose values, beliefs, and customs differ from your own. The goal of this handbook is to help you build awareness of your own and your participant’s culture in order to help you both have a more enjoyable and educational hosting experience.

**We learned so much from [our student] and found our exposure to another culture/religion to be one of the best learning experiences we have ever had. We would repeat the whole thing in a heartbeat.**

– U.S. Host Family



**We had a wonderful experience; go into this eyes wide open with no preconditioned expectations. The initial first few months can be as challenging for a host family as for the student - even for experienced host families. The experience you get from this is a lifetime of memories**

– U.S. Host Family

## ***Generalizations and Stereotypes***

To help you along in this process of mutual discovery, it is often useful to begin by considering **cultural generalizations**.

**Cultural generalizations are defined as the tendency of the majority of people within a culture group to share certain values, beliefs and behaviors.**

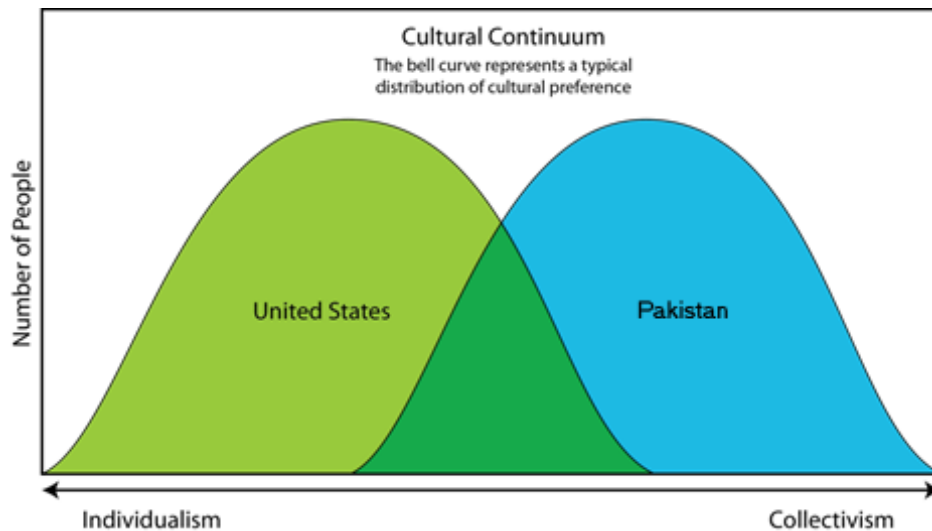


**Generalizations do not apply to all people within a culture group, and so should be used only as a guide to beginning conversation and developing understanding with your participant.**

An example of a cultural generalization is the strongly held **U.S. American value of individualism**. U.S. Americans tend to like to do things themselves and see themselves as responsible for their own lives. These things are reflected in popular expressions such as “pulling yourself up by your own bootstraps” or “the buck stops here.” But this doesn’t mean that all Americans value individualism in the same way or to the same degree. Rather, on average, most Americans hold this value and U.S. culture tends to view this as a positive.

In contrast, Pakistanis generally value **collectivism**. Collectivism tends to value the good of the whole as more important than the good of the individual: “One generation plants the trees and another gets the shade.”

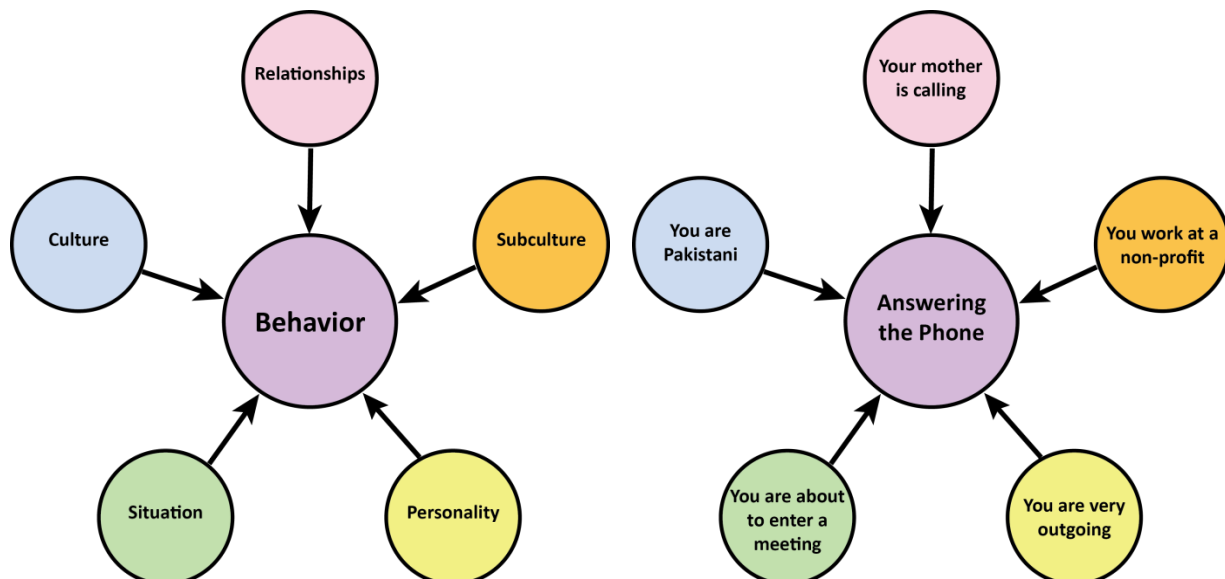
In a culture that tends to be more collectivist, the interests of the group, whether it be family, classmates or community, are typically given priority over those of the individual. People from such cultures tend to avoid confrontation and do not directly reveal negative feelings as we might in the United States. Maintaining harmony within a group is very important in a collectivist culture. There tends to be more emphasis on family relationships in these cultures.



**Cultural generalizations should not be confused with cultural stereotypes, which are fixed ideas or exaggerated beliefs about every individual in the culture group. They are often negative in nature and untested.**

An example of a **cultural stereotype** would be “U.S. Americans are materialistic.” To better understand the difference between cultural generalizations and stereotypes, please refer to the continuum figure that follows. On the left side, **individualism** is displayed as a U.S. value, and the right side shows the Pakistani value of **collectivism**. We see that only a small portion of each population sits at the extreme ends of this continuum. The majority of each population sits somewhere in the middle, with some from each culture tending more toward individualism and more toward collectivism. This graph also exemplifies the difficulty in quantifying values. Values can only be expressed in a way that is general with room for flexibility.

It is also important to keep in mind that culture is not the only factor influencing behavior. See the following chart for examples. On the left we have the general factors that might influence behavior at any given time. On the right the chart is filled in with an example of a person deciding whether or not to answer a phone call:



People can differ in many other ways, such as their likes and dislikes, personalities, and life experiences. The situation at hand can also have an impact on how people behave. In the example above, a Pakistani person may decide to answer the phone call at work, and his/her coworkers would probably not object or think it inappropriate, which does represent strong family ties that are generally characteristic of Pakistani culture. However another person, even another Pakistani, might make a different decision as influenced by any of the other factors above. For this reason, we emphasize that cultural generalizations should only be a starting point for exploration and discussion about how your cultural values may be similar to or different than those of your student.

## ***Culture and Perception***

**Culture shapes your perception in the same way that different colored glasses change what you see.** For example, if you were to look at a yellow car while wearing a pair of blue-tinted glasses, the car would appear green. However, if you were to view the same yellow car through pink-tinted glasses, it would appear orange. Similarly, you and your student may see the same situation with two different “cultural lenses” or sets of values, norms, and beliefs. If you are not aware of the color of each other’s lens, in other words, the cultural context of a given situation, conflict and misunderstandings are more likely to occur.



**When misunderstandings occur, seek clarification by exploring cultural differences that may be at play. You don’t need to change, just explain! A little flexibility goes a long way.**



**If you model open mindedness in speaking with your student about daily life in Pakistan, this will build trust and help to open up communication.**

**– U.S. Host Family**

## FAMILY LIFE

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This section is design to help you develop an understanding of Pakistani family culture. Family is one of the most sacred and important institutions of Pakistani life and society, and there are major differences between how a typical Pakistani family and a typical U.S. family function.

The difference in family values can be one of the most challenging points of adjustment for Pakistani students and their U.S. host families. Read this section carefully to gain an understanding of how you can help your student adjust to family life in the United States.

### ***The Family Structure***

Pakistani family time is vital and cherished. Just like many American families, a family will enjoy time together in front of their TV either watching a movie or their favorite TV shows. The family will also spend time together outside the home at the beach or park, shopping together, eating out, going to temple, and attending family functions such as weddings.

Traditionally, Pakistanis live in extended families, and this is still very common in rural communities. Typically, children will not move away from home until marriage. Life after university graduation is different in Pakistan than it is in the United States.

### ***Marriage***

Typically Pakistani sons are expected to get a job that is stable enough to financially support a family of their own. Even people from rural areas will try to get jobs in the nearest metropolitan city and commute to and from work every day. Students coming from big cities look for jobs in their hometowns. Once they become gainfully employed, they are generally expected to get married.

For Pakistani girls, expectations tend to differ from those of males. As soon as girls finish 12<sup>th</sup> grade they are typically expected to start thinking about marriage. Those who attend university will generally get married immediately after graduation. Generally after marriage, a daughter will move in with her new husband and his family.

Sons, typically, will raise their families in the same household as their parents. If parents have more than one son, the extended families can become quite large in comparison to what we are used to in the United States. These large extended families can give the illusion that Pakistanis have many children, but on average, most modern Pakistani families have three children.



**Your student may miss having grandparents living with the family. Feel free to introduce your student to any of your parents and/or grandparents who may live nearby. Your student may enjoy spending the day with them.**

Pakistani children are generally not accustomed to being alone at home. They are often used to being supervised and having an adult at home with them. Being left alone may be challenging at first for your student, leaving him/her with feelings of loneliness and uncertainty.



**Your student may be uncomfortable staying alone in the house. Show your student some activities at home that they can do to make them more comfortable and encourage involvement in extra-curricular activities that will help them socialize with others.**



## ***Family Reputation***

Family means everything in Pakistani culture, including personal reputation. Unlike typical families in U.S. society, which places high value on individual autonomy and in which each family member establishes his or her own reputation, there is little room for individualism in Pakistani society. This is a reflection of the value of collectivism that was previously discussed on page 8. It is the family's reputation that is always considered in Pakistan. Each family member is not concerned with his or her own reputation, but rather that of his or her family. So if one member of the family behaves poorly, this can adversely affect the entire family's reputation.

Along with this sense of familial reputation comes reluctance on the teen's part to discuss troubling issues within the family with any other family member. If your student feels upset by someone in your family, s/he may not want to discuss or argue about this with anyone in your family. This is related to the concept of saving face, see page 30 for more information. Your student will likely feel more comfortable speaking to a third party in order to work through issues, but s/he may still refrain from sharing specific details.



**Rely on your local contact to help your student work through any family tension. The local contact should make clear to your student that s/he is there for non-judgmental support, and that the student needs to communicate what is troubling him/her.**

**You may not recognize signs of conflict or distress coming from your student. Ensuring s/he has regular opportunities to talk to the local support contact will help bring issues to light.**

## ***Family Roles***

Family members in Pakistan typically fill fairly defined roles, often distinguished by gender. Though each family is different, gender roles seem less fluid in Pakistan than they are in the United States. **Frequently spell out to your student what the expectations of everyone in your household are.**

In a Pakistani family, the mother is usually the caregiver and homemaker whereas the father is typically the authority and provider. The women in the home, especially the mothers (remember there may be several generations under one roof), are expected to prepare meals and snacks, do most of the shopping, clean the house, and supervise the children's homework after school. If the mother is not home, she makes sure that someone – a relative or neighbor – will be home for her children. In Pakistan, there are very few “latch-key kids.” In other words, the mother ensures everything is done for her children. Children are never left alone in the house when sick. If the child is sick, the mother will either stay home with them or make sure there is someone else there to care for them.



**Explain to your student how, in U.S. families, parents actively help their children gain more independence and self-sufficiency.**

**Teach your student early the roles of each family member in your household, including with regard to rule-making, permission, and discipline.**

**Tailor your explanations to reflect your family's values. Be patient, it may take time for your student to get used to these new values and ideas.**

In Pakistan, **Education** is a foremost expectation for the children. The child's role is to go to school, come home, and study. As the **Education** section on page 27 of this handbook will later detail, education in Pakistan is carried out differently than it is in the United States, and it is taken very seriously in the Pakistani household.



**Be vigilant with following through with your student's school assignments and asking about school each day until s/he clearly demonstrates self-sufficiency.**

**This is incredibly important. If this is not done, the student may think his family does not care, and may feel no motivation to study.**

## ***Decision-Making***

**Most Pakistani children are not used to making their own choices or decisions.** They will typically be used to having their parents do everything for them. It can help to offer two or three choices, at first, to help develop this skill.

**Explain to your student that, in the United States, the children are expected tell their family what their needs are and to be able to make their own choices on certain things. Have patience during this period.**

## ***Chores & Household Help***

The children in Pakistani families are generally not expected to carry out any daily chores, cooking, shopping, or cleaning outside of picking up after themselves. In fact, most Pakistani children have no experience with chores, especially in the kitchen. This is not due to laziness, but rather due to the fact that most of their time is spent on educational activities. If Pakistani students have any experience doing chores, it will usually be the girls rather than the boys.



**Spend time teaching your student how to do the basic chores we take for granted. Don't assume s/he will know how to do simple chores like rinsing off dishes, setting the table, or sweeping the floor.**

**Closely supervise your student in the kitchen while teaching him/her how to use the different kitchen appliances and kitchen safety rules.**



**Create a 'chores chart' and post it somewhere like the kitchen that details what chore he/she and you and your own kids are responsible for each day around the house.**

**– U.S. Host Family**

In Pakistan, most middle- to upper-income households will have one or more **servants** living with the family. Having servants is not necessarily a sign of wealth, as it is here in the United States. Families that can afford them may have their own drivers, cooks, and maids. The servants are generally of lower income, and it is a gesture of goodwill to employ as many servants as the family can afford. Often, the servants will take on the women's chores other than studying with the children. This can also allow the mother to find work outside the home, though her duty is still to ensure that everyone is cared for and either she or the servants are keeping the household running.



**Help your student understand that most U.S. homes do not have servants and that helping with household chores is an important expectation. Be sure to explain that chores are not considered demeaning, but highly respectable.**

## ***Money Management***

In Pakistani households, there usually are strict rules for the children. If the child plans to go out with friends, s/he must inform the family as to where, when, with whom, for how long, and what they plan to do. While they may hang out at the malls, they are rarely given enough money to shop for themselves – only enough for some snacks. You may find your student not knowing how to manage his/her money, or how to shop.



### **Helping with Money Management**

**Spend time helping your student learn how to manage his/her money.**

**Encourage your YES student to spend his/her stipend money prudently.**

For YES students, their stipend money may be the most money they have seen in their lives, and may be reluctant to spend it. Keep in mind that the State Department mandates that stipend money is for the student's expenses in the United States, not for saving to take home!



**Clearly define and understand who is expected to cover the different expenses associated with your student's stay. Do this right at the start and help your student keep to those expectations.**

## ***The Bathroom and Hygiene***

Bathrooms in Pakistan are typical throughout Southern Asia. The toilet is flush with the floor, not chair-style, with foot treads on either side for stability. Toilet paper is not generally used. Instead, Pakistanis will use water to clean up by using either a pitcher of water or a nearby hose or sprayer. The use of water in this way is actually required by Islam. Your student may be completely unfamiliar and uncomfortable with using toilet paper.



**It was an adjustment for her to use the toilet without the hose and drain in the floor.**

**– U.S. Host Family**

Unlike in the United States, a wet bathroom in Pakistan is considered a clean bathroom, so bathrooms will be entirely tile or marble with a common drain right in the floor and are left to dry on their own. Because water is commonly rationed for each household, baths are taken using the water that will fill a single one or two gallon pail. Showers use more water, and are not used frequently unless the family is wealthier. There are no tubs. Rather, bathing is usually done in the central area of the bathroom.

**Teach your student how to use your bathroom, including the shower and use of toilet paper. Instruct your student how to keep dry or dry off any parts of the bathroom that cannot stay wet.**



**Teach your student right away what is appropriate to flush down the toilet. It may be necessary to give your student a lesson in how to use everything in the bathroom in your house in an amount of detail that may surprise you.**

**Frequently supervise and remind your student of the bathroom rules until s/he has adjusted and shows no more confusion about them.**

You will have to communicate openly with your Pakistani exchange student about hygiene. Because Pakistanis cleanse themselves with water after every visit to the bathroom, it is not uncommon to wear undergarments for multiple days prior to washing them.



**You may want to talk to your student about changing their underwear, wearing deodorant, and showering/bathing on a daily basis.**

**Deodorant is not commonly used in Pakistan. If body odor becomes an issue, you may have to have a frank conversation with your student and instruct them on using deodorant each day.**

It is normal in Pakistan not to shower daily and to wear clothes a couple times prior to washing them. Your expectations for personal hygiene should be communicated to your exchange students clearly.

## ***The Kitchen***

In Pakistan, children are not used to being in the kitchen.



**Supervise, supervise, and supervise!**

**It can be great fun for your student and your family to have him/her help cook while being taught to use appliances, etc. Having your own kids help in the kitchen can be an additional source of encouragement for your student.**

Pakistani students may feel it is demeaning for them to say, "I don't understand." They may say they understand something, when they actually don't.



**Patently work alongside your student and have him/her *show* you their understanding. Have your student try doing something that you've just demonstrated. Watch and repeat until it is done right.**

## ***Bedrooms***

In Pakistan, children may have their own rooms but it is relatively rare. It is more common in Pakistan to share rooms with other siblings. It is even common for everyone in a Pakistani family to sleep in one room when it is hot out so that everyone can benefit from an air conditioning unit. Your student may find it lonely to spend time in his or her own room and may prefer spending time in common family areas. If your family typically enjoys alone time in separate rooms, you may need to explain to your student that they are not being shunned or ignored.

# FOOD AND MEALS

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For most Pakistanis, eating is a great passion; people don't eat to live, but rather they live to eat. Pakistani food is noticeably different than the fare you find in a typical "American style" restaurant or diner in the United States. The spicy, flavorful chapatis, curries, lentils, biryani rice, and meat kebabs are all traditional staples of Pakistani meals. Many of the spices and dishes are similar to those found in neighboring India, though meat plays a more dominant role in Pakistani cuisine.

The YES Host Family Handbook and YES Cultural Handbook contain detailed explanations of the important Muslim dietary requirements. The following section addresses both Muslim and non-Muslim Pakistani dietary habits. Remember, as always, each student is different, and food is a cultural difference that can cause extreme homesickness, so treat this subject with care.



**Talk to your student about what foods s/he will or will not eat. They are aware of the differences between common American and Pakistani foods, and will be prepared to adapt to the cuisine/foods found in your home and community. Pakistani parents will appreciate your desire to have a healthy and nutritious diet for their child.**

## *Halal foods*

Muslim students follow the Halal laws governing the preparation of meat: meat must be butchered and prepared in a certain way and pork products may not be consumed or come into contact with other food. Be aware that foods like jellybeans, marshmallows, and other gelatin-based foods typically contain pork byproducts and are not considered Halal. If possible, find out if halal meat is available in your area before the student arrives. Many U.S. American communities will not have halal meat available. In these cases, kosher meat is an acceptable substitute as the preparation laws are the same. Many Pakistani students are also prepared to follow a vegetarian diet in the event that halal or kosher meat is unavailable.



**Make a commitment to limiting and/or not consuming pork products while hosting. This helps to demonstrate your sensitivity to the student's religious beliefs and being accepting of their religion.**

**– U.S. Host Family**

In some cases, available halal or kosher meat options may be pricey, and students are prepared that they must be flexible. However, as meat is widely consumed in Pakistan, it is likely that your student will appreciate a splurge of a halal meat meal every once in a while.

Although the restrictions concerning meat are the issues that will most likely pertain to your student, there are other food laws in Islam, including the prohibition against consuming alcohol. Although students under 21 are subject to alcohol restrictions anyway, be aware that the Muslim restriction on alcohol includes, for example, a wine-based pasta sauce. Even products like vanilla extract and toothpaste can contain alcohol! Food containing blood or blood byproducts, such as blood sausage, are also prohibited by Muslim dietary law.



**Her application said she must eat halal food, but after she arrived she decided that she wanted to be part of 'American teenage life' and eat fast food including McDonald's hamburgers, etc. She was still very careful not to eat any pork or pork products.**

**– U.S. Host Family**

Every student who comes to the United States will make his or her own choices regarding food habits. If you have not had a chance to find out your student's dietary restrictions before arrival, we suggest planning to serve vegetarian or pasta options until you've discussed your student's dietary restrictions with him/her.



**We had fun finding multiple ways of cooking chicken and other non-meat dishes. Families need to be willing to have fun with this: it isn't going to go away.**

**– U.S. Host Family**

## ***Alcohol***

Alcoholic beverages are strictly forbidden in Pakistan for Muslims. Christians and Hindus are allowed to apply for a permit to buy alcohol, so if your student is not a practicing Muslim, s/he may be able to eat food containing alcohol, such as a wine-based pasta sauce. However, be clear with your student about alcohol laws and consequences in your community and talk with them about peer pressure, since the culture of teenage parties is not the same in Pakistan as in the United States.



**Warn your student of the peer pressures that can occur with U.S. American teens to drink or go to parties where alcohol is served.**

**Make it clear to your student that you will provide moral support and encourage him/her to ask for help if s/he is given any pressure to consume alcohol or other illegal drugs.**

## ***Pakistani Meals and Meal Times***

The majority of a typical meal is made up of starch, such as flat bread (naan) or rice, and a curry, chick peas, or lentil soup. Many Pakistani families, particularly in rural areas, eat their meals served on a cloth which is spread out on the floor, eating only with their right hand. Often they'll use the flat bread to scoop up the food from communal dishes.



**Rice is a staple starch in Pakistan. Making rice available to your student will help them feel full.**

Pakistani families have three meals a day as we do in the United States, however they are usually very flexible about meal times. Generally, students have breakfast in the morning before going to school and have lunch after they are back from school around 2:00 or 2:30pm. They typically do not have lunch at school and only have snacks during the break at around 10:30am. Students take or buy snacks at school. Students don't generally make their own breakfast; usually their mothers make breakfast for them. Supper time is usually between 8:00 – 10:00 pm and is the main meal of the day at which the entire family gathers.

It is common for teenagers to eat any time they feel hungry, including in between meals. See the food appendix on page 42 to learn about typical Pakistani food. Except for special occasions, desserts are not common after meals.



**Your student will likely need a snack after dinner as dinner in Pakistan is eaten later than in the United States.**

Pakistani food is known for its rich flavors and hot spices. American food may seem very bland at first to your student. Vegetables and meats are always cooked and never served raw or undercooked. It may take time for your student to get used to eating food the way you are used to preparing it.



**Don't be offended if your student covers all of your carefully prepared meals in hot sauce or catsup. I asked my student to try at least one bite of the food as I prepared it and then he was free to cover it in whatever spice he wanted**

**– U.S. Host Family**

**To help your student adjust to food in the United States, consider the following suggestions...**



- **Bring your student to the supermarket to pick familiar spices (or suggest s/he bring favorite spices from Pakistan if you have the opportunity).**
- **Allow your student to have vegetables cooked at first, and to have meat cooked well-done.**
- **Ask your student to help you prepare a traditional Pakistani meal. Your student will enjoy sharing his/her culture and learning new skills in the kitchen. There are some recipes on page 42 of this book and many are available online.**
- **Find other spicy cuisine options in your community if Pakistani/Indian food is unavailable, such as Mexican or Thai food.**

## ***Table Manners***

Most Pakistanis are used to different standards of what constitute “good” manners and we suggest discussing these and any other table manner issues that come up. For example, when dipping items (i.e. French fries), to put a half-eaten item back in dip is common practice in Pakistan. Also, one water glass is usually shared. Further, students are not used to clearing their own place at the table. As noted above, in Pakistan it is very common for people to eat with their hands. However, it is always with the right hand, as the left hand is considered unclean.



**Although the students were taught the basics of using napkins and eating with forks and spoons before they left Pakistan, it'll probably take them some practice before they perfect these skills.**

**Have a detailed conversation about the ins and outs of table manners in your home.**

## ***Food Preparation***

As was mentioned in the Family Life section (page 11), Pakistani children generally do not have a lot of experience in the kitchen. They may actually not be permitted to prepare food for themselves in their families in Pakistan. Students may initially find it impolite to open the refrigerator door and scan the contents for something to eat as a U.S. American teenager might. Without your encouragement and permission, they might be reluctant to help themselves. Have a frank conversation about the rules surrounding food in your family and what to do if your student is hungry.



**Teach your Pakistani student about food preparation as you would your own Child. They will likely need guidance in using cooking utensils, the stove/oven, coffee maker, etc. and it's a good idea to supervise the use of these appliances closely at first.**



## ***Ramadan***

Ramadan is a Muslim holiday that requires a lot of adjustment relating to food. Please see the Religion section on page 24 for detailed information.

## ***Food packaging***

Food packaging as it is in the United States is not common in Pakistan. Food items are typically sold without packaging, usually by weight. Students do not generally go grocery shopping and, even if they do, stores and packaging are different from the US. Initially they'll need information/assistance buying food at a grocery store.

# PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

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Forging and maintaining lifelong relationships is of utmost importance in Pakistani society. As discussed earlier, Pakistanis have a community-based society in which the family is the central unit. Like American teens, Pakistani students will have many different types of relationships; however what kinds of interactions are considered appropriate in each one can be very different! A few of the most important relationships in your student's life may be:

## *Family*

The family is the central unit in Pakistani life and each family member has a specific role to play. The student may be used to very close involvement with extended family, as well. Close family friends are given the familial "aunt and uncle" title (see Family Life on page 11).

## *Family Friends*

The friends of the student's parents, and their children, are considered "family friends." In Pakistan, there is not a distinction drawn between the parents' friend circle and the child's. The child is expected to socialize when the parents' friends are visiting, and the parents do not hesitate to interact with their children's friends, particularly if they observe the child do or say something that is considered inappropriate.



**Coming from such a tight-knit community, it may not be immediately obvious to the student how to go about making new friends in the United States. Be prepared that your student may seek your help and advice when it comes to making and maintaining friendships.**

## *Friendships*

As in the United States, teenagers have close friendships with others their age in their school and their community. Unlike in the United States, it is rare for teenagers to have friends of the opposite gender.

Usually friendships are formed over many years of interaction, and the student's friends are essentially part of the family (or literally part of the family as Pakistani teens are usually very close to cousins or siblings of a similar age). Related to the notion of fluid friend and family circles, Pakistani parents will typically have a lot of input on the appropriateness of friendships. All peer relationships still reflect on the entire family, as discussed before in the Family Life section (page 3).

## *Maintaining Relationships Back Home*

Given the close nature of relationships in Pakistan, it may be particularly difficult for your student to be separated from his/her family and friends. Your student may want to be in constant contact with those back home, especially in the beginning, which can be expensive and isolating.

Pakistani families will likely make every effort to contact their students regularly and very often. Talk to your student right away and set firm limits about the appropriate amount of phone and Internet use and agree on a schedule. However also be aware that following an established schedule will be challenging for your student and family to follow. Encourage your student to do his or her best and communicate openly about when family is expected to call.



**Time Zones in Pakistan are 10-12 hours different from the United States. My student Skyped his family, for free, for hours on end, into the wee hours of the morning. We should have set limits earlier than we did, as his laptop would sing out at all hours with calls from home. Just as with U.S. American teens, too much online time means not enough sleep, which can contribute to depression.**

**– U.S. Host Family**

Be understanding. Your Pakistani student may be used to having his/her parents' input on every decision, and adjustment may be difficult. Encourage your student to focus energy on establishing new relationships rather than worrying about home, or being glued to the phone or computer.



**Make sure your student knows s/he can come to you, a host sibling, and/or the local program contact with feelings of homesickness.**

**Set up programs such as Skype or a calling card, as those options are cheaper than most long-distance calling plans.**

## ***Making Friends***

Your student may be unaccustomed to the independent and spontaneous nature of American friendships. For a Pakistani student to go out with his or her friends, s/he must have parental permission well in advance, and it is more common for friends to visit one another's houses. Your student will also probably be used to devoting his or her time to studying. Pakistani students will likely have a hard time fitting into U.S. high school and making friends, so make sure to emphasize the importance of making U.S. friends to your student, and help by providing him or her with opportunities to do so. It may make your student more comfortable if you offer them the opportunity to invite new friends to your home.



**Extracurricular activities are not emphasized in Pakistani schools, and are a great opportunity for your student to interact with peers and try something new. Attending exchange-related functions is another great way for your student to meet new people.**

**Help your student to make friends by:**



- **Explaining that American teenagers may use humor and slang that is unfamiliar to your student. Be especially conscious of helping your student identify unfamiliar and potentially offensive phrases, and helping place slang terms in the right context.**
- **Encouraging your student to join a school sport, club, or organization.**
- **Offering your student participation in local church activities and volunteer activities in the local community.**
- **Offering your student opportunities to invite friends to your home perhaps giving them a chance to share their culture by teaching a Pakistani card game or preparing Pakistani food.**

## ***Diversity and Acceptance***

Pakistan is a diverse country, but it is also a hierarchically structured one. There is a complex system of social interaction based on age, class, profession, and sex. Because equality is so highly valued in the

United States, this worldview can come across as rude, insensitive, or patriarchal. Part of the benefit of student exchange is learning to see things from a different perspective. Take some time to talk with your student about his or her worldview and help your student adjust to social norms in the United States. It is especially important to develop an understanding of which words and ideas might offend people, and that the same courtesy and respect should be paid to everyone regardless of social status or sex.

## ***Sex and Relationships***

In Pakistan relationships between unmarried or unrelated members of the opposite sex, whether platonic or romantic, are uncommon and are seen as wrong or inappropriate. Though some schools in Pakistan are co-ed, boys and girls usually relate to each other only as classmates. Boys and girls would typically socialize separately.

“Dating” is not a common practice in Pakistan, since in most families marriages are still arranged by the child’s parents. Your student might be made uncomfortable by close interactions with the opposite sex, or be confused as to what is considered appropriate conduct. Be sensitive to these issues especially when it comes to school dances, or other “date” related U.S. American traditions. Give your student the opportunity to become comfortable with this concept.

There are, of course, co-ed spaces in Pakistan, such as the work place. However there is an understood, social code about how it is appropriate to interact with members of the opposite sex. Know that your student’s family would likely disapprove highly of dating as U.S. teenagers often practice it. A young girl and boy going out to dinner together on their own would be considered inappropriate in Pakistan.



**If your student shows an interest in dating, be sure to be clear about what is considered acceptable in your household.**

## ***Sex and Intimacy***

Sex and intimacy are taboo subjects in Pakistan, and your student might be shocked or confused by seeing public displays of affection, or by sex being openly discussed in school such as in health class or amongst peers. For many Pakistani students, their perception of U.S. American teens and young adults may be based on what they have seen of the western media (music, T.V. shows such as “Friends”, U.S. American celebrities, etc.), which can present a hyper-sexualized version of U.S. American society. Help your student gain a realistic understanding of appropriate behavior with the opposite sex, and what constitutes sexual harassment.



**It is essential that you give a firm definition of appropriate limits of acceptable behavior to your student, and explain what is permitted in your household, regardless of what they may observe at school or in the media.**

## ***LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender)***

Homosexuality and LGBT culture in Pakistan is an extremely taboo subject. Your student will probably have little to no exposure to homosexuality and may be very surprised to see LGBT culture discussed openly in the media, their community, or their school. Your student may be confused, or even conflicted as to how to approach interactions or discussions regarding LGBT issues. Help your student understand that in the United States, sexual orientation is a highly personal matter and that everyone should be

treated with the same courtesy and respect, regardless of sexual orientation. Talk with your student about certain words and phrases that are absolutely not acceptable. For example, your student should be advised that using the word “gay” in a derogatory manner, be it calling someone “gay” or saying something is “gay,” is inappropriate, even though in some U.S. teenagers use this expression.



**Your student may need to be informed of the fact that some schools have Lesbian & Gay (LG) or Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) school clubs.**

**Please be open to helping your student gain more understanding about alternative lifestyles in the United States.**

### ***Dogs and Pets***

In Muslim communities, dog saliva is considered unclean, as per the teachings of Islam (see the Religion section for more information on page 26), and it is very uncommon to keep dogs as pets. Dogs may serve as watchdogs in homes or as aids to hunters or police. In any case, dogs are not treated as family members as is often the case in the United States.

# RELIGION

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Islam permeates every aspect of life in Pakistan. Most of the students coming to the United States have grown up with Islam encompassing everything they do. It is likely that your Pakistani student will want to follow his/her religious rituals as closely as possible while on exchange. The YES Cultural Tip Sheet on page 35 will provide a little more information about traditions of Islam.

## *Denominations*

As is the case with most religions, Islam has several denominations. Those represented by the populations of Pakistan are, for the most part, Shia, Sunni, or Ismaeli. The differences in cultural history and politics are multifaceted and may take some research to understand. However, your student will likely appreciate any effort you make to learn about his or her country's religious culture. See the Resources section on page 34 for useful references.

## *Discussing Islam*

General discussions about religion aren't typically a problem and students is usually happy to share knowledge about Islam. Be aware that religion might still be a sensitive topic. Questions that sound like criticism might make students uncomfortable, as criticism of Islam is forbidden by law in Pakistan.

## *Other Religions*

Pakistani students are taught to be tolerant of other religions, and the students may accept an invitation to observe religious services in order to learn about other religions. They will sit and observe but will not participate in the service. Be aware that proselytizing is not tolerated by the K-L YES Program on the part of either the student or the host family and may be grounds for program removal.

## *Prayer*

It is standard practice in Islam to offer prayers five times a day, for five to ten minutes each time. There are set times for prayer, but these times can be a little flexible. The students who follow this practice may need a space to pray that is undisturbed and away from any dogs. Determine a routine when your student arrives so that your student is not disturbed during prayer times.

Ablutions, or the practice of washing hands, feet, and face, is an essential step before prayer. This can be done in the bathroom, but it can result in wet floors (see bathroom section). Please note that the bathroom itself is not an appropriate place for prayer.



**Suggest that your student perform ablutions in the bathtub or shower to keep the floor dry.**



**We altered our dinner meal blessing to add "Allah" while still acknowledging Jesus in our blessing. We changed it to state "in Jesus and Allah's name" and this seemed to be acceptable to our student.**

**– U.S. Host Family**

## ***Halal Food***

One of the steepest points of adjustment for Pakistani students and their host families has been the issue of Islam's rules governing food. Because the majority of Pakistani students hosted in the United States are Muslim, this handbook contains details on dietary restrictions in the Food section on page 16.

## ***Muslim Holidays***

### **Ramadan**

Ramadan is the month in the Islamic calendar of fasting for Muslims. Those who fast do not eat or drink from sunrise to sunset. Students who fast will need food for the pre-sunrise meal (Sehri) that provides enough nutrition for the day. The fast breaking meal (Iftar) is usually after suppertime when Ramadan falls around the summer months. Students may not be able to eat meals with your family while observing Ramadan; they may sit with the family during mealtimes all the same. Simply putting a plate of food aside for the student to eat after sundown, and showing your student how to prepare his or her own pre-sunrise breakfasts is appropriate. However, as Ramadan is typically a community event and a time of joining together with family, eating alone after sundown and before dawn may feel lonely and is a time that homesickness is likely to be strong. Sitting with your student as they eat whenever possible may mean a lot to your student.

Furthermore, if there is a Muslim community in your area, your student may appreciate being connected with them in order to celebrate and learn about Islam in the United States. As there will likely be some special food items students will want for breaking the fast, connecting them with a local Muslim community could provide them with access to these things. Talk with the student about traditions and his or her needs during Ramadan.

People who are ill and women who are menstruating are permitted to abstain from fasting during the month of Ramadan.



**Consider trying to fast with your student for one day of Ramadan to experience the tradition firsthand.**

### **Eid-ul-Fitr**

The celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr concludes Ramadan and is one of two main festivals of Islam. The ceremony of Eid-ul-Fitr starts early in the morning with a prayer service at the mosque. If a mosque is nearby, your student may request to attend this service. Many students will want to celebrate the feast of Eid-ul-Fitr with their host family.



**Ask your student to help prepare some special meals to celebrate Eid-ul Fitr.**

### **Eid-ul-Adha**

40 days after Eid-ul-Fitr is the festival of Eid-ul-Adha, where an animal (goat, sheep, or cow) is ceremonially sacrificed. Like Eid-ul-Fitr, it starts early morning with a prayer service at the mosque. For this holiday, your student would likely appreciate a meat dish to celebrate. If Halal meat is available in your community, this is a time a splurge that would be especially appreciated.



## **Muharram**

During this time, Shia Muslims, which are a minority in Pakistan, mourn the death of Imam Hussein, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad, for the first 10 days of the lunar month of the new year.

## ***Non-Muslims***

Each year, there are a handful of non-Muslim exchange students from Pakistan. There are also small Christian, Sikh, Hindu, and Zoroastrian communities in Pakistan. Talk to your student to find out if they have traditions particular to their religion that they would like to share with you.

## ***Modesty Dress***

Islam contains tenants regarding dress for both men and women. For both Pakistani men and women, long pants and crew neck shirts satisfy typical modesty requirements. Some women may also wear long sleeves and skirts, and cover their hair with a “hijab” or scarf. Modesty comes into play most often with regard to Physical Education/Gym class in school. Changing in a locker room, even a same-sex locker room, may be uncomfortable for your student. Pakistani girls may choose to wear full-cover clothing in gym class, as well.

Talk to your student about how gym class works in your school, and discuss any special needs that arise with the school accordingly.

## ***Physical Contact***

Muslim men and women typically do not engage in physical contact with one another unless they are related by blood or married to one another other. This might include shaking hands, as well as hugging and kissing. Take your cues from your student and explain to them how people usually greet each other in your family and community. Advise them on an appropriate, polite way to decline physical contact.

## ***Dogs***

Islam states that the saliva of dogs is unclean; contact with dog saliva requires thorough cleansing, including a full bath before prayers. For this reason, your student may avoid contact with dogs. Furthermore, wild dogs run in packs and can be very dangerous in Pakistan. Dogs are generally not allowed in the house.

Many Pakistani exchange students are very uncomfortable with or afraid of dogs in the house for these reasons. Students might request that the dog not be permitted to enter their room so that their room will be “clean” for prayers. Typically, by the time the students prepare to return to their home country, they have adapted quite well to dogs and feel much more comfortable.



**Be sensitive to religious differences especially concerning food (pork products) and dogs. We have two dogs and we needed to keep them away from the dinner table during meals and tried to keep them away from our student's bedroom.**

**– U.S. Host Family**



**If you have a dog and your student is uncomfortable with it, discuss ways of addressing the issue. Solutions in the past have included keeping the dog out of the student’s bedroom. Understand that your student may not pet your dog and may prefer, at least initially, not to be assigned chores associated to dog care.**

# EDUCATION

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The Pakistani education system differs significantly from that of the United States. Below are some key challenges that your student may face in her/his exchange year, however your Pakistani exchange student will likely adjust quickly with your help.

## ***Rote Learning versus Critical Thinking***

In Pakistani schools, students memorize everything from the textbook provided. They come to the exams with knowledge of what will be tested and regurgitate what they have memorized. This behavior is rewarded with high grades for students who can memorize the most information. As a direct consequence of the focus on rote memorization, there is little to no emphasis on critical thinking as is often expected in the United States. Similarly, class participation is not expected in Pakistani schools and student may not understand at first that participating in class counts toward the final grade in the United States.



**You can help your exchange student by encouraging them to get involved in discussions at school or at the dinner table for practice, and learn to form his/her own opinion.**

## ***Public Speaking***

Pakistani schools do not pay much attention to public speaking, speech making, debate, or presentation of facts and ideas. For that reason, some Pakistani students may have an uncommonly high fear of presenting in front of a classroom. However, the majority of the students who are selected for the exchange program are exceptional students and are quite confident in their public speaking abilities. They are also prepared in their pre-departure orientations to give presentations and speak about their country and culture.



**Ask your exchange student to present in front of you a day before they are to present elsewhere. This will help them overcome any fears they might have.**

## ***Extra-curricular activities***

Public schools in Pakistan do not provide extra-curricular activities for their students to participate in after school. Private schools do offer extra-curricular activities to a very limited degree and may have a drama club and some sports, but arts and music activities are virtually non-existent.



**Encourage your exchange student to join some after school activities or clubs. Also help your student to select electives and suggest that they take something that they will not have the opportunity to experience in their own country.**

Because these activities are uncommon in Pakistan, your student may not understand the expectation to attend meetings and follow through one he/she has made a commitment. It will help your student if you check in regularly about club attendance.



She was not used to "doing too much" besides going to school and coming home, so she didn't seem to understand that when she joined a "team" (athletic) that she was expected to attend each day.

– U.S. Host Family

## ***Plagiarism***

Citing references and keeping track of sources in academic work is not emphasized in Pakistan. Schools do not typically institute anti-plagiarism measures or educate students on the importance of producing original work. Student plagiarism often goes unnoticed because there are no repercussions for turning in work without references.

Also, due to the emphasis on memorization, there are no repercussions for copying work from other classmates. Students will likely need proactive guidance, especially in schools where these policies are strict.



**Talk to your exchange student about the consequences of plagiarism and copying work in U.S. schools.**

## ***After-school Help***

Pakistani schools are not structured to provide any extra help with homework for students. Teachers do not offer to help students during breaks or after school. Parents in Pakistan typically hire private tutors to help their children with their studies after school.

Identify a teacher or guidance counselor as a resource for additional help. The student may need to be told to approach a teacher to receive extra help.

# COMMUNICATION STYLES

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Communication is about much more than the language we speak. In this section, we will review communication styles and many non-verbal aspects of communication. It is worth noting here that most Pakistani youth begin learning English from a very young age and will probably have fairly solid language skills upon arrival.

## *Indirect vs. Direct Communication*

Pakistanis tend to be less than straightforward in their communication style than their U.S. counterparts and may seem to U.S. Americans to beat around the bush before getting to the point. Pakistani teenagers may seem shy by nature and introverted, especially at first. Your Pakistani exchange student will likely take some time to open up.

Even after opening up, your Pakistani exchange student may be hesitant to communicate his or her needs and wants directly, especially about personal or private issues. You and your family members may miss the indirect clues that would be instantly understandable to a Pakistani family.

**We found out the hard way that our student was very indirect with her communication style. She usually only told us what she thought we would want to hear and would often leave out anything that was negative. When asked about school daily, she always replied with a smile that school was great, when in fact she was doing very poorly in some of her classes.**

– U.S. Host Family



**In terms of non-verbal communication, we found that her true opinion was likely expressed non-verbally. She might be saying she loved something, but non-verbally signaling that she didn't. We just flat out said that U.S. Americans listen more to tone and words.**

– U.S. Host Family



**Actively reach out your student, especially fresh upon their arrival, to inquire about any problems. The exchange student might not feel comfortable directly expressing even basic needs such as physical illness or discomfort.**

## *Interacting with the Host Family*

Most Pakistanis enjoy close social relationships with family members and hold a completely different concept of personal space, alone time, and boundaries than we practice commonly in the United States. See the Concept of Space section on page 33 for details.

That said, your Pakistani exchange student might feel awkward seeing outward displays of affection between the host parents. In Pakistan, it is very uncommon, and considered borderline inappropriate, for husbands and wives to show physical affection toward each other in front of their children.



**Explain to your exchange student your family's style of showing affection. Find out what he or she is comfortable with and make sure to respect your student's personal boundaries.**

## ***Interacting with Non-Family Members***

In Pakistan, children and teenagers are not permitted to address adults by their first name. He or she may start referring to you or other adults he or she meets as “aunty” or “uncle” – a common way to address elders and neighbors in Pakistan, regardless of actual blood relation. He or she may also refer to older friends or siblings as “big brother” or “big sister,” again a common reference in Pakistan.



**You may need to discuss with your Pakistani exchange student how he or she should refer to new adults and children to whom he or she is introduced. Explain that certain people can be called by their first name and for some people it would be more appropriate to use last names with the use of a prefix like Mr. or Ms.**

Your Pakistani exchange student might hug, hold, or kiss little children from the neighborhood as a sign of affection. Understand that in Pakistan, local communities would typically be well acquainted with each other. Tell your student about “stranger danger” in the United States and that it would be considered inappropriate to hold or hug a child who does not already know them.

In Pakistan, it is common for two male friends or two female friends to hug, hold hands, and put their arms around each other in public. You might need to tell your exchange student that this kind of behavior is not common practice in the United States especially between male peers. Advise your student to observe the behavior between friends around them and emulate the norms that they are comfortable with.

## ***Please and Thank You***

Around the world, there are different ways to display gratitude. In the United States, we say please and thank you quite a bit more than many other cultures and often visitors are unsure of how we use these words that to us seem so intuitive. Take time to guide your student when it is appropriate to say please and thank you, and help them practice.

Your Pakistani exchange student might say “thank you” out of context sometimes just because he or she does not know the appropriate response to what he or she is being asked.

## ***Concept of Face***

The idea of “Saving Face” in Pakistan is little different from how we understand it in the United States, where we typically save face to prevent ourselves from being embarrassed by something. In Pakistan, the concept of “Face” is more of a commodity that can be held, lost, earned, or given. This is very common in collective societies where saving your own face may also be saving face for everyone in your family or community.



**Remember that the culture is primarily Eastern in orientation so saving face will be a priority in everything he/she does. This includes saving your face, too. It is a specific cultural point to teach that Americans value honesty more than saving face and that we are not very subtle.**

**– U.S. Host Family**

This kind of face saving might read as dishonesty in the United States as your Pakistani student might see it as more appropriate to “save face” rather than ask a clarifying question about instructions you give. In your student’s mind, this might be more respectful than implying that you did not do a good job

explaining or that they were not able to understand you. This is likely due to fear or disappointing you rather than a desire to deceive.



**Be prepared to explain what is considered dishonesty in your family and the consequences of “lying.” If you have teenagers yourself, it may be more effective to ask them to conduct this conversation as equals. This will likely be an ongoing teaching opportunity so be patient and try to understand that this is a major cultural difference.**

## ***Discipline***

Pakistani teenagers are likely used to living under fairly strict parental control and supervision. They would usually look to elders when making choices. It is a cultural norm for Pakistani kids to lower their gaze when scolded by an adult. Making eye contact with an adult while being disciplined is considered rude. This might seem disrespectful in the United States, so be prepared to explain that it is respectful to make eye contact when having a disciplinary conversation.

There are a number of important conversations regarding day-to-day life that it is important to have with your student before they become very serious issues. See Bathroom and Hygiene issues on page 14, and Food and Table Manners on page 18 for more information.

## ***Refusals***

In Pakistan, refusing an offer does not necessarily mean that the person will not eventually accept. For example, guests will often turn down food as a sign of respect unless the host insists that they eat. Your exchange student may say no if asked if he or she is hungry, even if they are actually starving, and it may take some insisting before they agree to a meal. This applies to offers in many different situations.

One example in the United States that displays a similar concept is when one person offers to cover a check after eating out, and the other person politely refuses, but expects that there might be a little back and forth argument before coming to an agreement.

# CONCEPT OF TIME

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It is important to be prepared to have a student that is used to a flexible view on time. Many Pakistanis are accustomed unstructured social time. Conversations are often open-scheduled and often take priority over other structured or planned activities. It is a cultural norm for “just a minute” to mean 15 to 20 minutes or more.

While U.S. Americans are often future-oriented, Pakistanis tend to live in the present. For example, it is quite normal for a Pakistani at a social gathering to encounter peer pressure to stay longer, even if s/he has another engagement or is running late. Moreover, if someone does not wait for others to arrive late, others may find this rude. You may find it the case that your Pakistani student expects to encounter some imploration to stay, or may be tardy because s/he remained at a prior engagement.

Culturally, tardiness can signify status in Pakistan. Often, high-ranking government officials will arrive late, while others with lesser status must show up on time and wait. Formal programs and ceremonies, like weddings, are commonly an hour or more late to start, while less important gatherings can be a minimum half hour delayed. Staying late with important guests or colleagues is a sign of respect and there is an understanding in Pakistan if someone arrives late, s/he must have been meeting with someone very important.



**My student could not be induced to walk faster, shower faster, get ready faster. Being on time was not a priority for her. Fortunately, it is not a big deal for me either. She had a bus driver though, and it was important to him and she did work really hard to not make him late once she saw that it did impact other people. We thought it was important that she respect his schedule.**

**– U.S. Host Family**

Pakistan’s infrastructure also contributes to the cultural sense of time. In many parts of Pakistan, it is not uncommon for frequent power failures to occur, so unexpected delays are common. Schedules are constantly changing, so written agendas, diaries, and personal schedules are not common.



**You may notice your Pakistani student deviating from plans or following a slightly different schedule than what has been agreed upon ahead of time. Encourage them to use these to get into the habit of being more punctual in the United States.**

You may notice your Pakistani student underutilizing an assignment notebook for class assignments, or relying on outside validation from parents or teachers to do their studies. Flexibility with time also pertains to class routines at school. Because teachers in many Pakistani schools switch classes while students remain in the same room, there is an understood short break between classes, which is not written into the formal schedule.



**Encourage a peer from your student’s school to explain the rules for tardiness at school and provide some tips for getting to class on time.**

The Pakistani version of a common idiom sums up this sentiment of focus on the present. Pakistanis often use, “Don’t cross a bridge until you come to it” in reference to time, activities, or chores.

# CONCEPT OF SPACE

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Thus far, we have discussed some of the issues related to concepts of space for Pakistanis. Some of this might seem conflicting at times. A key factor to understanding the Pakistani concept of space is to recognize that it is deeply rooted in gender norms.

## *Space at School*

Most schools in Pakistan are gender segregated in one way or another. Many schools have separate institutions for boys and girls. Others schools are co-ed schools, but may separate boys from girls on different sides of the classroom. A very small number of schools will intermingle seating arrangements but will still maintain sufficient spacing to prohibit touching.

If your Pakistani student is from an urban environment, there is an equal chance your student will come from a school that is either co-ed or segregated by sex. Pakistani students from rural areas will more likely have attended schools where boys and girls attend school in different buildings or sex-specific institutions.

## *Space in Public*

Pakistani culture tends to recognize a much smaller realm of personal space between members of the same sex than many Western cultures. When speaking to each other, Pakistanis will often stand much closer than Westerners do. Moreover, it is common for a Pakistani to place a hand on one's shoulder when engaging a member of the same sex in conversation. See Communication Styles on page 37 for more information.



**As a host parent, be prepared for your Pakistani student to have closer proximity with you than you are accustomed to, while at the same time being less comfortable with physical touching between sexes than you are accustomed to.**

**Talk to your student about adjusting their personal space for U.S. peers.**

## *Greetings*

Among males, a handshake is the most common greeting, however close friends of the same sex may embrace in a hug if they are meeting after a long time. Women may greet each other with a handshake, hug, or kiss. As a host parent, remember it might be inappropriate for a man to shake hands with or touch a woman who is not his close relative.



**Your Pakistani student may not be comfortable with the level of touching/greeting/hugging that is common between U.S. friends and family members of the opposite sex.**

## *Alone Time*

The concept of private space and alone time in Pakistan is very uncommon. Winding-down time, decompression your student may not understand as “down time,” is usually spent together with family. It is not uncommon in Pakistan for family members to share personal belongings, often even without asking. Siblings and close friends often share items like clothing, toys, CDs, and video games. Your exchange student should be reminded that even if s/he is part of the family for a year, permission must be requested before using the personal belongings of others.



## APPENDIX A – REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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CultureGrams

Indian HOW Book

iEarn Pakistan Handbook

YES Handbook (Islam and the Student Handbook)

Wikipedia: Pakistani Cuisine, Pakistan

Department of State Website: Pakistan

### **SIT Ebrary:**

<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/worldlearningsit/docDetail.action?docID=10389011>

### **Culture Grams:**

Syed. Interview. *CultureGrams Online Edition*. ProQuest, 2012. Web. 20 Nov 2012.

Ishrat. Interview. *CultureGrams Online Edition*. ProQuest, 2012. Web. 20 Nov 2012.

Ali. Interview. *CultureGrams Online Edition*. ProQuest, 2012. Web. 20 Nov 2012.

"Pakistan." *CultureGrams Online Edition*. ProQuest, 2013. Web. 20 Aug 2012.

### **Other Websites:**

*Islamic Republic of Pakistan*. University of West Florida, 2010. Web. 20 Nov. 2012.

"Pakistan - Language, Religion, Culture, Customs and Etiquette." Kwintessential, n.d. Web. 20 Nov. 2012.

## APPENDIX B – YES CULTURAL TIPS SHEET

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TOPIC	CULTURAL INFORMATION	POSSIBLE SUPPORT ISSUES	SUPPORT ADVICE
RELIGION	<p>Even though many YES students come from countries that have large or majority Muslim populations, there are other students who are Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, Jewish, etc. Some students are very devout and religiously observant while others are not practicing. (Please also refer to the <u>YES Cultural Handbook</u> on differences regarding religious practices and the following of religious rules which may differ greatly from country to country.)</p> <p>The month of Ramadan is a time during which many Muslims fast from sun up to sun set (no food or drink). This special month is based on a lunar calendar and therefore does not correspond exactly with the solar, Gregorian calendar.</p> <p>Prayer is an important aspect of the religious life of practicing Muslims, who will generally pray five times each day, at specific times, which are religiously-dictated.</p>	<p>Diet: Practicing Muslims are not allowed to eat pork or consume alcohol; Hindus do not eat beef; many Hindus are vegetarians. In many religions, meat has to be prepared in a certain way prescribed by the religion (Halal foods/ Kosher foods).</p> <p>Fasting during Ramadan for Muslims may mean that they do not participate in sports or feel left out during family meal times; swimming can be an issue; if participating in sports, not drinking water may be an issue</p> <p>While the prayers typically take no more than several minutes, finding a quiet and clean place for prayer can sometimes prove challenging, especially the noon prayer, which takes place during the school day.</p>	<p>Diet: Be mindful of dietary needs; discuss and look up ingredients in dishes; if a student does eat something forbidden, it is ok, but s/he may need to stop once the mistake is discovered. Some host families choose to avoid eating the type of food that is forbidden; some offer different kinds of foods so that their host son or daughter can avoid the forbidden foods, while enjoying many of the same dishes his or her host family does.</p> <p>Fasting is common in a number of religions in some form. Some families choose to participate in fasting with their students as a way of experiencing a new culture through hosting. Students may be excused from participating in sports during Ramadan.</p> <p>Praying does not have to be done in a mosque or temple; a private space can be provided; it is helpful to find out the direction Mecca is and not to disturb the student while praying. Many schools allow the students to use a corner of a room designated for “study hall” or a school counsellor’s office.</p>

TOPIC	CULTURAL INFORMATION	POSSIBLE SUPPORT ISSUES	SUPPORT ADVICE
	<p>Many religions require specific levels of modesty in dress or specific types of dress. In the case of Islam, there is a wide array of interpretation of “modest dress” but many observant Muslims feel that head covering for women is essential and many would include the covering of legs and arms for both men and women as essential elements of modesty in dress. Again, there is a widely varying interpretation among the religiously observant Muslims about what is required.</p> <p>In Islam, the saliva of dogs is to be avoided, as it is seen as unclean.</p>	<p>Ablutions: practice of religious cleansing (primarily of the face, hands, and feet) before prayer can result in wet floors.</p> <p>Some people not used to seeing women who cover their hair will find the practice uncomfortable. The head cover will not stop a student from participating in normal family and school life (with the exception maybe of joining a coed swimming team, in some cases). Some students who wear the head covering might feel somewhat rejected by their peers in their schools because the head covering is unusual to see in most U.S. high schools.</p> <p>Students may be afraid or reluctant to live with dogs. Many religiously observant students would strongly prefer not to touch dogs. Some may not realize themselves that the prohibition is actually against the saliva of the dog and would not necessarily preclude them from walking the dog for example. However, it is the case that the religious root of the aversion to dogs is also compounded by the very practical consideration in many countries from which the YES students hail: that a great number of dogs are dangerous because they are generally used as guard dogs or are strays prone to biting.</p>	<p>Since wet floors in a bathroom may be seen as quite OK in the context many students come from, explaining the expectations regarding dry floors and using towels to soak up any water left on the floor may help students to meet expectations in the host family’s home. Stepping inside the bathtub, rather than using the sink for the ablutions, can help a lot.</p> <p>Students who use head covering make the decision to wear a veil on their own and will not view it as subservient (as is often interpreted in the West). They see the head covering as an essential element of their religious observance and are not embarrassed by it. A frank and open conversation about your student’s religion and the role the head covering plays in religious observance can help to demystify the head covering and even lead to some good discussions about what “modest” dress may mean to different communities.</p> <p>Keep the dog out of the student’s room and don’t expect the student to pet the dog; this does not mean the student cannot live with a dog; many students come to like their host family’s dog and overcome that fear.</p>

TOPIC	CULTURAL INFORMATION	POSSIBLE SUPPORT ISSUES	SUPPORT ADVICE
		Going to church or mosques participating in host family's religious services.	Students can participate in religious services of host family; there is nothing wrong with attending a different religious service; however, host families should not force a student to attend church if they feel uncomfortable doing so.
<b>SOCIAL LIFE AND GENDER ROLES</b>	Many students come from more hierarchical societies where respect of elders is stressed and fathers may be dominant. They may also be used to segregation of males and females. These societies stress dependence on others and doing many things as a group, not as individuals. People are very socially minded and often have social gatherings. Relationships are extremely important and saving face is a major concern. People can be very spontaneous and live in the here and now.	Students may not be used to being independent and doing things on their own. Female dominance may be difficult for them. Touching between members of the opposite sex may be considered inappropriate whereas touching between same sex friends may not be an issue. Public appearances can be extremely important and there is a difference in public vs. private behaviours. Strong reliance on friends and families may result in what could be considered excessive communication with family and friends. Spontaneity can be interpreted as lack of planning or not being on schedule.	Understanding of these differences as well as an explanation of these differences are the first step to addressing them. Modelling by elders or advice from friends could be very helpful. Giving students time to adjust and being mindful of differences in touching and space differences is helpful. Knowing that reliance on friends and family is very important and gaining trust is a prerequisite for building a relationship. It is important to know that relationship building may be slower than in the United States. It is based on helping each other and sharing secrets, not on doing activities together. By helping someone and doing things for them, you show that you care for them.
<b>COMMUNICATION STYLES</b>	Students are generally used to more indirect communication styles. That means they will not directly state what they think but will expect the listener to decipher the message and to find out what they really mean. Students rely on the context and on non-verbal indicators to convey a message. It is also important to tell the listener what they think the listener wants to hear and not to offend people, especially people in higher positions, so they can save face. It is also polite to refuse things that are offered (food, for example) with the expectation that it will need to be	The indirect way of communicating and not directly stating what they really need, think, or want can lead to many misunderstandings, from confusion to a perception that the student is "lying" or "manipulative." For example, students will find it more acceptable to give vague answers or make excuses instead of saying "no." They will also avoid direct confrontation at all cost and prefer to work through third parties who can mediate for them. Another tendency may be to exaggerate things, for several people to talk at the same time, or to get very loud and excited when they feel strongly about something (some Arab cultures). Other cultures may be very quiet	Know that what students say may not be what they really mean. It takes time to get to know the student and to build a trusting relationship. If the student thinks that you do not care for him or her by doing things for them, they may shut down and not be willing to do anything. They will say yes but have no intention of doing things because that is what they think you want to hear.  Silence may not mean that they agree; in fact it may mean that they should not object and shows that they do not agree (again, being respectful). Open ended questions such as "why did you do this?" are not productive; instead, closed statements followed by some silence may be better in getting students to

TOPIC	CULTURAL INFORMATION	POSSIBLE SUPPORT ISSUES	SUPPORT ADVICE
	<p>offered several times before they can accept. Likewise, when told “no”, they may argue/ask repeatedly after being told “no,” since this is what they think will bring the expected result. Repetition is very acceptable.</p>	<p>(Asians, for example); for them it is important to be modest and respectful; this could be shown by not looking people directly in the eye and by speaking in a very low and soft voice.</p>	<p>open up (for example, “this must have been very difficult for you,” showing the student that you feel for them, understand them, and want to help them. When the need for confrontation arises, know that this makes them very uncomfortable and the use of a third party (perhaps a teacher or religious leader) may be helpful. It helps to use stories or accounts of personal or other people’s experiences to get a point across (these could be fictitious, too) without mentioning people by name to avoid embarrassment.</p>
<b>HOUSEHOLD RULES AND FAMILY LIFE</b>	<p>Many students could be used to male dominance in their families. It could be that they did not have a lot of independence (may be more the case for females than males) and had a lot of very direct guidance from their parents. They may not be used to the concept of getting an allowance and may have no practice in spending money, either not wanting to spend any or spending too much. Household chores may not be something they are used to, especially males. Objects or personal things may be considered as belonging not to one individual, but to everyone in the family because it is one unit.</p>	<p>Families may find the students passive or needing too much guidance, direction, and/or attention. They may be perceived as lazy if they have to be constantly reminded to pick up after themselves or keep things clean. They could also be seen as immature. Some males may not be following instructions from females or feel uncomfortable in a female dominated household. Some communication practices may be perceived as “badgering”, not listening, or not following instructions. Using other people’s property could be an issue (stealing vs. sharing). Students could be expecting to be treated as guests at the beginning.</p>	<p>It may be advisable to enlist the help of a same sex person in advising the students. Doing things as a family and spending time together would be a good idea, as well, giving a lot of direction and guidance at the beginning and slowly making changes. Taking the student to other families where behaviour patterns can be observed is also helpful. Of course, another good way to experience different family styles is by spending time with friends and their families.</p>

TOPIC	CULTURAL INFORMATION	POSSIBLE SUPPORT ISSUES	SUPPORT ADVICE
<b>TIME AND SPACE</b>	<p>Time is not as scheduled and more fluid in most of the YES countries. It is not as important to be on time. It may also not be common to plan things that will happen in the future.</p> <p>Personal space may not be as important and people may stand a lot closer during conversations.</p>	<p>Some students may be late or oversleep. They may want to stay up late. They may not be on time at school or for certain events the family is planning. They may change their minds on whether or not they would like to do something or not openly state what they would like to do.</p> <p>Being physically close may make some people uncomfortable.</p>	<p>Students may need some time to adjust to a very time-oriented U.S. culture where it is important to schedule events ahead of time and to be on time. They may need some additional help in getting up or getting ready for events.</p> <p>You will need to offer an explanation on space differences and how people feel about it in different countries.</p>
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<p>School and studying may vary also. In some countries, there is a lot of homework and students are expected to work on their own when at home. In some other countries, studying may be done at school and not at home. There may be more group activities or very little discussion. Testing is different (multiple choice and open book tests may be uncommon). Writing styles, learning styles, and teacher/student interaction are most likely completely different.</p>	<p>Students may have a difficult time adjusting to school and different expectations from teachers and host families. Students who do little homework or little independent work after school in their own countries may be struggling in school. Due to the idea of saving face and indirect communication styles, they may state they have done their homework and school is going well when, in fact, it is not. Teachers who have not had experiences with people from other cultures could be misinterpreting behaviours and ways of approaching homework and classroom interaction. In Asian cultures it is not expected to criticize or disagree with what the teacher is saying; they may be very quiet in class. In other countries, the classroom may be very loud and students work a lot in groups.</p>	<p>It is definitely a good idea to contact the school and the teachers early and get progress reports. It may be a good idea to monitor homework and to provide help (or enlist help), especially in the beginning. Get grade reports early and do not assume that the student's reports on school work are accurate. Get the teachers' email addresses and check on progress regularly before there are any issues. Conversely, if a student studies all the time, encourage them to go out and spend time with friends. Working with friends on school work is also a good idea instead of not doing any homework. It is ok to help each other out but not to do the work for them or to copy from others. Certain subjects in school such as U.S. history or literature may need to be taken later on in the school year. After hour school clubs could help in making friends at the school and enlisting help with homework.</p> <p>Any issues regarding school should be reported to the volunteers early on so help can be set up before there are any problems.</p>

## **APPENDIX C – YES PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

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Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study (YES) Program was established in October, 2002 after a general recognition that public diplomacy efforts had been neglected in many countries around the world for many years. The effects of this neglect came into stark focus in the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001. The Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau of the U.S. Department of State (ECA), along with the U.S. exchange community, recognized the importance of youth exchange as a key component of renewed commitment to building bridges between citizens of the United States and countries around the world, particularly those with significant Muslim populations.

The ECA joined forces with like-minded, U.S. high school exchange organizations including AFS-USA, the Program of Academic Exchange (PAX), American Institute for Foreign Study (AIFS) Foundation's Academic Year Abroad (AYA), ACES (American Cultural Exchange Service) and CIEE; as well as Mobility International. Sponsored by ECA, this group worked together with Partner organizations in several countries, including Egypt, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, and Turkey to provide scholarships for high school students (15-17 years) from countries with significant Muslim populations to spend up to one academic year in the United States.

### ***YES Selection Process***

Students who participate in the YES Program are selected in an open, merit-based competition and reflect a wide range of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds within their own countries. Pakistani YES participants undergo a very rigorous selection process and come from all over Pakistan. Students who are accepted are provided a full scholarship to study in the United States. The YES Program also welcomes students with disabilities and works with a U.S. organization, Mobility International, to help support students on-program.

## APPENDIX D – PAKISTANI ENGLISH

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In Pakistan, British English is taught in schools. This can account for some of the linguistic differences between Pakistani English and American English. Some of the major language differences are outlined below. This is not an exhaustive list, so do not expect to entirely avoid misunderstandings. Sometimes those can be fun conversations!

### **Pakistani English** vs U.S. American English

**anti-clockwise** vs counter-clockwise

**biscuit** vs cookie

**bonnet** vs hood of the car

**boot** vs trunk of the car

**car park** vs parking lot

**chemist's shop** vs drugstore, pharmacy

**chips** vs fries, French fries

**cloth** vs napkin

**college** vs high school

**crisps** vs potato chips

**D** vs protractor

**drawing-pin, holding pin** vs thumbtack

**dummy** vs pacifier

**dustbin** vs trash can

**flat** vs apartment

**football** vs soccer

**holiday** vs vacation

**juggernaut** vs 18-wheeler

### **Pakistani English** vs U.S. American English

**lift** vs elevator

**lorry** vs truck, semi

**mad** vs crazy

**nappy** vs diaper

**naughts and crosses** vs tic-tac-toe

**petrol** vs gas, gasoline

**The Plough** vs Big Dipper

**post** vs mail

**toilet/washroom** vs rest room, bathroom

**return (ticket)** vs round-trip

**rubber** vs eraser

**smart** vs well dressed, well put-together

**scale** vs ruler

**spanner** vs wrench

**timetable** vs schedule

**torch** vs flashlight

**underground (train)** vs subway, metro



## APPENDIX E – FOOD & RECIPES

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### *Meals in Pakistan*

A typical Pakistani **breakfast**, locally called *nāshṭā*, consists of eggs (boiled/scrambled/fried/omelets), a slice of loaf bread or roti, parathas, sheermal with tea (mangoes, apples, melons, bananas, etc.), milk, honey, butter, jam.

Sometimes breakfast includes baked goods like bakarkhani and rusks. During holidays and weekends, halwa poori and chick peas are sometimes eaten.



**Pakistani breakfasts are generally leftovers from the night before wrapped in something like a tortilla. Whole-wheat tortillas were identified as a good substitute.**

– U.S. Host Family

**Lunch** for children in Pakistan consists of meat curries or lentils along with rice. Breads such as roti/naan are usually served for dinners and lunches. Rice is also popular as a lunch or dinner meal. Popular lunch dishes may include aloo gosht (meat and potato curry) or any vegetable with mutton. Chicken dishes like chicken karahi and chicken korma are also popular. Alternatively, roadside food stalls often sell just lentils and tandoori roti, or masala stews with chapatis. People who live near the main rivers also eat fish for lunch, which is sometimes cooked in the tandoori style.

**Dinner** is considered the main meal of the day as the whole family gathers for the occasion. Lentils are also a dinnertime staple. These are served with roti or naan along with yoghurt, pickles, and salad. The dinner may sometimes be followed by fresh fruit, and on special occasions, traditional desserts like kheer, gulab jamun, shahi tukray, gajraila, qulfi, or ras malai.



**Vanilla extract contains traces of alcohol, meaning that cookies, ice cream, and other sweets are tainted. Vanilla powder, with no alcohol, is available at ethnic grocery stores. Some mouthwash has alcohol. I even accidentally bought toothpaste with alcohol! We started the year buying Halal chicken, which is available nearby and in restaurants due to many immigrants in the inner city, but an Islamic friend in the suburbs received a dispensation to eat non-halal chicken because of the difficulty in obtaining it, so our Pakistani student felt it was okay to order non-halal Chicken McNuggets because he loves the idea of fast food.**

– U.S. Host Family

### *Recipes*

#### **PULLAO (RICE)**

##### **Ingredients:**

- 1 cup basmati rice (or any other white rice)
- 5 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 1 long cinnamon stick
- ½ cup of chickpeas or lentils (if lentils, soak for 15 minutes), may also substitute green peas (frozen) or potatoes (chopped)
- 5 cloves
- 1/4 tsp. cumin seeds
- 1 tsp. salt
- 5 Tbsp. olive or canola oil
- 1 cup water

##### **Instructions:**

1. Soak rice for 15 minutes
2. Lightly brown garlic in oil
3. Add the salt, chick peas/potatoes/lentils/green peas
4. Drain rice and add to the mix
5. Add the water
6. Simmer on medium-low heat for 25 minutes

## CHICKEN CURRY

### Ingredients:

- 1 whole chicken, cut into small pieces
- 1 can of diced tomatoes (or 3-4 fresh tomatoes, diced)
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. red pepper
- ½ tsp. turmeric
- 1 long cinnamon stick
- 7 cloves
- ¼ tsp. cumin powder
- 9 cloves garlic, crushed
- ½ cup olive or canola oil

### Instructions:

1. Lightly brown the garlic in oil
  2. Add chicken and tomatoes
  3. Add all the spices
  4. Stir all the ingredients for 10 minutes, adding a little water
  5. Add yogurt and stir
  6. Simmer for 1 hour on medium-low heat
  7. Add some more water until you achieve desired thickness
- 

## RICE WITH RAISINS AND ALMONDS

### Ingredients:

- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 1/3 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 cup uncooked rice (white, or rice pilaf, or basmati)
- 1/3 cup diced carrots
- 1/3 cup peas
- 2 Tbsp. raisins
- 1 ½ cups chicken broth
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 2 cardamom pods
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds (or pine nuts or cashews)

### Instructions:

1. Melt butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat
  2. Sauté onion, stirring until tender
  3. Stir in the rice, raisins, carrots, peas, broth, salt, pepper, coriander, and cardamom
  4. Reduce heat to low, cover
  5. Simmer 15-20 minutes or until rice is cooked
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## CHANA MASALA (CHICKPEAS IN SAUCE)

### Ingredients:

- 1 can of chick peas
- 1 can diced tomatoes (3 – 4 fresh tomatoes)
- 3 Tbsp. plain yogurt
- 1 cup water
- 1/4 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. red pepper
- 3 cloves of garlic, crushed
- ½ cup of olive or canola oil

### Instructions:

1. Lightly brown the garlic in oil
2. Add the can of chick peas and all spices
3. Add tomatoes and let it simmer for 10 minutes
4. Stir in yogurt
5. Add water and simmer for 15 minutes on medium-low