

## What you need to know about inviting an Au Pair to live as part of your family.....

### The Detail.....

#### Who does what?

**Your family will need to.....** write a letter of invitation to your Au Pair. This will be forwarded to him/her by the Agency together with a photograph of your family. You should also inform your home insurance company that an Au Pair will be living with you and working for you. Upon his/her arrival host families are requested to allow the Au Pair to telephone home to speak with his/her family and let them know he/she has arrived safely. Your Au Pair should be given his/her own bedroom with study facilities, full board and be paid weekly pocket money. Your Au Pair will appreciate having the opportunity to practice his/her languages in a family setting. They should be invited to join you for meals and not excluded from the family when they are not working. It is important you treat your Au Pair as if he/she is a member of your family. Treating your au pair in this way will help prevent him/her becoming homesick. Most Au Pairs require the opportunity to attend a language school and require 5 consecutive hours of free time each day to study. They should be allowed time to attend religious services if they so wish.

#### Who pays for your Au Pair's travel/flights?

Au Pairs usually pay for their travel/flights to and from the United Kingdom. However most host families give extra pocket money at Christmas, and sometimes at other times of year, to assist towards the cost of their Au Pairs travel/flights for a home visit. When your Au Pair first arrives in England, we recommend you reimburse him/her for any costs incurred for their journey from the airport to your family home.

**Your Au Pairs arrival.....** You will be given details of your Au Pairs travel arrangements by either the Agency or your Au Pair. Please make arrangements to collect your Au Pair from the airport, port, coach terminal or mainline train station. We do not allow our Au Pairs to travel alone on London Underground when first arriving in England with all their luggage. If you are unable to meet your Au Pair yourself, please pay for a taxi or minicab to go and collect them. Childcare Unlimited can provide reliable and friendly drivers, who will collect your Au Pair from the airport, port, coach terminal or mainline train station and drive them safely to your home. We will gladly quote prices for this service, upon request. Prices vary according to point of arrival and your home location. All areas can be covered.

**Your Au Pair's weekly timetable.....** We suggest you provide your Au Pair with a weekly timetable. An Au Pair generally works 25 hours a week (maximum of 5 hours a day). In addition they may be asked to babysit 2 nights a week as part of their working arrangements. Please give as much notice as possible when babysitting does not occur on a regular evening. An EU Au Pair must have at least one full day free per week that includes the evening. (Non EU Au Pairs should have weekends free). Public and Bank Holidays should be free whenever possible.

#### How much pocket money should you give your Au Pair?

We recommend you pay your Au Pair £70 per week minimum pocket money. Au Pairs who can only work a maximum of 25 hours a week, with W/E's free, may be given additional responsibilities such as driving your children to school or to other activities. We suggest you take this into account when deciding how much pocket money you think you should pay. Au Pairs who work more than 25 hours a week (i.e. an Au Pair plus) should be paid a minimum of £2.80 per extra hour worked.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

We are unable to place Au Pairs with families who would allow an Au Pair sole charge of an infant under 2 years of age. We believe this could be dangerous for a child as Au Pairs are not trained to look after babies, nor are they trained to notice signs of the onset of a serious illness.

Few children under two are able to explain an ailment to their parents let alone to someone who is not fluent in English!

**Your Au Pair will ....** help you care for your children. He/she will be prepared to watch over, play with and care for your children giving them meals, taking them to and from play groups, schools and other activities. Your Au Pair will also help with light housework such as cleaning, dusting, vacuuming, washing up, tidying and some ironing. They must not be asked to do heavy chores. Please explain how your home equipment works! We recommend you write some information down for example does your steam iron require tap or boiled water? Is your cooker fan assisted so cooks/burns much quicker? How do you replace the Hoover bags and where do you keep all the attachments? How do you like the dishwasher to be loaded and which programme do you use? Likewise the washing machine! Then the one that always gets me..... how on earth do you get the Microwave oven to work?

### **What nationality could our Au Pair be?**

Britain only accepts Au Pairs from a limited range of countries.

**European Economic Area (EEA) member countries**, whose citizens are permitted to live and take employment in the U.K. without needing a visa or work permit, are Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and of course the United Kingdom. It is acceptable for individuals from countries where National Identity cards are issued, to produce their ID card at the U.K. passport control instead of producing a passport.

Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are not members of the European Union (EU). However, the EEA Agreement gives nationals of these countries the same rights to enter, live and work in the United Kingdom as EU citizens. From the 1 June 2002, Swiss nationals have had the same rights as EEA nationals within the United Kingdom. They can work without a work permit.

Au Pairs from **Non-EC Countries** are covered by Home Office regulations. They are only allowed to work 25 hours a week with two full days free. They are not allowed to stay in England for more than two years. This includes Au Pairs from Andorra, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Republic of Croatia, The Faroe Islands, Greenland, Macedonia, Monaco, Romania, San Marino, and Turkey.

**Please Note:** Nationals of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Republic of Croatia, Macedonia, Romania and Turkey must get a visa from their British Embassy or Consulate before they travel to the United Kingdom. Other Non-EU nationals obtain their visa at immigration on entry to the United Kingdom.

**IMPORTANT: Some Non-EU Nationals are required to register with the police on arrival, this will be stamped on their passport. If requested to do so he/she must register within 7 days of arrival.**

**Language Courses.....** Your local library holds information on private and state schools and colleges that run EFL (English as a foreign language) courses. Before your Au Pair arrives please find out about courses in your area. Your Au Pair is responsible for paying his/her course fees however if you live in a rural area and travel to and from college is likely to be expensive, a contribution towards his/her travel expenses is recommended.

**Driving your car.....** Some Au Pairs have international driving licences so are allowed to drive in the U.K. If you need your Au Pair to drive your car, please remind them of this when talking to them on the telephone. Make sure you ask them to bring their international licence. It is your responsibility to ask to see this before letting your Au Pair behind the wheel of your car.

Please remember he/she may not have driven on the left hand side of the road before. We have copies of the Highway Code available to lend to your Au Pair and we suggest you go through this with him/her. We would also recommend you arrange some driving lessons for your

### **Driving your car..... cont.**

Au Pair or at least take him/her out in your car a few times so they can become familiar with your vehicle, roads around your home, routes you require them to drive and English motorists!

Please ensure your car is covered by fully comprehensive insurance and that your Au Pair is a named driver on the policy. If, in the event of an accident, your Au Pair is liable for an excess payment on your insurance policy please make sure he/she has been notified of this, in writing, prior to driving your car. In the majority of circumstances we would expect the family to pay any excess payable and to pay for damages caused in the event of an accident.

You are required to pay for petrol when the car is used by your Au Pair in connection with his/her duties. The Au Pair should pay for petrol when the car is used for his/her personal use.

**Telephone calls and bills.....** We recommend you arrange for itemised telephone bills. It will also help if you inform your Au Pair of the cost, per minute, of calls made from your home telephone. Let him/her know the cost of long distance/international telephone calls to landlines, long distance/international calls to mobile phones, local calls in the U.K. and calls made to mobile phones in the U.K.

The telephone bill can easily become an issue if guidelines are not made clear at the outset. Perhaps setting a maximum, per week, for a telephone allowance may help. Explaining that all calls made by the Au Pair, in excess of this weekly budget, are to be paid for by him/her.

Alternatively phone cards are available from The Post Office and most newsagents. These are pre-paid cards, costing £5, £10 or £20 that allow individuals to make cheap rate calls from any telephone without the cost of the call going onto the telephone bill. N.B. Some cards may result in a small charge being added to your telephone bill so it would be advisable to assist your Au Pair in researching the different cards currently available.

Please tell your Au Pair the earliest and latest times of day that your family is happy to receive telephone calls from his/her family and friends.

**Entertaining.....** We suggest you make your feelings known to your Au Pair with regard to him/her inviting friends to your home. Where can he/she entertain with some privacy? How late are you happy for your Au Pair's visitors to stay? Can a girlfriend/boyfriend stay the night? Do you feel it necessary to impose a weekday curfew?

**Holidays.....** Most Au Pairs appreciate the chance to go home for Christmas and for Summer Holidays. If your Au Pair has been with your family for more than 4 months, or 6 months if you choose to follow the International Au Pair Association guideline, we recommend one week of paid holiday time be offered to your Au Pair. A second week should be offered when he/she has been with your family for 12 months. Please make it clear to your Au Pair at the outset, how long they will be required to work before they will be entitled to a weeks paid holiday.

If your family are going away and do not wish to take your Au Pair away with you, he/she must be allowed to continue to reside in your home with adequate food and general facilities such as heating, lighting etc. maintained. You will still be required to pay your Au Pair whilst you and your family are away. You should not take your holiday time as your Au Pairs chosen week/s of paid holiday unless this is agreed by you both. Likewise should you decide to take your Au Pair away with your family this will be considered work time and his/her weekly pocket money should continue to be paid as usual.

**Medical Cover.....** Most Au Pairs can be treated under the NHS thanks to a reciprocal medical agreement with EU member countries. You should register your Au Pair with your doctor as soon as possible. Although most Au Pairs are eligible for NHS treatment, some GP surgeries may make a small charge. All Au Pairs should take out adequate medical insurance to cover any non-

**Medical Cover..... cont.**

emergency hospital treatment in the United Kingdom. All Au Pairs are subject to prescription charges.

**The Dreaded Dentist.....** Unless covered by their medical insurance, or NHS emergency treatment, your Au Pair will have to pay for his/her dental treatments.

**Medicines.....** We would request that you do not ask your Au Pair to administer medicines to your children unless absolutely necessary. In such cases please ensure you leave him/her written instructions clearly stating which child needs the medication, the name of the medicine, when it is to be given and the amount to be given. Do not write "two spoonfuls from the brown bottle in the fridge"! We can supply sample forms.

**Contact Numbers.....** Always leave contact numbers with your Au Pair when you are leaving him/her in sole charge of your children. Wherever possible include a mobile number.

**Notice period.....** We recommended that a minimum of 2 weeks notice be given by either party should one or other wish to terminate the arrangement. Only in exceptional circumstances should pocket money be given in lieu of notice.

**Problems and disagreements....** Sometimes a misunderstanding that is not clarified early on can result in problems and disagreements. If you feel you have a communication problem with your Au Pair don't just put up with it as one of those things. Please do not hesitate to call us. If necessary we will ask one of our translators to put your comments to your Au Pair, verbally or in writing, in his/her mother tongue thus eliminating the root of a possible problem!

**We hope the above information.....** proves to be of assistance to you. We believe that if you follow our suggestions they will help you and your Au Pair lay the foundations for a very happy relationship now and in the months ahead.

## **AU PAIR PLUS**

Au Pairs from EEA member countries are permitted to work more hours and/or days than those from Non-EC Countries. They are called an Au Pair Plus. Additional pocket money should be given for the additional hours worked. We recommend a minimum of £2.80 per extra hour worked. Hours in excess of a Non-EC Country Au Pair's 25 hour week, should only be for assisting with childcare duties.