

AuPairCare

The Pre-Departure Project is a **mandatory** part of au pair training. Every au pair must complete a Pre-Departure Project before leaving his/her home country. Please follow these guidelines when completing your project:

- Please print or write your name clearly on your project.
- Please complete your project in English.
- Your project counts for **8 hours** of mandatory training. Please spend at least this amount of time completing your project.

NOTE: Your project will be collected, reviewed and returned to you at the Academy.

Project Purpose and Format:

The purpose of the Pre-Departure Project is for you to learn more about how you can share your culture as well as your childcare knowledge and experience with your Host Family. You will give your project to your Host Family as a gift when you arrive in their home.

Please use the format below when completing your project. We encourage you to be creative and unique; however, all sections below are required in order for your project to be marked as complete. You may refer to the "Project Example" in Au Pair Room.

Section 1: My American Family and Region

Now that you have matched with your new American family, you will want to get to know them! This section is dedicated to your family's names, ages, professions, and interests, as well as your new local area. In order to complete this section, you should ask your host family questions about themselves to gather information. You can also research the city where you live and include interesting facts about the area and culture. You should include photos of your new family and region to make this section interesting and fun!

Section 2: Developmental Milestones

Research the physical, mental and social developmental milestones related to children of all ages. You may categorize the ages like this: 0-12 months, 1-3 years, 4-6 years, 7-9 years, 10+ years. Use your childcare experience, as well as research, to help you complete this section.

Section 3: Simple Crafts and Snacks

Describe simple crafts used to entertain children and healthy snacks or treats, especially those associated with holidays or special events in the United States and in your country. These can be arts & crafts activities involving paints, paper, glue or even items found in the house like macaroni or yarn. You may want to bring samples of these crafts to show to your new family.

Section 4: Storytelling, Singing and Games

List some of your favorite fairytales or folk tales you will share with your children. List lullabies or special songs used to soothe children when they are sleepy or upset. You may want to bring storybooks or songbooks from your home country to give to your children. List games and activities you can play with your children. Explain the rules and supplies needed to play the games. Explain why you think these stories, songs and games are helpful for their development.

Section 5: Motor Skills (Fine and Gross)

Fine motor skills are those that involve small movements, such as holding a spoon or pencil. Gross motor skills are those involving the entire body, such as jumping or throwing. Describe activities that encourage both fine motor skills and gross motor skills.

Section 6: Make Believe and Imitation

Children have great imaginations and love to pretend! List activities involving play-acting and imitating others. List things to be aware of regarding make believe and imitation (dangerous stunts on TV or in movies). With older children, you may want to research how these make-believe characters or celebrities are influencing them in their daily lives. Which stars or characters have an effect on your children and how can you monitor their exposure to this?

Section 7: Sharing and Cooperation

Activities and games encouraging social development are important to a child's growth. Describe some games that involve socialization, are age appropriate and could possibly be played by the entire family, such as Charades. List some possible responsibilities that can be given to the children to encourage family participation and cooperation, such as setting the table.

Section 8: Language Development

Children love to play with words, no matter how old they are! Describe word games, such as guessing games and tongue twisters. Find and list children's books that are age appropriate and will help enhance your child's language development and reading comprehension abilities.

Section 9: You & Your Country's Holidays and Customs

Being an au pair means being part of a cultural exchange program. You are interested in learning about American holidays and customs and your host family is excited to learn about those from your country. Use this section as a way to introduce your host family to some of the traditional holidays, foods and celebrations you are accustomed to in your home country. Describe yourself and your family. Include photos to share with your host family.

Section 10: Questions for my Host Family

Create a list of questions you will want to ask your Host Family during the first weekend you spend with them. These should include questions about the children, such as their likes/dislikes, needs, interests, routine and how the family prefers the children to be disciplined. You may also ask about the house rules, the neighborhood, your schedule, etc.

Communication is a very important part of having a successful year as an au pair; therefore, starting this list of questions pre-departure and adding to it during your training will only help you get off to a good start as an au pair this year.

If you need help, please contact your local office for assistance. Thank you!