

CARING FOR CROSS CULTURAL PARTNERS

Before they leave

- Get to know them – invite them to your growth group or for a meal.
- Offer to help them pack up, or mind children so parents can pack.
- Ask them what contact they would appreciate while they are away.
- Go to their commissioning or sending out service.
- Get involved with their sending organisation as a commitment to their support.

While they are on location

- Support their work financially
- Stay in touch – write, email, call, Skype, or become their friend on Facebook. (check for *security restrictions*.)
- Share details of your own life with them – build a closer relationship.
- Remember birthdays, anniversaries and other important occasions.
- Find out what they miss in Australia and send a parcel (check with them first)

When they are home visiting supporters

- Fill their pantry before they arrive back with quality groceries and treats – offer to coordinate this with others.
- Offer to help them go shopping or cook a meal to put in the freezer.
- Offer to mind children or arrange play dates.
- Check that they have a mobile phone with credit.
- Invite them on outings where they're not “on the job”, e.g. a film or party.
- Offer to lend a car, a holiday house, DVDs, CDs (and a player), toys, school uniforms etc; also recommend or lend good recent books.
- Give a voucher for something special, e.g. a massage, movie or outing.
- Offer help with packing and cleaning when they leave.
- Pray for and with them during their stay, and before they return.

CARING FOR CROSS CULTURAL PARTNERS

When they are on final home assignment

- Be aware that Australia has changed since they lived here – permanent return may be the first time they have had to confront this. Even simple tasks that need no thought for you can be demanding for them.
- Renew or continue your relationship with them. Be available to listen well. Read material about “re-entry” so you can provide effective support.
- Help with information about services such as medical and insurance, telecommunications, tax, superannuation, the school system.
- Help them gather the things they need and move into their home.
- Vouchers for department stores, bookshops etc make good gifts.
- Pray for and with them regularly as they readjust.

GROWTH GROUPS CAN:

- Adopt a Cross-Cultural Partner (or family). Pray and care for them, and invite them to be part of your group when they’re home.
- Learn more about mission through Bible studies and using resources from your Partner’s sending organisation.
- Stay informed about the country where your Partner is serving.
- Organise a culture night with food, local customs and items that teach how local culture impacts on your Partner’s life and ministry.