

# English Acquisition:

**The best way the host family can help the guest student with English.**

Speak English at all times! Speak naturally.

**What if my student doesn't seem to understand a word I say in English?**

- 1) Say it again, in natural English but maybe a bit more clearly.
- 2) If that does not work speak slower with pause between words.
- 3) Use simplified vocabulary.
- 4) Write it down clearly with block style. Japanese students often can write and read much better than they can speak.
- 5) Give examples, using situations familiar to them.
- 6) Use non-verbal communication, gestures.
- 7) Ask questions to check comprehension. Don't say, "Do you understand?" For example, after discussing transportation plans say, "What time are we going to meet? Where? Are you going to call me? When?"
- 8) Draw pictures, diagrams.
- 9) Ask them to show you their schoolwork. Ask them to explain what they are doing in class. Offer to answer questions, and help them with homework.
- 10) Turn off the TV. Students may find it difficult to initiate a conversation if they see everybody engaged with the TV. Talking during TV watching (like your family might do) is probably too much for them.

**What if my student doesn't seem to want to talk at all?**

She/he may feel very ashamed to making mistakes by speaking English, or may be tired after a long day of studying. Going to their room to study is much easier than facing a conversation in a language they feel very uncomfortable in, even though they may really like you. Don't take this personally! Engage them:

- Use magazines. Show them pictures and ask their opinions.
- Get out the newspaper and point out headlines. Express your opinion. They may not say anything back, but they will be listening and learning.
- Show family pictures.

