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WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

- Preteen trips: Participants need to at least be 10-12 years old **or** entering the 5th grade in the fall of 2017.
- Junior/Senior High trips: Participants need to be at least 12 years old **or** entering the 7th grade in the fall of 2017.
- Senior High trips: Participants need to be at least 14 years old **or** entering the 9th grade in the fall of 2017.
- ▶ Because of liability reasons, under-aged participants will be sent home at their own expense (NO babies or small children). Only registered participants are permitted at the lodging facility and at project sites.
- ▶ 19 or 20 year olds are welcome to attend as participants! Remember that they do not count as adults if they are under 21. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT IS THE ADULT TO YOUTH RATIO? CAN EXTRA ADULTS GO?

1 adult (21 years of age or older) is required for every 5 youth (20 years of age and under). If both boys and girls are registered in your group, you must have at least one male adult and one female adult registered.

- ▶ If you have extra adults over your 1-to-5 ratio, they can be part of your group or, if staff positions are open at your location, they have the option of serving on staff without paying the registration fee. Information about staff positions can be found on GroupMissionTrips.com under About Us and Join Our Team. ([Back to list](#))

ARE BACKGROUND CHECKS REQUIRED?

- Group requires that all participants 18 years of age or older be screened and background checked by your church prior to attending.
- Background checks must be multi-state and no older than two (2) years from the start of the mission trip. You choose your background check organization vendor.
- 18-20 year olds are not considered “adults” during camp, however because of our commitment to safety, we still ask them to go through your church’s screening process and have background checks run.
- Group requires a pastor-signed Screening and Verification Form for each 18+ participant in order for them to attend the mission trip. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT’S THE SCHEDULE?

A “typical” day at a Group Week of Hope involves serving others, “God Sightings,” daily devotions, and interactive worship programs. Your schedule will look similar to this:

Check-in: Sunday between 3-4 p.m.

4:30 p.m. Adult Meeting

5 p.m. First program

5:30 p.m. Dinner

7 p.m. Evening Program, everyone will get to meet their project crews! (6:30 p.m. for Preteens)

8:30 p.m. Youth group devotions (8 p.m. for Preteens)

11 p.m. Lights-out (10 p.m. for Preteens)

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Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday

6:30 a.m. Breakfast crew begins

6:45 a.m. Rise and shine!

7:00 a.m. Breakfast, gather supplies and sack lunches

8:00 a.m. Morning program and then depart for project sites!

12:00 p.m. On-site lunch and devotions

3:30 p.m. Return to lodging for clean-up and free time (2:30 p.m. for Preteens)

5 p.m. Dinner crew begins (4:30 for Preteens)

5:30 p.m. Dinner (5 p.m. for Preteens)

6:30 p.m. Clean-up (6 p.m. for Preteens)

7:30 p.m. Evening program (7 p.m. for Preteens)

8:30 p.m. Youth group devotions (8 p.m. for Preteens)

11:00 p.m. Lights-out (10 p.m. for Preteens)

Jr/Sr High Tuesday:

Same schedule as the other days until 3 p.m.

3:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Youth groups have free time (dinner is on their own)

8 p.m. Lodging facility is back open

9 p.m. Games (optional)

11:00 p.m. Lights-out

Preteen Tuesday:

Same schedule as the other days until 12 p.m.

12:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Youth groups have free time (dinner is on their own)

8 p.m. Lodging facility is back open

9 p.m. Games (optional)

10:00 p.m. Lights-out

Check-out: Friday by 9:00 a.m.

WHAT TRANSPORTATION DO WE NEED TO PROVIDE?

- ▶ Groups must provide transportation to and from the mission trip as well as daily to and from the sites. (Mileage or fuel costs are not reimbursed for any transportation costs.)
- ▶ Vehicles with a minimum capacity of six passengers are requested, with seat belts.
- ▶ While adults will be driving their own vehicles, they typically will not be transporting a crew that includes their own youth members (except at Preteen camps). Typically, the youth from your group will be traveling in other vehicles with their crews. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT WILL WE BE DOING?

Be ready to tackle any project and expect to interact each day with local residents from the community.

Projects could include working with children at a day camp, serving at a food bank or homeless shelter, leading a Vacation Bible School, improving the homes of people in need, assisting the elderly, tutoring struggling kids, working with disabled children, facilitating a sports camp, and/or serving churches and other human service organizations in different ways. If there are any minor repair projects, we may ask your group to bring a few small hand tools and paint brushes. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT DO WE NEED TO BRING?

Supplies: Groups are asked to bring 1 5-gallon water jug and 1 family-size cooler on wheels for every 6 people in your group. All other supplies are typically provided, but small items may be requested if needed.

Personal Items: The full Packing List is located online for every registered group on their Group Page, under the Schedule, Menu, Packing tab. It's pretty much what you'd expect. A twin-size air mattress and bedding for sleeping, work gloves, modest swimsuits, and modest clothing appropriate for a Christian mission trip. ([Back to list](#))

WILL OUR GROUP BE WORKING TOGETHER?

Groups are typically placed into six-person crews for the work portion of each day. In most cases, this is one adult and five youth, each person from a different church. When groups allow us to intersperse participants into crews, individuals develop social and leadership skills, make new friends, and develop a closer bond with their own group. Please give us a call with any questions or special requests regarding work crews.

Groups are assigned together (in 6-person crews) at our Preteen camps due to age. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT ABOUT SAFETY?

Safety is a top priority!

- ▶ We require groups to bring 1 adult (21 or older) for every 5 participants that are under 21 years of age.
- ▶ We require participants that are 18 and older be screened and background-checked by their church. Their pastor signs off that they meet Group's requirements and that they are approved to attend.
- ▶ Every staff member has been screened, background-checked, and reference checked by Group.
- ▶ For overall protection, we have separate shower times designated for participants that are 17 and younger from those that are 18 and older.
- ▶ We review safety procedures at camp.
- ▶ Participants are not required to do any work that they consider unsafe. Participants may be using a drill for screws, but no one under the age of 16 can use a power tool or drill for drilling holes. No one under the age of 18 can use a power saw.
- ▶ Although we do serve in needy areas, we require work crews to stay together at all times. No one should ever be left alone and all participants are back at the lodging facility by their designated check in time.
- ▶ Group Staff visit work sites every day so they are aware of where a crew is working and any issues in the area.
- ▶ Every work crew has the direct phone number to the Group office and directions to the closest hospital. If an injury occurs on the project site, and is not serious, Group staff will contact the youth leader and coordinate any transportation needed. If the injury is serious, the adult on site will call 911 and Group staff will offer support and ensure needed medical forms are delivered to hospital. Each work crew will have a small first aid kit and a bigger one in each vehicle. ([Back to list](#))

WHERE DO WE STAY?

A Week of Hope can hold up to 100 participants and we house them all typically at a local church. Our staff transforms the facility into a home away from home—there will be a separate boy's hall and girl's hall, a space for meals, adequate bathrooms and showers, and a space for the programs.

Participants need to bring air mattresses, sleeping bags, pillows and other bedding to sleep on floors. Youth groups are assigned to sleeping rooms together, gender separate. Sleeping rooms may be shared with other youth groups, depending on the size of groups and the size of the room.

Registered groups can see more information about their lodging facility online on their Group Page under the General Lodging tab. Trip Leaders are given the lodging facility's address in their online Planning Center. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT WILL WE EAT? WHAT IF THERE ARE SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS?

Registered groups are given a sample menu online on their Group Page under the Schedule, Menu, Packing tab. Meals will consist of breakfasts, sack lunches, and hot dinners. All meals will be prepared by participants in a rotating basis supervised by staff. Picnic-style lunches will be assembled in the mornings and brought to work sites. The last meal will be breakfast on Friday morning. IMPORTANT NOTE: Dinner is NOT provided on Tuesday, youth groups have free time this day and dinner is on their own.

If you have a participant that has a special diet or allergy, share the sample menu with them so they can start planning. Please know that we do have peanut butter on the menu as an option and we are unable to guarantee that there will not be any cross-contamination during the preparation of the meals by staff and participants. Participants are more than welcome to bring their own food items to fill in as needed during the week. There will be a staff member available who will be able to answer and all questions about food. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT ARE THE PROGRAMS LIKE?

- ▶ Jesus-centered. Our goal is to point people to Jesus. Programs focus on Bible passages and daily themes that challenge us to respond to Jesus in ways we will never forget.
- ▶ Interactive. People learn better by doing. Participants will be involved in sharing, speaking, singing, acting, reflecting...**not just sitting and watching.**
- ▶ Relevant. Through creative multimedia, thought provoking sound and video, and moving contemporary worship, programs are designed to reach everyone.
- ▶ Fun. Relationship-building activities, games and having fun are part of every program. Expect to have a great time! ([Back to list](#))

WHEN ARE THE PAYMENT DATES?

After you register by paying \$50 per space, there are 2 payment dates for the remaining amount due:

- ▶ March 15th, 2017: Half of what is remaining is due.
- ▶ May 15th, 2017: The final half is due. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT IF I NEED TO CHANGE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE I HAVE REGISTERED?

Call us! If there's space available in your mission trip, we'll ask for necessary payment for each additional participant. If you have exhausted all efforts to re-fill spaces and just can't, call us to make cancellations. We'll adjust your balance accordingly. **If you cancel a space before May 15th, 2017 you'll just lose that \$50 deposit.** The entire fee is forfeited for cancellations made after May 15th, 2017. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT IF I NEED TO CANCEL MY ENTIRE GROUP?

Cancellations have a huge effect on the people we serve, it is devastating news to them when we have to cancel. Based on the number of registered participants, we plan for lodging, food orders, supplies and staffing—just for starters. Not to mention, that depending on the time of year, it is simply impossible for us to re-fill cancelled spaces.

We also recognize that unexpected events happen that can pull participants away from their original commitment. Please give us a call, we are happy to talk through ideas to recruit other participants and keeping your group intact.

If there is no other option but to cancel your group, keep in mind that registration fees, less the \$50 deposits per person, are refundable when you notify the Registration Team by May 15, 2017. The entire mission trip fee will be forfeited for cancellations after May 15th, 2017. ([Back to list](#))

IS THERE A DRESS CODE?

We do request modest clothing choices in our Code of Conduct. While Group Mission Trips doesn't have a formal dress code, we serve local organizations that do have specific requirements for volunteers. Don't be turned away from your assigned project due to inappropriate dress.

Pack plenty of t-shirts, longer shorts or pants, and tennis shoes. Also, please have your females bring a one-piece swimsuit in case they are assigned to a project site teaching a resident how to swim. Many of our partner organizations don't allow volunteers to wear shirts with spaghetti straps, shirts that reveal the midriff, short shorts or flip flops. And, of course, no clothing with offensive language or images. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT ARE HOSPITALITY TASKS?

- ▶ Hospitality tasks are opportunities for participants to serve each other during the mission trip week.
- ▶ Hospitality tasks include: cleaning the cafeteria, restrooms, shower areas, and other common areas. Trash will also need to be taken out. The lodging facility will NOT have the services of a custodian.
- ▶ Participants will prepare and serve breakfast and dinner. A staff member will oversee the meal preparation, cooking, serving, and cleanup of all meals. Everyone participates!
- ▶ Meal shifts are divided into teams that will help prepare, cook, serve, and clean. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE REGISTRATION FEE?

- ▶ Lodging during the camp.
- ▶ All meals, except for Tuesday dinner.
- ▶ Site selection and organization.
- ▶ Supplies and project materials for each project site.
- ▶ Bible-based thematic, fun, faith building programs.
- ▶ Devotions to do before, during, and after camp.
- ▶ 3 highly-trained staff plus 2 volunteer staff to handle all the details.
- ▶ An online Planning Center full of resources to help prepare you and your group for camp.
- ▶ Unlimited customer support from professional and courteous staff.
- ▶ Theme T-shirt and Mission Handbook for each participant. ([Back to list](#))

WHAT IF SOMEONE IN OUR GROUP HAS TO LEAVE EARLY OR ARRIVE LATE?

We ask that all participants arrive on time and stay for entire time. Every part of the program is valuable and helps guarantee a life-changing experience. We really try not to make exceptions to this because it does effect other participants, residents, and work projects--so please check the schedule and make travel arrangements accordingly. Contact us if a situation arises. ([Back to list](#))

DO PARTICIPANTS HAVE TO HAVE INSURANCE?

- ▶ Personal health insurance is not required to attend, although highly recommended.
- ▶ If you carry personal health insurance, bring the appropriate information. It is needed if treated at any health-care facility.
- ▶ All health-care costs are the responsibility of the participants or his or her parent/guardian.
- ▶ If you have participants without adequate medical insurance and/or you desire to purchase trip protection insurance, you can purchase low-cost domestic and international insurance from any insurance provider of your choice. ([Back to list](#))

DO YOU HAVE REFERENCES?

Absolutely! Don't just take our word for it. Give us a call (888.644.1588) and we'd be happy to connect you with other youth leaders who have served with us. ([Back to list](#))