



# IDENTITY MISSION TRIP LEADER HANDBOOK

**IDENTITY MISSION  
SHORT TERM MISSION TRIPS**

- I. WELCOME**
- II. INTRODUCTION TO IDENTITY MISSION**
- III. WHAT MAKES IDENTITY MISSION DISTINCT**
- IV. TYPES OF TRIPS**
- V. SCHEDULING**
- VI. PRICING**
- VII. REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**
- VIII. TRIP PRECAUTIONS**
- IX. TRIP GUIDELINES**
- X. LEADER PREPARATION**
- XI. TEAM PREPARATION**
- XII. EXPECTATIONS AFTER THE TRIP**

## **I. WELCOME**

Thank you for your interest in partnering with Identity Mission by joining us on a short term mission trip! We believe that we are better together, and when a trip is intentionally planned your team can have a lasting impact in Honduras in partnership with our work! We desire to make sure that your time in Honduras is spent effectively, that your team leaves their time in Honduras with a better grasp of the climate of orphan care, and understanding their role in serving orphans moving forward.

## **II. INTRODUCTION TO IDENTITY MISSION**

### **OUR MISSION**

Identity Mission supports vulnerable children by providing family-based care solutions alongside the local church.

### **OUR VISION**

To see a nation where every child has the opportunity to develop their identity in Christ within a loving family.

## **OUR PROGRAMS**

### **FOSTER CARE**

Up until 2012, there were only a handful of orphans who were being cared for in the context of families rather than orphanages within Honduras. We prioritize children who have lost their families being placed in the context of family, where they can receive the focused attention needed to continue to grow and develop on target as well as being in an environment where they can develop a sense of belonging and ultimately an identity within a family and community. Our foster families receive ongoing training to care for children from all types of backgrounds competently. Our foster children and foster families are supported by Identity Mission caseworkers, community, and aid from local church partnerships; as well as, Identity Mission staff, and family support events. This holistic approach surrounds the child with the necessary positive influences to best prepare them for a life of knowing that they are loved and equipping them well to succeed in the future.

### **FAMILY PRESERVATION**

Knowing that globally, 80% of children who reside in residential orphanages do have a family that would care for them if they had the means to, but are rather there because of poverty, we developed a family preservation program to prevent children from ever experiencing unnecessary separation from their parents entirely. Our family preservation director identifies at-risk families, typically an impoverished single parent, then evaluates the family's situation to develop a strategic plan to assist. Initially, a short term, emergency plan is created to avoid children experiencing the trauma that comes from being separated from their parents. After the separation is prevented, a long term plan is created to move the family towards a sustainable lifestyle. One where their children can grow up with their family while surrounded by necessary resources for them to grow well.

### **ORPHAN MENTORSHIP**

Although we believe that care within a family is unequivocally ideal for a child, we honor the care option provided by many well-intentioned and quality residential facilities. We partner with residential orphanages by hosting an annual conference that is specific to orphan care

providers to help equip them with training and resources that assist with implementing best practices. We also host a yearly retreat for youth growing up in orphanages throughout Honduras. This weekend is specifically designed for them to develop an understanding of their identity in Christ. (The logistics of this retreat, by the way, is carried out by a short term mission team; we would love to talk more about this model for your team in the future!) In addition to this, our ongoing mentorship program trains up local Honduran church members to disciple youth growing up in residential orphanages; utilizing a curriculum we developed specifically for these youth. This relationship allows them to have an advocate and mentor to do life with throughout their transition from life in the residential orphanage into society.

### **III. WHAT MAKES IDENTITY MISSION DISTINCT**

#### **FAMILY-BASED CARE**

We firmly believe that God's design of a family for the care of a child is the model that we should strive to duplicate when providing solutions for children in vulnerable situations. No matter what the reason, when a child is torn from their family setting and is left abandoned, orphaned, or vulnerable; research has proven that the best answer for that child is placement in a caring family. Therefore, we believe that family-based care programs are all about keeping kids in families. Our belief that children should develop and be cared for within the context of a family is based on the truth that God clearly designed and continually states throughout the Bible. In addition, scientific and clinical research on the development of the child; as well as, authoritative decrees from the United Nations Rights of the Child also declare family-based care as the most effective and humane care options for vulnerable children.

#### **LOCAL CHURCH PARTNERSHIP**

Another defining trait of our work is that in all of our efforts we partner with local Honduran churches that have the heart to help vulnerable children and at-risk families within their communities. Local churches work alongside the staff of Identity Mission to help to keep kids in families. In foster care, the church puts out the call for families to foster, provides respite care, donates resources, and surrounds the foster family and foster children with love and assistance. In family preservation, the church meets struggling families in their community through their connection with Identity Mission then works with us in discipling the family and assisting with providing continued sustainability. Lastly, in orphan mentorship, mentors are recruited through the local church and build an ongoing relationship with the youth that is supported by the local church. In all of our efforts, it is through the local church that Identity Mission empowers a partnership that will establish family-based care and orphan prevention that is grounded in faith and sustained by the local church body. On a short-term trip, we will magnify this partnership with the local church as we work hand-in-hand together with your team on projects, efforts, and activities that will benefit the churches, families, and vulnerable children in the community.

### **IV. TYPES OF TRIPS**

#### **PROSPECT TRIP**

If you or your church is considering partnering with Identity Mission on the ground through a mission trip or beyond the mission trip as a financial partner and advocate partner in North America, we would encourage a small team of the leadership from your church or organization to come on a prospect trip! On this short trip, you will be introduced to the

mission and vision of Identity and witness the impact that you could have by being a partner! Contact us about how to involve your leadership team on a trip like this, and we would love to talk through the specifics with you!

### SPECIFIC VOCATIONAL TRIP

If you are or have a team of professionals that can meet specific needs within the work of Identity Mission, such as: medical professionals, psychologists or social workers, engineers, construction professionals, media creatives such as videographers or photographers, etc. We would love to use your abilities to craft a specific trip that would best use your strengths to serve vulnerable children and their families in Honduras best. Contact us about how to incorporate your team's specific gifting.

### SHORT TERM MISSION TEAM

Our short term mission teams are designed for a team to come and experience the full spectrum of orphan care in the context of Honduras, while serving alongside the local church, community partnerships, and the Identity Mission staff to join in making a long term impact. Teams will be exposed to several models of orphan care. However, their focus, primary investment, and effort will serve a specific aspect of family-based care for orphans, vulnerable children, and their families. Through all efforts, mission teams will come alongside Identity Mission to advance the family-based care movement for orphans and at-risk children in Honduras, helping to fulfill the vision of Identity Mission, to help move towards a nation where every child has the opportunity to develop their identity in Christ within a loving family. We desire that each short term mission trip would fall in line with best practices when it comes to serving with vulnerable children.

Mission teams, at their foundation are called to fulfill the role of a servant; thus, we believe that the roles that a short term mission team serve within should be secondary, consistently serving behind the long term presence, whether that is the primary caregiver of the children, the local church, or the existing organization. This removes the often unhealthy belief that mission teams are there to be the heroes, the primary givers of affection and attention to vulnerable children, or the focus, during their time in Honduras. We would, however, invite our mission teams to take on a full role of a servant, by being willing to let the long term personnel be those who have the most hands-on roles, especially when it comes to serving vulnerable children. We believe that when short term teams come and devote themselves to serving behind a long term presence, they have a more significant impact. Thus we invite you and your team into a time where we can make a more substantial impact together.

We do believe in the power of relationships, and we believe that it is important for members of the short term team to build relationships with local Hondurans. We do want to be intentional that those who the team are building relationships with are strategically with primarily caretakers, adults, and children that are not in a vulnerable place, where the temporary attachment and connection between the team member and child does not cause harm to the child. We would encourage your team while in Honduras to spend time getting to know people such as the local church leaders and members, church members and hired workers who are helping with construction, Identity Mission staff, foster families, family preservation parents, translators, etc! We believe that focusing on building healthy relationships can create a greater understanding of Honduras as a whole, and create lasting relationships with lasting impact.

*We do encourage teams to begin an ongoing partnership with Identity Mission. This can be done by bringing different groups of individuals from their community to more widely expose their community to all that is going on in Honduras through Identity Mission. However, after a church's first trip, if they wish to return on another trip with repeating trip members, we would encourage the trip dynamic to shift towards a more in-depth role, often fulfilling a specific mission. If after a first trip there are team members who are over the age of 18 we would encourage to return for a summer internship to continue their exposure and involvement in Honduras!*

## **V. SCHEDULING**

For our short term mission teams, each day, teams will have the opportunity to serve in capacities that will both help them to learn about best practices in family-based care for orphaned and vulnerable children, while practically serving in capacities that will marry theory and information with experience and names and faces! We believe that after a trip, a team will be given both the necessary information and experience to be able to understand orphan care in Honduras better and the impact of family-based care while making a lasting impact through their time in Honduras.

### **SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR A SHORT TERM MISSION TEAM**

#### **DAY ONE**

Team arrives at the airport and is met by transportation and the Identity Mission team  
Lunch  
Travel to hotel  
Dinner / Team Time / Introduction from Identity Mission staff

#### **DAY TWO**

7:30 am Breakfast  
8:15 am Project  
12:00 pm Lunch on site  
5:00 pm Return to hotel  
6:00 pm Dinner / Team Time / Debrief

#### **DAY THREE**

7:30 am Breakfast  
8:15 am Project  
12:00 pm Lunch on site  
2:00 pm Community Kids Programming with a partner church  
5:00 pm Return to hotel  
6:00 pm Dinner / Team Time / Debrief

#### **DAY FOUR**

7:30 am Breakfast  
8:15 am Project  
12:00 pm Lunch on site  
2:00 pm Activity at an orphanage alongside a local partner church  
5:00 pm Return to hotel

6:00 pm Dinner / Team Time / Debrief

#### DAY FIVE

7:30 am Breakfast

8:15 am Project

12:00 pm Lunch on site

2:00 pm Group travels to government welfare office for an informational tour

5:00 pm Return to hotel

6:00 pm Dinner / Team Time / Debrief

#### DAY SIX

7:30 am Breakfast

9:00 am Hosts all-day child care for a foster family training day

6:00 pm Dinner / Team Time / Debrief

#### DAY SEVEN

7:30 am Breakfast

9:00 am Church at a local partner church

12:00 pm Lunch

1:00 pm Excursion / Tourist shopping / Relax / Continue projects

6:00 pm Dinner / Team Time / Debrief

#### DAY EIGHT

7:30 am Breakfast

8:15 am Project

12:00 pm Lunch on site

2:00 pm Community Kids Programing

5:00 pm Return to hotel

6:00 pm Dinner / Team Time / Debrief

#### DAY NINE

7:30 am Breakfast

8:15 am Project

12:00 pm Lunch on site

5:00 pm Return to hotel

6:00 pm Dinner / Team Time / Debrief

#### DAY TEN

Breakfast

Travel to the airport

Keep in mind that the specifics of each trip will vary based on the ground needs, the team's experience, size, time of year, project opportunities, and a variety of other factors. Your team may also be traveling between two regions in Honduras, thus spending a few days in one area and then other days in another area, to best be able to meet existing needs while gaining as much exposure as possible. The specifics of your trip will depend on several factors. As the time of your trip gets closer, we will provide a more defined itinerary.

## SAMPLE PROJECTS

As mentioned before, all of your efforts and projects will be in line with the mission and vision of Identity Mission.

**FAMILY PRESERVATION:** Your team may be asked to partake in a project that will help to improve the living situation of an impoverished family, typically a single parent so that they can be empowered to take care of their own children. This can be building a home or addition to home, adding a roof or concrete flooring to an existing home, assisting with a family business endeavor, etc.

**FOSTER CARE:** Your team may be asked to partake in a project that will help to improve the physical space of a foster family to equip them to care better for their foster children, care for more foster children, or meet standard housing requirements in order to be approved as a foster family. Your team may be asked to host childcare for a foster family training day, where our foster parents will receive ongoing training. This would require providing activities and care for children for the all-day event.

**COMMUNITY KIDS PROGRAMMING:** Alongside a local church, your group may go to a community in need and bring a kids program that will help local church members to develop lasting long-term relationships with the community. These long term relationships will help the church to identify families in need of assistance and to meet the needs of at-risk families.

**Residential Orphanage Exposure:** For the purpose of your team seeing and experiencing the greater spectrum of the orphan care system, your team may go and serve behind a local church that has a relationship with a residential orphanage. This will always be with the goal of providing the local church with the opportunity to continue to build relationships with the children, youth, and orphanage staff. Your team may be asked to meet a practical need of the orphanage during your time there or may be asked to provide a program for the children. We will explain this process very carefully to your team before you go to ensure that our time at the orphanage is not causing any harm.

## DEBRIEF TIME

At the end of each day, Identity Mission staff will join the team for their debrief time. We encourage your team to share their highlights of each day to process all that they are learning! On certain days we would like the opportunity to share with your team about orphan care and how the team's efforts are joining in the overarching mission of Identity Mission. We want to use the time to help answer questions about Identity Mission and orphan care. Our national staff will provide great insight into the culture of Honduras and be able to share with your team as they serve. The last night of the trip, we would like to help your team be able to process all that they have experienced as well as develop action steps to continue to engage in orphan care through Identity Mission and in their communities. As your trip details are being finalized, we will communicate with the trip leader about which evenings strategically are best for the Identity Mission staff to share with the group.

## VI. TRIP PRICING

Identity Mission offers an "all-inclusive" price that includes all costs in Honduras. From transportation in the country, lodging, food, translators, project expenses, and all other on the ground costs which is \$1,000/person for any seven to ten-day trip. Trips that are longer than ten days will go up in cost. The money is due to Identity Mission a month prior to your team's



trip, thus make sure it is mailed before the month deadline. Payment can be sent by check to Identity Mission, PO Box 133 Lowville, NY 13367.

Our staff will manage the money on the trip to remove that extra responsibility and stress from your team leaders. They will carry the cash for project costs, meals, transportation, etc. This is so that team leaders can focus on their team.

Before the trip and after the trip, our finance team will send all projected costs as well as a report with all of the expenses after your trip for complete transparency!

Your team's airfare is not included in our pricing. However, we will make suggestions on which airlines to fly and when to book if help is needed!

We do not provide travel insurance for your team. However, we suggest that if you are interested in purchasing it, that along with the booking of your tickets that you would buy it for each member of your team.

If desired, we suggest using Good Neighbor Insurance. For more information, costs, and to apply: <https://www.gninsurance.com>

Any additional out-of-pocket expenses will be for souvenirs, personal drinks, extra meals and snacks, and extra excursions. We suggest that each team member brings an additional \$50-\$100, depending on how much shopping they expect to do.

The monetary unit of Honduras is the Lempira. The exchange rate is constantly changing, but you can easily find the exchange rate on google.

While in the country, Visa and MasterCard are accepted in many stores and restaurants so please bring a credit card or cash for any personal purchases. Small fees for using cards apply, check with your card about any international fees specific to your card.

There are ATMs available at local banks that have a fee of around \$5 per transaction.

Dollars are accepted in most locations. We suggest that team members come with cash for personal expenses, they will be able to exchange dollars to lempiras in the airport upon arrival.

## **VII. REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**

**PASSPORT:** Please encourage the team to apply for their passports no less than two months before the date of the trip. Please ensure that team members' passports are not expiring within six months of the date of the trip. When in the country, the team will be responsible for maintaining their passports. We suggest that the leader of the team makes a color copy of each team member's passport.

**LIABILITY FORM:** Each team member is required to sign a liability form, releasing Identity Mission from any legal liability of their time in Honduras. This form will be sent before the team's departure, and the team is required to submit it before traveling to Honduras.

**BACKGROUND CHECK:** Each team member over the age of 18 is required to have a recent background check completed and submitted before traveling to Honduras. When working with vulnerable children, we are responsible for assuring that volunteers serving with the

children are safe and are not causing any danger to them. Background checks are not included in the cost of the trip.

**SIGNED CHILD PROTECTION POLICY:** Each team member is required to sign and agree to uphold all that is stated in the Identity Mission child protection policy.

**SIGNED SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY:** Each team member is required to sign and agree to uphold all that is stated in the Identity Mission social media policy.

## **VIII. TRIP PRECAUTIONS**

### **SAFETY**

As in most places where there is extreme poverty there is often crime and violence. As in any country, some areas are known to be dangerous. We would, however, encourage you that where your team will be traveling and staying in Honduras are chosen with your security in mind. We will not position you in a place where your safety will be unnecessarily at risk. All of the areas of lodging have security guards. Our teams will not travel without an Identity Mission staff member, and our transportation is always with trusted businesses that we have worked with for years, who highly prioritize the safety of the team!

We would discourage you from reading and believing news headlines as total truth, but rather, ask our staff and team about any areas that you may have concerns. Please know that our staff maintains a current and accurate pulse on the security of each place that we work and of the country in general, and they know what areas are to be avoided. We promise that where you will be staying has a reputation as a safe community and that if your team abides by the guidelines given by your team leader that we will avoid any unnecessary risks.

Here are a few critical reminders:

- No one travels anywhere alone. Your team will always have an Identity Mission staff person with them.
- No one on your team should wear expensive jewelry, sunglasses, or watches.
- No one on your team should carry a large amount of cash or any unnecessary credit cards in public.
- No one outside of the trip leaders on your team should have expensive cell phones with them outside of the hotels.
- Take the usual precautions with purses and wallets that you would in any large city.
- Remain with the Identity Mission staff and if there are ever any questions or concerns of safety from your perspective, bring them to the Identity Mission staff's attention, and they will make the best decision in that circumstance.

### **HEALTH**

Occasionally when traveling to foreign countries, your doctor may recommend flu, typhoid, malaria, yellow fever, or other preventive medicines. It is always best to confer with your doctor before leaving the country to verify any precautions you may need to take. You may also obtain current information for the country you are visiting the website for the Center for Disease Control at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Some doctors will recommend taking antibiotics as a preventative measure against bacterial intestinal illness. We make no recommendations, but suggest you discuss it with your personal physician.

We suggest that each team comes with a medical backpack equipped with over the counter medicine such as Pepto Bismol, Imodium, Tylenol, ibuprofen, sunscreen, and bug repellent and a first aid kit. Depending on the size of your team, we suggest that you bring more than one medical backpack, especially if your team will be splitting into different work sites.

While in the country, the weather is typically hot. Drink plenty of purified/bottled water-more than you think you need. If you get thirsty, you're already dehydrated. Dehydration is the top health problem for most volunteers.

Wash your hands frequently and make frequent use of hand sanitizers or antibacterial liquid. (Note: Try not to use these products while among children; it can make them feel "unclean.")

Cover your toothbrush and only use bottled or purified water to brush your teeth.

There are doctors, hospitals, and pharmacies close to where you will be working and living in case there is a medical emergency.

We encourage your team only to eat the food that we advise or offer your team. Avoid food from street vendors. Our team will only take you to restaurants where the food is known to be safe to eat.

If anyone on your team has any special dietary needs or health concerns, please inform us in advance, so we know how to best prepare for your time here, and have them plan to pack additional snacks that are within their dietary restrictions.

We would suggest that your team would come equipped with bug spray and sunscreen to protect you from those elements.

## TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION

From the time that your team lands at the airport, your team will be met with on the ground transportation. We will arrange transportation for your team. Depending on the logistics of your team such as team size, the location, and terrain of where you are traveling, and if your team is splitting daily for projects, we will determine which type of transportation is best for your group. We often use minibusses with a hired driver, or rental cars depending on your team's needs. We will discuss with your team leader what type of transportation is best for the group.

Driving in Honduras is quite different than it is in most of the United States. We will take every precaution to keep your team safe while traveling within the country.

## STATE DEPARTMENT REGISTRATION

We would strongly recommend that you register each member of your team with the State Department STEP program, which registers you with the US Embassy in Honduras for the time that your team will be traveling. This is a free service to allow U.S. citizens and nationals traveling and living abroad to enroll their trip with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Register your team, just with their passport information by going to [step.state.gov](http://step.state.gov)

## XI. TRIP GUIDELINES

### GENERAL RULES

#### DO

- Be flexible. At all times and in all circumstances.
- Commit to maintaining a positive attitude regardless of the circumstances.
- Be on time.
- Try to use your knowledge of Spanish!

- Interact as much as possible with in-country Identity Mission staff and volunteers.
- Be patient with one another and with our Central American counterparts.
- When distributing items or preparing activities for the children, only work through the in-country Identity Mission Team Coordinator.
- Offer your gifts, your talents, and your service. Remember that you are there to serve, not to take charge.
- Be eagerly available to work in any way needed, your comfort zone will be challenged.
- Things can change rapidly, so be ready to remain flexible and willing to serve; however, you are asked.
- Look for needs, don't simply wait to be told, look to serve those around you.

### DON'T

- Don't promise anything to any of the kids or staff. Refer all requests for money, gifts, sponsorship, or anything else to your Team Coordinator.
- Don't discuss adoption or bringing a child home with you.
- Don't drink water that is not purified.
- Don't eat fresh vegetables or fruits unless your Coordinator says it's okay.
- Don't give money to street kids or any other beggars. DO give them food or snacks you have on hand.
- Don't ever be alone with any of the children. Protect yourself and Identity Mission against any accusations.
- Don't go ANYWHERE by yourself- always take a companion or a few others.
- Don't give things to some children and not others.
- Don't spend time with only one volunteer or only one child.
- Don't drive any motor vehicles without permission from the Coordinator.

### PHONE POLICY

Apart from the leaders of the trip, we ask your team to not bring their cell phones out on the work sites or out during the day. We understand that phones are often used for pictures and other resources. However, we believe that they put your team unnecessary at risk of theft. While smartphones are a commonality in North America, in Honduras, they are an easy opportunity to make hundreds of dollars in just a moment, and when the average Honduran makes only a few hundred dollars a month, it puts the team at unnecessary risk. Beyond the risk, we believe that having cell phones often offers a reminder to the socioeconomic divide between the team and the Hondurans, which is a division that we would like to work against. We don't want those in the community to settle for getting an experience with a device when they could be participating with you! We want your team to be able to engage to the fullest while they are on work sites and with the community, and we believe that not having a phone will help with this!

There are international phone packages available with your phone provider in the United States. However most of the time they are very unreliable in the country. Wifi is available in all of the places of lodging. However, the service is typically slow, often just adding levels of frustration when it doesn't work. We will provide phones and ways of communication for your team while out on the work sites for your team to be in communication with one another and we will offer methods of communication if phone calls or texts need to be made to the United States. We believe that a more meaningful level of connection and community

can come when team members are not connected to their phones. If your team is up to the challenge of completely unplugging on their trip, we would challenge them to leave their phones at home entirely, to see how much fuller of an experience they gain! *At the minimum, we ask your team members to not have their phones with them during the day!* We also ask that you as the leader would be the one to enforce this, you know your team members and the best way to communicate these expectations to them.

### PICTURE POLICY

We understand that capturing memories is a significant part to storytelling and advocating for the work that Identity Mission is doing for children; however, we would strongly suggest that your whole team does not bring cameras with them on the trip. In the effort to keep your team focused on the work that they are there to do, as well as to keep them from distractions, simply looking for the best picture rather than missing the moment in front of them. Expensive cameras can also put your team at-risk of petty theft. We would suggest that your team does one of the following: assigns one or two people as your trip photographers/videographers that understand how to take dignifying pictures of children and their families, as well as know the culture and when is appropriate to take pictures. Another option, which we highly recommend is we can hire professional Honduran photographers to join your team, who will take professional grade pictures and video, as well as employing a Honduran during your time in Honduras. We believe that a Honduran photographer will know better when and what is socially acceptable to take pictures of at the right time while taking photos that show children and families in a dignifying light. We believe in the power of a picture, and we want your team to be able to have high-quality pictures that accurately represent families in a healthy light. While we allow team members to bring cameras, we do believe that hiring a Honduran to take pictures will provide an accurate representation of your trip, while allowing your team yet another opportunity to interact with another local, and we believe it will keep your team focused on doing the work that they set out to do! Your team will receive full access to all of the pictures taken throughout the trip. They are often all uploaded by the time your team is back home! We would love to talk through any of your concerns about this regarding your team's experience!

### DRESS CODE

We have a dress code, so our team does not send signals contrary to our teaching or the local culture. We ask that you abide by these codes for the time that you are serving with us!

### GENERAL

- Don't take or wear a bandana. It often reflects gang relations.
- Do not wear expensive or flashy jewelry, smartwatches, etc
- If you have tattoos, plan on covering them for some work sites.
- Long shorts (mid-thigh) are ok in most places, but there may be times when we request you wear jeans or pants.
- Wear closed toed shoes when working in construction
- Mid-area (stomach) must be covered and be mindful of how low cut shirts are.
- No bikini bathing suits, if you have a bikini plan on wearing a shirt over.
- No revealing tank tops.
- No offensive writing on T-shirts.
- Casual clothing is appropriate for dinner, church, and free time
- Overall, dress in a mindful matter that does not bring extra attention to yourself.

## X. LEADER PREPARATION

We want our team leaders to come well equipped and prepared to make the most of their time in country. We want our leaders to have everything needed before departure to be able to best share with their team any and all expectations for the smoothest possible experience. We would ask that each team would identify no more than two team leaders that need to be communicated with during the trip's planning. The team leader(s) can expect that we will be in communication throughout the process of planning for your team, providing you with resources and training videos that we expect to be shared with the group. However, you determine what is best for your team.

For your team leaders to best be equipped to lead their group with accurate information on short term mission trips with orphaned and vulnerable children, we would ask that the team leaders would be informed on the following documents:

### MANDATORY READING

- Christian Alliance for Orphans (CAFO): Wise Short Term Missions: <https://cafo.org/ovc/missions/>
- Identity Mission Info Booklet: <https://www.identitymission.org/whatwedo>

### ENCOURAGED READING

- Faith To Action: The Short-Term Missions: Guidance to Support Orphans and Vulnerable Children: [http://www.faithtoaction.org/wp-content/uploads/Short\\_Term\\_Missions\\_Guidance\\_Support\\_Orphans\\_Vulnerable\\_Children.pdf](http://www.faithtoaction.org/wp-content/uploads/Short_Term_Missions_Guidance_Support_Orphans_Vulnerable_Children.pdf)
- ACCI Missions: Protecting Children in Short-Term Missions: [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/acci/pages/145/attachments/original/1464830333/ACCI\\_Short\\_Term\\_Missions\\_Manual.pdf?1464830333](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/acci/pages/145/attachments/original/1464830333/ACCI_Short_Term_Missions_Manual.pdf?1464830333)

After reading these, we would invite the team leaders into a conversation, where we can discuss the content in the materials listed above. This reading is to help team leaders to truly comprehend best practices in short term missions before the team's training meetings. We will discuss the contents of the readings in our communication before the team's trip.

## XI. TEAM PREPARATION

For your team to be most effective while in the country, we strongly advise that teams meet together regularly before the trip for several reasons. We believe that much can be accomplished by meeting together to grow as a team, to best set expectations about their time, to prepare for any activities that your team will be leading, and to better understand best practices on the short term mission field.

We would encourage your team to get together, choose a time frame to read, pray, and fast as individuals or as a team prior to your trip. We believe that God can and will honor all of our training and preparation; however, nothing of eternal significance happens apart from prayer, so we ask that your team would prioritize humbling themselves as they get their hearts in a place to serve in their time in Honduras.

As far as practical preparation goes, we will provide training videos that go over our core principles that we encourage your team to watch together. If your team is not able to meet together, we would encourage you to send the training videos to your team for them to watch prior to the trip.

The video training incorporate the following:

- Introduction to Identity Mission and Honduran culture
- Working With Orphaned and Vulnerable Children Part 1
- Working With Orphaned and Vulnerable Children Part 2
- Trip Expectations and Rules

## **XII. EXPECTATIONS AFTER THE TRIP**

### **LEADER DEBRIEF**

We want to take time after the trip to be able to debrief from the trip with the team leader. A few days after the trip ends, expect to get an email setting up a time to talk through the great wins that happened as well as areas where we together, could better improve on future trips! We want to cultivate a culture of improvement and excellence in all that we do, and we know that growth comes through honest evaluation. Be prepared to let us know how our teams could have worked better together during this time, as we will plan to do the same. Our team seeks to be approachable and in pursuit of growth and excellence as we grow to work better together over the coming years.

### **CONTINUED ADVOCACY**

We strongly believe that a short-term mission trip can have long term effects and we believe that that begins for the team as soon as they leave to return home! Your team can continue to advocate through these simple avenues:

- Sharing about their experience with their family and friends when they return about the work that they were able to accomplish and the larger picture efforts that are going on through Identity Mission and the long term partners in the country.
- Continue to connect with Identity Mission through our social media accounts, signing up for newsletters, and sharing content on social media periodically.
- Continuing education on best practices for orphans and vulnerable children and family-based care, resources can be found at sites such as [cafo.org](http://cafo.org)
- Partnering with your local welfare office to see how you can serve vulnerable children in your community, as well as wrapping around foster families in your community.
- Advocating for your church to observe Orphan Sunday in November each year, thus beginning to engage your entire church body in local and global orphan care.
- Choosing to turn the short term into a long term impact by beginning to financially support Identity Mission as monthly partners by going to [identitymission.org/donate](http://identitymission.org/donate)
- Advocating to your church leaders that your church should if not already become a financial partner to Identity Mission, supporting the work that Identity Mission is a part of throughout the year.