

# DIGNITY GUIDELINES

We are confident our participants want to bring honor and respect as they share the Gospel around the world. These guidelines will assist in telling those stories with honor and dignity to all involved, and we expect participants to uphold these standards. We're here to help: if any questions arise, the leadership teams will be available to help discern if the stories shared are honoring.

## MINISTRY INTERACTION GUIDELINES

If you're a participant, you've recently said 'yes' to God's invitation to bring the Gospel to the nations - maybe even to some of the most remote places on the earth. You're about to witness some of God's most beautiful creations. You'll meet a diverse array of people, and you'll learn and grow in ways you've never experienced before. You'll have a unique opportunity to become advocates for people, places, and ministries. Sometimes, knowing what is culturally appropriate in each country can feel confusing. The following guidelines will help you create a safe and honoring environment wherever you are serving - whether the camera is out or not!

1. Be attentive to the perception and appearance of the relationships you establish with the children and adults you serve. For everyone's protection, it is important to avoid even the appearance of inappropriate conduct.
2. Be aware of the various cultural sensitivities of the country you're visiting and avoid behavior which could potentially be interpreted as flirtatious, unwelcome, or sexual in any manner. (For example, in some countries, it is considered flirtatious to point a certain way, to hug, or to show your ankles in person.)
3. Respect the parents'/guardians' relationship with their children and do not interfere with parenting matters without expressed consent from your ministry host.
4. Adhere to your mission trip dress code. Dress codes are set based on cultural relevance, not to limit you, but to honor the ministries we serve and for the safety of all we serve.
5. Do not give cash directly to any children, families, ministries, or church members. If you feel led to give financially, consult your ministry host for the proper way to do so. Our goal is to avoid creating patterns of dependency and ensure we are truly aiding sustainable ministry opportunities in the future.
6. Do not hire men, women, or children for any purpose without the expressed consent of your local host.
7. You must not exchange personal information with children. This age range includes from birth to 18 years and includes email, social media, addresses, phone numbers, etc.

## POSTING GUIDELINES

You are witnessing and partaking in an incredible story of God's love and work here on earth - and it's not for you to keep. The truth is, many potential abuses can occur from media getting in the wrong hands. Seemingly innocent photos and videos of children and adults have put people in harm of sexual exploitation, abuse, and trauma of various kinds. Even with good intentions, you can accidentally dishonor and disrespect someone by posting a photo before understanding the cultural and societal norms.

Please hear our heart: we don't share this information to scare you from taking pictures, but rather to provide some context and implications of understanding cultural norms. However, for the safety of those we meet, it is important to consider whether the story or image you are sharing is safe, dignifying, and honoring to that person. Even if you have permission and follow all official guidelines, you are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the impact of your social media images are respectful to all people.

1. When you arrive at a new ministry location, do not capture any form of media before your cultural briefing.
2. Please develop relationships with and know the names of the people you are photographing.
3. Ensure your goal is God's glory, not building a name for yourself.
4. Do not post the personal information of any child or adult you meet. This includes, but is not limited to, their last name, identification numbers, specific medical conditions, size measurements, home address, school name, community or village landmarks, or place of employment.
5. Refrain from posting pictures of children without the parent or guardian's consent.
6. If you do not have consent from someone to take their picture, do not post it. If you do not have consent from a parent or guardian, do not post photos of children. If you are unsure if you should post a photo, ask a ministry leader first. It's always better to create a personal photo album to remember your mission experience offline and not post images publicly if safety is a concern.
7. Please do not take pictures of people's homes/huts/etc to show the severity of poverty. We want to honor the boundary and not exploit poverty.
8. Show respect and compassion for culture and the people you are serving. Portray people with dignity and respect. Ask, does this photo show this person/place in a positive light?
9. Show people their picture! (Try to give them a copy - polaroids are great!)
10. Give context - we want to avoid telling stories that we don't have context around.
11. When sharing stories on your blog or social media, change people's names and blur out faces if you don't have that person's permission to share their story or photo. If ministering in an orphanage, the red-light district, or with any known survivor of abuse/trauma, you must ALWAYS use a fake name and blur faces when sharing testimonies online even with consent and permission to share. Please do not share orphanage names, and ask permission before sharing any other host ministry names online.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I MESS UP?

We understand that it can feel overwhelming as you enter into a new culture and process a myriad of new norms - and oftentimes, these norms are vastly different than what you're familiar with. But, that's why we have trained staff members, training, and Dignity Guidelines to help you navigate each new culture. We're here to help you navigate what is honoring and what brings dignity to the people you serve.

We encourage you to consider questions like: Does this glorify God, and does it honor the people and culture I am sharing about? What might be a better caption that could shift the narrative to make God the hero of the story? How might this post be perceived if a local saw it/read it? If this was my child/sister/mother/etc, would I want someone to post this story on social media?

However, we do expect you to uphold these guidelines. Although each situation will vary depending on the circumstances, generally, the first violation will signal communication between you and your Squad Leaders and Mentor. From there, you and your leadership team will build an action plan to ensure you are honoring your host, your team, and the ministry you are serving. If these guidelines are continually broken, it can possibly result in removal from the field. We're confident your heart is in the right place and you want to bring dignity to the community you're serving. We're here to help you, not 'catch you'!

**Please note:** Adventures in Missions reserves the right to ask you to remove any public posting that might bring harm to the people, ministries, and communities visited during your mission trip.