Dear Parents,

Thank you for supporting your son or daughter as they go to the nations! Your child is about to embark on an adventure with the Lord that is going to change hearts and transform lives. We at Adventures are honored to be part of that journey.

While this is an experience of growth and development for your son or daughter, you are also about to embark on a journey of your own. As you release your child to go overseas, we understand your desire for them to have a positive experience in addition to being safe and secure.

The following serves as a resource for you, introduces your family to the Passport Program and provides the information you need to move forward in confidence in your partnership with Adventures.

Your child is growing into adulthood. Passport gives them freedom to make decisions for themselves and empowers them to take responsibility for their actions. Our expectation is they will be responsible to meet all deadlines, be your primary source of communication and information, and be ready for an adventure of a lifetime.

As you read through the following information we pray the Lord shows you specific ways you can support your child as well as encourage them to grow into the man or woman God has created them to be.

This is a great milestone and we are cheering with you, believing God will do incredible things in and through your children!

Blessings,

Passport Staff
What A Passport Parent Needs To Know

You may be full of mixed emotions about the fact your son or daughter is embarking on a crazy adventure around the world. We at Adventures In Missions take the responsibility and care of our participants very seriously.

While safety and security is a top priority for our programs, the reality is the world can be an unsafe place. We set protocols to minimize risk while expanding each Passporter’s exploration of God’s Kingdom around the world.

Our staff monitors safety concerns and issues around the world, including organized protests, political uprisings, medical alerts and natural disasters. We maintain active communication with our international contacts and will change locations if we believe the risk level in an area is no longer appropriate for our participants.

All of our on field leaders carry international phones and are in communication with our field support staff, including regularly scheduled weekly calls.

We actively encourage Passporters to make wise decisions and be “street smart” while living overseas, yet we also believe in the adventure. Passporters sometimes choose to participate in activities such as bungee jumping, rafting down rapids, and eating street food in the third world.

**EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER: (770) 983-1060**

This number is the main phone line for Adventures in Missions. During business hours, simply ask for the Passport Emergency Line. After hours, choose the “Passport Emergency Line” option through the automated phone system, and your call will be routed to the on call staff member.

In the event of a true emergency, such as a death in the immediate family, please call this number! We have staff on call to reach your child. We ask that calls to this line reflect an emergency state. Feel free to use the office number during business hours to get in touch with Passport staff for any other concerns or questions.
What A Passport Parent Needs To Know

Understand communication will be limited

There will be times on the field when communication with your child will not be readily available. Internet can be scarce and slow. There may be times when we ask Passporters to fully abandon distractions including Facebook, Skype, and other means of communicating back home. This is done to help them fully engage in what they are experiencing on the field.

We desire for them to move past the stage of leaving home and into a deeper dependency upon the Lord. Passporters will update family, friends, mentors, and churches back home about their life overseas and ministry when possible. Please read their team blog posts and comment on them! This is more encouraging for your child than you'll know. Passporters are encouraged to not carry personal cell phones on the field to help limit distractions and enable them to fully engage in what God is doing.

Our leaders are young

We utilize World Race (an Adventures’ program for young adults to 11 countries in 11 months) and Passport alumni as leaders for the teams of 5-20 participants. Their role is to care for the team, make sure our core values are practiced, and communicate between our staff in the States and the participants on the field. These leaders will travel with the team and live with them in community on the field for the duration of the trip.

We believe in raising up and training young leaders, and we know that field leadership is an appropriate vehicle for doing that. We have a thorough process for selecting and training trip leaders but for many of them, this will be a new level of responsibility. There is ongoing leadership development that happens during our weekly check-ins and communication with the team. We know that all leaders, regardless of age or experience, may make mistakes. But we also believe in strong home office support structures and in lessons that can be learned. We will always listen to concerns and we encourage open communication.

We’ve been doing this a long time

Since our beginning in 1989, we have taken over 100,000 people to the mission field, some for as short as a week and others for as long as a year. We are constantly learning from our participants and ministry contacts overseas. We deeply care about the spiritual journey of our participants and we want to create as much space for the Lord to teach and mature them as possible. The journey might look different than you or your participant expects, but our goal is to create a life-changing experience.
What A Passport Parent Needs To Know

This might be challenging for parents

With the limited communication ability in some areas of the world, it is likely you will get short and condensed updates stocked full of emotions…
You may tend to hear more of the challenges than the victories, more of the discomfort than the growth, and more of the insecurity than the development of identity.

Passporters get sick, they experience conflict, and they live in an environment that reveals and examines their past hurts. It is a process they will not find many other places and sometimes it gets messy. Journeying with Jesus takes time, a bit of discomfort, and wholehearted trust.

We believe in the journey and the challenges Passporters experience living overseas. We see them come alive and begin to understand, with a wider worldview, what it really means to trust in God. Though it is tough at times, as you will likely hear from your child, it is growth. Transitions and changes are challenging, but they can also be sweet. You never know, it just might be exactly the taste of adventure and challenge you needed in your life too!

Resource for parents

We have a Parent Ministry department that is available to you. While questions about trips should be addressed with your Passorter, general questions about us as an organization, our process, our history, or concerns you may have as a parent can be emailed to parentministry@adventures.org. Kelley Grunewald, the Passport Parent Ministry Representative, is also available to talk with you. You can reach her at 770-744-3989. Parent Ministry will be facilitate a parent Facebook page and you will be sent an invitation to that group as your Passorter prepares to launch.
Passport Core Values

The Pursuit of God
Our hope is that Passporters will become completely dependent on God. The journey away from the familiar is essential to this goal. Even if they have good worldviews and theology, they must learn to develop their own pursuit of God. To achieve this they must journey away from the comfort of family, the security of friends, and the predictability of their everyday lives.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” Hebrews 12:1-2

Engaging the Holy Spirit
We encourage Passporters to learn the discipline of listening prayer. Through this, Passporters develop a two-way conversation with God and can more easily be led by the Holy Spirit. Our desire is that Passporters would begin to walk in the authority God has given them as sons and daughters.

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me.” John 10:27

Being the Gospel
Passporters get the opportunity to serve alongside our partner ministry hosts around the world. Whether playing with street children, sitting with widows, teaching English, preaching at church, painting buildings, or serving meals, Passporters get to be part of bringing the Kingdom of Heaven to Earth.

Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give. Matthew 10:8

Community and Healthy Communication
Safe communities where conflict is managed in a healthy way and feedback is a norm is not common in our society. Living in a close community provides Passporters an immediate opportunity to learn humility and selflessness. Passport encourages honest feedback from peers and leaders. Feedback is a tool used to help them reach their fullest potential through sharing both positive and constructive observations.

This is not an easy process to learn or to experience. Your son or daughter may want to process team dynamics, including feedback and conflict with you. Resist the temptation to rescue them, but rather encourage them to stay engaged in the conversation and humbly learn all that they can from those around them. We’ve seen this process change Passporters not only for their trip, but years to come.

“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” Ephesians 4:15
What You Can Expect From Us

A desire for your son or daughter to succeed
Our desire is for this trip to be the best possible experience for your child. Our core values exist because we want to see Passporters reach their fullest potential. The leaders we place on the field are committed to investing in each of the participants. As staff, we read Passporter’s blogs, pray for the teams regularly, rejoice in their victories and mourn in their losses. While we may only spend a short time with them, we truly want to see greatness in them.

Communication
We are committed to keeping you informed in case of an emergency. Should your child become seriously sick or involved an accident, you will be notified as soon as possible. In the case of an emergency in country (such as a natural disaster), the team leader will update us as soon as possible and we will communicate information to you.

Should you need to get in touch with your child in case of an emergency at home, you can reach us at 770-983-1060.

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Emergency Travel Arrangements
On rare occasions, a participant may need to return home early. Reasons include but are not limited to: sickness on the field that needs to be treated at home, an emergency at home that requires the participant’s return, or a participant’s inability or unwillingness to engage with the team or ministry on the field. (Please note, MissionSafe must be involved in all medical related travel needs.) Whether an early return is voluntary or not, we will work with you to arrange travel plans and rebook flights as necessary.