

**Team Building,  
Sample “Team Covenant”  
& Mission Team Advice**

## Team Building

### Team Meeting

- Team meetings are probably the best way to do team building before you leave for a trip.
- Consistent weekly meeting times are extremely important. Pick a time and stick with it.
- Spend time in prayer before each meeting. Pray for team members, for the orphanage kids and any other issues the team is dealing with. Laugh and have fun together. This is a great time for bonding.
- Weekly information handouts will probably be more effective than just talking through your own list of business items. You should still talk through the handouts, but people are more likely to remember things if they hear them and see them in writing. You may want to have team members start keeping up with all handouts in a team folder and bring that to meetings every week.
- You also may want to have students start giving their spiritual journey's during these meetings so that you will all get to know each other better before you leave. This is also a great way to get people to start being vulnerable with each other so that lives are really being affected.
- You should try to have a devotional time at the beginning of each meeting to focus everyone and to center your meetings on God. Have students sign up at one of the first meetings and remind them the week before it's their turn to give devo. This is also a great way to start getting students out of their comfort zones and taking on spiritual responsibility within the group.
- It's also a good idea to start off the meeting with an icebreaker question and then maybe another deeper question about where they are spiritually or in preparing to leave for the trip.
- If you're doing a VBS you should start planning at least a month before you leave. Keep in mind when you're planning that the kids do not speak any English so try to keep things as simple as possible. Crafts, skits, and games are a great way to communicate without talking.

### Other Team Building

- You should have everyone sign a covenant at one of the first official team meetings. Be sure that you talk through everything on the covenant so that people are clear on what they are signing.
- Taking Spiritual Gifts Tests and discussing them with the group is a great way to begin to appreciate people's different roles on the team and to grow together spiritually.

- It's a good idea to give each team member a handout with everybody's phone numbers and email addresses. This will really come in handy throughout the semester.
- Once you start scheduling outreaches and fundraisers you should hand out a calendar so that people can get an idea of what is coming and plan accordingly
- If you're going to get a team t-shirt made it's a good idea to do this before the trip that way you can wear it for some outreaches and fundraisers. You also should take these on the trip with you. If you don't know what to wear to a certain event even a team t-shirt is always a good option. There are several places in town to get t-shirts made. We used Scarborough Specialties and they did an excellent job at a reasonable price. You may just want to check around.
- It's a good idea to let students be in charge of certain areas of the planning, like VBS, designing a t-shirt, and helping organize fundraising. This is a great way to get students to start taking ownership within the group
- Give each member of the group 5-10 prayer bracelets to hand out to friends and family the week before the trip

## Team Preparation - Session 1

Are you spiritually prepared to go in this mission trip?

Ask yourself the following questions. You may write down answers if you want to, but you don't have to. You can share your answers with the group if you want to, but you don't have to. You do have to be honest with yourself.

1. *Reflect on where you are spiritually.* What will give you a richer experience if you begin to do it now?
2. *Start Listening:* Are you listening to God? Are there quiet times in your day to reflect on what God is teaching you?
3. *Start Reading:* Are you spending time reading God's Word? How consistently?
4. *Start Speaking:* What's your prayer life like? Are you taking time each day to talk with God?
5. *Start Responding:* Are you striving to be obedient in the little things? Are you attempting to apply the things God is teaching you?

## Team Preparation - Session 2

Are you emotionally prepared to go on this mission trip?

Ask yourself the following questions. You may write down answers if you want to, but you don't have to. You can share your answers with the group if you want to, but you don't have to. You do have to be honest with yourself.

1. Are there any unresolved issues or relationships in your life?
2. Are you having any bouts of depression or discouragement that should be talked out prior to going on your trip?
3. Would it be wise to talk these out with a pastor, a counselor, or a friend?
4. Could you be viewing this trip as some sort of therapy for problems in your life?
5. If you are, what problems are you trying to "escape" from? Why?

## Team Preparation – Session 3

Are you prepared relationally to go on this trip?

You will be spending much of your time with a group of people to whom your experience will be closely tied. Consequently, it is important to think through the way you relate interpersonally.

Ask yourself the following questions. You may write down answers if you want to, but you don't have to. You can share your answers with the group if you want to, but you don't have to. You do have to be honest with yourself.

1. Are you prone to any types of conflict that hinder your ability to work with others? What are they? When are they most likely to occur?
2. Do you consider yourself a good listener? How might your listening skills be improved before going on this trip?
3. Are you comfortable being transparent with others? What factors determine whether or not you will share with another? What obstacles do you have when it comes to being open and vulnerable?
4. Do you consider yourself to be a cooperative person? Why or why not? Are there certain circumstances when you find it hard to be cooperative with others? What are they? Do group decisions frustrate you?

<u>Meeting Date</u>	<u>Devotional</u>	<u>Spiritual Journey</u>	
February 20, 2005	M'Lynn	Julian	
February 27, 2005	Larry	M'Lynn	
March 6, 2005	Cat	Natalie	
March 13, 2005	NO MEETING: SPRING BREAK		
March 20, 2005			
March 27, 2005	NO MEETING: EASTER SUNDAY		
April 3, 2005	Natalie	Larry	Rebecca
April 10, 2005	Emile	Emile	Jesse
April 17, 2005	Jennifer	Ashley	Chris
April 24, 2005	Rebecca	Cory	Rachel
May 1, 2005	Jesse	Jennifer	Cat
May 8, 2005	Rachel	Jamie	Joni
May 15, 2005			

## Guatemala Mission Team Covenant

As a member of the Guatemala Mission Team, I agree to abide by the following team covenant and expect to be held accountable to it. I will:

1. Respect my team leaders, Greg & M'Lynn and their decisions.
2. Attend all team meetings and follow-up meetings.
3. Commit to both individual and team fundraising. I realize that ultimately I am responsible for the cost of my trip. I know that if my fundraising attempts are not successful, I will not be able to attend.
4. Fulfill all logistical requirements, including: passports, applications, support letters, finances, etc.
5. Pray regularly for my teammates and New Life Children's Home.
6. Understand that I will be expected to participate in and possibly lead devotionals and prayer during team meetings and on the trip.
7. Give at least one week's notice if I need to back out of a commitment, such as leading a devotional, going on an outreach, going to Parent's Night Out, etc.
8. Refrain from complaining. I realize travel can present numerous unexpected and undesired circumstances, but the rewards of conquering such circumstances are innumerable. I will be a supportive and creative member of this team.
9. As our team grows in our relationships with the Lord and each other, I agree to resolve all personal conflicts with other team members quickly and with love and respect.
10. Refrain from gossip. I may be surprised at how each person will blossom when freed from the concern that others may be passing judgment.
11. Remember not to be exclusive in my relationships. If my best friend or my sweetheart is on the team, we will make every effort to interact with all members of the team, not just one another. If I am attracted to a teammate, I will not attempt to pursue a relationship until we return home.
12. Follow all Accountability Guidelines of the New Life Children's Home.
13. Realize our team is in Guatemala for a short while, but New Life Children's Home is there for the long term. I will respect their knowledge, insights, and instructions. I will be open to learning their methods and ideas. I recognize Christianity has many different faces throughout the world, and the purpose of this trip is to witness and experience faith lived out in a new setting.
14. Develop and maintain a servant attitude and commit to grow personally in my walk with Christ through personal prayer and quiet time.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Team Covenant

1. I will be an active participant in all activities of the North Africa 2005 Wesley Mission Team, before, during and after the trip.  
\*\* Before: Weekly team meetings-Sundays 8:00-9:30pm (If for some reason I am unable to attend a meeting, I will contact Kelly or Tammy in advance), church outreaches, fundraising, team retreat/work project  
\*\*During: Fully participate in ministry during travel and in all activities in North Africa  
\*\*After: Debrief meetings and follow up with churches
2. I agree to take full responsibility for raising money for the cost of this trip. I will be responsible to raise money on my own as well as participating in the team fundraisers. If for any reason I cannot go on the trip, I realize that any and/or all of the money I have raised may not be reimbursed.
3. I will commit to pursuing ongoing personal growth in my relationship with Christ.
3. I will commit to praying daily in preparation for the trip and will recruit a prayer support team of at least 20 people who will commit to pray for me daily while I am on the trip. I will maintain a list of these people.
4. With the understanding that I am participating in this trip as an ambassador of Christ, I will refrain from the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco during the trip, as well as from any kind of promiscuous or immoral behavior. I will make myself accountable to Kelly's and Tammy's judgment in issues of appropriate behavior (both culturally and morally) on this trip. (Kelly and Tammy reserve the right to send home anyone who behaves in a way that is detrimental to the team.)

## Team Commitment

With God directing me, I commit myself to go on the Wesley mission trip to N. Africa from May 15-June 15, 2005. I will work as hard as possible to raise the necessary funds for this trip and will trust God to do the impossible as I do the possible. I understand that I am participating in this trip as a servant, a learner, and a leader, not a tourist. I will make myself available to all that God wants to teach me and do through me. I choose to be bound by the covenant outlined above.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Ten ways to ruin short term mission trips

Believe it or not, it's possible to have a bad short term mission experience. Most times, this is not the fault of the situation or organization. Often, the root cause is the short-termer's own attitudes and expectations.

To help you maximize your short-term experience, here's a Top Ten checklist of what not to do.

1. **Keep narrowly focused on "spiritual" activities.** Since you want to win people to Christ, focus on only the loftiest of things. Avoid menial work like data entry, loading trucks, or working on buildings. Such things will only distract you from your primary task.
2. **To tighten up your schedule, eliminate personal prayer and Bible study.** You will be so rushed that you won't have time. Besides, can't you get all the spiritual food you need from group devotions and from church services?
3. **Stay organized and on schedule.** Set detailed goals before you go. Establish schedules and refuse to deviate from them. Do not accept delays, last-minute changes, and impromptu visits and invitations. Those things will just keep you from getting things done for God.
4. **Help the missionaries by pointing out their mistakes.** Bring them up to date on what you've heard are the latest missions trends. Some missionaries are stubborn. So, you may need to enlist some support among the nationals for your views about how things should be run.
5. **Get involved romantically with someone.** Being away from family and friends makes this the perfect time to get involved romantically. While it may distract you slightly from the work, you will be able to expose national Christians to America's progressive dating customs.
6. **Don't embarrass yourself by trying to pick up the local language.** People are always saying that English is spoken all over the world. So, insist that those people use it with you.
7. **Immediately begin pointing out your team members' faults.** Time is short. It will be difficult for people to make the needed changes if you don't help them from the start. Focus your helpful criticisms on team leaders.
8. **As you go all out in warring against attacking germs, don't eat any of the local food.** To be sure, you may miss some friendly opportunities with "the natives," but you'll avoid all those awful germs!
9. **Keep your distance from team members who couldn't raise their full support.** They may try to mooch off you. Don't give in. Sweating over finances will help them build their faith.
10. **When you return home, scold your home church and friends for their lack of commitment, for their weak prayers, and for their inadequate giving to missions.** This may be one of the few times you will have their deferential respect. Make the most of it.

*\*Make sure we de-brief! Honor God.*