



CHAPERONE GUIDE

2023





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WELCOME!



Thank you for your commitment to our Student Service Learning Program! We are thrilled to have you joining us as a chaperone.

Each service trip is extremely valuable both for the students and the community they will be serving, and it would not be possible without the dedication of helpful chaperones and nurses.

Your role is an important one, as you will share the responsibility for ensuring that students have a safe and rewarding experience.

This guide will provide you with all the information you'll need to effectively help manage our students and have a great time, including: what to expect from the trip, travel guidelines and expectations of both you and the students. At the end of this guide, you'll find all the relevant documents you'll need to complete prior to departure.

Before leaving, make sure:

Your passport is valid and up-to-date (it cannot expire within 6 months of our return date), and you have a travel visa if necessary (not required for U.S. or Canadian passport holders).

You have consulted a doctor who has declared you fit to travel and you are up-to-date on any recommended vaccinations (the most common for this region are Typhoid and Hep A). We require all chaperones be fully vaccinated against COVID, including a booster.

You have informed a School the World staff member of any serious allergies or dietary restrictions.



WHAT TO EXPECT

During this trip, students will be building a primary school and/or a playground in a community living in extreme poverty.

- At the end of the trip, the entire community, the local Mayor, and representatives from the Ministry of Education will participate in an official Dedication Ceremony to celebrate the partnership between all stakeholders in the funding and building of this project.
- The Central American children will start learning in the new school the following week!

Throughout this 8-9 day adventure, you will be acting as an extension of School the World staff, and as such, you are expected to set a good example and manage the students *safely and responsibly* (more information in the “Your Role” section).

- You will also be acting as a **resource** for students to come to with any questions and concerns.

Safety is our top priority for every component of the trip.

- Your group leader (STW staff member) is trained in our safety procedures and can answer any questions you have regarding preparedness.



WHAT TO EXPECT (CONT'D)

As a chaperone, you will be helping to oversee our student travelers. The ratio of adults to students is a minimum of 1:6.

For transportation purposes, you will be assigned a specific van and a smaller group of students.

- You, and any other adults In your van, will be responsible for a **group of on average 10 students** that will be traveling with you every day to and from the community.
 - We do not allow students to switch vans unless it is determined by School the World staff that there is a relevant need (the only day that vans may stray from our everyday schedule is when students may attend a cultural activity of their choice).
 - It is important that the students in your van pick up after themselves and carry any trash out with them (more information regarding van ride expectations and responsibilities in the “Your Role” section).



As a chaperone, you will be expected, above all, to model appropriate behavior for the students.

- As such, chaperones are **prohibited from** using tobacco, alcohol, or inappropriate language and may not possess any form of weapon or administer medication to students.
 - If you have any questions about these policies, please consult a School the World staff member for more information.

To manage your student group as efficiently as possible:

- **Account for all students before departing every location;** if there is anyone missing or in the wrong place, notify a staff member immediately and locate the student. We will take attendance each time we load the vans and prior to departing any location.
- **Go over proper travel behavior with your students.** Students are required to wear seatbelts and not move around when the van is driving. We encourage students to get to know each other during their van rides; however, if certain language or conversations are not appropriate, please address this. Our drivers typically let the students play their own music. We ask that any music played is free from profanity.
- **Make sure you are available to the students for the duration of the ride.** They may have questions throughout the trip. If you do not know the answer, let them know that you will ask a staff member and report back. Should a student need to pull over at any time, please alert driver and he will inform the rest of group/vans to stop.



YOUR ROLE (CONT'D)

In addition to overseeing a small group while traveling, you will be responsible for the **safety and supervision of the entire service group** along with the other chaperones, second to all School the World Staff.

Regarding all students, keep these expectations in mind:

- **Proper student behavior is mandatory.** Should there be a behavior problem with one or more of the students, report the problem to a School the World staff member so they can properly address the issue. We do have Incident reporting procedures we will follow.
- **Familiarize yourself with the trip's itinerary** and be prepared to answer any questions that students have about the day's activities. Additionally, be prepared to discuss the day's events with students.
 - Staff and chaperones will meet each night to make sure we are all on the same page and to discuss any information each adult should be aware of (health, incidents, etc.).
- **Familiarize yourself with safety and emergency procedures.** Know where the First Aid kit is, know how to reach the on-call nurse and be aware of all emergency phone numbers and relevant medical information (should you need to use them).
- **Know the proper dress code** for each part of the trip (at the community, in the city, etc.) and enforce students' adherence to the dress code, if needed.

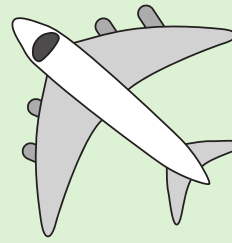
YOUR ROLE (CONT'D)

Regarding all students, keep these expectations in mind:

- **Never let students wander on their own;** they should always be in groups of two or more in airports, community, etc. Students are not allowed to leave the hotels after we come back each evening unless we are traveling somewhere as a group.
- **Be alert** and available to the students and staff. You should technically plan to be on call 24/7 although STW staff and nurses will be the front line.
- If you learn any sensitive information about students, whether through School the World staff or through the student themselves, **the information MUST be kept confidential.**
- **Be flexible** in case the day's itinerary changes unexpectedly! We do not anticipate changes, but anything can happen and we all will adapt as needed.
- **Should a student become ill** and a nurse determines s/he is unfit for the day's activities, you may be asked to stay back at the hotel while they rest.



TRAVEL TIPS



You will be meeting our staff & the students at the airport on the day of travel. As such, you will be jointly responsible for guiding students through the travel process.

Keep in mind the following suggestions and guidelines to make traveling as smooth and stress-free as possible.

In General:

- Be aware that **some students may have anxiety** about flying or airports in general, and be prepared to mitigate their fears with gentle reassurance.
- **Not all students will be familiar with airport and security procedures.** Plan to go over the security screening process with anyone who is unfamiliar. The TSA website ([tsa.gov](https://www.tsa.gov)) has helpful information on security screenings that you can refer to, if needed.

Check-in:

- Students will need **assistance with check-in**, please be available to assist however STW Staff may need.
- **Advise students to remove all liquids and metals** from their person/carry-on (to avoid delays in screening process).

Security Checkpoint:

- Before entering the security checkpoint, **make sure all students have their boarding passes and passports.** Advise students to put their passports immediately into their backpacks following security.
 - An STW Staff member will collect student passports once settled in Guatemala/Panama/Honduras.

TRAVEL TIPS (CONT'D)

In the Airport:

- **When traveling through the airport, one staff member / chaperone should always be leading** and one should always be bringing up the rear to keep students organized in a single group.
- **Never let students wander by themselves through the airport;** they should always be in groups and/or supervised by a chaperone or staff member.
 - Should they travel off in groups to buy food, use restroom, etc. make sure that everyone is aware of the exact meeting time at the gate.
 - A chaperone will always stay behind at the gate should any students need assistance.
- **Emphasize the importance of appropriate behavior in the airport.**

On the Plane:

- Our travel agent typically books all the seats together and **students need to sit in the seat that was assigned to them.** They are only allowed to switch seats with another School the World student. They cannot sit in a random seat next to a friend.
 - Some students are anxious about traveling and ask to sit next to a friend. Prior to boarding, coordinate the switch among the other student next to specific friend.
- **Keep a general eye on all students throughout the flight,** making note of where they are seated.



AND LASTLY, GET EXCITED FOR AN INCREDIBLE TRIP!