

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS **ABOUT A CFCA MISSION AWARENESS TRIP**

Q. How can I sign up to go on a Mission Awareness Trip?

A. To reserve a place, please complete the enclosed application form and return it along with a \$100 non-refundable deposit to: **CFCA, MAT Coordinator, One Elmwood Ave., Kansas City, KS 66103**. We recommend submitting your application at least eight weeks prior to the trip date. Spaces are limited, and they fill up quickly. Upon receipt of your application and deposit, we will send you a confirmation letter. CFCA reserves the right to cancel any trip, in which case your deposit will be refunded. For trips to India and African countries, more time is recommended due to the need for visas, immunizations and other arrangements.

Q. How much do the trips cost?

A. The cost for trips to Latin America is \$350. The cost for trips to India, Africa, and the Philippines is \$650. The price is the same for all individuals, including children. This amount covers food, lodging and most in-country transportation. **Please note that airfare to and from the destination country is not included.** A \$100 non-refundable deposit is due with your application and the final balance is due four weeks before departure.

Q. Do I need a passport and visa to travel?

A. A valid passport is required to enter all countries. Be sure your passport does not expire just before, during or soon after your trip. Certificates of naturalization, birth certificates, driver's licenses, and photocopies of these or other documents are NOT considered acceptable alternative travel documents. U.S. citizens will need a visa to visit India and any African countries. Visas may be obtained by mail from the countries' embassies or consulates, typically located in Washington, D.C. Fees vary for visas depending on type and country. Many countries charge an entrance and/or departure tax or require the purchase of a tourist card.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, you will need to investigate any additional requirements for entering the country you are visiting.

Q. Do I need immunizations?

A. No immunizations are required, except for trips to Africa, but you should contact your local health department for their recommendations and the locations of clinics providing immunizations. It is always a good idea to have a tetanus booster every ten years. In addition, we recommend that you visit with your doctor about personal health concerns or any vaccinations you may need for traveling. Any recommendations regarding medical matters must be made by qualified medical personnel. Research the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to find out more about vaccinations: <http://www.cdc.gov/>



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800-875-6564 913-384-6500 www.cfcausa.org

Q. Is it safe to travel in the country I will be visiting?

A. Travel in any foreign country involves some risk. Safety is always a priority on the Mission Awareness Trips. You will travel to and from all sites chauffeured by CFCA hired drivers. The group will travel together as much as possible. Tourists everywhere must exercise common sense about carrying and showing money and valuables and about how to safeguard against pickpockets

Q. How far in advance should I make flight arrangements?

A. You are advised to make flight reservations as soon as you receive confirmation from CFCA that your registration has been completed. Book well in advance, as fares increase closer to the departure date. This is especially important around Christmas, Easter and Spring Break. If you plan to use frequent flyer miles, you may need to make your air travel arrangements many months in advance. Frequent flyer reward seats are limited on each flight.

Q. How do I know when to schedule a flight?

A. The first and last dates listed for each trip are the days that travelers will depart from and will arrive back in the U.S. For trips to Bolivia, Chile, the Philippines, India, and African countries, you will arrive at your destination 1-2 days after your departure due to overnight travel and passing through multiple time zones. We prefer that you arrive and depart before evening; however, we know that this is not always possible

Q. Who should I contact to make travel arrangements?

A. It is the responsibility of trip participants to make their own flight arrangements with a travel agent, the airlines or via the Internet. Sandy Gonzalez at Vista Travel, (800) 537-5066, may also be contacted regarding airfare. She is familiar with our programs and trip schedules, and she uses a discount consolidator whenever possible.

Q. Will I see my sponsored child or aging friend?

A. Everything possible is done to arrange a visit with your sponsored child or aging friend. Due to the possibility of unforeseen circumstances such as illness, natural disasters, washed out roads, etc. we cannot make guarantees. However, uniting sponsors with their sponsored friend is one of our highest priorities during a Mission Awareness Trip. In most countries, the sponsored children will be brought to you at the retreat site. Unfortunately, it is not always possible for you will visit your sponsored friend's home. Many variables make visiting a sponsored friend's home quite complicated. Your sponsored friend may live many hours away and possibly across the country. Lack of well-maintained roads and difficult terrain are factors that make visiting their home a safety concern. We consistently keep the safety of the sponsors a high priority. We have found it is a much better option to have the sponsored friends, and if possible, members of their family, travel to a central location to see the sponsor. Sponsored friends and their families look forward to these visits.



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Q. Am I allowed to bring gifts for my child or aging friend?

A. Yes. However, keep in mind that your presence is a gift in itself and the sponsored friends look forward to meeting you and simply spending time with you. You may be interested in bringing a gift for your child or aging friend and also for their family, if you wish. Very basic items are appreciated. Upon enrollment, you will receive a list of suggested gift items. We prefer that you don't bring candy and toys for the other children. There will be too many children around during project visits to have enough for all of them.

Q. Are interpreters provided?

A. Yes. Interpreters are provided for the group to help sponsors communicate with their sponsored child or aging friend.

Q. Is the trip appropriate for children?

A. Parents would need to determine the needs of each child. The Mission Awareness Trips can be filled with activity. Schedules can be rigorous especially in the Philippines, Africa, and India. There is not much rest time and it may be hours before it is possible to return to the groups lodging. If a child is flexible, enjoys meeting strangers, can handle long days, a daily change in routine and is willing to try new foods, they would probably enjoy a Mission Awareness Trip.

Q. Are family, friends and non-sponsors allowed to participate in a Mission Awareness Trip?

A. Most Mission Awareness Trips are open to anyone. A parent or guardian must accompany minors.

Q. What are the accommodations like?

A. All Mission Awareness Trip participants stay in safe, simple accommodations, usually in some type of retreat center or hotel. There are not always private rooms for individuals, but rooms for couples and families are available. Running water for showers is readily available; however, it may be unsafe for drinking. Simple, nutritious meals will be served onsite. The project will provide bottled drinking water throughout the trip.

Q. What will the food be like?

A. You will have the privilege of trying a variety of foods. Be prepared to eat some very different foods. However, the project coordinators take into consideration our typical meals when planning dining arrangements. All food will be prepared with purified water. We do not recommend eating outside of the location where you will be staying, except when with the group. Meals are often served at a later hour than most Americans are accustomed to eating. We recommend bringing snacks such as fruit and nut mixes, raisins, granola bars, etc. as you may want something to eat between scheduled meals.



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Q. What is a typical day like on a Mission Awareness Trip?

A. A typical day includes morning prayer followed by breakfast. The group then travels to nearby subproject sites to meet the project coordinators, sponsored children, aging friends, and families. Frequently there is a reception with songs, folkloric dances, games or other activities. There may be some free time built into a few days. On many trips, you may visit nearby tourist attractions, sometimes with the sponsored children. The group will have lunch either at the subproject or retreat site. Daily Mass is available in some locations. At the end of the day, there often is time for reflection and group discussion. There may be video presentations, history lessons, explanations about the local government, or testimonies from sponsored families. More detailed itineraries will be sent to you shortly before your departure.

You will travel to many locations and will have a rigorous schedule. The in-country travel may include covering long distances at slow speeds, often on rugged terrain. These trips can be physically demanding. Participants walk each day, sometimes long distances in very warm weather. You may need to walk on uneven surfaces such as dirt paths or cobblestones, and on stairs. Be sure to bring comfortable walking shoes. We try to keep the needs of our sponsors in mind, and we try to accommodate any special needs or physical limitations. If you have trouble walking long distances, please inform the trip coordinator. We encourage participants to rest when necessary. During the trip, if you feel that you need to opt out of group activities in order to rest, we welcome you to do that, if it is possible.

Q. When will I receive a finalized itinerary for the trip?

A. When your application has been processed, CFCA will send a confirmation packet to you, including additional forms and information that will be helpful in planning your trip. One week prior to departure, you will receive a pre-departure packet which will include a trip itinerary, a list of emergency numbers you may share with your family, and a name tag for you to wear upon arrival at the airport. With this name tag, CFCA personnel will be able to identify trip participants at the airport. The trip itinerary is subject to minor adjustments as circumstances during the week may change.

Q. Will there be an opportunity to shop?

A. While the emphasis of our Mission Awareness Trips is not tourism, we will provide you with some shopping time, as the schedule allows. Each area we visit is unique. In certain countries, it is more convenient to shop than in others.

Q. Who should I contact if I have more questions?

A. The Mission Awareness Trip Coordinator can be reached at 1-800-875-6564 or (913) 394-6500 if you have any questions. More information about CFCA is available at our website: www.cfcausa.org.



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