



What to Bring

...and What NOT to Bring on your Mission Trip to Nashville

Five things to remember about the City:

1. The people who live in the city come from many different places, backgrounds and cultures. Different isn't good or bad.
2. The people of the city work hard at preserving their cultures...they are proud to be Korean, Thai, Salvadoran, Honduran, Mexican, African-American, etc.
3. You will bring your suburban/rural culture with you. You will naturally look, act and talk like suburban/rural people.
4. Sometimes these cultures are in conflict. Please remember to respect the cultures of the city that are different from your own. Do not make fun of or denigrate the dress, actions, food, or music of the cultures with which you come in contact. This also includes different religious groups, ethnic cultures, sexual orientations, political views, etc.
5. The city is inconsistent. We ask that dress be modest and appropriate to the situations you will be in. This is regardless of the attire that you may see others wearing who are not part of CSM. Many work sites that deal with food require tennis shoes or other closed shoes with non-skid soles – no open-toed or open-heeled shoes such as sandals, flip-flops or clogs.

Things to bring with you to the City:

- An attitude of FLEXIBILITY! In ministry, God sometimes sees fit to change things! And remember, Nashville is in the **Central Time Zone!**
- Please make every effort to use VANS for your group's transportation. Make sure there is room for your CSM City Host in your vehicle – in the front seat of course!
- Sleeping bag, pillow, towel, wash cloth. Twin air mattresses (optional).
- Personal toiletries (shampoo, soap, towel, toothbrush, sunscreen, etc.)
- Your Bible, a pen and a journal.
- A water bottle.
- DRESSCODE: (to be followed at ministry sites as well as around the housing site). Be prepared for painting (just in case). We serve in all weather so be prepared with layers and rain gear.
 - Jeans/long pants, t-shirts, closed-toe shoes with non-skid soles
 - Some ministry sites are OK with shorts, fingertip length or longer. Most prefer jeans/long pants.
 - Shirts that expose the shoulders (tank tops, halter tops, cap or spaghetti sleeves, muscle shirts, etc.) may NOT be worn.
 - Shirts must be long enough to raise arms without exposing midriff or underwear.
 - Sandals or flip-flops may be worn around the CSM housing site and shower but be prepared to change.
 - If your group is serving with a day camp, bring your bathing suit (one piece, modest cut for girls) just in case you go swimming with the kids.
- Church clothes (only if you will be in Nashville on Sunday morning): Please check with your CSM City Director because different churches that we visit have different requirements.

LEADERS: Alarm clock.

Things NOT to bring to the City:

- Radios, iPods, Gaming Systems, TVs, etc. (We prefer that students not bring cell phones. If you do, they must be left at the housing site during the day).
- Anything that is not replaceable or has significant value like expensive jewelry.
- A lot of money (CSM t-shirts and water bottles are available for \$5 to \$20).
- Bandanas and college or professional team **jerseys**. Baseball caps are discouraged.
- Drugs, alcohol, knives, guns, weapons of any kind, etc.
- If planning VBS activities, please be creative and **do not** use the "Salvation Bracelet" craft, as the colors can easily be misinterpreted and offensive to certain cultures.



Rules and Guidelines

Nashville

Your trip begins with a positive and accepting attitude. Even if you have been to Nashville before, you will be seeing, meeting, and experiencing new and different things during your stay with CSM. This is not your hometown. The customs, language, food, and thinking are very different from your own. Thinking about the inner-city this way will help you prepare for your time of service. Safety is very important, and the following guidelines are to help you understand the culture of the city a little better.

1. While in the city, you will be guided by CSM staff – your host. These are people who know the city and how to make your experience safe and meaningful. Please listen to CSM staff at all times and do not question decisions on the spot (wait until you are out of the immediate situation).
2. It is important to stay in groups at all times. Use the buddy system! Students should never be outside of the CSM housing site without a “buddy.” Remember, always make sure your host knows where you are.
3. There can be no yelling, whistling, gesturing, etc. out of the buildings or vehicles. This can be misinterpreted and may be dangerous, as well as rude.
4. Money should be handled out of sight so we do not create temptation for anyone. Most of the time, students will not need money, however, the host will let them know if this changes. In addition, we ask that group members not give money to anyone. We wish to be a blessing and not a burden. If you think you have uncovered a legitimate need, let your CSM host know. If time permits, we can purchase a bus ticket or meal for someone. However, do not make promises before consulting your host. We do not wish to make false guarantees.
5. You should always be aware of your surroundings and not so wrapped up in conversation that you don't realize what is going on around you. The best way to avoid danger is to not walk into it.
6. People will not be offended if you don't smile and wave at them. Avoid looking people in the eye because this can be seen as a sign of physical or sexual aggression. However, if someone speaks to you, or if you are speaking to someone, it is okay and encouraged to look them in the eye.
7. Bathrooms and showers are a luxury not an expectation. Showers may only be available EVERY OTHER DAY. Due to limited space, we ask that your showers be five minutes maximum.
8. Lights out will be at 10:30 p.m. each night.
9. Photographs can take away from your effectiveness to do ministry. However, cameras are allowed at some of the sites. Many people do not want their picture taken and some children can not be photographed for legal reasons. Also, some pictures can not be posted on the internet. If you want to take a picture, first check your motivation, then check with your CSM host.
10. Part of your CSM trip is experiencing the many cultures of the city through eating at ethnic restaurants. The people at the restaurants are very proud of their food (it's an important part of their culture) so please be open to trying everything and be polite.
11. The key to inner-city ministry is FLEXIBILITY. We have a schedule prepared for you, but God probably has something different in mind. If plans change, just accept it as God's guidance for your trip and go with it.
12. It is important to remember that wherever you go, you are an ambassador for Jesus Christ. It will be quite obvious to city residents that you are not from the area, and many can also tell that you are with a church. Therefore, you will want to behave well towards each other and strangers. In addition, public displays of affection between men and women (students, leaders, and/or CSM staff) such as teasing, roughhousing, and backrubs are inappropriate when with CSM and especially at ministry sites.