VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

IMPACT missions

Christ's Love in Action

PARENT MANUAL

"We love because he first loved us."

1 John 4:19

A Guide for Parents and Families

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Letter to Our IMPACT Families 3

You're on the Team. What Now? 4

The Journey Your Student Is On 6

You Are Part of This Too 7

What IMPACT Is 8

Your Role: Partnering With Us 9

Growing Alongside Your Student 11

Safety Is Our Top Priority 15

Supporting Your Student Before They Go 17

Supporting Your Student While They're Away 18

Supporting Your Student When They Return 19

Documents to Sign and Return 20

IMPACT Parent Letter Acknowledgment 21

IMPACT Financial Agreement 24

Permission Slip 25

Medical Consent Form (If Applicable) 26

Passport Information Page 27

A Blessing for You Too 28



FROM OUR STAFF

A Letter to Our IMPACT Families



Dear Parent(s) and Guardian(s),

Thank you for entrusting your student to us for this IMPACT experience. We don't take that trust lightly, and we're doing everything we can to make this season a blessing not just to your student, but to your entire family.

Everything we do in this program flows from one truth: we love because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). Before your student serves anyone or crosses a border, they are already fully loved. IMPACT exists to help them live from that love, not toward it, as they learn to seek first His Kingdom (Matthew 6:33) through cross-cultural service, real relationships, and hands-on learning.

When we think about what we most want for your student, it always comes back to relationships. On these trips, we watch young people choose again and again to include rather than exclude, to serve rather than compete, to love and show compassion rather than protect their own comfort. That's not how the world usually works. It reflects the beauty of the Kingdom and how relationships were always meant to work. These connections aren't a distraction from the mission; they are the mission. In them, students catch a glimpse of the joy, freedom, and beauty of life as God intended.

Some of the places we serve carry injustice and poverty that go back generations. We can't fix that in a week, and we're honest with students about that: this trip was never about them being the hero of the story. What we can do is show up as guests and learners, be fully present, love without holding back, and stay humble enough to learn from people who have much to teach about faith and resilience. We can help students see what God is already doing in these places, long before our team ever arrived, and invite them to join His story rather than write their own.

Thank you for partnering with us in this. Your child is stepping into something bigger than a single trip; may it bless them and strengthen their faith in a positive way.

Our prayer for your family:

Our hope is that God would disturb us, our sense of identity, our understanding of how we fit in our community and world, and how we live out our calling to love the people of this world just as Jesus has loved us. Amen.

With gratitude and hope,

The IMPACT Team
Mark Lodewky, Marcus Martinez, Raven Coker

NEXT STEPS

You're on the Team. What Now?

Congratulations, your student is on the team. Between now and departure, your student moves through training, the Encounter phase of the journey, and your family has a few practical things to take care of. This section is your one-stop for all of it: what's due, what's coming up, and where you fit in.

LOOK AHEAD

There's a Required Documents section later in this manual

It's where you'll find every form that actually needs to be signed and turned in, including the Permission Slip and Medical Consent Form, each one numbered 1 through 5 so it's easy to track. Look for it toward the back of this manual.

Checklist: What We Need From You

A few essentials, right away. We may add more items as departure gets closer; we'll always let you know directly.

- ☐ Obtain a valid U.S. passport, not expiring within 6 months of the trip's return date. Processing can take a month or more, so start now. Full instructions and current processing times are at travel.state.gov.
- ☐ Make trip payments by the schedule below. A separate, secure payment link will be emailed directly to you; please don't send payment through this manual.
- ☐ Financial aid is available if cost is a barrier. See General Support & Care under Your Role: Partnering With Us to learn how to apply; you don't have to navigate this alone.
- ☐ Sign and return the notarized Minor Travel Consent form. Instructions and the specific form will be sent to you separately; a notary is required for all minors.
- ☐ Turn in all required paperwork. The exact forms to sign and submit, including the Permission Slip and Medical Consent Form, are covered in the Required Documents section later in this manual, numbered 1 through 5 for easy reference.

Payment Schedule

All payments are made through a separate secure link, sent directly to your email, not through this manual. A reminder email and the payment link will go out ahead of each date below, timed to that specific payment. Valley Christian is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization and your donation is tax deductible within the guidelines of U.S. taxes, please keep your email donation receipt as your official record. We'll send it to you upon successful completion of your donation. If cost is a barrier for your family, need-based scholarships are available; see General Support & Care under Your Role: Partnering With Us.

Due Date	Mexico- Baja Trips	All Other Trips
November 9	$300 deposit	$300 deposit
November 20	$300	$500
December 18	$300	$500
January 29	$300	$500
February 26	$300	$500
March 26	Final Balance	$500
April 16		Final balance due

Training Meeting Dates

Your student already has these dates. Meeting dates and times are listed in your student's Student Manual, so there's one schedule to check instead of two that could fall out of sync.

A Few More Things to Prepare

- Any required medical release, consent, or emergency contact forms, signed and returned by the deadline your leader provides.
- $100–150 in small U.S. bills for airport meals and souvenirs, kept in a secure pouch rather than a pocket or backpack exterior.

What to Pack

The full packing list lives in your student's Student Manual, not duplicated here, so there's one list to check against instead of two that could drift out of sync. See Supporting Your Student Before They Go for how you can help without packing it for them.



Communication While They're Away

Leaders send a family update most nights the team is traveling, including highlights and photos. Each team also carries a contact sheet with lodging information, leader phone numbers, and emergency contacts, including the nearest U.S. Embassy.

Direct contact with your student will be limited. Recreational phone use is limited so students can be fully present, with essential family communication allowed under leader direction. Trust the nightly update: uninterrupted silence usually just means your student is safe, busy, and fully engaged.

Safety

Full safety protocols are covered next, in Safety Is Our Top Priority. The list shows we do our due diligence and take protocols seriously.

Help Your Student Engage Early

- Attend every team meeting. That's where the team actually becomes a team, not just a group that happens to be on the same flight.
- Learn the story of the ministry partner and community they're serving. Ask their leader for background, so your student arrives already invested, not just informed the day they land.
- Get familiar with our service philosophy now, in Growing Alongside Your Student, so training conversations build on something instead of starting from zero.

THE JOURNEY

The Journey Your Student Is On

Here's the shape of what your student is being trained in, so you can recognize it as it happens, before, during, and after the trip.

Phase	Focus	What's Happening in Them
Pre-Trip	Preparation	Encounter: knowing who they are in Christ, and why they're going
During	The Experience	Formation: real relationships, active faith, growing character
Post-Trip	Reflection & Return	Mission: trained and ready to keep serving, wherever they are

Every student is somewhere different on their journey with Jesus when they start this program, uncertain, curious, committed, or already living it out, and that's exactly where we want to meet them. We're not expecting a finished product. We're asking for one honest next step.

You Are Part of This Too

You are trusting us with something precious. We don't take that lightly, and this manual is our attempt to include you in it, not just inform you about it.

> ***"We love because he first loved us."***
>
> 1 JOHN 4:19

Everything your student is about to learn on this trip, humility, service, biblical compassion, trusting God to provide, flows from a single truth: they are loved first, before they do anything to earn it. That's true for you too.



Meeting Your Student Where They Are

Every student on an IMPACT team is somewhere different on their journey with Jesus. It's exactly where we want to meet them, and where we hope you will too.

Uncertain	Open to Faith	Committed to Jesus	Practicing Mission
Not sure yet what they believe, and that's honest, not disqualifying.	Curious, asking real questions, and starting to lean in.	Has said yes to following Him, and is growing in that.	Following Jesus is becoming a lifestyle, not just a belief.

Wherever your student lands on that list, this trip has a next step for them. We're not expecting every student to arrive as a fully formed disciple with all the answers. We're asking them to take one honest step forward from wherever they actually are.

If your student is uncertain or still asking hard questions, here's something worth knowing: researchers who study what makes teenage faith last have found that doubt isn't what actually damages it. Silence is. If your student voices doubt or a hard question at home, that's not a warning sign. It's often the healthiest thing they could do. Meet it with openness, not alarm, and you'll be giving them exactly what their faith needs most.

WHAT IMPACT IS

Our Purpose

IMPACT exists because we are loved first. As part of Valley Christian's Spiritual Formation program, we lead students into life-changing, cross-cultural mission experiences where they encounter Jesus and are transformed by His love. Through humble service, meaningful relationships, and hands-on learning, students grow in Christ, discover their God-given gifts, and learn to seek first His Kingdom (Matthew 6:33).

I.M.P.A.C.T.

Everything in the program is organized around one word:

- **Identity in Christ:** your student learns who they are by first learning how loved they are.
- **Mission-Minded:** a growing heart for what God cares about, not just their own corner of the world.
- **Purposeful Relationships:** practicing love, through their team and the people they serve.
- **Active Faith:** faith that shows up in service, prayer, and everyday choices.
- **Christlike Character:** growth in humility and integrity, especially under pressure.
- **Trained to Serve:** a posture meant to shape their life well beyond this one trip.

None of this is about performance. It's about response, to love your student has already received.

Encounter, Formation, Mission

You'll see this language throughout the manual, because it's the shape of the whole experience. Before the trip, it's Encounter: your student grows in knowing who they are in Christ, and why they're going. During the trip, it's Formation: real relationships, active faith, and character shaped in the field. After the trip, it's Mission: trained and sent to keep serving, wherever they are. This trip was never meant to be a single moment. It's one part of a much longer story.

YOUR ROLE

Partnering With Us

You're not a bystander in this, and it's not just your student's experience. It's a family experience. We pray the whole process, praying, preparing, waiting, and welcoming home, becomes a season of real connection for your whole family. Below are the ways your partnership matters most. No family will do all of it, and that's fine; even a little of each goes a long way.

Prayer



This is the single most important thing you can do. Pray for your student by name, for their team, their leaders, and the people they'll serve. Consider committing to pray daily once training begins, not just the week before departure. During training, you'll receive a short weekly email connected to what your student is learning that week, with specific ways to pray and support them; watch for it, and use it. Once the trip itself begins, a day-by-day prayer guide is waiting for you in Supporting Your Student While They're Away.

Engagement in the Learning Process

Set aside real time each week to ask your student what they're learning, about serving, about culture, about themselves, and actually listen, even to the half-formed answers. You don't have to read the training manual to be part of it; Growing Alongside Your Student gives you a short window into each part of their training, with real questions you can bring home.

Encouragement

- Ask your leader whether they'll deliver letters partway through the trip. If so, write one before departure, sealed for a specific day; the halfway point tends to land well.
- *Keep any direct messages brief, warm, and forward-looking,* exactly as described in Supporting Your Student While They're Away. A short note that says you're proud of them goes further than a long one that makes them miss home.

Learn the Story of the Ministry Partner

Ask your student's leader about the community and ministry partner your team is serving. A little background, who they are, what they've been building, what your student's team is stepping into, gives you something specific to pray toward and talk about, instead of general well-wishes. It also mirrors what we're asking of your student: to arrive already invested, not just informed the day they land.

Celebrate the Return

- Show up for the welcome-home gathering if your team has one; the send-off and the return deserve equal attention.
- Ask good, open questions in the weeks after, and let the story come out slowly instead of expecting it all in the first conversation home.
- Support whatever interest your student has in continuing to serve locally. The goal was never a single trip. It's a lifestyle, and you get to help it take root.

General Support & Care

- Attend the parent meeting and any whole-team gatherings you're invited to; these are where you'll meet your student's leaders and start building the same trust your student is building with their team.
- Help your student personalize and send their support letter, but let them write it in their own words; their voice is the point, not a polished version of it.
- *If cost is a barrier for your family,* need-based scholarships are available; ask your student's leader or IMPACT staff. If your own family's fundraising is going well, consider quietly helping close the gap for a teammate who's behind, or giving toward the general scholarship fund through the finance department.

None of this is required, and no family will do all of it. But every one of these is a way of saying the same thing: I'm not just sending you. I'm with you.

Commitment

This isn't a form to sign and turn in, just a posture worth considering for yourself as this season begins: prayer, engagement, encouragement, and presence, before, during, and after this trip. I'm not just sending my child. I'm with them in it.

DISCIPLESHIP

Growing Alongside Your Student



You don't have to read the training manual to be part of this. Your student's pre-trip training moves through six parts: identity, foundation, team, story, culture, and readiness. Below is a short window into each one, with a few questions you can bring home. Use them at dinner, in the car, before bed, whenever a natural opening shows up. You're not quizzing your student. You're giving them a chance to think out loud with someone who loves them.

Part One: Getting Started

Early training is about identity, prayer, and starting to raise support. Your student is learning they don't have to arrive as a finished disciple; wherever they are in their faith is exactly where God wants to meet them.

- Where would you say you are in your faith right now, uncertain, curious, committed, or already living it out? There's no wrong answer.
- What are you most excited about for this trip? What's making you nervous?
- Who's praying for your team right now? Want to pray together for them?

Part Two: Our Foundation

This is the deepest part of the training, and it's worth understanding yourself, not just asking your student about. Two ideas sit at the center of it.

Service vs. Justice. Your student is learning there's a real difference between doing something kind for someone and pursuing lasting change alongside them:

Service	Justice
Can quietly make someone feel like a rescuer, doing for others what they assume is needed.	Remembers God is the Rescuer, and we're invited to join Him, alongside people from every background.
Can unintentionally create “helpers” and “helped,” without meaning to.	Restores dignity: everyone gives and receives, as equals.
Is something done for others.	Is something done with others, as partners and co-laborers.
Is often one moment: meaningful, but brief.	Becomes a lifestyle: faithfulness that outlasts a single trip.
Looks for a quick, visible result.	Embraces the long road, trusting that real change takes time and prayer.
Goal: help someone.	Goal: remove what's standing in the way of someone flourishing.

Already in the city. Your student is learning that Jesus is already present in every community we serve, and that our first job isn't to bring Him somewhere new. It's to notice what He's already doing and join it: entering with a posture of learning rather than answers, and partnering with people who have long-term engagement in that community, long before our team arrives and long after we leave.

Learn, Build Relationships, Work. In that order. Your student is being trained to listen and understand first, invest in real relationships second, and only then serve alongside our partners, so the work becomes an expression of relationship, not a substitute for it.

Dignity, not deficiency. Poverty isn't just about money. Your student is learning that it's rooted in broken relationships, with God, with self, with others, and with creation, and that the people they'll serve often carry a depth of faith, gratitude, and resilience that's every bit as instructive as anything your student brings. They're not just going to give something. They're going to receive something too.

- Your training talked about the difference between service, doing something for someone, and justice, doing something with them. What stood out to you about that?
- What have you learned about why the people you're serving might have as much to teach you as you have to offer them?
- Is there a hard question, about suffering, poverty, or fairness, that this week's training left you sitting with?

Part Three: Becoming a Team

Your student's team is learning to actually become a team: naming their strengths, handling conflict directly, and signing a covenant to each other before they ever leave.

Handling conflict, biblically. Your student is being trained in a specific pattern for conflict, drawn from Matthew 18: go directly and privately to the person first, don't let frustration turn into gossip, listen as much as you talk, and loop in a leader if it stays unresolved. It's the same pattern that works at home.

Unity as witness. Jesus prayed that His followers would be one, "so that the world may believe" (John 17:20-23). Your student is learning that how their team treats each other, especially when it's hard, is itself a testimony. Before they ever go overseas, they're practicing that with their own teammates.

- What's something you're good at that your team will need? Where do you tend to hold back?
- How did training describe handling conflict on a team? What would that actually look like for you?
- What part of the Team Covenant stood out to you most?

Part Four: Telling Your Story

This part is about your student getting honest about their own story with Jesus, and learning to talk naturally about their faith with someone who asks.

Their story, then the Gospel. Your student is working through a simple Before, How, After structure to tell their own story honestly, not performed or polished. Then they learn to explain the gospel in its simplest form: we were made for relationship with God, sin separated us, Jesus died and rose to make a way back, and the response is grace received through faith, not earned.

The 3 Circles. This is the practical tool: a simple way to sketch Design, Brokenness, and Gospel on paper, in the dirt, wherever, so a real conversation about faith can happen naturally instead of feeling forced. Your student is also learning they go "not by might nor by power, but by [the] Spirit" (Zechariah 4:6); they're not responsible for how anyone responds, only for being faithful with the conversation.

- Would you tell me your story- the before, how, and after? I'd love to hear it.
- What feels hardest about the idea of talking about your faith with someone you just met?
- Where have you seen God's power show up in a way that clearly wasn't about you?

Part Five: Engaging Culture with Humility

Your student is learning to enter someone else's culture as a guest and a learner, not an expert, and to expect some disorientation, including homesickness, along the way.

Ethnocentrism, named. Your student is learning to recognize a trap almost everyone falls into without realizing it: assuming your own culture's way of doing things is simply "normal," and everything else is a variation on it. Naming it ahead of time means less judgment and more curiosity in the moment.

Reading a new culture. Two simple frameworks help: some cultures run "hot" (relationships and hospitality matter more than the clock) and others "cold" (schedules and structure matter more); some are time-oriented (the schedule rules) and others event-oriented (the moment rules, even if it runs long). Neither side of either framework is more godly than the other, just different, and knowing this ahead of time helps your student read a new culture instead of just feeling frustrated by it.

- What surprised you in training about how other cultures see time, hospitality, or relationships?
- Homesickness is really common on these trips. What usually helps you when you're missing home?
- What's one question you're hoping to ask someone in the community you're going to serve?

Part Six: Ready to Go

The last stretch is practical: packing, health, safety, and a final checklist before departure. It's also a good moment to talk about what your student is carrying emotionally, not just in their suitcase.

- What part of getting ready feels overwhelming right now? Let's go through it together.
- Have you finished your support letter thank-yous and signed your Team Covenant?
- What are you praying for as departure gets closer?

SAFETY

Safety Is Our Top Priority

Your student's safety is our top priority. Every protocol below exists because we've thought carefully about what could go wrong and planned for it in advance. You don't need to memorize this list. You just need to know it's real, it's taken seriously, and your student is in careful hands.

Trusted, Long-Term Partners

- We work directly with in-country missionaries and ministry partners we've built long-term relationships with, not one-off contacts made just for this trip.
- Every host we serve alongside has experience hosting short-term teams like ours.

On the Ground

- Every adult leader is a Valley Christian employee, screened and confirmed through our standard hiring and background check process. On the rare occasion a local youth pastor or another adult outside those employment parameters joins a team, we confirm that with parents in advance.
- A minimum ratio of one adult leader for every ten students is required on every trip.
- Our staff and ministry partners arrange and vet transportation, lodging, and meals in advance.
- Every team carries a full emergency plan and a clear chain of contact.
- We register our trip with the U.S. State Department's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program before departure.

Documentation

- Every student needs a valid passport and a notarized parent/guardian travel letter; we keep copies of both on file.
- Every student is covered by travel insurance for the duration of the trip.

Communication

- You'll receive a nightly update email while your team is traveling.
- Our phone policy limits recreational use so students stay fully present; essential family communication is always allowed through a leader.
- *Before departure, you'll receive a detailed trip document* with emergency information, trip-specific leader contacts, emergency protocols, and anything else you'd need if you ever had to reach someone quickly.

Behavior & Conduct

- Every student and leader operates under the Valley Christian Code of Conduct; we send full details before departure, and we have zero tolerance for behavior that puts a student or the team at risk.
- We share dress code expectations in advance, so packing is simple and consistent with the culture we're serving.

Emotional & Relational Care

- Leaders are trained to watch for friction, exclusion, or a student quietly struggling within the team, not just to enforce the code of conduct. Leaders actively shape team culture, not something left to work itself out.
- Leaders check in with students individually throughout the trip, not only when a problem is raised. If your student is having a hard time with a teammate or feeling left out, we'd rather catch it early than wait for it to become a bigger issue.

Health & Medication

- Our leaders carry basic over-the-counter medication for the team.
- Any prescribed medication stays with your student, clearly labeled, with a completed medical release form on file; our staff coordinates directly with our medical point of contact for anything beyond the basics.

Immunizations & Health Prep

Recommended and required immunizations vary by destination and change over time, so we don't prescribe a single list here. Please check with your family physician or a travel clinic well before departure, and follow whatever guidance you and your doctor are comfortable with for your family. The CDC's destination-specific travel health pages (cdc.gov/travel) are a good starting point for current recommendations.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What happens if my student gets sick or hurt?** Leaders carry basic first aid and over-the-counter medication, and every trip has a plan for reaching local medical care. Travel insurance covers anything beyond that, and we'll contact you directly if it's ever serious.
- **What if my student is homesick and wants to come home early?** Leaders are trained to work through homesickness with your student rather than default to an early return.
- **What if my student has friction with a teammate or feels left out?** Leaders are watching for this, not just waiting for it to surface. They check in with students individually and address team dynamics directly, the same way they'd address any other safety concern.
- **Can I reach my student if there's a family emergency at home?** Yes. Before departure, you'll receive a detailed document with trip-specific emergency information, leader contacts, and protocols. Contact the trip leader directly, and they can reach your student quickly, even with the phone policy in place.
- **What if my student loses their passport or other documents while traveling?** Leaders carry copies of every student's passport and travel documents, and we coordinate directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy if a document is lost, so it's routine, not a crisis.
- **What if there's severe weather, unrest, or another safety concern at our destination?** Our staff monitors conditions at every trip location and adjusts plans, including canceling a trip if necessary, well before it would put a team at risk. We'd contact you directly if this ever applied to your student's trip.
- **My student has a food allergy or dietary restriction. Will that be handled?** Let your student's leader know as early as possible. We plan meals in advance with our ministry partners, and leaders carry that information throughout the trip.
- **What if I don't get a nightly update one night?** Connectivity is limited in some locations, so an occasional missed night isn't a sign anything is wrong. If there's ever a real concern, you'll hear directly from a leader, not through a missed group email.

BEFORE THEY GO

Supporting Your Student Before They Go

- Pray with your child, not just for them. Make it a regular rhythm as departure gets closer.
- Let them write their own support letter. It's tempting to help too much; their voice, not a polished version of it, is the point.
- Ask genuine questions about what they're learning in training, and actually listen to the answers, even the half-formed ones.
- Help gather documents and plan logistics, but let them pack their own bag. Owning their preparation is part of what the trip is meant to build in them.
- Encourage them to build their own prayer team, adults and friends who'll commit to praying for them by name through the whole trip.

WHILE THEY'RE AWAY

Supporting Your Student While They're Away

Trust the team of adults caring for your student. They've trained for this, and they have eyes on the ground that you don't.

- **If you hear your student is homesick, resist the urge to rescue.** An early-return promise, even a well-meaning one, can unintentionally signal that discomfort should be avoided rather than worked through. Homesickness is normal, and it almost always passes within a few days.
- **Keep any communication warm and forward-looking.** Save the heavy emotional conversations for when they're home. A supportive, brief message helps your student stay present instead of pulled toward missing you.
- **Route concerns through the leader, not just your student.** If something feels off, reach out to the trip leader directly; they're positioned to actually help in the moment.

A Prayer Guide for the Week

Each day of the trip, your student reads a short devotional built around one theme. Praying the same theme from home, even without knowing exactly what their day looked like, is a real way to walk this with them.

Day	Theme	Pray This
1	Loved First	That your student would serve this week out of being loved, not out of trying to earn it.
2	Sent, Not Needed	For humility, that they'd notice what God is already doing there rather than trying to be the hero.
3	Learning to See	For patience and curiosity as they encounter something unfamiliar, instead of judgment.
4	True Compassion	That they'd receive from the people they're serving, not just give to them.
5	Unity Is Your Witness	For their team: genuine love, patience, and unity, especially when everyone's tired.
6	Your Story, His Gospel	For courage and peace in any conversation about faith, and grace for the ones that don't happen.
7	Sent to Keep Going	That whatever posture they're building this week would come home with them, not stay at the airport.

However, this week goes for your family; remember this is often as formational for you as it is for your student. Let it be.

WHEN THEY RETURN

Supporting Your Student When They Return

Coming home is its own kind of culture shock. Expect some whiplash, for your student and honestly for your family's rhythm too.

Five Common Ways Re-Entry Feels

Almost every student lands in one or more of these places. None of them are wrong to feel, and most students move through several, not just one.

- **Fun:** simply glad to be home, in their own bed, with their own food and people.
- **Flee:** missing their team fiercely, and feeling lonely or isolated even surrounded by familiar faces.
- **Fight:** frustrated with the comfort or indifference of life back home, and pushing back against just slipping into it.
- **Fit:** tired of fighting it, and sliding back into normal life, sometimes faster than you'd expect.
- **Far:** feeling distant from God, wondering if they somehow left Him on the trip.

Occasionally a student also comes home feeling quietly superior to peers who didn't go; if you notice that, it's not alarming, just something worth naming gently together, the same as any of the five above.

Your student's Student Manual includes an extensive Coming Home section, with more detail on what re-entry feels like, journaling prompts, and questions for reflection. You'll receive a copy of these same re-entry resources once your student returns, so you can walk through it together if that's helpful.

- Give them time before expecting a tidy, dramatic story. Some of the most meaningful processing happens slowly, over weeks, not in the first conversation home.
- Ask open questions, and be ready to hear both the good and the hard. Real re-entry includes both.
- Encourage continued connection to their team and leaders in the weeks after, and support any interest in ongoing local service. The goal was never a single trip; it's a lifestyle.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Documents to Sign and Return

Before your student can travel, five documents must be read, understood, but ONLY ONE needs to be returned to Valley Christian Schools. They are numbered below in the same order they appear on the pages that follow, so you can track your progress as you go.

Documents to Read and Acknowledge with One Signature

The following three documents must be read in full. Rather than signing each one separately, you will provide a single signature at the end of the Activity Permission Sheet (Document 3), acknowledging that you have read and understood all three.

- ☐ **1. IMPACT Parent Letter Acknowledgment:** outlines the risks associated with travel and the School's safety procedures and expectations. Read only; no separate signature.
- ☐ **2. IMPACT Financial Agreement:** outlines trip costs, the payment schedule, and the refund policy. Read only; no separate signature.
- ☐ **3. Activity Permission Sheet and Release and Waiver of Liability:** grants permission for your student to participate and includes the Acknowledgment of All Required Documents. ***This is the one page that must be signed and returned for the three documents above.***

4. Medical Consent Form (If Applicable)

If your student will carry or need any medication, over-the-counter or prescribed, during the trip, a separate Medical Consent Form must be completed and signed. This form is submitted independently of the Activity Permission Sheet. If your student needs no medication while traveling, this form is not required.

5. Passport Information Page

A clear photo or scan of your student's passport information page must be submitted on file. This item does not require a signature.

How to Submit These Documents

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

IMPACT Missions learn@vcs page LINK HERE

Click the Permission Slip Submission button

Your IMPACT trip leader will confirm specific deadlines for each document. If anything is missing as departure approaches, we will reach out directly.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

IMPACT Parent Letter Acknowledgment

REQUIRED TO READ: DOCUMENT 1 OF 5

Dear Parent(s) and Guardian(s):

As you know, Valley Christian Schools' IMPACT Missions Program has been provided an incredible opportunity to travel domestically and internationally, including to [insert country or region]. While Valley Christian Schools (hereafter the "School") is excited about this opportunity for students to minister to and experience other cities and cultures, the School remains concerned about possible safety issues and wants to advise parent(s)/guardian(s) of its general concerns, as well as notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of the precautions the School is taking to address those concerns. The School also asks parent(s)/guardian(s) to reinforce with their children that we are visitors and to be respectful of other cultures and standards while visiting, and to remind their children of the importance of adhering to expected standards of conduct and behavior.

Trip Risks

As with any form of travel, there are always associated risks. These risks are magnified when travel is outside the United States, particularly given the current political climate. The School advises parent(s)/guardian(s) that it makes no representation or warranties regarding the safety of your child and cannot guarantee the safety of any child participating in this trip. The School specifically warns parent(s)/guardian(s) that there is a risk of permanent injury, disability, death, terrorist activity, kidnapping, arrest, plane and car accidents, separation from the group, disease, sickness, lack of adequate medical care or treatment, and other similar dangers which could result in a child failing to return from the activity or trip, as well as permanent injury and death.

Student Safety

In an attempt to address these possible concerns, the School has formulated general recommendations and procedures to facilitate, to the extent possible, a safe and enjoyable travel experience. These are provided for informational purposes only and should not be construed as a guarantee, representation, warranty, or contract. We hope the following recommendations and procedures will help ensure a pleasant, safe experience for everyone:

- Valley Christian Schools intends to have an adult-to-student ratio of no less than one adult for every ten students.
- Valley Christian Schools will meet with students and families to review the safety issues and dangers posed by the trip, and the general expectations for the trip.
- For international trips, Valley Christian Schools will be in contact with the U.S. State Department, and other agencies as applicable, for guidance on traveling in the destination region, and will incorporate their suggestions and recommendations.
- Each adult attending the trip and monitoring students on behalf of Valley Christian Schools will be provided a cellular phone capable of working internationally, for communication with [IMPACT Trip Leader], the trip administrator, and with other supervising adults.

- Before taking students to any local areas, the School will check with partner missionaries, hotel staff, and others regarding the safety of the area and where students may safely be permitted limited time to sight-see in groups.
- Where opportunities for breaking into smaller groups are provided, students will remain in groups no smaller than four, and activities are planned so that every student can personally contact their supervising adult within ten minutes.
- If students are permitted to break into their defined groups, they must remain in a specific defined area and will have periodic check-in times with their assigned adult; adults will also be monitoring the defined areas.
- At each destination, students will be provided a contact information sheet with lodging information, a cellular phone contact for an adult or adults on the trip, and information for the nearest U.S. Embassy, in the event of separation from the group.
- The School will plan time in the schedule, periodically in the morning or evening, for briefing on trip issues, plans, and other concerns that may arise that day or the following day.

A note on cellular service: many U.S. cellular phones do not work internationally. Parent(s)/guardian(s) who want their child to have personal cellular phone access on an international trip are encouraged to check with their cellular service provider regarding international coverage and take appropriate action before departure.

Student Supervision

- Valley Christian Schools intends to have adult supervision while conducting activities. If the team breaks into groups, an adult will be assigned to each group. Students are allowed to pair off when inside the security of airports during extended layovers.
- If students are permitted to break into their defined groups to do work, adults will also be monitoring the defined areas.

Student Behavior

- Students will be instructed not to, under any circumstances, wander off individually or attempt to “sight-see” individually.
- Students will be instructed that they must remain in a specific defined area and will have periodic check-in times with their assigned adult.
- IMPACT leaders review the IMPACT student behavior expectations prior to the trip.
- Students are instructed to avoid the appearance of impropriety and to avoid doing anything that could be criminal, or construed as criminal, in nature.
- Failure to adhere to defined parameters of student behavior and trip expectations will result in loss of future privileges and/or a requirement to return home at the expense of the parent.

Medication

- All medication must have the Medical Consent Form filled out with appropriate signatures for over-the-counter and prescription medication, and be turned in to the IMPACT trip leader at the start of the trip in the original bottle or prescription bottle.
- No student is allowed to carry their own medication unless they are traveling by air or crossing a border, at which time they may be required to carry it.
- Leaders, when appropriate, will provide over-the-counter medications unless specifically asked not to do so.

Document Security

- A copy of the student's emergency information will be with the IMPACT trip leader at all times.
- On international trips, the School will collect the passports of students not accompanied by a parent at each destination and keep them in a secure location. Students will be instructed to keep a copy of their passport on their person at all times.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

- VCHS recommends that students leave expensive electronic devices at home.

Communication While on the Trip

- One trip leader is in charge of parent communication. An email update will be sent out by the IMPACT trip leader each day.
- We encourage students not to use their phones while on IMPACT trips, except for necessary parent communication.

In order to participate in the IMPACT Missions Program, students must adhere to existing VCHS policies. Disciplinary records will be considered, and a student may not be able to participate on the trip if disciplinary issues exist or occur. Additionally, if VCS feels unable to secure a student's well-being while on the trip, the student will be asked not to attend.

The School wanted to follow up with parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing regarding the potential dangers involved and the efforts taken by the School to address those concerns. Any information provided herein is for informational purposes only. The School strongly encourages parent(s)/guardian(s) to address these potential dangers with their children and to instruct them on the necessity of remaining in groups, avoiding wandering off from the group, and following the instructions of those in charge on the trip.

We ask parent(s)/guardian(s) to be prayerful for the trip and the experience of the entire group. If you have further concerns regarding the above information, please contact your IMPACT trip leader.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

IMPACT Financial Agreement

REQUIRED TO READ: DOCUMENT 2 OF 5

Initial Trip Deposit

All IMPACT trips have high demand. In order to secure a spot and make a commitment to the trip, each participant must submit their deposit on time.

Trip Deposit Deadlines & Paperwork Deadlines

Winter and Spring trips follow the same payment schedule; Summer trip payment plans will be sent separately. See the Payment Schedule above. Please read and understand the benefit of financial aid, and apply if needed; see General Support & Care under Your Role: Partnering With Us.

IMPACT Refund Policy

The initial deposit of $300 is non-refundable after November 24. Once the deposit payment has been received, VCS purchases a non-refundable trip on behalf of the student. If a family desires to be removed from the trip after November 24, the IMPACT Program will seek to replace the student with someone on the waitlist. If a substitute student is identified, the original family is still responsible for the airline change fees (approximately $200). If a replacement student cannot be found, the parent/guardian is responsible for the entire cost of the trip.

IMPACT Fees as Charitable Donations

All fees for mission trips qualify as tax-deductible charitable donations. VCHS collects and tracks all missions-related fees through our Extend the Gift program, which generates receipts for parents to use to track their deductible contributions.

Fundraising

We believe that raising resources for this experience is another opportunity for God to use this trip in a meaningful way. We encourage all students to write a letter to distribute to friends and family, even if your family decides to pay for the trip and you only ask for prayer. We view raising support as a ministry opportunity in its own right, one that usually becomes a blessing to everyone involved. This network of people may become a support system for the student, sharing in the blessings of the trip. Students are then able to share their experience, and all that God has done, with this extended community.

Your acknowledgement: rather than sign a separate page for this document, you'll confirm you've read and understood it, along with the IMPACT Parent Letter Acknowledgement, in one place: the acknowledgement section at the end of the Permission Sheet. That's the only signature page we need back for these three documents.

"Do it heartily as to the Lord." Col. 3:23

SUBMIT THIS PAGE

REQUIRED TO READ AND SIGN: DOCUMENT 3 OF 5

International Overnight Travel

Activity Permission Sheet and Release and Waiver of Liability

I give my permission for _____ to participate in the following Valley Christian Schools' activity and in consideration for my child being permitted to participate in the program, trip activity or activities, hereby agree to the following:

Details of Activity: IMPACT Missions Trip

Acknowledgement of risks: I acknowledge that I have been advised and understand the risks and dangers associated with international travel, which include, but are not limited to, personal injury, death, permanent disability, disfigurement, terrorist activity, kidnapping, arrest, plane and car accidents, separation from the group, disease, sickness, lack of adequate medical care or treatment, and other similar dangers which could result in my child failing to return from the activity or trip as well as permanent injury and death.

I agree that Valley Christian Schools is not the guarantor of my child's safety, cannot guarantee my child's safety while on the trip, and has made no representation or warranty to me regarding the safety of my child. I agree on my behalf and on behalf of my child to assume the risk of any damage, injury, or death which I or my child may sustain arising in any way from my child's participation in this program, activity, or trip and its related activities.

Release and Waiver of Liability: I hereby agree, both on my behalf individually as a parent and on behalf of my child, to hereby release and to identify and hold harmless Valley Christian Schools, its agents, officers, directors, and employees, and any other organization co-sponsoring the program, trip, or activities, from and against any and all Injuries or damages which I or my child may suffer for any claims of negligence or alleged negligent act(s) or omission(s) arising out of or in any way connected with my or my child's travel or participation in the program, trip, event(s) or any activities related thereto. **I have read this paragraph and understand and agree that this is a Release and Waiver of claims both on behalf of myself and my child, and that I am relinquishing rights by signing this agreement and have done so voluntarily.**

I agree that if my child disregards the rules and regulations put forth by the directors and staff, he/she may be sent home prior to the planned conclusion of the trip. The cost of the early return will be paid by me, and I also understand I will not be refunded any money for the balance of the trip.

Any dispute between the parties arising out of this agreement shall be submitted to binding arbitration before a retired Judge in Santa Clara County under the arbitration provisions of the California Code of Civil Procedure. This arbitrator shall be selected by mutual agreement, or if that is not possible, shall select this arbitrator by the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court. Each party shall bear their own costs and expenses of the arbitration and an equal share of the arbitrator's fees. Any arbitration shall be subject to the same statutes of limitations as would apply in the absence of an arbitration provision. THE PARTIES IRREVOCABLY WAIVE THE RIGHT TO A COURT OR JURY TRIAL.

I have read, understand, and agree to the above provisions and sign form individually, on behalf of my child.

Acknowledgement of All Required Documents

By signing below, I confirm I have read and understood each of the following:

- ☐ IMPACT Parent Letter Acknowledgement
- ☐ IMPACT Financial Agreement
- ☐ This Permission Sheet and Release and Waiver of Liability

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

"Do it heartily as to the Lord." Col. 3:23

REQUIRED TO READ: DOCUMENT 4 OF 5

SUBMIT THIS PAGE IF APPLICABLE

Medication Consent Form

☐ High School ☐ Jr. High School ☐ Elementary School

Prescription or Non-Prescription

Student Name _____ Date _____

Name of medication _____ Purpose of medication _____

Date to begin medication _____ Date to end medication _____

Amount to be given _____ Times to be given _____ Times per day _____

Possible adverse reactions _____

Special instructions for storage of medication _____

Special instructions for administration of medication _____

Physician's Name _____ Physician's Phone _____

Administrative Statement

Any pupil who is required to take, during the regular school day, medication prescribed for him by a physician, may be assisted by the school nurse or other designated school personnel if the school district receives (1) a written statement from such physician detailing the method, amount, and time schedules by which such medication is to be taken and (2) a written statement from the parent or guardian of the pupil indicating the desire that the school district assist the pupil in the matters set forth in the physician's statement.

The student is to bring the medication to school and must be delivered to the school office first thing in the morning in the **original container.** All medication must have the student's name clearly marked on the container. **This form must be completed before medication will be administered.**

Parental Consent for Administering Medication

I give Valley Christian Schools personnel the permission to give my child, _____ (print first and last name) the medication (listed above). As the parent or legal guardian, I hereby agree to release Valley Christian Schools from all liability, claims, damages, harmful effects, or expenses arising out of the administration of the medication and/or for any adverse effects or reactions attendant to the administration of the medication to the aforementioned student.

_____ _____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature Home Phone/Work Phone Date

VC015 Rev. 7/14

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Passport Information Page

REQUIRED TO READ: DOCUMENT 5 OF 5

SUBMIT A PICTURE

Submit a clear photo or scan of your student's passport information page: the biographic data page containing their photo, full name, passport number, and other identifying details.

- The passport must be valid for at least 6 months past the trip's return date.

How to Take a Clear Photo

- Lay the passport flat and open to the photo page in good, even light. Avoid a direct flash, which glares off the laminated page.
- Shoot straight on, not at an angle, with all four corners visible and nothing cropped, blurry, or covered by a finger or shadow.
- **Confirm these are legible:** photo, full name, passport number, nationality, dates of birth/issue/expiration, and the two machine-readable lines at the bottom.



Example: photo, name, passport number, and all dates clearly legible, all four corners visible.

How to Obtain a Passport

If your student does not yet have a valid passport, start as early as possible; processing can take a month or more depending on demand and the service level selected. Full instructions, current processing times, required forms, and fees are available directly from the U.S. Department of State at **travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports/how-apply.html**.

Need it faster? If your timeline is tight and you're interested in expedited service, we recommend **CIBT Visas** (**cibtvisas.com**), a private expediting service that can help secure a passport on a shorter timeline for an additional fee.

Your IMPACT trip leader will confirm exactly how and where to submit this photo. No signature is required for this item; it's simply kept on file so we have accurate information in case of an emergency abroad.

CLOSING

A Blessing for You Too

This manual has mostly talked about your student. But watching your child grow in faith, sacrifice, and service isn't something that happens to you from the sidelines. It can be a blessing for you too!

> ***"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth."***
>
> 3 JOHN 1:4

May this trip be an opportunity for your child to live into your hopes and prayers for them. You will see them be courageous, sacrifice, serve, and work toward something greater than themselves. The fruit of you and your family's love and support over the years has prepared them well.



Let this season stretch your own faith too. Pray more than you think you need to. Trust more than feels comfortable. Watch for what God does in your student, and let it remind you what He's still doing in you.

A Few Verses for This Season

"Impress these commandments on your children... talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road." (Deuteronomy 6:6–7)

"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

Thank you for trusting us with your student, and for being far more than a name on a permission slip. You are part of this too.

1 John 4:19 · We love because he first loved us.