

RETURNING HOME IS OFTEN DIFFICULT FOR TRIP PARTICIPANTS.

They return different than when you sent them. They have just experienced something that in many ways can only be understood by those who were on the trip with them. We know you are excited to have them back and that you look forward to hearing about their trip.

Here are a few things that you can do to help your child transition back into everyday life and get the most out of this experience.

- ▶▶ Give your child time and space to process.
They have just finished an intense week and they are still trying to understand and process all they experienced. When you begin asking lots of questions right when you see them, they have a tendency to shut down or give simple one word responses. Don't expect to get answers to all the questions you have the minute they get home...but do ask them how the trip was and allow them to share as much or as little as they want.

- ▶▶ Be prepared for post-mission trip withdrawal.
Your child just spent a week living in community with a team and spent a significant amount of time each day serving others. It is natural for them to mourn the loss of this time with their team and feel lonely. They will likely also be experiencing reverse culture shock (they got used to doing things a certain way on the trip) You may be expecting to spend a lot of time with them after they were gone for a week or two, but they will probably want to spend time with other trip participants if possible. Give them time to readjust.

- ▶▶ Don't just ask what they did.
Ask about what they learned about God and themselves? Here are a few suggestions:
 - In what ways did you see God work in you?
 - In what ways did you see God work through you?
 - What did you learn about who God is through the trip?
 - What is something new you learned about yourself?
 - How did you see God answer prayer during the trip?
 - What are some things that you think will change here as a result of what you experienced there?
 - Are there any plans I can help you with to apply the things God taught you on your trip?
 - How can I be praying for you now that you are home?

▶▶ Continue processing with them.

We have seen students get insights months after the trip when something they experience triggers a memory from the trip. Throughout the next 3-6 months continue asking your child about the differences they are experiencing and the things they are learning since their trip.