

## THINGS TO REMEMBER WHILE IN HAITI

1. **Protect your passport at all times.** Make two copies prior to departure. Give one copy to the group leader, keep the second copy in a safe place separate from your passport and checked luggage.
2. **The most common problem is petty theft.** Please leave expensive jewelry at home; do not carry expensive items in your hand or on your person. Carry your backpack in front of you in crowded areas. Leave passports and other documents, credit cards, and cell phones at the housing site. Team lockboxes are available; please bring padlocks to secure these boxes. We cannot be responsible for stolen or lost items.
3. **Do not leave the group without permission from the team leader and HOM staff.** Always travel in groups of two or more team members; never travel without a Haitian escort. MICECC leaders and HOM staff will make final decisions regarding team travel and activities.
4. **Please listen to the team leader and HOM staff when he/she is giving directions, they are ultimately responsible for your safety.** Ask questions, if you do not understand instructions or information provided, others in the group may be confused as well!
5. **As representatives of a Christian based organization and out of respect for the Haitian culture, please refrain from conduct viewed as offensive:** such as public displays of affection, consumption of alcoholic beverages, tobacco use or “colorful” language in the clinics, schools, churches and nearby communities.
6. **Dress modestly!** No tight fitting, short or revealing clothing in the schools, churches and communities. Be mindful of wearing t-shirts with provocative language or images. Knee length dresses or skirts are recommended for women, long pants are encouraged for women and men on work sites due to safety concerns. Scrubs are appropriate for medical team members in the clinic. Knee length shorts are allowed in Terre Noire after hours and for site seeing. It is inappropriate to sunbath in any area except at the beach or a pool. Even teams staying off campus are representatives of HOM, it is important that we do not distract the people from the message we want to convey, and to respect cultural and church customs.
7. **There is NO safe public water in Haiti. Never drink water from the tap,** always use the water provided for drinking, taking medication and filling water bottles. Do not rinse your toothbrush with water from the sink and try to avoid getting water in your mouth while showering. Carry anti-bacterial wipes to clean the contact surfaces of soda bottles, etc. Always check the source of ice prior to using it in a drink.
8. **Be careful what you eat!** Food served at Terre Noire or hotels is safe, but **never** eat from street vendors.
9. **Please let your team leader know if you become ill while traveling or working in Haiti.** Your first aid kit should contain appropriate antibiotics and medicines. Additional help is available if such a need arises.
10. **Your ultimate purpose for being in Haiti is to share the love of God.** Get to know our Haitian hosts. Meet people with a smile, a handshake and a “**bon jou.**” (good morning).
11. **Feel free to take photos, but be respectful of the people around you.** Honor the people’s right to privacy. Always ask permission before taking someone’s picture. Be considerate of patients in the clinic, they may be reluctant to say no for fear of not receiving treatment. Be subtle with your photo taking; sometimes people photographed expect money for this privilege.
12. **Keep mind that flexibility is vital; each trip is a unique experience when one considers the individual needs of the Haitian people and the dynamics of each volunteer team.**

13. Do **not share personal information such as email addresses or phone numbers. We discourage individual gifts, including gifts to children.** If you wish to give an individual gift or donation, talk with the MICECC leaders.

14. **Be cautious and refrain from petting Haitian dogs or cats even if they appear friendly.**

**NOTE ON HAITI APPROPRIATE DRESS WHILE WE ARE IN HAITI** [ I specifically contacted Arnold in Haiti to ask him about the appropriate dress for when we are working, at the Blanchard Compound and church services. The reason for my asking is there have been some years when they let us wear shorts while working. So I wanted to clear this up. Please see his response below]:

#### **DRESS CODE**

1. Dress must be modest and conservative: no tight, short or revealing clothing allowed.

a. Women must wear knee length skirts or dresses with sleeves in the churches, schools. Long pants or scrubs are acceptable on the work site and clinic.

b. Long pants for men are required in the church, schools, work sites. No short pants on work sites!

Collared shirts are appropriate for church; ties appreciated but not required.

c. Plain short-sleeved T-shirts preferred, no clothing with sexual or profane images or language.

d. No flip-flops in church, tennis shoes or other closed toe shoes are required for construction and medical sites for safety reasons.

e. Knee length shorts for men and women allowed in the compound only after church and school hours and for site seeing. Capri or crop pants are also acceptable after hours and for site seeing.

f. Gym, spandex or short shorts, short skirts and dresses, sundresses, camisoles, tank, halter, low cut or tops that expose the stomach are NOT appropriate in Haiti, do not bring!

As a side note, we have lock boxes in the dorms for our guests to keep their passports, money or anything valuable locked. We ask that you bring some locks down with you.

