

Note on Technology:

We are asking students to leave home any electronic devices such as iPods, tablets, video games...etc. We also would encourage them to leave cell phones at home as well. If a student needs their phone on the trip, our plan will be to collect these phones and offer the students a chance to call if necessary when it best fits into the schedule. We will also offer our staff phone numbers for you to use if you have an emergency or need to check in. We know that you want this trip to be the best experience for your kids, so here is our purpose behind this policy and what we hope to offer to your student.

Keeping devices safe:

Because we are staying in tents there is no way that we can guarantee that these devices will be able to stay dry, secure and damage free. We know that many of these devices are quite expensive and our camp setup does not lend toward caring for those items well. In addition, we will not have electricity available at our campsite, so keeping the devices charged is typically a nuisance and a distraction.

Protecting from content:

There will be a wide range of students on this trip with varying levels of maturity, development and standards for media. These devices open up a whole world of content from music, to movies to games. With this in mind, we want to protect students from inappropriate content that they, or you as their parents, would not be comfortable with them seeing.

Leading them to communicate directly:

We want to encourage the students on this trip to embrace responsibility. One way we desire to see this happen is for the students to communicate their needs to their leader and to help own the solution. Having a cell phone easy at hand can offer them the shortcut of going to you first without communicating their needs to our leaders and staff. Not only do we need to be aware of these needs to care for them well, we also want them to learn to be assertive and take responsibility for their needs.

Helping them be present and engaged:

This is last and most important reason for developing this strategy for technology. All of the above concerns distract the students from the core goals of this trip; stretch their comfort zones, to build relationships, and experience God. A student may be checking out with an iPod on the bus and avoid the chance to build relationships or they may be getting too focused on responding to text messages that they tune out our speaker and miss the message. Technology, though very useful, is such a distraction in our culture, and on this trip we desire to offer students a disruption from that world that will allow their hearts to be fully available for the experiences, relationships and love of God that will be richly offered on this trip.