

Missions to Mexico

Taking Photos and Video

Pictures and video will play a very important part in your mission trip. It will be the main way you'll remember your trip and report back to your church about all you have done. However, this important tool, if not handled wisely, can harm your work and the people who you'll be serving. Following are some suggestions that will help you use this important vehicle in a healthy manner:

1. We'll need to be careful the first few days of ministry so we don't come across as a paparazzi show. If a lot of pictures are taken at the same time, you could be interpreted as just being tourists, or it's all about you and they are just a side show. They could also feel like you came to see how "bad" they have it and want to just "see" their poverty. To them they'll feel like they're a "show" you've come to see. However, after relationships have been developed, it will be interpreted just the opposite. They will be honored and delighted that you want to take a photo of "them."

There is an exception to this guideline which is the following: during the VBS playtime you can take photos and then show them to the children on your cameras. They love to see themselves and the setting is more of a fun time. However, during formal ministry times, we ask you to follow the above mentioned suggestions.

2. The first few days designated media persons can be appointed (as long as they exercise discretion), who can take photos and video for your presentation to the church, or copies for group members. We would ask however, that the media persons take photos and video in such a way as no one would take notice.

3. When you are out and about as a tourist would be, and not in a ministry related activity, you can take pictures as you please.

We realize this places a burden on you as everyone will be excited to take photos. However, for the good of those you'll be serving, and so you'll have maximum ministry impact, we have established these suggestions. In some more severe cases, ministry opportunities have been closed because photos have gotten into the hands of some activist in the states and have caused problems. Some Mexican organizations, therefore, don't want to run the risk of being exposed and in some cases are leery about allowing Americans to enter certain areas to minister. However, our ministry has a good reputation and with your help we can protect it.

We thank you in advance for your sensitivity to this important area. If you have any questions please feel free to ask us.