



International YMCA
5 West 63rd Street
New York, NY 10023
Main: 212-727-8800
Toll Free: 888-477-9622
Fax: 212-724-2334
www.internationalymca.org

YMCA Global Teens

Participant Manual

Revised March, 2009



Personal
Growth

Broadening
Horizons

Meaningful
Service

Cultural
Exchange

 **New York City's YMCA**
We're Here for Good.

Staff Team

Chad Nico Hiu

Director – Teen & Outbound Programs

Office: 212-875-4328

chiu@ymcanyc.org

Lori Tay

Asst. Director – Teen & Outbound Programs

Office: 212-875-4334

ltay@ymcanyc.org

Welcome On-board!!

You are about to embark on the journey of a lifetime!!!

Participation in the YMCA of Greater New York's Global Teens program is an honor. By accepting this honor, the YMCA of Greater New York and the International Branch have placed our faith in you to serve as cultural ambassadors for our YMCA and for young people from all across the United States. This is a responsibility not to be taken lightly.

As a Global Teen, you have the opportunity to truly step outside your comfort zone and build relationships and friendships across borders, oceans, and continents. It is said that it is only through stepping into another culture or country that we can truly begin to understand and appreciate our own. The education and experience you gain through Global Teens will no doubt propel you to even more wonderful experiences in your future.

That being said, you must do your part. Your behavior, attitude and conduct during this program orientation, pre-trip bonding activities, air-travel and during your trip in your host country will determine the type of experience you have, and the level of responsibility you are given in your Global Teens experience. While your Group Leaders are ultimately responsible for you during your trip, this is a teen program, so you must do your part for this to be successful.

There are many issues that may cause apprehension, including those of safety and well-being. We hope to eliminate any uncertainties you may have with the information contained within this manual. Please review this participant manual in detail, and be sure you understand every aspect of your role as a Global Teen and the responsibilities and expectations we have of you as a member of this program.

Congratulations and have a safe and meaningful experience!!

Sincerely,

Your Global Teens Staff Team

YMCA Youth Program Philosophy

The YMCA prepares youth for success in life through programs that build self-esteem and teach important life skills. The YMCA believes that building competence and confidence in youth is accomplished by enhancing literacy, encouraging service, and teaching healthy behavior and positive values. The YMCA seeks to prevent violence, criminal activity, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and problems in school through its youth programs. The YMCA's four core values - Respect, Responsibility, Honesty and Caring- are woven into the fabric of all program activities and interactions with participants.

Overall Program Principles

YMCA Teen Programs are designed to incorporate important developmental principles, including:

- Fostering social responsibility
- Increasing self-reliance
- Improving health, fitness and nutrition
- Promoting social and emotional growth
- Improving cognitive functioning
- Providing a full range of recreational activities
- Exposing participants to a range of cultural experiences
- Improving reading, writing and speaking skills
- Building an appreciation for higher education as an important and preferred post-high school option

The YMCA of Greater New York's Global Teens Program

The Global Teens program is a dynamic youth program that offers teens the opportunity to engage in the powerful journey of global discovery through a short-term immersion experience abroad, and a year-long program, (pre-travel and post-travel) consisting of training, reflection and local service projects. This program increases participants' awareness of social issues at the local and international levels through:

- An action-packed in-country itinerary, exposing participants to a culture other than their own.
- Participation in community service projects in New York City and the host country.

The Program aims to empower teen participants by enhancing their abilities to affect positive local, national and international change. This is accomplished through providing teen participants with in-depth and first-hand experiences with local and international social issues, through both international service and a sustainable "legacy project" at a local organization in the U.S.

Before traveling abroad, each group will participate in an orientation exposing them to certain social issues faced in NYC, and preparing them for a service project with an organization in NYC that deals with those issues. The service project will be organized and facilitated by the group leaders on **Saturday, April 25th**, Global Youth Service Day. While abroad, participants will work on a related service project, organized by the host YMCA. After returning from their travels abroad, participants will continue to work on a local NYC service project sometime in **October or November 2009**. The participants will work with a local organization to complete a local service project, which should leave a tangible impact on the NYC community.

Detailed and thought-provoking training and reflection (before and after each service project) are key components to maximize the impact for teen participants during each phase of service. Teens are educated on the statistics, causal factors, and historical backgrounds of the social issue they are working to address, and they are provided tools they can use to realistically and

powerfully become advocates for social change.

The Group

There will be 10-15 teens and 2 group leaders per group. All trips are 10 days to 2 weeks in length during which the teens will be challenged to try many different things and stretch themselves in ways that will develop and enhance their leadership skills. This will be a tremendous and exciting learning experience.

Group Leaders

Each YMCA Global Teens travel group is led by two trained, experienced and inspirational YMCA trip group leaders. At least one leader of each travel group is a YMCA of Greater New York staff person. All group leaders are experienced travelers of at least twenty-three years of age, committed to and experienced in working with young people.

All leaders receive training in CPR and First Aid, and at least one leader will possess current certifications in Child/Adult CPR and Community First Aide in each travel group. All group leaders are also required to submit to a pre-employment/assignment drug test and background check in accordance with YMCA of Greater New York Human Resources Policies. Group leaders are put through a meticulous screening process to ensure they are the right "fit" to lead this multi-faceted and complex program, and to be responsible for the lives of the teens they will supervise.

In addition to the YMCA Global Teens' group leaders, each overseas host YMCA will provide at least one dedicated program staff to support and assist in the safe and successful operation of the program. This host YMCA "coordinator" plays a major role as they act as the bridge between the host country YMCA and the Global Teens' travel group.

Accommodations

Accommodations can vary from country to country, but primarily consist of YMCA facilities, community schools and hostels/dormitories. Teens may be able to visit typical homes of the host country through day time activities and planned interactions. If teens feel unsafe, insecure or uncomfortable about anything during while abroad, s/he should immediately inform the Global Teens' group leaders. Teen participants are responsible for their own belongings at all times while abroad.

Orientation

Prior to departure, participants will have the opportunity to meet their peers, work on life skills, participate in an NYC area service project and establish personal and group goals for their travel experience. There will be three full day orientation sessions and additional monthly travel group meetings leading up to the summer travel period. The dates of these smaller, group orientations will be determined by each of the groups and their leaders to make it as convenient for everyone as possible. The purpose of these brief orientations is to build group cohesiveness, establish ground rules, and learn about the host countries. *Full program trainings are mandatory for all participants.*

****At least one legal parent/guardian of each teen MUST attend one Global Teens parent orientation.**

Cultural Presentation

Group leaders will work with their participants during the orientation process to plan a short cultural presentation which will serve as an introduction to life in the United States for the host countries. The hosts are as eager to learn things about the United States as we are to learn about them and their culture. The presentation should be generic and able to be refined for a specific audience once abroad. Prospective audiences could be a school group/class or the national board of

directors of the host YMCA.

Departure and Arrival Information

All travel groups will meet at the International YMCA offices and depart together to their designated departure airport. Detailed information about travel plans will be given to the teens' families closer to the time of departure. Parents who wish to see their teens off at the airport will be given the information they need to do so. *Parents/guardians (or their designee) are expected to meet the participants at the airport on the return date.* If an alternate plan is necessary, Parents/guardians must communicate these arrangements beforehand to the International YMCA staff. No teen will be released on their own unless written consent is provided by a legal parent/guardian.

Journal

Each Global Teens group will work on a group journal. Assisted by their leaders, every individual teen will be responsible for at least one daily entry in the group journal. The resulting group journals will serve as a great way to remember their adventure as well as a tool in their leadership training experience. Group participants will be responsible for a thought of the day, keeping trip records and coming up with night chat topics.

Night Chats

The evening will be a time for reflection. Night chats are usually conducted in a dimly lit room to allow for a relaxing and non-threatening atmosphere. Group members choose a topic of discussion that will allow everyone to talk about their experiences and give closure to the day. This activity serves to bond the group, disarm uncomfortable situations, and provide an open forum for problem solving and conflict resolution. Teens will be given an opportunity to facilitate the group on a rotating basis.

Free Time

There are some occasions when participants may be permitted to have "free time" to explore temples, cultural attractions and shopping locations. However, participants should be able to locate or contact a group leader **AT ALL TIMES**. Participants must listen carefully to any boundaries and instructions given to them by their group leaders or host YMCA coordinator. Failure to comply with the rules and failure to check-in with leaders according to schedule will result in consequences which may include:

- Shortening or elimination of future "free time".
- Removal of other privileges during the trip.

Please note that being tardy to "check-in" with leaders or being late to a meeting point inconveniences the other members of the group as well as the host YMCA staff. Participants should conduct themselves according to the YMCA's four core values at all times: Respect, Responsibility, Honesty and Caring.

Calling Home

Our goal is to have the participants enjoy their travel experience without being distracted by issues that might be happening halfway around the world. Please understand that the itinerary is action-packed, and travel sometimes takes groups to remote areas. Also, keep in mind that telephone systems are not always efficient or reliable in some countries. We will encourage participants to send postcards as a fun way to share their experiences with their friends and families back home.

Calls home to parents will be conducted as follows:

- **1st Call:** Upon arrival, all teens will call their parent(s)/guardians to let them know that they

have arrived safely.

- **2nd Call (optional):** After the first call, teens will wait 7 days before placing a second call to their families. The time between the first and second call allows teens to adjust to the program and fully immerse themselves in the experience.
- **3rd Call:** Teens will make their third and final call the day before they return. This check-in call is also meant as a reminder to parents that they will need to pick-up their teens at the airport upon their return.

Teens will be able to call home in the event of extraordinary circumstances which may make it appropriate for an additional call to be made. This will be at the discretion of the trip Group Leaders.

Laundry

Eventually participants and leaders will run out of clothes! Group Leaders will work with the host YMCA to arrange for laundry to be done at least once a week. This may not always be a simple procedure and sometimes participants will have to hand-wash some of their clothes. If participants have concerns with this or need to do laundry at a different time, they should inform their group leaders. No matter how this process occurs, you can be sure it will be an interesting experience!

General Safety

Global Teens trip leaders are knowledgeable about the safety guidelines that are observed by all YMCA programs that involve teens. However, due to the nature of the program, we sometimes encounter unique situations while in the host country because such things as vehicles, roads and other personal safety issues vary from country to country and region to region. Our trip leaders are provided with country-specific training prior to their trip's departure. In addition, they are advised to analyze each area they visit as soon as they arrive in order to identify and avoid potential hazards.

We rely on the good judgment of the host YMCA staff, our trip leaders and the participants themselves. In discussions with teens we stress the fact that their safety is of the utmost importance and that they themselves play an important role in maintaining and ensuring the safety of the entire travel group.

Swimming

In accordance with YMCA of Greater New York policies, Global Teens participants are ***not allowed to swim*** during any Global Teens trip unless accompanied by a certified YMCA of the USA lifeguard with certifications on file in the Global Teens office.

Traveling Safety Tips for Participants:

- Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. Observe what is happening around you. Pay close attention to where you are and whom you are with. Constantly be aware of yourself and your belongings.
- If you feel uncomfortable about any situation, immediately inform your group leader, or move to a safe place such as: a crowded restaurant or store, a police station, or other locations where you can easily spot staff that may assist you.
- Constantly orient your self to your surroundings, the nearest source of assistance, and direction of your "overseas home" or the host YMCA.
- Do not "flash" valuables or money when in public.
- Keep a copy of your passport and another form of identification in a hidden "money belt" at all times.

- Store your cash in more than one location on your person (i.e. \$10 in one pocket, \$10 in another) to prevent any potential pickpockets from taking all your money. And/or store your cash in more than one location in your bags in case a bag is lost or stolen.
- Keep backpacks or bags in front of you when in crowded places. Make sure no one can unzip or reach into your bags.
- Do not attract unnecessary attention to yourselves or to your group while traveling. When possible it's best to avoid looking like a tourist/ looking like you have money. Try to blend in, and use caution when looking at maps, taking pictures, etc. Try to dress appropriately- not too "flashy."
- Be culturally appropriate in your dress, conversation and overall conduct at all times.
- Being too careful is a good thing when traveling. It is better to err on the side of caution when in unfamiliar surroundings.
- **Watch out for each other and take responsibility for yourselves!!**

Emergencies

All staff will be trained in basic emergency procedures and protocol. They will also be familiar with any country-specific measures. In the case of an emergency, our host YMCAs will assist us in getting to the appropriate local facility or safe haven. All emergencies will be communicated to the program Director as soon as possible. The Director will advise trip leaders what to do and will then contact the participants' families. We request that the trip leaders, participants and families cooperate to keep the lines of communication as open as possible. Twenty-four hour coverage between the International Branch and all host countries is in place in the case of an emergency.

All participants will know who the emergency contact person is in each specific location and will be provided with his/her telephone number(s). In addition, the program Director can be reached 24/7 on his cellular 646-996-3108 (for emergencies only).

Emergency Contact Cards

Prior to leaving the United States, each Global Teens participant will be given an Emergency Contact Card with telephone numbers of emergency contacts at the host YMCA, and at the International YMCA in New York (Global Teens Staff).

Participants will be able to call the emergency cellular numbers for local host YMCA coordinators in the event that they become separated from the group while in the host country. Group Leaders should review the use of these cards with the participants before leaving the US. The Emergency Contact Card should be kept with participants AT ALL TIMES.

Participants are only to use the emergency contact numbers for Global Teens staff in New York in EXTREME emergencies, or when the host YMCA site coordinator can not be reached. Group Leaders will also be provided with contact information for someone at the US embassy nearest to where the group will be staying. The US embassy is also informed of all group members names and emergency contact information.

Emergency Procedures for Participants:

- In the case of an emergency, follow the directions of the group leaders and/or YMCA staff.
- If you become separated from the group:
 - Remain calm...
 - Assess if you are in any immediate danger/risk. If so, move to a safer or more secure location immediately.

- Locate the nearest source of assistance (uniformed police officer, employee of a bona fide store, etc.)
- Use the information on your Global Teens Emergency Card to contact your host YMCA coordinator and/or group leaders. If you are unable to reach them, contact the Global Teens staff in New York.
- Remain in a safe location near or at the location where you were supposed to meet your group. Try to stay put, so that it is easier for someone to locate you.

Health and Medications

Teen participants and their parents/guardians will be required to fill out a medical form and permission release forms prior to the trip. The trip leaders will carry copies of these papers at all times and copies will be kept on file at the International YMCA.

It is important that families talk with their teens prior to departure about the importance of staying healthy. Trip leaders will also reinforce this issue. It is important that teens keep their leaders informed about any health problems that they might be experiencing (pre-existing or otherwise). We know that participants will be tempted to carry medications with them; however, all medications should be turned in to the trip leaders who will log usage and dispense as needed. *Teens are NOT to carry any type of unapproved medication on their person at anytime, without the expressed permission of the a Group Leader, and written documentation on file in the Global Teens office.*

Medical Forms and Pre-existing Conditions

- Participants/Parents should inform group leaders of any and all relevant medical information and history. This should be done through the submission of the participants' health forms.
- This information is essential to enable group leaders to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all participants while traveling abroad.
- Please DO NOT withhold any relevant medical information from the group leaders.
- The withholding of any pertinent medical/psychological information from Global Teens staff may result in a teen being removed from the program or sent home prematurely at the expense of the teen's parent/guardian.

Medical Insurance

All Global Teens participants are covered by medical liability insurance provided by Nationwide. Group leaders will have copies of claim forms available and will assist in the completion of the necessary forms should the need arise.

CPR/AED and First Aid Certifications

There may be situations when the group is not near medical facilities, and group leaders will be called upon to respond to injuries or illnesses. At least one group leader will have valid certifications in CPR/AED and Basic First Aid.

Medication

All of the participants' medications (prescribed or "over the counter") must be given to the Global Teens group leaders upon arrival at the airport. In some cases, as in the case of oral contraceptives, there may be exceptions made and participants will be able to administer the medication on their own. In order for this to be possible, a written note (i.e. a notarized letter) from the legal parent/guardian must be provided. In most cases though, group leaders will hold the medication and supervise its administration.

Food and Water

While it may be challenging to eat and drink enough water in a new environment, during the trip, it is extremely important that the participants eat properly and make conscious efforts to stay hydrated.

Please be mindful that while food choices and selections may seem “strange” or “odd”, they are not “right” or “wrong”, but simply different. It is a good rule of thumb to try everything at least once (unless the participant is allergic, of course).

Safe drinking water is always a concern for travelers. Although it would be extremely rare, it should be noted that even with bottled water, an adverse reaction can occur simply because the chemicals and components of that water vary from what an individual may be accustomed to. Global Teens will be advised to drink only the water identified as safe. Host YMCA’s will be responsible for providing bottled water for our groups in areas where the water is a potential concern. Participants will be encouraged to drink plenty of fluids in order to prevent dehydration and promote good health while they are traveling.

Sleep

While we want everyone to have a good time and experience the many wonderful aspects of the host culture, it is important that participants get at least eight hours of sleep per night. Because the days will be filled with hard work and many program activities (in addition to the stresses of being in another country), participants should compensate by ensuring that they get enough rest.

After curfew, no teen will be allowed in a sleeping area not assigned to them. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in severe consequences, which may include being sent home.

Health and Medical Advice for Participants:

- If you become ill, feel dehydrated, or simply “not right” while traveling abroad, it is imperative that you inform your group leader immediately so that appropriate action can be taken to help and assist you. Do not wait until you become “run down” or sick.
- Never take medication that is not authorized by your parents or the Global Teens group leaders. If anyone offers you any drugs/alcohol/medication, politely decline and defer to the Global Teens group leaders.

Expectations of the Participant

The foundation of the Global Teens program is built on the premises that teen participants are active and full partners in this experience. This means they must take full responsibility for their actions, behavior and conduct during participation in the Global Teens program. The nature of international travel can be unpredictable and fluid, so participants must listen closely to the instructions of the Group Leaders. Keep in mind that participants represent the people of the United States, so they should conduct themselves in a manner becoming of a youth ambassador.

It is our hope that behavior issues do not call for disciplinary action, but our staff will take quick and precise measures if behaviors endanger the health, safety or well-being of any involved party, or if the teen demonstrates an inability or lack of desire to correct/address a behavior challenge which has been brought to their attention by the Group Leaders.

All Global Teens participants (and their legal guardians) are required to sign the Participant Code of Conduct Agreement stating that they will abide by the rules, policies and expectations of the YMCA

of Greater New York and the Global Teens program. Copies of this document accompany each teen overseas. These rules, policies and expectations apply during all related training, orientation and social activities here in the United States (before and after travel), as well as during the overseas travel experience.

In addition to any individual group rules set by Group Leaders and what is mentioned in the participant "code of conduct", some major guidelines are:

- NO DRINKING
- NO SMOKING
- NO DRUGS
- NO OPERATING MOTORIZED VEHICLES
- NO SEXUAL ACTIVITY OF ANY KIND
- NO FIGHTING/HARMFUL BEHAVIOR
- Laws of the United States of America and the host country must be respected while traveling abroad.

Failure to abide by the expectations, policies and rules outlined in this manual and the Code of Conduct may result in the early termination of participation in the Global Teens program. In the event that it is necessary to have a teen participant return to the United States before the completion of the travel period, trip group leaders will inform the Program Director/Assistant Director immediately, who will then notify the parent/legal guardian of the situation. **ANY ADDITIONAL EXPENSES FOR UNPLANNED TRAVEL HOME WILL BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENTS.**

Behavior Guidance Principles

In the event that a teen engages in inappropriate behavior or actions, the following guidelines will be followed;

- Stage One: Group leaders will casually confront participants about the poor behavior.
- Stage Two: Group leaders will sit down and discuss the behavior and the consequences of its continuance.
 - Clear consequences (relevant to the host country, logistical constraints and other variables) will be outlined for the teens in question (including the possibility of being sent home at the expense of their parents/guardians).
 - If appropriate, host YMCA staff will be involved at this point.
- Stage Three: Participants in question will be removed from desired program activities (i.e. shopping, social events, etc.). They will be required to stay at the side of a group leader at all times.
- Stage Four: The Program Director will be informed of the situation and any action that has been taken. Group leaders and the Program Director will decide upon any additional measures to be taken. The Director will inform the parents of the participants in question about the situation, and the group leaders will involve higher authorities at the host-site if necessary.
- Stage Five: Arrangements may be made to have the participants in question return to the United States if they do not exhibit desires to improve their behavior.

Discipline is at the discretion of the group leaders- and before any disciplinary action is taken, they will ensure that it will not endanger or threaten the health, safety or well-being of any teen participant, U.S. or host YMCA staff/volunteer member or any other person. In each individual instance, group leaders are ultimately responsible to determine if they should inform Global Teens staff in New York of the situation.

Rules for Participants:

Please see Participant Code of Conduct/Participation Agreement.

Under no circumstances are teens or group leaders to consume or purchase alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, or any other items which are illegal to possess, use, or consume in either the host country or the United States of America. All group members are also prohibited from engaging in any type of sexual activity.

As stated in your notarized agreement, participants who participate in such activity may be sent home immediately- the group leaders will work with the Director to make the appropriate arrangements. Parents/Guardians will be contacted in all such instances.

Conflict Management and Resolution Tips for the Participant:

Conflict is natural and to be expected on international trips. Efforts should always be made to tactfully and immediately de-escalate conflict. Teens should be mindful of the intense personal journey each person is on while abroad.

When traveling together for an extended period of time, friendships and boundaries can become strained and tested. It is important that you remain open-minded, flexible and tactful regarding your feelings and concerns. Inform your group leaders if you feel a problem or conflict brewing for which you need assistance.

Help to support, guide and counsel each another... your group must truly operate as a "family" while abroad, caring for one another, and looking out for one another. We are all in this together!

Packing and Preparing for the Trip

Passports

For all international travel, participants are required to have a valid passport. Obtaining this passport is the sole responsibility of the teen/parent. In addition, some countries may require a visa to enter. In these cases, Global Teens staff will coordinate the application process for said visas. **IMPORTANT: If a teen is not a U.S. citizen with a U.S. issued passport, it is the teen/parent's responsibility to research country-specific visa requirements and to obtain and provide documents accordingly.**

The Global Teens program staff is here to assist you with any questions regarding passports and visas that you might have. Passports can be obtained by mail with applications available from the post office. Please note that it is very important to apply for passports early, especially in New York and other large cities. Summer is the busiest time, and appointments are necessary to discuss any problems. The usual wait for a passport is around 4 to 6 weeks. You can visit the following website for more information: http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738_2.html

Please send one *clear* copy of your passport to the International YMCA no later than **May 15th** of any travel year. We will make additional copies for our files as well as for the embassies in the countries to which participants are traveling. Group leaders will hold all passports. Participants will only be responsible for their passports at the airport, when they exchange money and, in other extenuating circumstances.

Backpacks

The Global Teens program will provide participants with backpacks on designated trips. These backpacks are part of the program's supplies and we expect to have them returned in good condition. Teens who are not issued backpacks are limited to one check-in luggage piece each. Each teen will also need a daypack to take with them for short trips during the times when they are traveling around the countryside. ***Teens are responsible to carry their own belongings at all times.***

If applicable, parents & teens will need to complete a "Backpack User Agreement" in order to check out a backpack. The agreement highlights the fact that if the backpack is not returned by August 20th, 2009, there will be a charge of \$100 for the replacement of that backpack.

Spending Money

All program costs are included, with the exception of the participant's spending money. The YMCA Global Teens program is focused around service and cultural exchange (NOT shopping), but it does offer opportunities for the participants to purchase souvenirs and/or extra snacks. **THE SPENDING MONEY LIMIT IS \$250.** This is a non-negotiable rule. We strongly suggest teens and their parents talk about this issue prior to departure. We also want to acknowledge the fact that we will be spending time with teenagers from host countries who may not have anywhere near that same amount of money to spend and we do not want to be insensitive to that fact.

We recommend that participants purchase American Express Travelers Checks since they are very well known in most countries. We suggest check denominations of 20.00 US dollars. This will allow participants to exchange their money as needed.

Prior to departure, the teens are asked to hand their travelers checks over to their leaders so that they can make photocopies of the record locator numbers in case of loss. The participants are responsible for their money and the way in which they spend it. Trip leaders can assist them with money management and safety issues. Money management is an important skill to learn and, therefore, we discourage any phone calls home requesting additional funds. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, Global Teens will not allow parents to wire money to the teens while they are on a trip.

Cameras

A camera will allow the participants to capture sights and faces that might never be seen again. Pictures will help family and friends back home visualize the adventures experienced by each of the participants. The camera does not need to be very specialized; it just needs to be a vehicle to preserve some memories. We strongly encourage the use of disposable cameras that have been pre-bought in the U.S. The Global Teens program is not responsible for any lost or stolen items, including cameras. If digital cameras are brought, please note the different plug configuration and voltage requirement in the host country.

Electronic Devices

No electronic devices (such as iPods, Discmans, MP3 players, computers, video games etc.) are allowed during the program. Participants are encouraged to bring along one or two CDs of their favorite music so that they can share it with the rest of the group and the host YMCA teens during times when music is appropriate. We stress the power of communication and sharing in the Global Teens program. Electronic devices can be an obstacle for good communication among our teens, and they also have the potential for being lost or stolen.

Global Teens General Packing List

For your 10 day to two-week program, we suggest you to use this packing list as a guide. Your trip Group Leaders will be distributing country-specific tips/items as the travel period gets closer. Remember to pack only the most essential items, as you will be responsible for carrying your own belongs at all times during the travel program.

Traveling during the summer will make your packing easy since weather will be pleasant and you will need mostly light clothing (unless you are traveling to a location in the southern hemisphere, where it will be their winter).

For most of your adventure, the dress code will be casual, but keep in mind you are a representative of the YMCA. You may not wear very short skirts or shorts. There may be one or two occasions when you will be required to dress up, so please plan accordingly. Please pay close attention to the DO NOT BRING LIST. Teens are responsible for items in their baggage at all times. Teens found to be bringing inappropriate or illegal items will likely be sent home at the parent's expense, and/or will not be allowed to travel overseas.

YOU MUST BRING

PASSPORT!!!

Two paper copies of your passport.

Alternate form of identification (state ID suggested)

Traveler's Checks (make copies and leave at home with your parents)

Day Pack (regular backpack)

Pillow & Sheets (if applicable – inquire with your group leaders)

Gifts (small tokens of appreciation for those who host you)

Two children's books to donate to the communities we visit

Clothing

2 pairs of jeans or long pants

4-5 pairs of shorts

1 pair of nice pants or skirt (not a mini)

1 nice shirt or blouse

6-8 t-shirts

1 sweatshirt or cotton sweater

8-10 pairs of socks

8-10 pairs of underwear

1 bathing suit

1 hat

1 pair of pajamas

Footwear

1 pair of sneakers and/or hiking boots (there will be a lot of walking!)

1 pair of shoes (multipurpose to use for dress-up, walking or working)

1 pair of flip flops or Texas (for showers and swimming)

Toiletries

Toothbrush/Toothpaste

Shampoo

Conditioner

Soap
Wash Cloth
Towel
Hair Brush
Tampons/Pads
Deodorant
Sunscreen
Body Lotion
Insect Repellent

Miscellaneous

Water Bottle
Prescription Medication (to be given to leader)
Bandannas
Watch
1 pair of working gloves
Flashlight
Book or Magazine (for the flight)
Journal/Diary
Disposable Camera

DO NOT BRING

Jewelry
Pets
Radio, Boom Box or Walkman, iPod
Expensive Items
Cell Phone
More than \$250!

Wrapping Up

The success of Global Teens trips depends on the efforts of many: the participants, parents/guardians, group leaders, host countries staff and families, program director, and the many people we depend on along the way. With the cooperation of everyone involved, this program should prove to be one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences of the participants' lives!

If you have questions about any of the information presented above, please consult your Global Teens Group Leader, or the program Director/Assistant Director.

Emergency Contact Information while Abroad or during NYC area Activities:

Chad Nico Hiu, Director – Teen & Outbound Programs
Cell: 646-996-3108
Office: 212-875-4328

Lori Tay, Assistant Director – Teen & Outbound Programs
Office: 212-875-4334

Amarilis Soler, Associate Executive Director
Office: 212-875-4329

Sandy Mitchell, Executive Director
Office: 212-875-4319