

URBANPROMISE WORKGROUP INFO

- This information package is provided to help you prepare for your trip to Camden, and is specific to Workgroups. For information about UrbanPromise (UP) Ministries in general, please refer to our Web site www.urbanpromiseusa.org

What Workgroups Do

Throughout the year there are a number of groups that travel to Camden to spend time working with UP. We try to expose each group to the many aspects of our ministry in Camden, and give them a chance to develop relationships with the children we serve.

DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE WORKGROUP PROGRAM

Afterschool Programs (while in session)

Groups may spend time working with children in one of our Afterschool programs. During this time they assist our staff by helping with:

- Homework time
- arts-and-crafts projects
- sporting activities
- Bible classes

Work Projects

Time also may be spent participating in various physical labor projects. These projects vary considerably, and may include:

- Light building renovations
- Building maintenance and landscaping
- Neighborhood clean-up projects with the city of Camden.

These projects:

- Save money, allowing UP to direct more of its resources towards children's activities
- Help to keep our buildings clean and in good working order
- Are a witness to the community, showing a Christian concern for Camden neighborhoods specifically and God's creation in general

Education

Other possible activities include:

- Morning devotions
- A session with our president, Bruce Main
- A tour of Camden
- Workshops on social justice issues

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Arriving

All groups should plan to arrive on Sunday afternoons. In the spring, we ask groups to arrive between 3-4pm and during the summer at 2 pm. Please fly into Philadelphia International Airport (PHL)

Departing

Groups departures can be flexible. Most groups leave on Friday night or Saturday morning. All groups must leave by Saturday at noon. Please contact the workgroup coordinator with any additional questions.

HOUSING

Where Groups Stay

Most groups are either housed in local churches or at a UP facility, such as a staff house or Children's Ministry site. Each site varies in sleeping arrangements but all require each group member to bring their own bedding (ideally sleeping bags.) Please contact the workgroup coordinator for more details.

Meals

All groups are responsible for their own meals. Kitchen facilities will be provided.

Showers

Some Groups will have shower facilities where they are staying. Groups staying at a site without shower facilities will be provided with information on where to shower.

Phones

Not all housing facilities have phone access. Be prepared to use pay phones or cell phones if you need to make a call. The phones at UP will be available only for emergencies or for group leaders to make local calls.

Site Cleanup

Groups are expected to leave their housing site as clean as they found it. If your group is staying in a church, the way your group leaves the facility impacts how the church views UP. A site left in poor condition could damage our relationship with that church, and may prevent us from using that site for groups in the future.

PREPARATION

PRIOR TO ARRIVAL

- **Group leaders must e-mail typed group roster including name/age/emergency contact info for each member to be given to Workgroup Director. Roster must be submitted 30 days before scheduled arrival.**

- **Group leaders must send a \$500 deposit** in form of a check, made payable to UrbanPromise Ministries (put WORKGROUP DEPOSIT on the memo line) 30 days before scheduled arrival.

GROUP LEADERS NEED TO BRING

- **A check for the balance of the workgroup fee**, made payable to UrbanPromise Ministries (put WORKGROUP FEE on memo line of check)
- **Signed waivers** from each group member
- Anti-Theft Devices for your vehicles
- First Aid Kit

WHAT EACH MEMBER NEEDS TO BRING

- Bedding (sleeping bag or sheets, pillow, and foam mat if possible)
- Shower items (soap/shampoo/towel)
- Work clothes (including at least one pair of long pants)
- Work shoes (running shoes or work boots)
- Work gloves (if you have them)
- Water bottle that can be used all week
- Bible
- A small amount of spending money

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BLESS OUR PROGRAMS

- Please visit <http://urbanpromiseusa.org/wishlist> to see what our current needs are
- Personal hand tools that you could use for the week or old tools that you would like to donate

ITEMS YOU SHOULD NOT BRING

- Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or weapons
- Large amounts of cash
- Expensive personal items
- Pets

WORKGROUP FEE

The workgroup fee is \$350 per person. This fee funds work supplies, lodging, utilities, and administrative costs associated with the workgroup program, Children's Ministry and/or Afterschool program expenses.

MINISTRY IN THE INNER CITY

Working Cross-Culturally

Groups should keep in mind the following:

- Respect cultural differences that will be encountered
- Realize your presence might be intimidating or possibly resented by some people in Camden, just as you might be intimidated by certain situations you encounter in the city.
- Don't stereotype, and be careful how you talk about Camden (and groups of people in the city), especially when you are around Camden residents.
- Learn about the children you work with. Ask them questions about what they are interested in. Again, don't stereotype or make assumptions.
- Be yourself. Kids can tell when someone is trying to fit in. Act as you would at home. This will allow the kids to learn about differences in culture and speech that may exist between your home and theirs.
- Be prepared to try new approaches to ministry. What works in the suburbs might not work in the city.

SAFETY ISSUES

In the City

- DO NOT GO ANYWHERE ALONE
- WALKING AFTER DARK IS NOT ALLOWED (The waterfront is an exception to this)
- ALWAYS BE WITHIN SIGHT OF A UP STAFF WORKER OR ONE OF YOUR LEADERS
- DON'T CARRY LARGE AMOUNTS OF CASH
- ALWAYS LOCK VEHICLES

While at UrbanPromise

- BEING ALONE WITH CHILDREN IS NOT ALLOWED. STAY WITHIN SIGHT OF THE REST OF THE GROUP.
- AVOID FULL HUGS AND HAVING CHILDREN SIT ON YOUR LAP. For some of our kids, appropriate touch is difficult to interpret. Be aware of this as you interact with the kids.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is it ok to bring gifts for children?

To avoid showing favoritism, we suggest that people bring gifts that all the children can use, such as sports equipment or art supplies.

How should I deal with people who ask for money?

This is a hard one to answer as some people who ask will be in genuine need, some will be using the money to support a drug addiction, and some are just good at getting money from 'tourists'. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Money might not always be the best way to help the person. Another option might be buying the person what they need, like a bus pass or some food.
- You are with a group and may not have time to adequately deal with the situation. In this case it might be best to simply say “I can’t give you any money. Sorry.”

When is it ok to take pictures?

Keep in mind the following:

- Photograph people and not places, and only photograph people who you know.
- Photograph your kids at the end of the week, once they have had a chance to get comfortable with you.
- Remember that others might be watching. How would you feel if outsiders or tourists came to your town and started taking pictures of your house and neighborhood? Please use discretion.

Will there be time for sight seeing?

Yes. Most of your evenings will be free. Groups often visit one or more of the following places:

- Philadelphia (historic sites, South Street, sporting events, etc.)
- Atlantic City (beach)
- New York City

We also encourage groups to do as much as possible in Camden. There are a number of things to see and do on the Camden Waterfront:

- Harbor area
- State Aquarium and Children’s Garden
- USS New Jersey Battleship museum

For Additional Questions:

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