



## ABOUT: Chaperones – A free guide to selection

What do teachers need to travel? Great Chaperones! The following guide subsequent chaperone success contract from About Tours and Travel and will give you a baseline for choosing chaperones that help to guide your students and their trip, to success!

### Chaperone Expectations

Chaperones are a vital part of any student trip. Giving careful consideration to anyone who serves in the role of chaperone can help to set a tone for organization and success for any trip. Chaperones provide supervision and additional support for the group leader. The role of the chaperone may include:

- Be assigned and responsible for a small group of students (typically 5-10 students) - Chaperones may not be familiar with the students on the trip prior to departure. Encouraging the assignment of small groups ahead of departure day, can help chaperones become familiar with their group.
- Count students and group members when leaving a venue to ensure that all are accounted for.
- Help perform nightly room checks based upon assigned room numbers.
- Attend a nightly meeting with other chaperones and Group Leader in order to communicate trip information.
- Relay pertinent information to the students at rooms checks or throughout the day.
- Be responsible for sick students who are sitting out of an activity. This may include staying behind at the hotel with a sick child and missing out on activities. This should not be the responsibility of the Group Leader specifically, nor the tour guide.
- Be responsible for communicating incidents to the Group Leader.

Consider making chaperone assignments and posting them well ahead of departure day. Hold a final departure meeting about a week before travel to assign chaperone roles. Trips typically start on the go as soon as the group arrives to the destination. It is not helpful when no one knows what group they are in or have never met their chaperone.

Things to consider when choosing chaperones. There typically a 1 per 10 minimum chaperone ratio required for traveling minors. This means that if there are 44 students traveling on a trip, it may require 5 adults. For some age groups or destinations, the chaperone requirement is lower and may require 1:8. When talking to your travel provider, a group leader should understand required ratios (usually dependent on student age, destination, or activities) and group overall size including trip capacity. For instance, the seating capacity of a bus may determine the maximum group size. Bus capacity in the US is often much larger than bus capacity in Europe. Talk with your travel provider to understand the tipping points of a second vessel for transportation and the appropriate number of chaperones needed for a group.



When soliciting chaperones, consider the selection process. Is there an interest form or application for the role of chaperone and how is selection criteria met? The below list of questions can help you formulate the selection criteria.

- How many chaperones will accompany the group on the trip?
- Will your chaperones have specific duties such as supervision (sometimes required for student trips when visiting museums, etc), bed checks, medication or health supervision, etc?
- Does the school require a nurse, health aid or other qualified person to be in charge of health related content while traveling?
- Will chaperones be school staff or parents or both?
- Will the chaperone be asked to cover part or all of their travel costs? Will chaperones (any or part) receive a discount for travel in trade for duties?
- How does the chaperone candidate handle stress? How do they handle change?
- Is the person responsible?
- Do they take instruction, direct or requests, well?
- Does the itinerary require a certain level of physical exertion? Does this candidate meet those requirements?
- Are they a good role model to the students? Will they adhere to any school or trip policies regarding smoking or conduct, etc. while on the trip?
- Will they be responsible for attending any pre-travel meetings, meet ups or arrangements?
- Will the chaperone need to be in charge of any equipment such as instruments or performance attire?



## Chaperone Success Agreement

The below chaperone travel agreement may be used as a template in full or in part, to outline expectations for any chaperone (staff, parent or otherwise) who will be traveling on the trip. Edit at will.

\_\_\_\_\_ (school or group) is thrilled to be traveling to \_\_\_\_\_ (destination) on the dates of \_\_\_\_\_. You have been identified as an adult chaperone, staff member or traveling/invited friends and family member. The following agreement outlines the expectations for this trip. Please review and initial each line. Please review and sign below.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that this trip is for the benefit and purpose of the students/performance/educational purpose.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that adult chaperones may be assigned to supervise small contingents of students, as needed or necessary based upon the itinerary.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that adult chaperones may be assigned to perform nightly bed checks or relay information to student rooms.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will adhere to any school or group rules while traveling.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand there may be a higher level of physical activity (including walking) on the trip than I am used to.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will conduct myself in a positive and responsible manner while traveling with the group and be a positive role model.

\_\_\_\_\_ I acknowledge that all travelers are important on this trip, however the needs of the student group will come first. The group will not wait unnecessarily, for late/tardy adults.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that chaperones shall inform the group leader of any concerns, incident or medical situation involving a student, in a timely manner.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to perform these duties and others as assigned to me, for the overall success of the trip and the safety of the students traveling.

Please review and acknowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date