

Information for Parents about YouthWorks Newport – East Tennessee

Who is YouthWorks?

YouthWorks' core purpose is to help the church be the church by providing life-changing, Christ-centered resources for ministry. One ministry of YouthWorks is our summer youth mission trips, a multi-denominational ministry that provides youth with a life-changing experience by allowing them to be the hands and feet of Christ and to see God move in a new way. The mission trip opens their eyes to both situations and relationships in different communities and allows them to serve side by side with their peers, learn from leaders and deepen their relationship with Jesus.

For the last eighteen years, YouthWorks has partnered with thousands of churches to provide week-long mission trips to communities across the U.S., Mexico, Puerto Rico and Canada. Last summer alone, over 36,000 youth and adult leaders from over 2,000 churches went on YouthWorks mission trips!

Tell me about Newport - East Tennessee.

Majestic mountains, sparkling rivers and scenic wilderness are the backdrop for the 7,242 residents of Newport, Tennessee. Located in eastern Tennessee's Cocke County, Newport is approximately 50 miles east of Knoxville on the eastern border of Tennessee at the edge of the Great Smoky Mountains. Once a bustling commercial and transportation center, Newport was originally named "Clifton" for the sharp cliffs towering over Pigeon River, but was renamed "New Port" because of the importance of the river. The Pigeon River and Norfolk/Southern Railroad run parallel to Newport's Main Street, where you can enjoy shopping and dining. While this rural town has a low cost of living, there still are residents who struggle to make ends meet, often because of the lack of educational and employment opportunities. Only 60 percent of Newport's residents have a high school diploma, and the unemployment rate hovers near 8 percent. Twenty-nine percent of the population lives in poverty, including almost 41 percent of children under age 18. Visit Newport and be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ to this peaceful community.

What happens during a typical YouthWorks day?

Youth will assist in meal preparations, participate in personal devotion time, work at the various ministry sites, experience fun and cultural evening activities and engage in "Club" – a time that includes worship, games, skits and a talk. The service work incorporates a variety of opportunities to serve the community of Newport, through serving at a YouthWorks Kids Club and Work Project.

Safety is our top priority.

Safety is of the utmost importance to our organization! Each community we serve has four to five summer staff that lives in the community all summer. Every staff member at YouthWorks is CPR and First Aid certified. Additionally, our staff has gone through an intensive application process and has had thorough background checks completed on them. We also ask that each adult leader attending a YouthWorks mission trip also has a background check completed on them by the organization that they are attending with.

We are very aware of the neighborhoods within which we work; we have secure housing for our participants and our schedule does not bring us out late at night. Our program is conducted within very solid boundaries and in communities where we are known and loved. When groups arrive to the mission site, the staff leads orientation meetings explaining the community that they will be serving, the boundaries of the housing site, the rule of three (all participants are required to travel in groups of at least three with at least one adult leader) and other necessary safety precautions applicable to where they will be serving.

We trust that by being wise in taking the necessary steps to ensure safety, as well as by trusting in the Lord, your child will experience an amazing adventure this summer with YouthWorks!

