

Trip Planning Guide



About SYTA

Student & Youth Travel Association (SYTA) is a non-profit, professional association dedicated to its mission of promoting and supporting integrity and professionalism among student and youth travel service providers. Our members promote quality packaged student and youth travel services that enhance social, cultural and educational growth.

Main Purposes & Goals

1. Create a positive awareness of and desire for student and youth travel.
2. Foster an established level of financial integrity and credibility in the student and youth travel marketplace.
3. Promote a professional code of ethics for companies operating in the student and youth travel business.

SYTA's Code Of Ethics

Honesty And Integrity: SYTA members shall conduct business in a manner reflecting honesty, honor, and integrity.

Truth In Advertising: SYTA members shall be accurate and truthful in representing products and services in all offerings, advertisements, and promotions.

Disclosure: SYTA members shall disclose in writing to the contracted party all terms, conditions, inclusions, and policies of the agreed-to services.

Commitment To Satisfaction: SYTA members shall strive to resolve all disputes and concerns between its company and its clients.

Travel is an Education in Itself

Travel for young people is an exciting, memorable and enlightening experience.

The classroom curriculum comes to life, inspiring students to learn through first-hand, interactive experiences. History comes alive when visiting an historic site. Language skills improve by becoming immersed in a foreign country. Art can be absorbed in a much more meaningful way when experienced close up. And for young musicians, nothing compares to the experience of performing with peers in an exciting new venue. Travel can change a young person's educational or extracurricular experience.

Travel teaches understanding of other people and cultures in the global community.

Meeting different people and experiencing other places can significantly enhance students' understanding of the world they live in.

Young people are more likely to retain information when absorbed during an interactive travel experience.

Whether the trip is for a day, a week or a semester, or takes place within their own city, state, country or abroad, it will be an experience they will always remember. It can change the way young people think about their studies and their commitment to extracurricular activities.

Professional Conduct: SYTA members shall conduct their business activities in a professional manner with the general public while maintaining ethical competitive practices.

Diversity: SYTA members recognize the importance of diversity and will strive to incorporate, promote, and embrace each person's value and contribution through education, recruitment, and sensitivity.

Compliance With Law: SYTA members shall conduct their business in compliance with all applicable state/province and country laws and regulations.

Pledge Of Loyalty: SYTA members shall pledge loyalty to the Association and agree to pursue and support its objectives.

What Makes Planning a Student/Youth Trip Special?



Every Group of Travelers is Unique.

Student and youth groups may be traveling for a wide variety of educational purposes. They may be a band or choir that is traveling to a performance, or a sports team competing at an event. The age range of a group dictates everything from the types of attractions to visit to the security and room arrangements at the hotel or hostel. These issues and many other requirements make planning student and youth travel a unique challenge.

Why Should I Use A Tour Operator?

Planning a student and youth group trip takes time and expertise. Airlines, motorcoach companies, attractions, accommodations and restaurants need to be contacted and arrangements made.

An experienced tour operator can seamlessly put together your group's entire trip—without extra work for you, your school or organization—making sure that the airline, motorcoach company and the attractions you want to visit have the capacity and capabilities you need when you need them. They can also provide services and security appropriate to the age of the group you are working with.

How Do I Find The Right Tour Operator For My Group?

Since the majority of tour operators cater almost exclusively to adults, special interest or senior citizen groups, it is important to identify a travel provider that has the in-depth experience and proven track record handling student and youth groups.

Organizations like the Student & Youth Travel Association (SYTA) are a good place to start. SYTA includes some of the most prestigious tour operators and suppliers in the travel industry that serve young travelers. Student and youth travel is not just part of what they do—it's their focus and specialty.

SYTA member companies specialize in educational travel, music programs, language immersion, team and club travel, and more. Working with a certified youth specialist can make a big difference in the way the trip is organized and the types of components included.



How to Protect Your Group

It is always a good idea to do a little research if you are organizing a trip to avoid confusion en route, as well as to provide parents with as much information as possible. There are questions you can ask and places you can go to help you minimize problems.

The following is a handy checklist.

Work With Reputable Travel Providers:

1. Are they experienced with students to the specific destination you want to travel to?
2. Do they have professional liability insurance?
3. Do they have consumer protection?
4. How many years have they been in business/years at that address/years operating under the same name?
5. Do they have a professional association membership such as SYTA?

Know What You're Paying For:

1. What hotels will you stay at? Is there 24-hour security? How often does the travel provider work with that hotel?
2. What meals are included? What restaurants are being used? What are the menus? Are there extra meal costs?
3. Charter vs. commercial airlines: Who is the charter company or airline?
4. Is everything that is included/not included in the package price clearly stated? What options must be paid for?
5. Is the company management willing to put their promises to you in writing?
6. Do you fully understand the company's policies on payment and cancellation? If not, are they willing to explain them to you?

Where To Check Before You Pay:

1. Professional travel organizations like SYTA (www.syta.org)
2. Better Business Bureau
3. State Attorney General's Office/Consumer Protection Division
4. If you are working directly with a motor coach company, check with The U.S. Department of Transportation or Transport Canada. For more information go to www.buses.org/safety



Programs & Scholarships

SYTA YOUTH FOUNDATION

Members of SYTA help support the SYTA Youth Foundation, a non-profit charity organization, which designs and implements programs that “Give Something Back” to student and youth travelers. By providing volunteer and financial resources, the Foundation is continuing to make a positive difference in the young lives of tomorrow’s global citizens. Among the Foundation’s activities are:

- **Ripley Hunter World Is A Classroom Essay Contest**

Scholarship created for secondary school students grades 9-12 who wish to share a special travel experience in the form of a written essay.

- **Road Scholarship**

The Road Scholarships awards funds to youth who, for various reasons, are unable to afford the cost of their group’s educational travel.

- **Silver Lining Program**

The program recognizes deserving youth who have demonstrated through their action, intention, or circumstance the desire to expand their awareness, creating a dramatic life change.

- **Running For Youth Program**

The SYTA Youth Foundation Run Team uses long distance running/walking as a symbol of endurance and hope. The goal is simple—to raise money for youth to travel with their schools or youth organizations. Participants on the Run Team fundraise on behalf of the SYTA Youth Foundation, train and participate in a marathon or half-marathon, and run in honor of a student who has been chosen to receive a Roads Scholarship.

- **Next Generation Program**

Next Generation is a new program funded by SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment where underprivileged youth will have the ability to engage in interactive and innovative learning experiences that teach them firsthand how to take care of animals and their wildlife habitats. The students will also learn about conservation and how they can impact their environment. Our valuable Wingmen also provide the funding for transportation to the parks.

To learn more about the application process or download forms for any of these programs/scholarships please visit the Foundation’s website at www.sytayouthfoundation.org.

