

So...your child wants to go to Overseas!  
Ky's first mission trip...my fears, my joys.

The first time Ky approached me about going to Japan was in January of his senior year in high school. I knew about iWitness from Disciple Now and from Super Summer tales, and I knew that Ky had been called to the ministry. I was pretty sure Ky would never get around to finding out about passports, much less actually obtain one by the deadline and raise money for the trip. However, Ky managed to raise enough money to not only go to Japan that summer, but also to go to Southeast Asia the next summer and still have a little spending money left over for college. Ky was ready. Was I afraid? The first time, initially, YES! I was afraid he would get sick, lose his passport, get lost, get homesick, get hurt, etc. etc. etc. But this is how I dealt with my fears. I put it in perspective. Ky was much more at risk on the highways than he was in Japan answering the Lord's call. There is less risk of violence in Japan, where no handguns or weapons allowed, than on the streets outside his apartment in Arlington. I thought to myself, "If something happened to Ky on a mission trip, could I ever forgive myself for letting him go?" Yes. Ky belongs to the Lord first and I find great comfort in knowing that God is in control of Ky, not me. That is how I managed to let go and quit worrying (to the extent any mother can not worry) about what "could" happen. It is always a bit scary to know your child is on a plane flying across an ocean and living in a foreign country. Through prayer and a realistic perspective, I allowed my only son to go and experience some of the greatest joys of his life.

The iWitness trips are planned with the well-being of the students as the foremost concern. iWitness would never put together a trip that wasn't planned for safety. I never once worried, even when Ky was in Southeast Asia, about his safety. The missionaries in the country where your child will be going know all about the medical facilities and how to take care of any minor or major emergency. Both the leaders and students are given intense training on cultural issues and witnessing strategies. While Ky was on the mission field, I was kept up to date through e-mails about how the team and my son were doing. The staff at iWitness was so patient with all my questions.

I hope my personal experience as a MOM is a help to anyone who is considering this for their own child. May God Bless you as you search for what the Lord is leading you to do.