

The Spring Break Outreach Cell Phone Challenge

Successful experiential learning depends on the thoughtful presence and full participation of each participant.

Immersion experiences provide opportunities for participants to enter into situations that are unfamiliar and possibly uncomfortable; as they learn to embrace the unfamiliar, participants can gain new insights about themselves and others. Putting aside material comforts that are not necessary for the immersion week—often called “simple living”—is an important way participants can prepare to be fully present to the rest of the Site Group and to the members of the host community.

Cell phones can be very disruptive to the immersion process by tempting participants to ‘opt out’ of the discomfort by reconnecting with the familiar, thereby undermining potential learning opportunities provided by the experience. To prevent theft or loss, phones also need to be carried or safeguarded during service activities and other immersion events; leaving them at home or in a central location allows participants to be unencumbered to focus fully on the opportunities at hand.

As part of our commitment to education through service, we ask SBO participants to “lean into discomfort” by limiting or even eliminating cell phone use during the immersion week. This can be accomplished in a number of ways—each person has the option to choose how far they want to challenge themselves—including storing personal phones in a secure location during the SBO immersion trip, keeping cell phones off except during specified evening times, or leaving personal phones on campus for the week of spring break.

Every Site Leader and Staff Participant will have a working cell phone during the trip, along with one other designated site group member in each group. Family members will be provided with those numbers in case of an emergency, and participants will be able to access those phones to make a call home as needed.

I have read the SBO Cell Phone Policy and agree to limit or eliminate cell phone use during the SBO immersion week.

Signature/Name printed

Date