

Rice N Beans Personal Safety in the Mission Field

It is important that everyone be mindful of his or her surroundings concerning safety. The instructions below will help your time in the field ministering with Rice N Beans to be safe and productive.

- Your valuables should be locked in your car. Please do not leave them in sight.
- Never leave by yourself with anyone or get out of sight of the other volunteers, unless you go in a team of two or more and a team leader knows you are leaving.
- Do not judge or condemn. You do not know the experiences that have shaped these individuals. Most have been hurt, abused, and/or molested and have not experienced God's love.
- Please do not give money to anyone, no matter what the situation may seem to be. Often, stories are told that will appeal to your sympathy. If approached by anyone asking for money just say, "We are not allowed to carry money with us."
- Do not give anyone your full name, telephone number, work or home address.
- Never assume someone is homeless. Ministry leaders will help assess the situation.
- Get down on their level. If someone is sitting or laying down, kneel or sit next to them. We are trying to restore dignity in their lives.
- Do not let anyone use your cell phone.
- Please don't promise anyone anything, no matter how good your intentions may be.
- Do not buy gifts of any kind for anyone.
- If anything during your conversation makes you feel uncomfortable or threatened, simply say, "God bless you," and then back away.
- Please do not attempt to intervene in an emergency.
- Do not give anyone a ride in your car for any reason.
- Do not smoke while involved in any outreach ministry with Rice N Beans.
- Always ask before you pray for someone. If they say "No," then bless them and be on your way.
- Watch and pray. God does not require us to close our eyes when we pray, so for safety always be aware of what is going on around you - even while you are praying.
- No cameras are allowed on ministry sites. Taking pictures of ministry in action will be done by Rice N Beans staff. Some people like their picture taken, but others may not want to be recognized, such as ladies escaping an abusive situation.
- In the event of a medical emergency, every effort will be made to provide transportation, either by a staff member or by ambulance.
- Dress Code - Due to the nature of homeless ministry, and to model a Christian witness, a dress code for outreach is necessary. Youth directors, pastors and leaders are responsible to ensure their volunteers are properly dressed for multi-gender ministry. Dress casually and comfortably. Please, absolutely no low-cut or revealing tops, hip-hugger pants, or bare midriffs. Shorts should be no shorter than 2-3 inches above the knee. Absolutely no "short-shorts." Because of gravel, broken glass, etc., open-toed shoes are difficult to wear. In cold weather seasons, please dress warmly, perhaps in layers.

Don't hesitate to ask about anything you don't understand, or if you're in doubt about how to answer a person's question.