

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### **Do we travel on our own or in groups?**

Families typically travel in groups of 3-5 families. We will normally try to form groups of families all adopting from the same orphanage or province, but there may be times when families in a given group are adopting from multiple provinces within Vietnam.

### **How do we arrange for our flights and hotels?**

LSSMN can help you to arrange all your travel needs. Our staff in Vietnam will arrange for your hotel accommodations and the majority of your in-country transportation needs. LSSMN can arrange your flights for you, if you wish, or we can suggest reliable travel agents who you may use. If you are an experienced traveler, you can also use your own travel agent. However, adoption travel requires specific arrangements and we highly suggest working with an agent experienced in arranging such travel.

### **Do you recommend bringing our children along with us?**

Adoption is about family. You are certainly welcome to bring any children currently in your family. Many families find it helpful to bring along a trusted friend or family member to help watch over the siblings while parents deal with some of the adoption-specific appointments. You will want to bring plenty of age-appropriate activities for the long plane ride, long van rides and general down time. We would be happy to provide you with a list of suggestions from other families who have traveled with their children.

### **What if we want to arrive early and/or stay longer in Vietnam?**

You are more than welcome to travel early or stay longer to tour this beautiful country of your child's birth. While we can't promise that you would have full access to our staff, we will do all we can to help you arrange for additional travel in-country.

### **Is travel to Vietnam safe?**

All international travel carries with it a certain amount of risk. By comparison with many countries, travel to Vietnam is relatively safe. We have gone through considerable effort to arrange your stay in clean, secure hotels. Our staff will accompany you to most of your adoption-related appointments and will help watch out for your safety while you are in-country. Your biggest concern will be pickpockets or theft of cameras or purses while out shopping in the markets or on the streets.

### **How do we get around while we're in Vietnam?**

As you will see, the larger cities are bustling with motorcycle traffic, mini taxis and even some cars. It is a chaotic mess. LSSMN has arranged for air-conditioned vans to transport our families to their required appointments or group events. In some cases you will take mini taxis to your scheduled appointments. While on your own, you may walk around the city, take a *cyclo* ride, rent a bicycle, or hail your own taxi.

### **How soon does our child join us once we arrive in Vietnam?**

Typically, you will travel to your child's orphanage within a day or two of your arrival. That first meeting will be an hour or so in length and you can spend some time getting to know your child, the caregivers, and the orphanage director. Your *Giving and Receiving Ceremony* will likely be scheduled for the next day. Once the ceremony is concluded, your child will be with you from this point on until you depart for home.

### **What if our child needs medical care while we're in Vietnam?**

We will have a western-trained physician on call at all times during your stay in Vietnam. Our physician will be happy to come to your hotel to care for your child's medical needs. Additionally, there are several international clinics in both Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi.

### **What if we need to go to an appointment without our child?**

We will have nannies traveling with us to help make the transition to your family a bit easier. They can watch over the children for you while you go out for dinner, a bit of sightseeing, or to an adoption-related appointment that is for parents only. These nannies will be with us until you depart for Hanoi. At that point, most families just work together to cover childcare as needed.

### **What kind of bottles, formula and diapers do we bring with us?**

The children in the orphanages use whatever type of bottle the caregivers can obtain for them. Most often, they are a Vietnamese or Chinese made plastic bottle with a standard nipple. Most of the nipples are old from excessive use and sterilization. Formula is either a Vietnamese or Danish brand, whatever is donated to that center. Abrupt change can be hard on your child's digestive system. To make the transition easiest for your child, each family will be given a 3-day supply of bottles and formula. You can purchase all your additional formula, bottles/supplies and diapers cheaply and easily in Vietnam. You don't need to bring any with you. Once you have returned home, you can begin transitioning your child to the American brand of formula recommended by your pediatrician.

### **How can we communicate with family back home in the United States?**

All of the hotels we will arrange in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi will have internet access, your cheapest method of contact to family back home. Each family will also be given a cell phone for their use while in Vietnam. Though families cannot dial the U.S. on these phones, friends and family can call into that cell phone number to reach their loved ones and learn the latest on the adoption process and travel adventures.