

HSM Ascent: Parent FAQs

We're excited to have your student join us for HSM Ascent! Below, you'll find answers to frequently asked questions covering everything from packing details and weekend expectations to safety policies and what your student can expect. If you have any additional questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to our HSM staff — we'd be happy to help!

Vision

Our world is constantly competing for your student's attention, shaping how they see themselves, others, and what is true. HSM Ascent creates intentional space for students to step away from the noise, explore God's vision for their lives, and consider how the gospel shapes the way they see the world. Through honest questions, biblical answers, and meaningful conversations, students will be equipped with a biblical worldview, strengthened in their faith, and encouraged to follow Jesus with confidence beyond graduation.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Where are we going?**

This year, we're headed to Pineywoods Camp in Woodlake, TX. The camp provides comfortable lodging, great meals, and plenty of opportunities for students to have fun together, including zip lines, ropes courses, a climbing tower, and more. Set away from the distractions of everyday life, it's an ideal place for students to connect with one another and spend focused time in God's Word.

- **Who is going?**

Our full-time High School Ministry staff from every campus will be at Ascent, along with trained and vetted small group leaders who will invest in students throughout the weekend. We maintain a ratio of one leader for every eight students, and every leader is MinistrySafe trained and background checked.

- **How are students getting there?**

All students, staff, and leaders will travel together by bus. Traveling together is part of the experience, giving students a chance to build friendships and make memories before the weekend even begins.

- **What are the sleeping arrangements?**

Students are assigned to cabins by small group, grade level, campus, and gender. Each cabin is overseen by at least two adult leaders, and all supervision follows our MinistrySafe policies and procedures to help provide a safe and well-supported environment throughout the weekend.

- **What are we doing during the retreat?**

Students will enjoy a mix of structured and free-time activities designed for fun and connection. Spiritually, our content includes daily quiet times, biblical teaching, and small group discussions to help students grow in their faith.

POLICIES + SAFETY

What is the cell phone policy?

We ask all students to leave phones at home to help them fully engage in the weekend without distractions. If you need to reach your student, you can contact one of our HSM staff members directly. Photos from the event will be shared with parents through our Waldo Photo Manager (details below).

What is the dress code?

We ask students to dress modestly and appropriately. Clothing with vulgar language or branding related to alcohol, drugs, or tobacco is not allowed. Students not in compliance will be asked to change. Failure to do so may result in being sent home at their parent's expense.

What is the medication policy?

If your student takes any medication, whether prescription or over the counter, please bring it to check-in with a labeled, resealable bag that includes:

- The student's name on the bag and all medication containers
- Original containers only (no loose pills)
- A notecard inside detailing dosage and timing

Medications will be handled by our medical staff.

Will there be nurses?

Yes! We have three registered nurses attend every trip to help care for students' health needs throughout the weekend. They assist with medication management, injuries, and any medical concerns that may arise.

What is your safety policy regarding behavior and off-site travel?

For everyone's safety, any student caught with illegal substances, engaging in inappropriate behavior, or leaving the retreat area without permission will be sent home at their parent's expense.

What happens if there is bad weather while away at Ascent?

For off-campus trips and overnight events, the Student Ministry team will review the host location's emergency and weather procedures before departure. If weather or emergency concerns arise during the trip, the Trip Lead, Events Coordinator and either the Student Ministry Director or Students Manager will work together to determine the appropriate response in consultation with Christ Chapel's Executive Director of Operations.

Once a decision has been made, communication will be shared in the following order:

1. Student Ministry Staff
2. Leaders and Volunteers
3. Students and Parents

Parents will receive updates regarding delays, schedule changes, cancellations, or emergencies through email and text communication from the Events Coordinator or Trip Lead.

PHOTOS + COMMUNICATION

How do I get photos of my student during the trip?

We will have photos available through Waldo Photo Manager for all parents. Waldo is a facial recognition photo-sharing app that allows you to easily access photos from the event. You'll receive a QR code at check-in. After uploading a photo of your student, you'll receive text updates when new photos featuring your student are available. You'll then be able to download and share those photos directly.

PREPARATION + PACKING

What should my student bring?

Pack light! One large duffel or suitcase and one carry-on backpack.

Packing List:

- ✓ Bible, journal, and pen
- ✓ Clothes for outdoor activities
- ✓ Weather-appropriate clothing (jacket, sweatshirt, rain gear)
- ✓ Bath towel and toiletries
- ✓ Pillow and bedding for a twin mattress
- ✓ Refillable water bottle labeled with name
- ✓ Sunscreen and insect repellent
- ✓ Money for the snack shop
- ✓ Prescription medication (to be turned in at check-in)

Do NOT bring:

- ✗ Cell phones
- ✗ Drugs/vapes/tobacco/alcohol
- ✗ Weapons, fireworks, or explosives
- ✗ Inappropriate clothing (see Dress Code policy above)

REGISTRATION + PAYMENT

What is the refund policy?

To help with budgeting, registration opens early so you can make payments throughout the year.

- A 50% payment is recommended six weeks before the event
- Final payment is due two weeks before the event
- Refund requests must be submitted at least three weeks before the event date

If you have any additional questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to your campus HSM Ministers or email our team. We're looking forward to an incredible weekend of growth, connection, and seeing what God does in the lives of your students!