



Field Trips Or Land Mines?

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There is no question that field trips are an essential part of strengthening the curriculum and creating an interactive learning experience for today's students.

In fact, most independent schools pride themselves on the unconventional and unique off-campus learning opportunities provided to their students on both day trips and extended travel.

It is imperative that the parents of every student who participates in a field trip have executed a proper release.

This lesson was recently learned by a Connecticut school after a \$14.7 million verdict was entered against it when a jury found that it was negligent in preventing a student from contracting encephalitis.

Specifically, the jury found that the school was negligent in not warning the student and her parents that she would be traveling in the mountainous and forested terrain of China, and that these areas posed a risk for insect-transmitted diseases.

Every adult participant should be trained before participating in a school-sponsored trip. The training should include a review of all applicable school policies and any trip-specific rules. It should also include a review of the expectations for adult behavior on the trip, including, the prohibition of smoking and drinking, adult/student boundaries, and the need to act as a role model for the students.

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