

# A-Teams

An introduction & info-guide to Advocacy Teams



## Good A-Teams are...

...very diverse. There is no “best way” to be an A-Team.

Some churches do great supporting missionaries financially. But the mission field can be an isolating place. Moreover, membership at American churches experience frequent turnover. This leaves a missionary feeling estranged when they visit their own sending church on furlough.

*An Advocacy team is a group of believers committed to being "home" and "family" to a missionary both while they are away and when they return on furlough.*

## The Basics:

*What does an A-Team do?* It's simple: A-Teams are aware of and sensitive to their missionary's needs and serve them as best they can. Here's how:

### Get to know your missionary

- Ask questions to get to know them, just like how you would get to know a new friend.
- Don't just ask to hear about their ministry, but to get to know them personally; become friends.

### Be their family/community

- Invite them for coffee, a round of golf, or have play dates with their kids.
- Invite them to participate in your small group or other community events, even if they are only in town for a few weeks. Many missionaries go from one small group to the next while they are in town, sharing about their ministry. Wouldn't it be great if they could plug into a real community of believers while they are in town to develop deeper relationships? Make sure they know the opportunity is available to them.
- Be *for them* as a person, not just for their ministry. Be there through thick and thin, through life changes, and through the difficult transition of returning permanently to the U.S.

### Be their Advocate

- Advocating/introducing...many missionaries can only visit their sending church every few years when they return to the USA. But how much has the membership of your local church changed over that period? Each time missionaries return to America, they need to be introduced to new church members.
- Let your missionary know you are behind them, no matter what. You are a confidant that gives them safety to share about their struggles

- Church leadership changes over time, and there may come a day when you need to give the new pastors or elders at your church an introduction to their long-time missionary. Church leaders often bear the responsibility of making financial decisions about which missionaries to continue supporting. As their A-Team, you could be in a unique role to remind those making financial decisions about the importance of supporting the work of your missionary.
- There is a difference between a missionary sharing their problems and asking you to get involved in resolving them. As you pursue being your missionary's advocate, ask for clarity about ways you can help and ask whether it would be helpful for you to communicate needs to members, elders or staff at the sending Church.

### Why join an A-Team?

*In our interviews of A-Teams, one message kept coming across over and over . . . "Being part of an A-Team is such a blessing!" Jesus says it is better to give than to receive, and that has been the experience of people on A-Teams serving in the important Kingdom role of senders. They feel blessed!*

### Ready for more information?

Then read: [A-Teams - Beyond the Basics](http://grace360.org/global-outreach/) available at <http://grace360.org/global-outreach/>