

# CHI Volunteer Handbook

*A Visitor's Guide to Serving in Haiti*



**Child Hope**

Updated September 2016

# Short-Term Volunteers: Our Vision

*"Haiti does not need short-term heroes. It needs long-term partners."*

We are so excited that you have made the decision to visit Child Hope International in Haiti! Introducing others to this little island that we call home is truly one of our greatest joys. We hope that this handbook will help you understand Child Hope's vision for short-term volunteers, and give you some practical tips to help you prepare for your trip!

## WHO IS A SHORT-TERM VOLUNTEER?

Child Hope defines a short-term volunteer as anyone who visits the ministry for less than 30 days, and is not living in-country on a permanent basis.

## WHAT IS MY ROLE AS A SHORT-TERM VOLUNTEER?

Our vision for your role as a short-term volunteer is for you to encourage and enhance the work that is **already happening** on the ground in Haiti, as well as to be open to how God may want to work in your own heart through your trip!

Sometimes this involves completing a specific task, while other times this may just mean **listening, learning, and being present**. Both are valued and welcomed when done in the right way.

## SO...WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WHEN I VISIT?

We value and desire to use whatever skills and talents God has gifted our volunteers with. However, our desire first and foremost is for our volunteers to gain a greater understanding of what life is like in a country like Haiti, and how you can partner with us not just for one week, but for a lifetime!



# Short-Term Volunteers: Things to Know

## HOW TO PREPARE

Before your trip, we encourage you to **read and learn** as much as you can about Haiti. Having historical context and background will only enrich your experience while you are on the ground. We highly recommend reading the book, ***When Helping Hurts***, by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert to gain a greater understanding of our philosophy behind short-term volunteers and missions work.

We also encourage you to pray, pray, **PRAY** in preparation!

## ROOM + BOARD

A guesthouse in our neighborhood costs **\$65/night/person**. This fee includes three meals per day, airport transportation, and travel insurance.

It does NOT include airfare or additional spending money.

**We will take care of booking it for you or your team. We require a 50% booking deposit to secure your stay at the guesthouse. Final payment must be made at least two weeks prior to your trip.**

## PAYMENT

To make your guesthouse payment **online**, visit [www.childhope.org](http://www.childhope.org), click on "DONATE", and select "Guesthouse Payment" from the drop-down menu.

To make your guesthouse payment by **check**, make your check out to "Child Hope" and mail it to our US Office at 1225 Coast Village Road, Ste C, Santa Barbara, CA 93108.



## ADDITIONAL FUNDS

We recommend bringing between **\$50-\$100** in personal spending money (USD, cash) to spend on gift shop items, additional food, customs (see below), and airport tips.

In addition to this, you or your team may be asked to consider raising **additional funds** to bring with you to complete projects such as construction, activities with the kids, special events, etc. This may vary based on what you or your team's skillsets are, but it is good to keep in mind when preparing for your trip. The team coordinator in Haiti and the US office will communicate with you specifically about what your projects will be as you prepare for your trip.

## AIRFARE

You are responsible for purchasing your own airfare to and from Haiti. If you are traveling with a team or group, **you must all be on the same flights**. Please do not book flights on Sundays, as we have limited staff on the weekends.

Please make sure to forward your purchased flight itinerary to our US office so we can coordinate airport pick up and drop off.



## TRAVELING TO HAITI

- **VISA** | There is no visa required prior to traveling to Haiti – just a valid US Passport. A visa application will be given to you on the plane where you will need to fill in your address and phone number while you are in Haiti. Use our office address: **Delmas 75, Rue Catalpa, Bertol #2, Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Phone Number: 2230-3031**
- **CUSTOMS + IMMIGRATION** | Once you are in the airport in Haiti, you will go through customs where you pay a **\$10 fee in cash (USD)**. Have this ready. You will then go through immigration where you will be issued a visa – there is no cost. Keep the bottom portion of the green card they give you; you will be required to present it when you depart Haiti. Once you claim your bags, you can then walk through the customs area with your baggage receipts in hand. The customs agents may stop you and ask to check your bags; this is normal and you should comply.

## TRAVELING TO HAITI (CONTINUED)

- **OUTSIDE THE AIRPORT** | If someone tries to help you with your luggage, just say “no merci.” They will expect payment if you allow them to help you. Child Hope will send someone with a marked sign with your name on it to help you get all your luggage to the Child Hope vehicle; please have **\$2 cash/bag** to tip them. Someone from Child Hope will also be there to meet you right outside of the airport.
- **OTHER** | Keep your bags close to you. Do not take out valuables such as cameras, large amounts of cash, jewelry, etc. Stay with another person at all times. Do NOT get in a vehicle with anyone besides Child Hope staff.

## PACKING LIST

- Passport: make two color copies; bring one with you and leave another at home with a family member.
- Driver's license or ID
- Reusable water bottle
- Bug repellent - 100% DEET
- IMMUNIZATIONS:** We recommend having your Hepatitis A & B, Typhoid, and Tetanus immunizations up-to-date before traveling to Haiti. We also recommend taking anti-malarial medication, as well as bringing medication for traveler's diarrhea. Consult your local physician for specific recommendations.
- Sunscreen, hat, and sunglasses
- Cell phone and charger - electrical outlets are same as those in the US. No adapters required.
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Bible, journal, writing utensils
- Snacks or other foods you "can't live without."
- Additional spending money
- Clothing: T-shirts, shorts, and tank tops are usually what are easiest and most comfortable to wear in Haiti. Additionally, bring:
  - Socks and comfortable tennis shoes AND a pair of comfortable/durable sandals
  - 2 pairs of pants/jeans
  - A light hooded jacket in case of rain
  - A modest bathing suit/swim trunks on the occasion you can go to the beach or pool
  - Nice clothes for church on Sundays
  - Women: Pack modest clothes. No tube tops or halters. Tank tops shouldn't be too low cut and straps should be thick enough to cover bra straps. Dresses, skirts, and shorts should be no shorter than mid-thigh.
  - Men: Pack at least one collared shirts for Sundays.
- Other medications/vitamins you take regularly
- Hygiene items: deodorant, toothbrush/paste, body/face wipes, shampoo/conditioner, body wash, hand sanitizer, unscented body lotion
- Laptop – not a necessity, we do have two computers upstairs available for your use

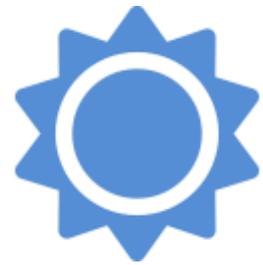
# Child Hope: Rules + Guidelines

We ask that you respect the rules that we have put in place at Child Hope with the upmost care. Imagine if you had fifteen visitors in your home at any given time, snapping pictures of your children, feeding them candy, and overriding the rules that you have put in place. We put guidelines in place based on years of experience working in Haiti...not because we don't want you to help or have fun! If you need ANY further clarification on the rules listed below, please reach out to your team leader or a Child Hope staff member before your trip.

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## 1. THE ENVIRONMENT

The weather in Haiti is very humid and often times warm; please come prepared with appropriate attire and sun protection. There are also lots of mosquitoes! We provide mosquito nets at our guesthouse, however you should bring bug repellent with you – 100% DEET is best. And drink LOTS of water!



## 2. THE GUESTHOUSE

- **MEALS** | Meals at the guesthouse are prepared by wonderful Haitian cooks. Please respect the kitchen areas by not tampering with items that do not belong to you. Please arrive on time or early to scheduled meal times. Note that Child Hope will not reimburse you for any meals eaten outside of the guesthouse.
- **WATER** | We have filtered water available for drinking; we encourage you to bring a reusable water bottle that you can use throughout your time in Haiti. Only brush your teeth with filtered water, and please try to conserve water by only flushing when necessary. Showers are cold, and we ask that you turn off the water when you are not rinsing, again, to conserve water.
- **YOUR BELONGINGS** | Please keep your belongings in your room; never leave items unattended in the common areas. Please pick up after yourself and leave the guesthouse better than you found it.

## 2. THE GUESTHOUSE (CONTINUED)

- **ELECTRICITY** | Please try to conserve electricity by turning off and unplugging any devices that are not in use, i.e. turning off a fan when you leave a room. You are welcome to charge cameras, phones, etc., but please only do so when city power is on in the evenings. Please be considerate and do not use excessive electricity.
- **KID'S POLICY** | Children are NOT allowed in the guesthouse unless under special circumstances. If you see a child unattended in the guesthouse, please let one of our staff members know.
- **SMOKING & ALCOHOL** | Smoking and consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited on the guesthouse premises at all times.
- **QUIET HOURS** | Quiet hours at the guesthouse are between 10pm and 7am. Please keep noise to a minimum between these hours.

## 3. INTERACTING WITH THE KIDS

*Our staff work hard to establish healthy routines, expectations, and discipline with our kids. We ask that visitors come alongside us in this effort by adhering to the following guidelines:*



- While at group times of devotions, Bible studies, and worship, encourage the kids to pay attention and participate. This is not a time to play and distract them. Help the staff by trying to keep the kids focused by asking them to be quiet or redirect their attention as needed.
- Visitors are never permitted to enter the Boys' or Girls' homes without a CHI staff member.
- Many of our children are in their teenage years; flirting of any kind (excessive touching, hugging, etc.) will not be tolerated. Feel free to interact with the kids during group times, but set appropriate boundaries.

### 3. INTERACTING WITH THE KIDS (CONTINUED)

- Do not prod the kids to share about their past; many of them have come from abusive environments in the past, and we do not want them to feel pressured to open up to someone who is visiting on a short-term basis.
- Do not make promises of any kind to the kids, such as returning to Haiti or providing them with the funds to carry out a goal. **We ask that any communication you have with the kids after departing Haiti is carried out through our US Office. This includes communication through social media with kids of all ages who are living in our homes.**
- Do not purchase anything directly from the kids. **Visitors are not permitted to give gifts of any kind directly to the kids. All gifts must be cleared with CHI staff prior to arrival, and then given to a staff member to give to the child.**

### 4. INTERACTING WITH THE COMMUNITY

- Feel free to greet people on the street as you walk by. “Bonjou” means good morning, “Bonswa” means good day.
- **Do not give food or other material items to people or children in the community. Your actions have long-term effects, and if you give to one person, others will expect you to give to them. We do not want to feed into a larger cycle of dependency or create unhealthy expectations in the community.** If you develop a special burden to give to a member of the community, please talk to a CHI staff member to discuss the best way to go about it.
- Keep in mind that you are not on a “poverty tour.” Do not take people’s pictures without their permission. Do not walk around with expensive camera equipment in full view or take excessive photos with the kids without their permission. Always keep in mind that you are a visitor, and treat every person you meet with care and dignity.



## 5. OTHER RULES + GUIDELINES

- Our staff in Haiti, specifically the Team Coordinator, works very hard to prepare a weekly schedule for each team and/or volunteer who visits Child Hope. **Please respect this schedule – be on time, do not make any decisions regarding your projects without consulting the Team Coordinator.** We want you to be able to use all of your talents and gifts to serve in Haiti, but we ask that you please communicate these ideas with our staff so that we can work as a team to make it a fruitful trip for everyone involved.
- The neighborhood we are located in is generally safe, however from time to time we do experience crime such as burglary and break-ins. We do have armed guards at all of our facilities, so there is no need to be worried, but we do ask that you NEVER walk anywhere alone, and never walk around at night unless you are with a CHI staff member. Do not carry personal items with you such as laptops or other valuables. Make sure that someone always knows where you are going, and do not leave the immediate area between CHI facilities unless you are with a staff member.
- Be flexible and patient. Remember – you are in Haiti to serve, and to learn. Be open to last-minute changes and don't be in a hurry...Haiti has a very different pace of life than the United States or other countries may have!
- Take care of yourself. It is easy to become overwhelmed, especially in your first few days of being in Haiti. Stay diligent in your times of prayer and in processing what you are experiencing with others.



# Short-Term Volunteers: How to Stay Involved

*Often volunteers leave Haiti wondering, “What can I do to make a difference now? What is the right response to take back home with me? How can I take what I have learned and make a sustainable impact over a long period of time?” Here are a few ways that you can get involved not just for a week, but for a lifetime!*

## SPONSOR A CHILD

By committing to sponsoring a child each month, you are providing basic necessities for our children such as food, clothing, clean drinking water, medical care, and education. Most importantly, you are allowing us to continue pouring the love of Christ into their lives. When you sponsor a child, you are making an eternal investment in the life of a child who may not otherwise ever hear the name of Jesus. Sign up to sponsor a child by visiting our website at [www.childhope.org](http://www.childhope.org).

## COME BACK

Many of our teams who end up having the greatest impact on our community are teams who have traveled to Haiti on multiple occasions. Taking trips to Haiti on an annual basis can often give you deeper insight into the ministry of Child Hope, and the country of Haiti as a whole.

## HOST A FUNDRAISER

If you don't have the means to sponsor a child and are wondering how you can stay involved here in the States, we encourage you to host a fundraiser at your church, school, or even just in your home! We provide what we call a “Go Packet,” that will provide you with everything you would need to host a fundraiser or event in your community. The Go Packet includes brochures, sponsorship packets, a DVD, sign-up sheets, and other items that would be helpful to tell the story of Child Hope. Contact our stateside offices at 805-845-1946 to have a Go Packet sent your way!

## PRAY

We believe that prayer changes things. By committing to praying for the ministry of Child Hope – the children, the staff, the missionaries, the surrounding community – you are making a huge impact in the ministry. We covet your prayers and are so thankful for those who partner with us in this way!

## STAY IN THE LOOP

Sign up to receive our monthly newsletter to stay up-to-date on needs, praise updates, and other news. You can sign up on our homepage at [www.childhope.org](http://www.childhope.org). For the most up-to-date information, “like” us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram!