

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If you choose to volunteer your time and energy to assist in the ongoing ministry of Morningstar Children's Home and/ or Strong Tower Christian School, you will more than likely find yourself immersed in surroundings and situations which will be very different from your day to day lifestyle. To better prepare you for this experience we have prepared answers to questions posed by many of our volunteers. Please be aware that this will be a challenging experience that will in many aspects challenge your comfort zone, possibly unsettle preconceived notions of service, and give you an excellent opportunity to serve God and others in very real and practical ways.

What is the weather like?

Located on the stretch of dessert that lines Peru's coast, there is very little rainfall and very low humidity. Summer is from December to March with temperatures ranging from the low 70's to the 90's. Winter is from June to August and has temperatures from the low 60's to the low 80's. The remaining months are gradual adjustment between those ranges. The sun will be out in full force almost every day of the year.

Are there cultural or mission dress standards?

This part of Peru adheres to modern western dress standards. As a spiritual mission we encourage modesty and propriety, and while we don't want to be legalistic, because we are raising children we must be careful of the examples we place before them. This means clothing should always cover cleavage, midsections, and legs above the knees. Teachers working in the school for an extended period will need to wear the teachers' uniform or something close to it.

What are the accommodations like?

You will most likely be housed at the Morningstar facility, either in the same rooms as some of the children or in a separate room for volunteers. You will probably not have a private room and will share a bathroom. In some cases you may be housed off campus. These details will be addressed once the time frame for your participation is established according to what housing is available at that time.

What kind of personal items should I bring besides clothes?

We suggest a Spanish/English Bible (especially for an extended stay) sunscreen, insect repellent, toiletry items, and any medication you are prescribed.

What kind of medical care is available?

Local private physicians and clinics maintain an acceptable standard of medical care. Should you have any specific ongoing medical requirements, please advise us and we can research availability.

Are there any items I could bring down to help?

Always! But these needs change often so ask for an updated list if you so desire, once the date for your trip is established.

I would like to bring gifts or items for the children. What would be appropriate?

The age of our children changes as some are adopted and leave and others arrive. The ages and amount of children at the school is also always shifting. If you want to bring them something you should ask for suggestions in an email as your travel dates near.

What is the best way to access funds from abroad while in Peru?

There are ATM's readily available which are affiliated to every major network in the world. They deliver U.S. dollars as well as Peruvian Nuevos Soles. U.S. dollars and Euros can be exchanged on the street easily since most places only accept Soles.

Travelers Checks are accepted only in banks and require waiting in line during banking hours to get a lesser exchange rate.

Our recommendation is to travel to Peru with \$200 cash (less for each member in a group). This could last your whole trip if you don't buy much, or you can use an ATM later.

How far is the children's home from the airport?

Your international flight will arrive in Lima. Chiclayo is located 320 miles to the north. You can get there on a one-hour flight or a twelve-hour bus ride. Once you have travel dates we can help you with the prices and arrangements for this travel.

From Chiclayo the Children's Home is another 20 minutes by car. We will be happy to pick you up at either the bus station or airport in Chiclayo and take you there.

Are there any special requirements for entering Peru?

For many countries, like the USA, Canada, England, Spain, Australia, and others, there is not. You may stay for up to 183 days without further paperwork. From some countries, however, you will need a visa from a Peruvian embassy. Check out the requirements for your country at <http://theonlyperuguide.com/2012/12/do-i-need-a-visa-for-travel-to-peru/>

What shots should I get?

Although your local physician may recommend certain “tropical” vaccinations, there are no requirements for entry and in this part of the country they are not needed. (There is a major mountain range between here and the jungle!) We strongly urge all standard childhood vaccinations, as there are polio, rubella, etc. in this part of the world.

What would be a typical day’s routine?

Teams have atypical schedules accommodating their plans and goals. Those staying on campus might awake around 6 AM and assist in breakfast preparation and getting ready for school. Then they would either be teaching at the school, helping in the home, or working on a project. Lunch is the main meal and would be around 1:30. After that there would be time for rest, playing with the children, and possibly some form of community outreach. Supper is around 6 PM and some nights there are church meetings.

How could I teach English if I can't speak Spanish?

Some of our English classes are full immersion, meaning there is basically no Spanish used in the classroom, thus Spanish is not required.

What is Peru's national language and do I need to know it?

Spanish is the language spoken in our area of Peru but many come without it and fare well. Obviously, the more fluent you are in Spanish, the more options you will have to serve and communicate, and the more comfortable you will be on a day to day basis. However, it's not a requirement. This will be an excellent opportunity to sharpen your Spanish language skills and we hope you at least have a desire to attempt to learn some Spanish while you are here.

Would there be any safety concerns or things I should consider for traveling?

As with any international travel, the basic concern is point-to-point arranged travel. Avoid spontaneous travel with unknown services or individuals and keep your luggage and belongings as physically in your possession as possible. Avoid small loose items. Leave expensive looking jewelry, costly electronics, and precious keepsakes at home. Traveling with deep, closing pockets that can hold passports, tickets, and money are a big help. Use luggage locks that Homeland Security can open and close and don't put anything in outer zipper pockets. Once your travel dates are set we can insure that you will be met at the Lima airport if you plan to go into Lima, and or the Chiclayo bus terminal or airport.