hands across the water
GUIDE - Volunteering at New Life Project, Kanchanaburi
Volunteering at New Life Project Kanchanaburi

How much time do I need to commit to volunteering?

We ask that you commit at least three weeks to volunteering to ensure the kids don’t feel as though many people are coming and going from their lives, as this can be unsettling.

How much notice do I need to give?

To coordinate a volunteer placement, please ensure you give us at least three months’ notice. Please note, an expression of interest does not guarantee you a volunteer placement. We tend to receive more expressions of interest than we are able to accept.

What is the best time to visit?

Thailand is a wonderful travel experience at any time of the year and the children and staff welcome visitors. Thailand has a tropical monsoon climate. It is warm all year round, but the two periods of April-May and September-October are the hottest. The September-October period is also the wettest.

The best time to visit is during the cool season, from November to March when it isn’t so humid, and the cool breezes keep things comfortable. The average temperature is around 24ºC to 32ºC (75ºF to 89ºF).

During June, July and August the weather is usually fine (and there are less tourists). The usual pattern is brief but heavy showers, with plenty of sunshine between downpours.

Make sure you take sunscreen and mosquito repellent with you whatever time of the year you choose to go!

Transfers

New Life Project Kanchanaburi is approximately three hours’ drive from Bangkok. A return transfer can be organised via Hands with the home’s driver and will cost AUD$100 each way. This money is paid to Hands and then forwarded to the home.

Alternatively, you can organise a pick up from the River Kwai train station, which is 30 minutes from the home, for AUD$20 each way.

A taxi from Bangkok to Kanchanaburi will cost you around AUD$100 each way.

Accommodation

Basic rooms with air-conditioning and an en suite are available at the home. Please book your accommodation via Hands.
What is the process?

CLICK HERE to express your interest in volunteering.

We will be in touch with you within two weeks. We will liaise with Thailand staff to check availability of dates.

You will need to complete a Working with Children Check, Police Check and Privacy and Confidentiality Agreement.

On successful completion of the above paperwork we will touch base with you again to confirm your placement and talk through details.

Can I make a donation towards the home?

Yes of course! The home couldn’t keep their doors open without the generous support of people like you! It is vital that all donations are made through Hands Across the Water rather than directly to the home. This will ensure your funds are used appropriately and it will also enable us to issue a tax receipt.

CLICK HERE to donate now.

Can I sponsor one of the children?

Yes definitely! Again, it is important that this is done through Hands Across the Water to ensure your donations are tax deductible and your donation is used appropriately.

CLICK HERE to Sponsor a Child today!

What should I take?

Many people ask us what they can take for the children. Food items such as rice, milk (fresh or long-life), baby formula and cooking oils are always welcome. Other supplies that are most welcome are personal care items, clothing, underwear, first aid equipment, dish soaps, laundry soap and education materials.

We ask that you avoid bringing hand me downs. There are markets and shops nearby. We also recommend that you bring bottled water for your own consumption while at the home. Please refrain from bringing sweets for the children as well as gifts for individual children. It is recommended you hand any gifts for the home to the staff for distribution. Most homes have a “wish list”, feel free to ask us and we will supply some recommendations.

What sorts of things can I expect to be doing?

You may be asked to help with any number of tasks while at the home including cooking, supervising the children to and from school, cleaning and general upkeep at the home.

You may spend some time without guidance from staff and we ask that you use your initiative to support wherever you can. We do ask, however, that you do not take over any chores without permission from the staff, as it respecting the current routine and chores of the children and staff is of utmost importance. Sometimes the chores are allocated as a form of discipline, just like we would do here, and therefore it is important to respect those boundaries. Please do not use the Hands supplied vehicles at the home without the permission of Hands.

Of great importance will be your role in encouraging the children with their English. As a child’s English improves, so do their opportunities for future employment, so this is a focus of the home.
Can I take photos of the children?

We ask you to exercise common sense when it comes to taking photos of the kids and are sensitive to their privacy. We also ask you to exercise caution when posting photos on social media platforms like Facebook. Please do not use children’s names.

Routine

The children are all at school during the day and arrive home at approximately 4:00pm. They play and do their homework until dinner time at 7:00pm, then have group time (sometimes taken up with an activity designed by the volunteers) followed by prayer/song and then bedtime at 9:00pm.

Is there Wi-Fi?

It is recommended that purchase your own Wi-Fi for your computer as the home’s internet bandwidth is limited and reception is also not consistent in the homes. Please give Hands your contact number whilst you are in Thailand so that we can get in touch with you if necessary.

Tips before you go

See a travel doctor before you leave for recommended medication for the area in which you are volunteering. You might like to pack thongs; torch; baby wipes; hand sanitiser; antibiotics; immodium; deet strength mosquito repellant; ear plugs; eye mask; umbrella and a poncho.

Return volunteer placements

Any future volunteering at a Hands home must be made via Hands. Please do not approach the home directly.

Need more information?

Please don’t hesitate to contact us via email at volunteering@handsacrossthewater.com.au or visit our website at www.handsacrossthewater.org.au.