

## Centre for Children and Teenagers in the Park

### Highlights



- Providing the children and teenagers with much needed attention and support and knowing you are making a real difference to their everyday lives.
- Working within one of Quito's largest green areas, just a few minutes walks from our language school.
- Taking weekend excursions during your free time – beaches, mountains and jungles are just a few hours away!

### About the project

The project is a center for children and teenagers located in one of Quito's largest parks. The center was originally set up by Ecuador's first Christian church, and at the time, meals were provided for children and adults in need, but on the condition that they converted to the Christian faith. The government later intervened and decided that the project should continue, however, those attending were not obligated to become Christian. Nowadays at the project, once a week, the children are taught about different religions, allowing them to choose for themselves which faith they wish to follow.

In the mornings, the center cares for up to 50 children aged 5-12 years. Their parents are working, so attending the center means that they have somewhere safe to go, and they are also provided with lunch each day and clothes, which is a benefit to the families who are often scraping by with very little money. For some children, the center has also been essential in finding them new homes in cases when their parents are no longer able to look after them.



In the afternoons, the center provides help for up to 15 teenagers and youths aged 13-25 years. Many of the teenagers are coping with difficult issues, for example some have drug problems and others are living on the streets. The center provides the teenagers with one meal each day, as well as assistance in finding jobs and homes for those living on the streets. Ex-street children also run workshops about the dangers of living on the streets.

## Volunteer Role



The first Monday at the Academia is an orientation day. All new students and volunteers go on a city tour of Quito to get to know the city and learn how to get around and use the public transport system. In the afternoon there's an orientation session in which you will learn about the Academia, as well as about important issues such as security, do's and don'ts in Quito, the host family etc. Your volunteer work will start on Tuesday of the first week.

As a volunteer, you can choose to work with either the children, or the teenagers and youths. The children attend the center between 9.30am and 12.30pm, and the teenagers attend from 3pm until 5.30pm. If you prefer you can volunteer during both sessions. The project is open on weekdays only, meaning you will have free time at the weekends. Volunteers working with children will assist the center staff with everyday tasks such as preparing and serving lunch, and helping to clear up afterwards. You will also spend time playing games and sports with the children in the park, and organizing educational activities. The permanent staff are busy running the center, so if you choose to teach, you need to be able to organize and run your own activities and programmes - using your initiative is vital!

Volunteers working with teenagers and youths will work alongside the center staff, assisting with tasks such as helping with homework, teaching IT skills, running sex education sessions and preparing meals.

## Location

The project is located in a large park, just a few minutes walk from the Academia in Quito.

Lying at 2,800 meters above sea level, and about 15 miles south of the equator, Quito is a city of sun and sky surrounded by mountains, with three snow-capped volcanoes in view on a clear day. Its climate has been described by many as eternal spring, due to its high altitude and its location close to the equator. It has a daily average temperature of about 70 °F / 16°C.

Quito has plenty to offer in terms of culture and entertainment. The city is brimming with bars, restaurants and clubs, as well as cinemas, shops, museums, art galleries and markets. Nearby there are local attractions such as the 'TeleferiQo' cable car, providing stunning views of the city, and the 'Middle of the World Museum' where you can stand with one foot on the southern hemisphere and one foot on the northern! The area of Quito known as the 'old town' is also a must with incredible colonial architecture. If you enjoy shopping then you'll be pleased to hear that Quito is Ecuador's most important marketing center for the country's artisan products, lying very close to some of the major production areas and indigenous markets!

As the capital city, Quito has good communication and transport links to the rest of the country, as well as other parts of South America. Its location makes it ideal for access

to Ecuador's beaches, mountains, cloud forests and of course the Amazon and the Galapagos!

### **Accommodation**

You will stay either at the student residence or with a host family. Host family accommodation includes a private room, breakfast, dinner and laundry service. Singles, married couples and parents with children can all be accommodated. It is also possible to stay at the student residence located within the school grounds itself. Here you will self cater - there is a large supermarket very nearby and a fully equipped kitchen at the residency.

### **Requirements**

Volunteers must be able to commit to at least 4 weeks at the project in order to build up trusting relationships with the children, teenagers and staff.

All volunteers must hold at least an intermediate level of spoken Spanish. If your Spanish is at a lower level, you must join our Spanish language school prior to commencing your volunteer work.

When choosing to volunteer in a developing country such as Ecuador, it is important to remain flexible as the needs of the project are constantly evolving. This is what makes volunteering so rewarding – the fact that you are on hand to lend your support when and where it is needed. By choosing Academia Latinoamericana de Espanol you will have a comprehensive safety network behind you as we are here to help throughout the duration of your entire stay!

### **Feedback**

*"Joining this project was both fun and rewarding. We played football in the park, which the children loved, and I organized activities in the classroom to keep them occupied. It was great to be part of a support network for children whose parents are unable to care for them during the day".*

*Cassandra White, USA*

### **Programme Fee Includes**

- Accommodation
- 2 meals per day if staying with a host family
- Project Support
- A donation that goes directly to your project
- Orientation and city tour
- Pre-departure information
- Laundry service if staying with a host family
- 24 hour emergency support

### **Programme Fee Does Not Include**

- International flights
- Meals if staying at the student residence
- Laundry service if staying at the student residence
- Visas
- Travel Insurance
- Inoculations
- Excursions over and above the itinerary

### **After Your Project – Travel Ideas**

We are fully equipped to you with making weekend travel arrangements, and onwards travel arrangements following your time in Quito. We work with the best tour companies to offer safe, reliable and competitively priced trips. Popular trips include:

- Otavalo – a famous Saturday market offering a dazzling array of textiles, crafts and jewellery just a couple of hours from Quito.
- Papallacta - 8 natural hot springs to soak away the day in! A great day trip from Quito.
- Cotopaxi – you can choose to hike this immense volcano, or take a more moderate tour to see it!
- Banos – great for trekking, mountain biking, rafting and taking a dip in the hot baths! This makes for a nice weekend break from Quito.
- Mindo Cloud Forest – swing in a hammocks, spot exotic birds and animals, bath in waterfalls, float down the river in inner tubes, trek and horseback ride! All this and near enough to Quito to make it a great weekend excursion.
- The Amazon – A fantastic option for those looking to travel after their volunteer project. Stay in rustic jungle lodges, swim with pink river dolphins, search for anacondas and swim in hammocks!
- The Galapagos! Ecuador's true gem! Experience for yourself the exact places Charles Darwin got his inspiration! Take a cruise around the beautiful islands and spot seals, turtles, sharks, albatross, blue and red footed boobies, iguanas and more as you trek, swim, snorkel and explore! An unforgettable way to end your time in Ecuador!

### **Apply Now**

If you have some further questions about this project, please feel free to contact us at [info@latinoschools.ec](mailto:info@latinoschools.ec)

If you would like to book this programme, please [click here](#) to complete the booking form. We will be in touch within one week of application to confirm your booking!