



Centre for Street Children and Teenagers



Highlights

- Seeing the smiling faces of the children and teenagers as you build up a rapport with them.
- Knowing that you are making a real difference by providing these children and teenagers with the attention and support they have thus far lacked in life.
- Living and volunteering in Quito – gateway to the rest of exciting Ecuador!

About The Project

The center has been set up to provide a safe haven for children and teenagers living on the streets of Quito. Some of the children have been abandoned and others have run away from home – whatever the case, they are living in the constant danger of drug addiction, alcoholism, sexual abuse and child prostitution. The center provides these young people with two meals per day, a place to sleep, psychological help, assistance finding schools and jobs, educational assistance and help obtaining identification documents. The project aims to promote a sense of identify and self-respect amongst the children and teenagers.

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 information 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, accommodation, volunteer work etc. Your volunteer work will start on Tuesday of the first week.





Volunteers will work from 9am – 3pm. As a volunteer, your role is to be on hand to support the teenagers and children. Many of them have had very difficult backgrounds so it is important that you set a good example and act as a responsible role model. Most of the children have been devoid of any real affection or care, so part of your job is to provide the children and teenagers with some attention and support. By simply dedicating your time and spending it with them will reassure them that there are people who care for their welfare.

The kinds of tasks you can expect to get involved with include:

- Assisting during meal times
- Organizing the necessary paperwork to help the young people to obtain identification documents
- Accompanying the children to school and acting as their responsible guardian to monitor their progress
- Helping with homework
- Preparing study materials
- Organizing trips for the children and teenagers
- Providing psychological assistance if qualified and experienced

Location

The project is located in Ecuador's capital city – Quito. It is about thirty-five minutes by bus from the Academia.

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 allow time to build up trusting relationships with the children, teenagers and staff.

All volunteers must hold at least a low 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. This is vital in order to allow you to build up a good rapport with the children, teenagers and staff.

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!

On this project, it is important to remember that the children and teenagers have experienced very difficult backgrounds. The children have not been used to a lot of attention and care, and whilst some will crave time with you, it may take time and patience to build up a trusting relationship with others.

Feedback

"As a teacher I was able to use quite a few of my abilities to help the children. I was patient with them, as they were of my Spanish! I helped them with homework and comforted them when necessary. I also organized a music activity using tin whistles, and purchased a computer for the center and showed the children how to use it. The kids have really taught me how to value life and the things I have – I've learnt not to get caught up in unimportant problems that don't really matter. I won't be taking my life for granted any more. I realize now that I have so much – a job, a home, people who love me and stability."

Nicola Smith, UK

"I've come to realize how lucky I was to have grown up in the environment that I did. I had a lot more than the children have and now I feel grateful for it."

Mari Kimura, Holland

"I definitely learnt not to take anything for granted after volunteering on this project. Volunteers need to be patient and enjoy the experience, as I have. The kids are great and it would be good to introduce some new activities, perhaps cultural ones from volunteer countries. We donated a computer to the project which I think will be very beneficial for the children's education."

Brenda McCuskee, USA

Programme Fee Includes

- Accommodation
- 2 meals per day if staying with a host family
- Project Support
- A donation directly to the 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
- Transportation from your accommodation to the project
- 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 help 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. Some of the most 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 in which to soak away the day! 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, bathe 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 swing 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

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!