

CasaParaNiños Aleluya

Km. 32 Carratera Panamericana • San Bartolomé Milpas Altas • Guatemala, Centro America

[REV. April 2008]

Code of Conduct

We appreciate your willingness to give yourself to this work. It is our desire that your time with us be useful, and rewarding, and brings you to a greater understanding of the life that our heavenly father, through Jesus, has to offer. Thank you for coming! Welcome!

Obedience and hard work. That defines the life of Jesus, and it is a good standard to apply to your time with us. We cannot attain His perfection in this, but by His grace, we can walk in His Spirit, rather than in our flesh. Please consider doing *His work His way*. Be available for long hours when necessary, and being inconvenienced continuously when you come here. It's not about you; it is about the children, and the needs at hand. This is not the place for focusing on meditation, or finding yourself, or doing what you think best. This *is* a place where you can find the truth of Jesus' words: "***If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me... (also) whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it.***"

Much of it is a matter of Common sense

Ben Franklin said that common sense is not too common. It isn't always what comes naturally—especially in another culture. When you are with us, please continually think of yourselves as representing Jesus as a guest in another person's home. Please ask yourself "WWJD?" and also **ask us** before doing anything!! We cannot list every common sense thing, but here is a variety that often needs to be stated:

Casa Aleluya is a tobacco, alcohol and drug free home. Those who work here must be also!

- Do not shout or talk loudly near where others are sleeping, praying, or studying.
- Do not ever sit on tables, or on chairs made for little people.
- Do not throw trash on the ground or spit on the sidewalk.
- Do not linger near the windows of Dormitories.
- Do not take long, hot showers or leave lights on when leaving a room(think energy conservation).
- Do not leave tools lying around and jobs half finished.
- Guard what you say, and how you say it. Many of our children understand English.
- When you finish your assigned duty please look for "what needs to be done" and pitch in. Should you have "down time", offer to relieve one of the permanent workers, to give them a break.
- If you are sick let us know so we can cover for you.
- Everyone needs a day off each week. Take it!

Some things will be more job specific...

If you are assigned to a dormitory:

- Coordinate your activities with that dormitory's houseparents.
- Put the children to bed at night and get them up in the morning.
- Assist the children in bathing, brushing teeth and hair.
- Help them get dressed appropriately and presentably.
- Assist in cleaning the dormitories and bathrooms.

- Assist with laundry. See to it the clothes get to and from the laundry.
- Assist in getting the children to school, meals, and Bible study on time.
- See that sick Children in your dormitory get to the clinic.
- Care for sick children in the night time. Give medication, rock them, etc.
- Play with the children whenever possible.
- Assist with special days of clean-up. Saturdays are always clean-up days.
- Ensure that your area of responsibility is covered when you are not around.

Logistics

Meals, lodging, incidentals:

Teams are responsible for bringing their own cook and will be given access to a standard, residential kitchen. A fee of \$25 per person/per day will be collected toward the purchase of groceries and to cover water, electric and transportation costs for your group. There will be a set 'American style' menu that will reflect what foods were purchased for your group. This menu should be adhered to. At Casa, we do not tolerate food being thrown away; too many of our children have known the pain of real hunger and some of our neighbors will go to bed hungry tonight. So, if you put it on your plate, eat it. It is very helpful to us if you would eat your meals at the same time the children eat. Remember, you are constantly watched by the children; practice courtesy and decorum, especially at meal times. Our children are not allowed to eat or drink in their dorm rooms and we ask visitors not to either. Do not ever offer your mealtime food to the children; please refrain from giving treats to the children just prior to their mealtimes so that they will eat what is served them.

Passports, money, airline tickets and other valuables:

Please ask where to put valuables. Your passport, airline ticket and \$3 cash for exit fee should be placed in a Ziploc bag upon your arrival and given to your group leader for safe storage. Remember, many of our children have lived on the streets; do not provide temptations for them. We have secure places to store your things. Do not bring or wear excessive jewelry; limit valuable items to only what is essential. If you put something down, even for just a moment, it means you don't want it (even if it is your camera, watch, etc.). When you return to find your possessions, do not expect them to be there.

Bathing:

You should bathe in the dorm to which you are assigned. There are also outside showers that are quite suitable should your dorm showers be inconvenient to use. Please help us conserve time, water and energy by not taking long, hot showers.

Laundry:

When you need clothes washed, coordinate to wash clothes in the assigned machines as efficiently as possible (full loads only!). Do not ask staff members to do it for you or to use their washers.

Medical Needs:

We have a full-time doctor that works in our clinic M-F from 9-5 who can provide fairly comprehensive first aid. We have seen the powerful effect of our children praying for injured people, and want to stress the importance of this remedy if you are injured or fall sick. We have a friend, a Guatemalan surgeon, who is competent and fairly well equipped. He can perform more in depth tests and operations, and it is recommended that he be compensated if you find yourself in need of his help. Should you require more sophisticated procedures there are a few high quality hospitals in Guatemala City that will treat you. Without prior approval, however, they rarely accept American health plans. Your plan provider may possibly repay you later, but you

should contact them before your trip to find out their policy.

Telephone:

We have phones with various rates. We will tell you what is available for your use when you arrive; usually a phone is assigned to your group, but do not expect this. You will be required to pay for your phone usage. If you need to ask to use a staff member's phone, plan on limiting your calls to matters of great importance. Please do not make the full time staff search for you in order to be repaid when you have used their phone. In all cases, make conversations brief and do not request to make calls after 8:00 PM. You should not expect to receive calls while you are here; if you should need to, please advise anyone who may call you not to call after 8:00 PM.

Vehicles and equipment:

When using vehicles, equipment or tools, you take on full responsibility. If something breaks while you are using it, it is up to you to fix or replace it – at a very minimum to notify a staff person that there is a problem. The only enforced traffic law in Guatemala is: Do not have an accident. Should you feel unable to accept the responsibility, do not drive.

Leaving Campus:

Coordinate ALL departures from our home with Mike and Dottie, or their designate. It is a beautiful country, and there are many things to see. Keep the focus on the job at hand. Remember that our staff is here for the children; do not ask them to be tour guides. Our staff members are not permitted to authorize you to leave. If you visit the city or Antigua, plan your time to return here before dark. This is not downtown USA. **LISTEN** to advice and warnings of those who live here. It is dangerous to go certain places or to go alone and when we say that is the way it is then please have the courtesy to heed our warning.

Dress code:

Your dress, personal appearance, and hygiene should be a positive example to the children. Dress conservatively, and comfortably. We do not allow tank tops or sleeveless shirts or blouses of any kind – for both men and women. We do not allow our children, staff, or visitors to take their shirts off while they are working. T-shirts and jeans or sweats are what most people wear. Shorts are fine for men and women as long as they aren't too short. This means hems within inches of the knee. Men are not allowed to wear earrings, do-rags or have braided hair. Body piercing of any kind is not allowed; tattoos must never be exposed. Hats should never be worn indoors, especially during worship and Bible.

Daily schedule:

Your assignment will determine the best time and duration for work, depending on various factors. Our home is an “early to bed, and early to rise” establishment.

Wake-up: M-F @ 5:30 AM, S-S @ 6:30 AM

Bed time: M-F @ 8-9 PM, S-S @ 8-10 PM

Do not neglect a significant time with the Lord -by yourself- every day.

Courtesy

The origin of this word refers to how one behaved in the presence of the King. We are here to raise the King's kids, and want to maintain a level, therefore, of courtesy.

Our Guatemalan Staff:

We view our Guatemalan staff as ministers, just like we view ourselves. Please show the utmost respect for them. They probably won't do everything the way a North American would do it, but we are guests in their culture. Many Indian pastors come by, as well as police officers and people from the courts. Please be humble and polite with them.

Staff homes:

Always knock and wait for a response before entering any of the apartments/rooms of staff and volunteers. If you do not get a response, you do not enter. There is very little privacy here, so we ask that you enter only with permission and stay only when invited.

Worship time

We consider worship an important part of our community life, and ask that each volunteer respect the children in this time. Treat it like you would a church service: no extraneous talking, or playing, no distracting behavior.

Getting along on campus:

- The children must see unity among visitors and staff. Negative attitudes will not be permitted. Disagreements need to be handled in private. Be willing to wait patiently for an opportunity to discuss things with the staff or Mike and Dottie. Understand an immediate answer may not be available.
- People from many denominational backgrounds will pass through these gates. There may be a difference of opinions with some doctrinal issues. However, any problems you may have with Mike and Dottie's teachings may be discussed with them in private -- NEVER with or in the presence of children (this includes our "adult" children as well).
- Remember, when you leave, the fulltime staff will remain. Make your time count, and try to finish what you started. Go the extra mile.
- We realize there is room for improvement in many areas, but we have only so many hands. Hardly a week passes without short-term visitors and almost everyone has an opinion about some aspect of our home. If you really feel that God has revealed something that we need to hear from you, pray about it. When you return home, think about how to present it and then write to us. Time constraints, as well as personalities, can limit the effect of your good intentions, should you demand to counsel us during your visit.
- When you start to become critical, grumpy, and complaining it's time to go home.

Children/Visitor relationships:

- **DO NOT** do anything that our children or people in the community may interpret as a sexual or romantic advance. Remember, many of our children have come from sexually abusive homes. What may appear to be innocent to you may not seem so innocent to a child who has suffered abuse. This is especially the case between visitors and older children. Such inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to: prolonged hugging, kissing, private conversations apart from others, holding hands or sitting on the lap. Just

- remember to "avoid all appearance of evil."
- **Do not enter any dorm, especially dorms of the opposite sex** unless given permission to work in that dorm and with permission from the dorm parent prior to entering the building. If in the dorm of the opposite sex, always be accompanied by another adult and make your presence very well known before entering (shout when entering so that your masculine or feminine voice can be heard).
- Almost every visitor who passes through our gates connects with one or more of our children. It is fine if you want to bless them with a piece of candy (never gum) or a little extra attention. The children understand and are happy for others when they get blessed. However, please do not over do it.
- Our children are available for sponsorship, but there are restrictions. If you feel you would like to sponsor a child, please talk it over with us before talking about it to the child. Because of the varied reasons why children are here and the way the Guatemalan court system works, we make it a practice not to allow children here for fewer than 6 months to have sponsors. Please do not make promises to the children about what you may do for them in the future. Our good intentions do not need to cause them later disappointment.
- Gifts are allowed only when they are given through and with the permission of a staff member, preferably the dorm parent. Do not give anything to a child prior to clearing with a staff member. Things that you may think are harmless may not be allowed. For instance, our elementary school kids cannot have pens, pencils, or generally any writing utensil of any kind. Do not assume that your gifts are harmless. We also need to be sure that the motive and intentions behind the gift are understood. If you do not clear gifts through a staff member, we will assume that the items are stolen. Imagine the aftermath of a dorm parent accusing a child of stealing. While you may think the problem has gone away once you have clarified that the item was a gift, the dorm parent and child are left to deal with the accusation and a need to mend that relationship. Remember, your actions don't just affect you.
- **Do not eat after the children** nor feed them off of your plate or give them a bite of what you are eating (candy bar, etc). You will get sick and the child may as well.
- **DO NOT let children enter your sleeping quarters.** Your reputation and your valuables are at risk. If we feel that one of our children is at risk, you will be escorted off the property immediately.

Rules Children Must Obey:

- Children may only be in the clinic if they are assisting the doctor or if they have a note.
- Children are NOT allowed to be in the Kitchen, school, library or the worksites without permission of that area's supervisor
- Children are NOT allowed to play where you are working, unless they have permission from a staff member.
- Children are NOT allowed in the work team's eating or sleeping areas, or in parked vehicles
- All children are required to attend the Bible classes. It is helpful for you to attend as well. Your presence will minister to the children.
- Children are NOT allowed to listen to rock music of any kind. Christian artists only.
- Children may NOT pick fruit off of the trees without permission; they are never allowed to climb trees.
- Children are NOT allowed to chew gum.
- Children may NOT leave the property without their dormitory leader's permission.
- **Help us by not doing things that will tempt the children to break these rules; they are the ones who will pay.**
- **If you bring your children,** you must control and discipline your own children at all times.

Everyone's job description from Mike and Dottie's on down is "whatever is necessary", which can be both physically demanding and at times humbling. We are here to serve, not to be served. It works best when the chain of command is followed, especially when things do not go according to the original plan. We are working towards a long term focus, an eternal harvest. Temporary inconvenience is a small price to pay for being a part of God's working in these children.