



Thank you for volunteering

Thank you for your interest in our volunteering program. We are committed to ensuring your volunteer experience with us is a positive one.

Please read through the volunteer guide booklet careful and make sure you understand all the points. The volunteer experience is life changing and complex for all involved. Join us on our journey in life.

Rain Tree Foundation's Volunteer Program

The Raintree Foundation is a grassroots social non-government organization, registered under the Ministry of Interior, operating in Thailand among rural and underdeveloped communities. Our aim is to help people through education, appropriate technology and self-help projects, to improve their living standards.

Present projects are children homes and rural schools, where volunteers mainly teach English to the children and staff. Volunteer tasks also involve taking care of the children, playing with them, and sharing life with them.

Volunteers split their time between teaching and working alongside the local people, and taking part in the community's everyday activities.

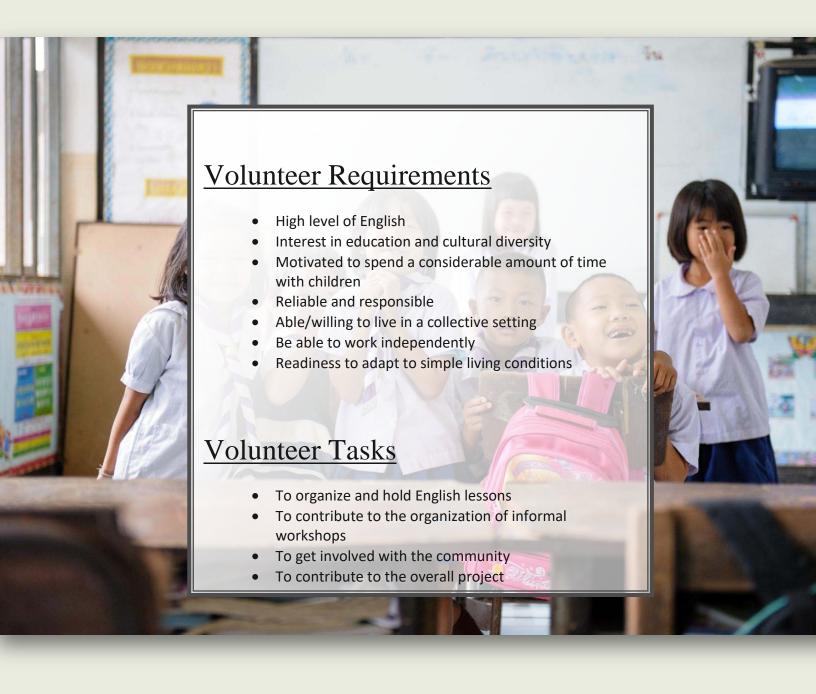
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GENERAL ADVICE

We all come from different backgrounds, however when volunteering and working together some regulations are necessary. Please respect the local Thai and tribal culture and try to understand that your volunteering goal is to help others. Serve and don't be served. Your logic and common sense is different from other people and cultures but none is superior. Nor is any human better or higher than others. We need to at least try to understand that people are different. You should behave as a good example. Don't fake it, be yourself but it takes a lot of effort to be a good example. Children imitate the actions of adults and therefore good role models are necessary to have a positive impact.





Predeparture Form

Please fill out the Predeparture form (send extra as e Mail) and send it back to us as soon as you have booked your Flight and you can provide all information to us.



PERSONAL INFORMATION

First Name:	
Last Name:	
Date/Time of arrival in Chiang Mai:	
PASSPORT INFORMATION	
Passport Number:	
Nationality:	
Date of issue:	
Date of expiry:	
Issued at:	
INSURANCE INFORMATION	
Insurance Company:	
Type of cover:	
Policy Number:	
Emergency Number:	
Departure Date:	
Airline:	
	H. H5
Flight Number: Arrival Department in Cl	
Depart Date Chiang Airline:	
Flight Number	
Departure Time in Chiang Mai:	
EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION	
Name:	
Relation to applicant:	
Address/Country:	
Email:	
Home Phone:	
Mobile Phone:	

<u>Visa</u>

You need to apply for the correct visa at a Thai embassy or consulate. If you do not have the correct visa you may not be able to stay in Thailand the full time you wanted to. Most volunteers that could not complete their volunteer term was because of the visa.

To overstay the visa in Thailand is a serious offence and you can go to jail worst case. Follow our instruction for the best possible result when applying for your visa.

Make sure you contact us BEFORE applying for a visa.

REQUIREMENT

This type of visa is issued to applicants who wish to participate in voluntary services in Thailand. 1.VISA TYPE

For up to 3 month a "tourist visa" need to be applied, which is usually valid for 60 days and can be extended for 30 days. For longer commitment of a 1 year visa category Non-O need to be applied with MULTIPLE entries.

2. DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

- Passport or travel document with validity not less than 6 months
- Visa application form completely filled out
- Recent (4 x 6 cm.) photograph of the applicant
- Recommendation letter addressed to the Consulate
- Copy of registration certificate of the employer/foundation/organization
- Copy of the previous/current work permit (if any)
- Copy of the employment contract (if any)
- Consular officers reserve the rights to request additional documents as deemed necessary

3. VISA FEE

30-150 Euro

4. VALIDITY OF A VISA

The validity of a visa is 3 months.

5. PERIOD OF STAY

Holder of this type of visa is entitled to stay in Thailand for a maximum period of 90 days. He or she may apply for an extension of stay at the Office of the Immigration Bureau and may be granted such extension for a period of one year from the date of first entry into Thailand.

6. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Nationals of certain countries are required to apply for a visa only at the Thai Embassy or Consulate-General in their home/residence country or at the designated Thai Embassy. Therefore, travelers are advised to contact the nearest Thai Embassy or Consulate-General to find out where they may apply for a visa to Thailand before departure.

Please note:

This Visa information is correct at the time of writing, however, visa requirements can change, and it is <u>your responsibility</u> to check with the relevant visa office before departure.

Volunteer Costs

You come and volunteer (work for free), why should you pay anything at all? Your work is highly appreciated, but it still causes us expenses, for example

- Culture and customs briefing course (1 week)
- Transport to and from the project
- Accommodation at the project
- Food at the project
- Debriefing
- Special activities every 3 month and the Transport to the volunteer activities
- Contact person and support both in Europe (Germany) and Thailand (Chiang Mai)

It doesn't cover the costs of:

- Travel to and from Thailand
- Visas
- Insurance
- Food and accommodation during briefing and language course in Chiang Mai
- Traveling and personal expenses

The minimum stay for volunteering is 3 months. The fees we charge are actually lower than the cost you create. We do not intend to make financial profit with your volunteer fee, but to keep the cost covered as much as possible. All volunteers pay the same fee but not all volunteers cause the same costs.

- Short term volunteers (3 11 months) fee is 2,000.-THB monthly
- Long term volunteer (12 months or more) fee is 15.000.-THB flat.
- Additional there is a fee of 2,400.-THB for the Thai course

The reason for that is, the longer the volunteer stays, the more efficient and beneficial the volunteer will become for the project.

We distance us from professional volunteer organizations, which make profits from their volunteers. There are plenty of organizations operating in Thailand charging ridiculous amounts of money.

Pre Departure Information

Make a check list of items you want to take for your volunteer time. Learn how to write a travel blog. Buy a Thailand our guide book like rough guide or lonely planet. The more information you have and the better prepared you are the more enjoyable will be your experience. With luggage often less is more.

See this Link; it has a Checklist and great tips;

https://www.volunteerhq.org/blog/how-to-pack-for-a-volunteer-trip/



INSURANCE:

Sickness and accidents can happen anywhere in the world. (By the way, statistically most people die at home in their bed...). You need to have a health insurance before coming to Thailand, so you are covered just in case something happens Travel and health insurance is compulsory when doing your volunteering with us. We require that, at minimum, you are covered for medical expenses including emergency repatriation. We strongly recommend that it also covers for personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects.

ACCIDENT

In case some emergency happens please go to a hospital immediately, inform us as soon as possible. The Thai hospital is not required to take care of you and not treat you before the payment method is cleared. At the hospital you need to pay either cash or show your insurance documents.

VACCINATION

Thailand is a tropical country and we do have sometimes different diseases that what you have experienced before. For example Dengue fever, Malaria. etc.

ASK us for advice and see the general recommendation.

Vaccination and health information

Before visiting Thailand, you may need to get the following vaccinations and medications for vaccine-preventable diseases and other diseases you might be at risk for: (Note: Your doctor or health-care provider will determine what you will need, depending on factors such as your health and immunization history.)To have the most benefit, see a health-care provider at least 4–6 weeks before your trip to allow time for your vaccines to take effect.

Be sure your routine vaccinations are up-to-date.

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Vaccine recommendations are based on the best available risk information. Please note that the level of risk for vaccine-preventable diseases can change at any time.

Vaccination or Disease

Recommendations or Requirements for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

Routine

Recommended if you are not up-to-date with routine shots, such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, poliovirus vaccine, etc.

Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG)

Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in countries with an intermediate or high level of hepatitis A virus infection where exposure might occur through food or water. Cases of travel-related hepatitis A can also occur in travelers to developing countries with "standard" tourist itineraries, accommodations, and food consumption behaviors.

Hepatitis B

Recommended for all unvaccinated persons traveling to or working in countries with intermediate to high levels of endemic HBV transmission, especially those who might be exposed to blood or body fluids, have sexual contact with the local population, or be exposed through medical treatment (e.g., for an accident).

Typhoid

Recommended for all unvaccinated people traveling to or working in Southeast Asia, especially if staying with friends or relatives or visiting smaller cities, villages, or rural areas where exposure might occur through food or water.

<u>Japanese</u> <u>encephalitis</u>

Recommended if you plan to visit rural farming areas and under special circumstances, such as a known outbreak of Japanese encephalitis.



Once you arrived in Thailand

Currency

The **baht** is the currency of Thailand. It is subdivided into 100 *satang*. The issuing of currency is the responsibility of the Bank of Thailand. For current exchange rates visit www.xe.com

Weather

Thailand can best be described as tropical and humid for the majority of the country during most of the year. The area of Thailand north of Bangkok has a climate determined by three seasons whilst the southern peninsular region of Thailand has only two.

In northern Thailand, especially in the mountains where you will be working, it can get quite cold during the winter (November to January), so make sure to bring some warm clothes.

For more information about the weather go to:

http://www.travelfish.org/weather_fish.php

Safety

In general, Thailand is not a dangerous country, although there are some basic things you should be aware of, especially when you are around crowded areas and areas popular with tourists.

Many international governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure.

A lock is strongly recommended for securing your valuables inside your luggage. We also recommend you to have a hidden money belt, to carry your documents (passport, air tickets, etc.) while traveling. You shouldn't need to bring any valuable items, but if you do, please make sure they are covered by your insurance.

Foreigners can be a tempting target for pickpockets, so be aware at all times, and don't leave your belongings lying around unattended. Be aware of anyone with a hard luck story, asking for assistance, soliciting sponsorship (particularly education) or anyone offering a deal to change money at favorable rates. In general, use your common sense

Useful Websites

http://www.tourismthailand.org/campaign/en/

http://www.thai-language.com/

http://www.thaitravelblogs.com



Once you arrived in Chiang Mai

We will pick you up at the airport n Chiang Mai. Make sure you are in contact with us direct before arriving. You will normally arrive at the INTERNATIONAL gate in the airport. We will be waiting for you there <u>if</u> you arrive at the domestic gate go to the international gate to meet us.

Then we take you to a guesthouse where you can get a good rest and check out the local places. There will be a few days time for briefing and orientation as well as learning some basic Thai before going to the actual project in the mountains.

Once you arrive in the city you can buy a SIM card for your phone at any shopping mall (Airport plaza, Central Festival or Kad Suan Kaew Center) at a electronic mall. Please buy a "1 2 Call" (Telewiz), otherwise it might not work in the mountains.



Accommodation Recommendations

You can stay in a guest house near the office, where you will be doing the briefing, or in one in the city:

- Near the office it's more convenient to come to the briefing, but you have to get a
 taxi to get to the city if you want to visit something (taxi is about 200THB). Our
 office is about 30 minutes from the city center. (please contact us for
 Accommodation)
- In the city is easier to move around and visit touristic places, but have to get a
 taxi to come to the office every day. We suggest Daret's Guesthouse or Julies
 Guesthouse, but of course you can book any other Guesthouse.

How to get to our Rain Tree Office

Taxi: you can call a taxi to pick you up from the city to the office (around 200 Bath/ride)

Mrs. Rey 0858633143

You can also get a Tuk-Tuk. You can get it all around Chiang Mai, but beware; the ones around the touristic areas tend to be more expensive.

If you haven't heard about it yet. It's easy and cheap to get around Chiang Mai GRAB is a online based App similar to UBER to hire a taxi.

Click on the Link here: GRAB Use Information

Here our address, PLEASE PRINT THAT PAGE and bring it with you:

มูลนิธิบ้านต้นน้ำ
262/1 หมู่ 5 บ้านหัวทุ่ง

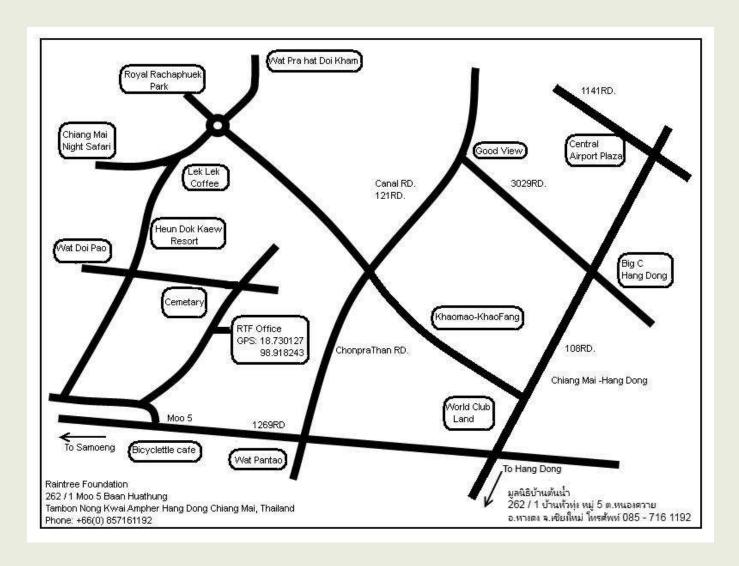
ต. หนองควาย อ. หางดง

จ. เชียงใหม่ 50230

โทรศัพท์ 053-125 199

Raintree Foundation
262/1 Moo 5 Ban Huathung
T. Nong Kwai A. Hang Dong
Chiang Mai 50230, Thailand

Phone: 053-125 199



Information of Projects

The projects where our volunteers work are usually in very remote locations, getting there can take up to 8 hours from Chiang Mai. At the moment we have 7 different placements for volunteers, each of which can take a maximum of two volunteers. Be ready to be the only English speaker in the village at some times.

When volunteers get to the project they sleep and eat at the village. The conditions vary depending on the project, but in general it is very basic. You should not expect hot water, internet, telephone reception or washing machine. For your bedroom, a mosquito net, bedding and blankets will be provided. The food is also simple and it's likely that you will eat a lot of rice.

Don't expect a huge variety of choice in terms of food available. If you have any special dietary needs or allergies, please inform us before your period of volunteering begins. We cannot quarantee that in the village they will be able to provide you with special meals.

Raintree Foundation has many different projects. Some projects are permanent, some temporary. The volunteer should have 6-8 hours work per day Monday - Friday. These will be divided between teaching English to the children at school, teaching English to the staff, helping the children with their homework and organizing your lessons. You may also want to help with other activities, like gardening or helping with some of the house repairs.

Depending on the project location you can go for small vacations out of the project or involve yourself with the community. During school holiday, volunteer need to check with RTF, if there are activities or projects to join, but public holidays the volunteer also have holidays. The volunteering time will be also interrupted with visa trips and our regular volunteer meetings. We try to select the volunteers most suitable for the various projects and challenges as every project is different. It can be that the volunteer will have to move during the volunteer time to another project. This could be changes of policy of the local government school, or not enough work for the volunteer at the assigned project, etc. On the weekends you can stay and organize activities with the children, enjoy your free time or you can do a trip. Every 3 month we will before or after your Visa –Run we will organize a special activity for all the volunteers such as, visiting a cultural site, rafting, hiking, etc. You can take holidays during the Thai school holidays (from mid- March until mid- May and all the month of October).

YOU WILL:



EAT A LOT OF

RICE

DIABLA Bla bla

PRACTICE A GREAT DEAL OF THAI LANGUAGE

AND MAYBE SOME KAREN TOO

BIA

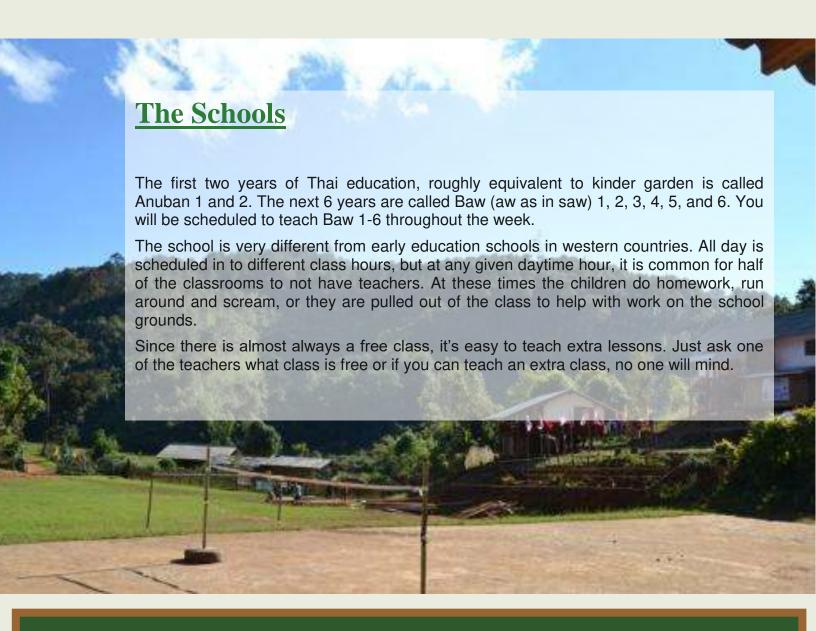
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LEARN HOW TO SPEND YOUR TIME WITH NO INTERNET/PHONE/TV/ETC



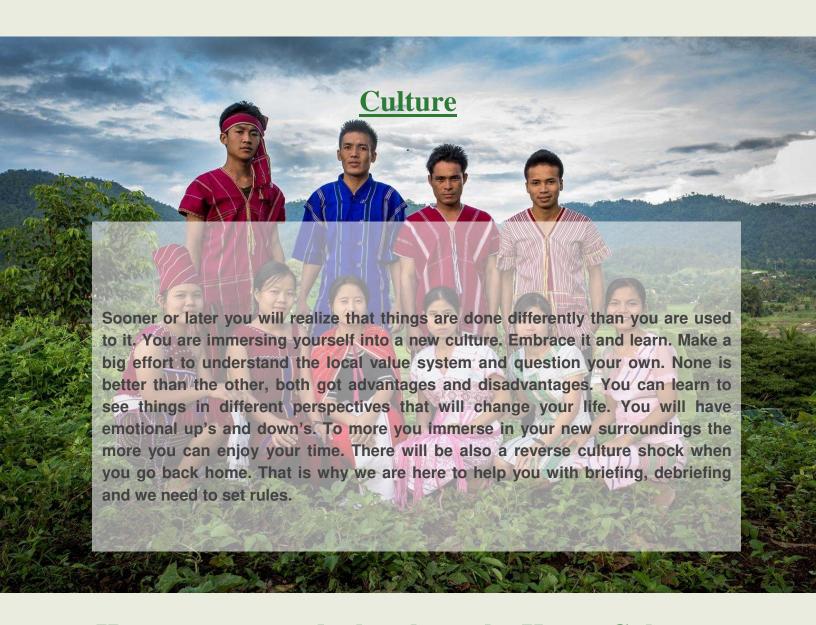
APPRECIATE SIMPLE THINGS LIKE A WARM SHOWER OR A SOFT BED





HOLIDAYS

School holidays are from 15th March to 15th May and 1st October to 31st October, volunteers are expected to join activities, like summer camps during this long period of holiday. Check with RTF about possible activities or camps before.



Here you can read a lot about the Karen Culture and get some very good Advises

See the link below:

https://ethnomed.org/culture/karen/karen-cultural-profile

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES & RULES

The purpose of the foundation is to help children and communities. We thank you that you give your time in helping us helping them. This is no easy task and everybody has different expectations and ideas, so we need the rules.

VOLUNTEER RULES

Volunteer Rules:

- Drugs (all kinds!), weapons and other things regarded by the Thai law as illegal are not permitted at the projects. If you are not sure ask.
- Volunteers should under no circumstances be alone together with one child in one room or in public. Always are together with a few people, this if for you and everyone's protection.
- Volunteers are not allowed to give medication of any sort to the kids or villagers, if they need medication, let them buy themselves and you can pay for them if you want to.
- Children are not allowed to enter the room/accommodation of the volunteer.
- Never go alone with a child in the forest or village, always in groups.
- Before you arrive we need to be informed if you have of any health issues like diabetics, epilepsy, allergies, heart problems, phobic, etc.
- Let us know if you have any special requirements for food, for example, vegan, vegetarian, can't it pork, etc. before you come.
- We expect that you are mentally healthy and can function rational in tense and difficult situations. Let us know if we should be aware of something.
- During working time, e.g. teaching electronic devices like mobile phones, tablets etc are not permitted. Do your social networking only in your free time.
- Stay in contact with us minimum 2 times per month.
- Contact us immediately if there are any difficulties or problems.
- When you are working with us we are responsible for you, therefore you are not permitted to ride a motorbike (we had far too many accidents with volunteers and motorbikes). If you are on vacation, you are responsible for yourself. If you rent a motorbike make sure you don't drink & drive, have a valid driving license and can pay for accidents in cash (replacing a motorbike, paying for third party damage etc.). Motorbike riding is nice, but it is dangerous. Only do it if you can afford it in your vacation time.
- Friends and family members visiting want to visit you need our approval before they arrive. It is nice to show them where you live, but it can cause unintended problems and difficulties.
- Sex with villagers, staff or children is NOT permitted under any circumstances.
- If you fall in love... consult us. Most often you are misguided by your emotions.
- These rules cannot be compromised and are for the protection of the children and the volunteers. Failure to conform to the rules result in immediate dismissal from the project.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

General Behavior

- Don't touch a child's or adults head. In general avoid touching people.
- Don't use your feet to point on something or somebody.
- Don't put your pajamas under your pillow or sit on any pillow that is designed for the head.
- Don't step with your feet on money, it bears the image of the King and it will be a big insult to Thai people.
- Don't discuss Thai politics or comment negative about the Royal Thai Monarchy.
- Under all circumstances keep smiling, always keep your voice low, never show anger public and don't make too many movements with your hands when talking.
- Don't kiss your lover in public or display other intimate behavior.
- Always wear skirts, pants that cover your knees, keep a t-shirt on and wear clothes that don't expose your "private parts".... conservative dress code...
- Always take off your shoes when entering a room or a house
- Smoking or drinking alcohol during work is not permitted. Never smoke in front of the children and if you drink alcohol in the evenings don't get drunk, noisy or "messy".
- If invited by locals for an alcoholic drink, politely say no with a smile again and go on. If you cannot refuse them that one drink, have only one and leave. Things can turn out very ugly.
- If you want to walk around the forest or village always have a few children or an adult with you. Always inform people of where you go and what time they can expect you back. Don't wonder off in the forest, it's not like at home.
- If you have a problem, smile, walk away and after you cooled down go to the project leader and discuss the issue reasonably.
- Do not show too much favor to one child or group of children, be equally kind to all children.
- Some of our children went through very hard life experiences. Therefore be respectful if they do not want to talk about it. Do not disclose personal information of one child to other children. For example if a child reveals to you that has been abused or is HIV positive do not tell it to other children, but only inform us direct. We then will deal with these issues through our house parents and professional consultants. You are not permitted to attempt to council a child yourself if you are not a professional and specifically instructed to do so. You are obliged to inform us if you see things you are concerned with.
- All volunteers should write up a journal what they teach so the next volunteer has some information how to continue, check the kids on the old input and continue the teaching.

- All volunteers should write a short report with positive and negative points what they experienced, with the children, staff and general situation. Suggestions are welcome. This report will be confidential. With this report we can see things through "your eyes" and improve.
- If teaching materials or other things are needed, please let us know.
- If you want to donate some of your things when you leave, please make sure it is clean e.g. T-shirts shoes etc. and distributed equal and fair, not to "favorite" kids.
- If you do want to donate other things or buy things for the children please consult with us first

All volunteers are required to additionally write a small report for our social media as well as webpage beside our usual report about the feedback to our foundation. The report should be as following:

- In between 100-120 words
- 2-5 good, self-explaining (meaningful) pictures in Jpeg attached
- Send them directly to <u>info@thaicare.de</u> with CC copy to <u>office@raintree-foundation.org</u>
- Topics should be something special, for example and excursion, English camp, music camp or any happenings in the village/school which is worthwhile to mention
- Also possible a story about the daily life with the kids and the villagers

Long term volunteers need to write 2 reports during their time with us; short term volunteers just 1 report.

FOOD & PERSONAL HYGIENE GUIDELINES

- In the projects provide you 3 local meals daily. You are required to join the children and the house parents for their meals. If you miss your eating time you volunteered to skip a meal. Don't eat alone, it is not polite.
- While eating, put only the rice on your plate which you are going to finish. If you need more rice add it later. It is very impolite to leave rice leftovers on your plate.
- Don't fill your plate with heaps of food. Take one or two spoonful of the dishes you like and then you repeat it when you need more.
- Eat all they put on your plate. If you dislike certain foods you remember to smile and smile only saying: no thank you! Don't make strange insulting noises/face.
- If you don't like certain foods, maybe too strong taste or too hot... smile and decline politely. Do not make negative comments about their foods in front of them.
- Wash your hands before eating! (you will be thankful for that one)
- Wash up before breakfast, brush your teeth and clean your hands and feet.
- Take shower at least once a day! Locals shower 2 3 times
- Wash your feet before going to bed
- Unpleasant odors and passing gas noisy is considered very impolite.
- Take care of your own household contractual duties (laundry, washing dishes and cleaning up). Do yourself at your home, the house parents or children are not your employees. Don't let them serve you. Do your own stuff.
- Sometimes you will see the local people do not follow the guidelines. But they behave in a certain context that is ok for them to do and not for you, which will be difficult to understand with "Western logic". In case they make exceptions to the rules it does not entitle you to make them. You can always consult us if you are not sure how to handle certain situations. Whatever happens, always smile and stay calm. A smile in Thailand does not necessarily express happiness, it also displays anger, hate, embarrassment, fear, panic, shyness etc. Any emotional reaction is displayed with a smile. That's what you should do too, even if this is sometimes confusing coming from a different culture. All this might seem like a lot of things are expected from you. But relax, enjoy and You guessed right: SMILE!

VOLUNTEER ADMISSION PROCEDURE

- Volunteer contacts (mainly through email). Volunteer Application Form, with other information attached and selection
- Personal Interview
- We give the volunteer the *Volunteer Manual* and *Pre-departure Form*, which he/she will have to fill in and send back to us.
- If everything is correct we sign Volunteer Agreement Form
- The decision of the project destination will be made once the training is done.

VOLUNTEER BRIEFING AND TRAINING

- Basic institutional: information about RTF
- Specific information about the activity or activities the volunteers have to do.
- Basic information about the projects
- Basic information about the language, culture, customs and situation of the people the volunteer will be working with.

EVALUATION DURING THE PROCESS (once a month)

- The volunteer(s) and the volunteer coordinator
- The person(s) who is/are responsible for the activities held
- Purposes of the evaluation:
 - detect the things that are working
 - detect the things that are not working
 - design a way of improving techniques

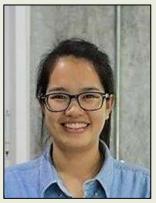
VOLUNTEER DEBRIEFING AND FINAL EVALUATION

- Debriefing form
- Interview of the volunteer(s) with volunteer coordinator
- To determine whether the objectives and results of the program where achieved
- To know if the volunteers are satisfied with the work done
- To know what things are working to maintain them
- To detect things that are not working to correct them
- To discuss possible solutions to problems

Contacts



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Volunteer Coordinator (RTF)
office@raintree-foundation.org
(+66) (0) 89 552 2049



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noai@raintree-foundation.org
(+66) (0) 83 760 2329



Germany
Anne
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Until then...

