



Short Term Team FAQs

What can I do to best prepare for a trip to Bethesda?

We will ask each team to read *Cross-Cultural Servanthood* by Duane Elmer prior to coming. Once here, there will be opportunities when we will discuss this book and how it relates to best practices in orphan care. *Orphanology* by Merida and Morton is another book we highly recommend.

In addition to reading, spend time praying for God to prepare your heart as you learn more about His heart for the fatherless. Our prayer is that you will imitate Him by becoming involved in orphan care locally and/or globally.

Where will we stay while at Bethesda?

Teams will stay on Bethesda property at the Team Center. There are men's and women's bathrooms, each equipped with a shower as well as a full kitchen, lounge, and laundry available.

What will we eat?

Bethesda provides your meals while in country. Breakfast foods will be available for you to prepare every morning. Normally, lunch and dinner will be prepared for you. The menu is varied from more traditional South African meals to American style meals.

How do we travel once in South Africa?

In order to ensure the safety of our guests, teams will travel by a Bethesda-owned, and staff-operated vehicle.

What is a typical day like?

Each day of your trip will be pre-planned and every team member will have a schedule. Some days will be spent on property doing work projects, ministry, or games, while other days will be spent off property serving local ministries, or doing other activities. Bethesda's overarching purpose each day is for teams to learn about, engage in, and become personally involved in the ministry of orphan care.

Are we able to interact with the Bethesda Children?

Yes, you will be able to interact with the Bethesda children as there will be times of interaction with the children through games and other planned events. However, your interaction with the children must fit within the model and priorities of Bethesda's family

homes. We prioritize the autonomy of our families, so teams must work within the family schedule.

What languages are spoken at Bethesda and is it a problem if we only speak English?

Nearly everyone in South Africa speaks and understands English. South Africa has 11 national languages, and several other tribal languages. The area where Bethesda is located is a melting pot of these languages. Our Bethesda families have many different home languages that they speak depending on where they are from but Tswana is the most often used language. All of our children and parents are fluent in English, so speaking English only will not be a problem.

What does a mission trip cost?

Every trip varies in cost depending on many factors such as: time of year, length of stay, number of team members, and off-property activities. The largest expense will be the plane ticket. On-the-ground expenses will be calculated and sent to the team leader once plane tickets are purchased and activities are finalized.

How long is a standard mission trip?

Length of stay varies from team to team. It can be up to two weeks with the average being ten days.

Is there an age requirement for team members?

Our preference is for team members/visitors to be of college age or older although we have made exceptions if younger children are accompanied by one or both parents. In 2014, South Africa passed a law requiring additional paperwork for minors (under the age of 18) to enter and leave the country. If we have agreed the minor can come, we will help you with each step of the process, and communicate what paperwork you need in order to be in compliance with the law.

What is the weather like in South Africa?

South Africa is in the southern hemisphere so the seasons are opposite of the United States. Winter (June-August) is cool and dry, with temperatures typically ranging between 40 and 70° F. The summer is hot and potentially rainy. It usually rains between November and March. Summer temps range from 65 – 105 °F. There is no air conditioning or central heat available so dressing in layers during the winter is recommended.

Do I need plug adapters or power converters to use my electronics?

We have adapters that we will make available to you. South Africa uses 220v power and most electronics are set up to be able to handle 110-240v (this will be listed on the device or the cord). We will provide hair dryers if needed.

What shots and medication do I need?

You should be up to date on your tetanus as well as Hep A and Hep B. Hep A is a two shot series in which you should have the first shot completed. Hep B is a three shot series in which you should have the first two completed. Bethesda is not located in a malaria or typhoid area so these are not required or necessary.

Is the water safe to drink?

Bethesda has taken steps to ensure that you will have safe, filtered drinking water that is freely available.

Is WiFi available?

There is WiFi available, although unlimited data is not available in our area yet. Each team is allotted 5 GBs of data, any additional data will cost R100 (+/- \$7.70) per GB.