



Open Arms Volunteer Criteria for working with Children

Open Arms is a Members-only, Not-for-Profit association which is 100% volunteer led. The Committee which runs Open Arms is responsible for making sure that the volunteers who meet with the children are suitable adults who will be a positive influence in children's lives. We support the volunteers in their work, look out for the safety and wellbeing of the children while they are under our care, and foster good relationships with the welfare homes we are invited to work with.

Certain partner organizations have an understanding with Open Arms that allows their members to volunteer *as if* they were members of Open Arms: these criteria apply equally to those volunteers.

There are two relationships that each volunteer must care for: the connection with the children, and teamwork as a member of Open Arms: both are important.

The Volunteer-Child Relationship involves:

A **caring attitude** to give **time and effort to building relationships** with the children in our programs. These will not be exclusive relationships with one child, unless you are mentoring or tutoring an individual.

Enthusiasm for working with children, **listening** to them, being **patient** and **kind**, **understanding** their challenges and strengths, **encouraging** them and being there for them, **having fun** together;

Dedication and **dependability**: showing up to sessions on time and prepared, **committing** to regular attendance over time, being **consistent** and **trustworthy**;

Willingness to develop skills: attending **training** courses, **developing** and **sharing knowledge** about the challenges orphans face, **advocating** for Open Arms' work.

The Volunteer-Open Arms Relationship involves:

Cooperation as part of a team, **responsiveness** to emails and Signal messages, **communicating** effectively to support one another and overcome challenges, **resolving concerns** with **teamwork**;

Conscientiousness: **supporting** the team by turning up to programs and sessions as expected, undergoing **training** courses as required, attending meetings, communicating unavoidable absences, filing necessary paperwork;

Openness and discretion: **open-mindedness** around cultural differences, being **discreet** about confidential matters, especially related to child protection.

All volunteers must abide by the Open Arms Code of Conduct and be over 18 years old