

Dear Volunteer!

We, the Samith Family, staff, and all the kids from Save poor Children in Asia Organization (S.C.A.O.) want to welcome you and we hope that you will enjoy your stay with us, enriching your knowledge about the work and mission of S.C.A.O., its progress, needs and challenges! Please feel free to communicate us any suggestion and constructive critics. We ask you kindly to read the following information about S.C.A.O. and the important guidelines for volunteers.

1. Who are we?

S.C.A.O. is a Cambodian non-profit, non-government organization opened on 5th of December 2007. It provides to orphans and children living in condition of poverty and social isolation

- homecare,
- nutritious meals,
- healthcare,
- education,
- clothing

– all in a loving, caring environment based within the origin Khmer (Cambodian) family culture. Currently, 17 children, Mr. and Ms. Samith and their two children live at the Centre.

S.C.A.O. is also an Education and Learning Centre for the disadvantaged children of Boeng Chhouk Village.

Currently about 100 -110 children from the village attend 4 English teaching groups per day:

08:00 am – 09:00 am
14:00 pm – 16:00 pm
17:30 pm – 18:30 pm
18:30 pm – 19:30 pm

These classes are mostly taught by volunteers with support by Srey Lat and held at the new Education and Learning Centre from Monday to Saturday.

More education facilities such as motorbike mechanic and computer courses are planned for the near future.

2. Vision

Cambodian children are among the most deprived and abused in the world. They suffer the misfortune of being born into a country with one of the highest rates of child prostitution, domestic violence and child labor in the world today. Public schools, although ostensibly free, are outside the means of many of Cambodia's poor. Whether due family size, disability or disease, many parents need their children to earn an income or supervise their siblings, and education remains beyond their reach. Cambodia now has 5.1 million children under the age of 15 – a full 38% of the population that will eventually enter the economic environment, unskilled and undereducated. The rate of child prostitution and child trafficking is expected to increase without serious, long-term intervention.

For these reasons and more, the work of S.C.A.O. is essential. Empowerment through education will break the cycle of poverty that hinders the progress of these children.

This is the vision of S.C.A.O.

„We tend to measure success according to our wages or the type of the car we drive, instead of considering the grade of our charity actions and our level of humanity.“

Martin Luther King

3. Goal

All children at the Centre must have the possibility to receive an adequate school education and to learn a vocational skill that they choose. The integration into society and the labor market is the last step supported by S.C.A.O. on the way to independence and responsible citizenship.

While branching S.C.A.O. throughout the districts all over the country, it is also envisioned to build a vocational training school in every Centre where the children living at the Centre and in the surrounding area can learn their chosen skill.

4. Volunteer Guidelines

The Family Samith wants to make your stay at S.C.A.O. as remarkable, pleasant, and safe as possible. More than one year of experience with helpful volunteers from all over the world and of any age lead us to redact these guidelines. Please keep in mind the following hints, recommendations, and safety tips. Do not hesitate to contact us in case of any doubt or suggestion:

GENERAL

- Always take into consideration the Child Protection Policy you sign at the beginning of your stay. Please inform Mr. Samith when you observe a visitor not following the child protection guideline for visitors.
- Remember: Every children's natural instinct is to keep certain distance to adults they don't know. We don't want the children of S.C.A.O. to lose this natural behavior. S.C.A.O. is not a place of "orphanage tourism!" The well-being and safety of the children and students at S.C.A.O. is the highest priority for all matters concerning the S.C.A.O. projects. Please report every concern about any child's well-being and safety to Mr. Samith!
- Familiarize yourself with the "Do's and Don't's" of Cambodia Culture, e.j.: Take off the shoes when you enter a private room, don't touch an adults head, decline your body when you pass by or through a group of Cambodians, never point with your feet to anyone, etc.
- Teaching English is a great afford and way to help the children and support S.C.A.O. Nevertheless other activities, as selling T-Shirts, hang out posters in bars and restaurants, give a guitar charity concert in a bar, etc. are also essential for the ongoing of the S.C.A.O projects. Ask Mr. Samith for more ideas or be creative and suggest other activities!

FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY IN CAMBODIA

Cambodia generally is a safe and peaceful tourist destination with an open-hearted and naturally friendly population! Nevertheless, for your own safety we ask you to take in mind these tips and hints of common sense:

- Drunken and drugged Westerners are an easy target for robbery, violation, etc.
- Drugs are of bad quality in Cambodia! Do not take drugs!
- Watch your belongings at all moments. The cases of bag-snapping by motodivers have increased considerably in the last month.
- Cambodian men and women can be very nice and extraordinary charming but not all of them are trustworthy.
- Avoid accumulations of people caused by a problematic incident, as traffic accidents or riots.
- Using a helmet while driving a moto is a legal must since 01.01.2009! Take extremely care when participating in the Cambodian street traffic!!!

OVERNIGHT STAYING AT S.C.A.O.

- If you decide to stay overnight at the installations of S.C.A.O. we ask you kindly to cover at least the costs that are caused for S.C.A.O. by your stay. (Use of accommodation, bicycle, electricity, food and beverage).
- As Mr. Samith feels responsible for S.C.A.O.'s volunteers, please inform him, when you consider going out at night till late.
- Never take a child with you into the room or off the S.C.A.O. property without permission from Mr. Samith.
- Switch off all electric devices, fan, etc. when you leave the room.
- Always lock the bicycles! Motorbikes, bicycles, and mobile phones are the most stolen items in Cambodia.

TEACHING AND PLAYING WITH THE KIDS

- Respect the children's religious beliefs and in consequence don't teach about religious matters. However, if you consider teaching about a theme related to religious aspects, please inform Mr. Samith or Srey Lat in advance.
- If you want to bring stationary, food, beverage, etc. for your class, please inform Mr. Samith or Srey Lat in advance. S.C.A.O. has to make sure, that all children get the same opportunities, facilities, and advantages so that no one will be left out. Otherwise envy, greed, and jealousy can be provoked by a volunteer, when he originally aimed to do good by a generous and helpful gesture.
- Games and playing with the kids should never harm the children physically, emotionally or create feelings of shame about their national or religious identity.
- While playing with the kids be aware of risks of hurt or painful actions for the children.
- Cambodian mentality is based on religious beliefs, respect and modesty. Excessive shouting and continuous noisy behavior by the kids but also by the volunteers can easily lead to complaints by neighbors of the installations of S.C.A.O. and cause serious problems for the organization. So please be aware of the noise level, especially from 8 pm to 6 am and 11 am to 2 pm.

Thank you very much for your help and support!

Sincerely,

*Family Samith,
staff and all the kids at S.C.A.O.!*

Tel.: +855 (0)12 336 501

S.C.A.O. is a young and small helping organization. Financial support is mainly given by volunteers and in our charity projects interested tourists. Minimum administration costs and the direct contact with the disadvantaged children make the work of S.C.A.O. extraordinary efficient. Please stay in contact with us and spread the word about the mission of S.C.A.O. around in your country to help us to give a brighter future to the children!

E-Mail:
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S.C.A.O.'s MISSION IS TO FIGHT POVERTY BY SUPPORTING CHILDREN ON THEIR WAY TO EDUCATION, SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND SELF-RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP! YOUR DONATION CONTRIBUTES TO NUTRIOUS MEALS, HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION AND CLOTHING FOR THE CHILDREN AT S.C.A.O.!