



HANDBOOK FOR VOLUNTEERS



RESPECT • SANCTITY OF LIFE • LOVE & CARE



OUR MISSION

To care for, develop and enhance the quality of life,
with love and understanding from a dedicated staff,
persons with intellectual disability of all races and creeds entrusted to us,
by providing with trust in Divine Providence
and in cooperation with the parents, the community and the State
the necessary spiritual, nursing, therapy and stimulation services
in as an efficient and economic manner as possible.

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FOREWORD

I extend a very warm welcome to you and thank you most sincerely for volunteering your time and resources in the service of LITTLE EDEN.

LITTLE EDEN is certainly a very special place where we serve, through our work, children and adults who are *angels*; people who need to be protected and cared for and, most of all, loved.

In your dealings with our special angels, you will in turn be loved for who you are and for what you do; and that may fill you with a sense of deep satisfaction.

Should you feel the need to discuss anything with me during your time at LITTLE EDEN, whether it is a concern, to clarify something or to share an experience, please be assured that my door will always be open.

The continuous public support since 1967 and the belief in the needs that the Society meets in the community has brought it to where it is today – the benchmark amongst like NPOs.

With your help, LITTLE EDEN will continue to serve as a model in bringing happiness and an improved quality of life to people with profound intellectual disabilities and to their families.

I invite you to visit our website: www.littleeden.org.za

I wish you a blessed and happy stay with us!

LUCY SLAVIERO
Chief Executive Officer



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A brief history of LITTLE EDEN

LITTLE EDEN Society, established in 1967, aims to develop people with profound intellectual disabilities to their full potential and to encourage the wider community to recognise and respect that each individual is a whole, complete person created by God with a mind, body and soul - however disabled.

The Society's commitment is to identify each resident's abilities and to work with them at their level of functioning through a variety of care and stimulation intervention programmes utilising physio, occupational, speech and music therapists, art, hydro therapy, reflexology, horse riding and farming activities. Most of the residents are incontinent and wear diapers. We do not use disposable diapers due to the enormous cost involved and the impact on the environment; but we use cloth nappies and we wash 2 500 nappies every day.

LITTLE EDEN, founded by the late Mrs Domitilla Rota Hyams (who received numerous awards in recognition of her pioneering work) is a registered non-profit organisation operating in the welfare sector, licensed with the South African Provincial Department of Health to care for people who have profound intellectual disabilities and who may also be affected with mental illness, disturbed challenged behaviour, multiple physical disabilities and epilepsy. LITTLE EDEN is also registered as a Public Benefit Organisation.

Many of the 300 residents at LITTLE EDEN were previously abandoned, abused or destitute currently ranging in age from 19 months to 65 years and although the average physical age is 23 years, the average mental age remains below one year. The Society, with a total staff complement of 257, provides 24-hour full nursing care at Domitilla and Danny Hyams Home, Edenvale (DDHH) for 180 residents and at Elvira Rota Village, Bapsfontein (ERV) where 120 residents live on a 43 ha farm.

Funding for the running costs comes from four major sources: the Gauteng Provincial Government Department of Health (DoH), corporate donors, a second-hand shop and the general public. The DoH funding caters for approximately 36% of the monthly running costs of R2.5 million or approximately €180 000 per month (in 2014 terms). The remainder of the running costs and all capital development costs have to be funded by in-house fundraising activities.

In defiance of the then apartheid laws, and at the risk of losing its subsidies at that time, LITTLE EDEN took the courageous step of admitting its first non-white child in 1973 and its first black child in 1985. Government subsidies for black residents were only finally approved in 1992.

Key to the success of the LITTLE EDEN endeavours is the role that volunteers from the wider community, both local and overseas, play in support of the wonderful, dedicated staff. Volunteers have included persons from all walks of life from the most humble through to scholars, students and professionals (doctors, dentists, lawyers, accountants, architects, engineers etc.); people who give freely of their time and talents; helpers who read to the residents or massage their feet; those who work in the office or in the LITTLE EDEN second-hand shop; students and those required to do community service who work with

the therapists; those who play soccer or throw a ball with the residents, or help them hold a crayon to colour in a picture.

In addition, students from the various relevant disciplines at universities and colleges are accepted to do their practical training under the guidance of the LITTLE EDEN therapists.

A Board of Governors is responsible for the overall control of the Society with the day-to-day management in the hands of a Chief Executive Officer and Management team. Financial Statements (which are reviewed by an independent auditor) are issued annually and testify to the philosophy of exercising all reasonable economies of operation, but never to the detriment of those entrusted to the care of LITTLE EDEN.

Assets of the Society are vested in and managed by the independent LITTLE EDEN Foundation. An overseas legal entity, Associazione Domitilla Rota Hyams (ADRH) ONLUS, was formed and is expected to become the European centre for the financial support of LITTLE EDEN, the transfer of know-how and scientific research in the field of intellectual disability and the facilitation of volunteers. The ADRH ONLUS is registered in Italy for the 5/1000 tax benefit programme as well as with Transnational Giving Europe (TGE) which will permit donors in most European countries to receive a tax credit for donations to LITTLE EDEN Society via the ADRH ONLUS.



Where is LITTLE EDEN situated?



LITTLE EDEN operates two full time residential care centres in Gauteng Province, one at Edenvale and the other at Bapsfontein. DDHH is situated at 79 Wagenaar Road corner Harris Avenue, Edenglen, Edenvale approximately 10 minutes by car from O R Tambo International Airport (Johannesburg International Airport). GPS co-ordinates South $26^{\circ}07.877'$; East $028^{\circ}10.758'$



ERV is situated at consolidated stand 115 Tweefontein 413JR, Bapsfontein approximately 30 minutes from O R Tambo International Airport, (Johannesburg International Airport). GPS co-ordinates: South $25^{\circ}57.792'$; East $028^{\circ}23.235'$



Why do you want to volunteer at LITTLE EDEN?



Perhaps the reason for you volunteering is to be able to make a positive difference in one way or another in the lives and well-being of persons less fortunate than yourself. For some volunteers this may be your first working experience in a facility for the care of children and adults with intellectual disabilities, many with physical disabilities and epilepsy.

Spending time at LITTLE EDEN is not a holiday, it is a commitment **and it is a challenge**; it is a time for you to give of yourself and your talents. There are real challenges that you will face for which you should prepare yourself.

Some residents have difficulty swallowing and drool constantly; many residents cannot feed themselves; some cannot talk but communicate with sounds; many residents are also physically disabled and are in wheelchairs.

However the residents respond to love and give love unconditionally; they will smile for you and laugh and cry with you; they will become your friend and expect nothing in return; the only thing that you are likely to lose is your heart because the children will take a grip on your heart and you will never forget them!



Who may volunteer at LITTLE EDEN?

As a volunteer you will work with a therapist or group leader and will be guided and mentored throughout your stay. Long-term volunteers will be more involved with the stimulation programme, while short-term or local volunteers will be placed according to appropriate needs and skills.

For **overseas visitors** you must be **at least 20 years old** and, for companionship, you should not come out alone, but rather come with another like-minded companion or friend. To be in a strange country, away from your family and friends is not easy and will take time for you to settle. **Volunteers MUST be able to communicate in English.**

Where possible, schedule your arrival and departure times for during the week rather than on a weekend, as well as for other planned travelling during your stay. This will be less disruptive to the LITTLE EDEN programme.

You need to be mature enough to cope and adapt to the different culture, climate, food, security and lifestyle – these are additional challenges!

Please note:

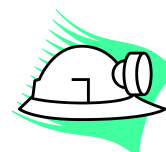
- Volunteers must be aware that LITTLE EDEN Management will schedule the work hours in accordance with the LITTLE EDEN residents' needs. Where possible it will be a mutually agreeable time and period of hours. It must be understood however that LITTLE EDEN is a fully operational Home and cannot be expected to re-arrange work and staff to meet the needs of volunteers.
- No local volunteer service is performed on week-ends or public holidays.
- Be aware to protect the dignity and privacy of each person.
- No food or drink may be administered to residents unless authorised by and under the direction of the appropriate LITTLE EDEN staff.
- Only designated medical staff may administer medications to the residents.
- **NO PHOTOGRAPHS** may be taken of the residents without the express permission of Management.
- There may be photographs of you at LITTLE EDEN that could be posted on social media through our public relations and communications department. Inform us in writing if these photographs of you may not be used.
- Do not be afraid to ask for help or advice in any situation. Management and staff are there to assist and guide you.
- LITTLE EDEN Policy No.501 *Compliance with the Occupational Health & Safety Act* applies to all volunteers and is available on request.
- The use of illegal substances is a criminal offence and is strictly prohibited.
- All LITTLE EDEN premises are designated as non-smoking. Smokers are required to utilise the designated external smoking areas. No LITTLE EDEN residents or staff may be offered or induced to smoke cigarettes or other products.
- No alcohol consumption is permitted at any time throughout all work areas. Moderate consumption by volunteers in the volunteers' accommodation is permitted after hours as long as this does not result in intoxication and/or any problems on the LITTLE EDEN premises. No LITTLE EDEN residents or staff may be offered or induced to consume any alcoholic drink at any time.
- South Africa has a high incidence of HIV, AIDS and other infectious diseases. All volunteers are reminded to practise the universal precautions for infection control at all times. If in any doubt, please contact the Care Centres Manager.
- Where time and circumstances permit LITTLE EDEN may, in conjunction with long- term volunteers, arrange for outings and sight-seeing trips during the volunteers' leisure time. It is stressed that this is the exception rather than the rule and is entirely at the discretion of the CEO.
- Short-term volunteers may have visitors at the end of their stay, not during their volunteer period.
- Generally breakfast consists of cereal with milk; lunch - meat with potato or rice and vegetables; supper - soup or pasta or cold meats.
- Accommodation is communal and in the best interests of all, you are requested to maintain a high standard of hygiene and personable behaviour.
- Volunteers may not fraternise with staff or residents after hours or behave inappropriately at any time with staff or residents.

Wheelchairs



- Never lean or rest yourself on a wheelchair.
- Make sure that the resident is sitting comfortably and that his/her feet and arms are in a safe position before moving the chair.
- Before moving off, familiarise yourself with the chair's features, particularly the brakes.
- Watch where you are going! Take it easy! Don't go too fast!
- When you stop, immediately apply the chair's brakes. No runaway wheelchairs please!
- You should be aware of your limits and do not attempt to lift, push or pull someone who is too heavy for you. Ask for assistance if needed!

Personal safety considerations



- South Africa is generally a safe place for overseas visitors as long as basic universal rules for personal safety are followed.
- Ask for local advice before venturing out to places away from your daily routine.
- DO NOT hitch-hike and do not give lifts to hitch-hikers! Do not accept lifts from strangers.
- Never allow strangers on to the property and keep doors locked and windows shut at night.
- Females should refrain from walking alone especially in deserted areas and never at night.
- Do not act or behave as a 'tourist' e.g. expensive camera hanging from neck, wallet/purse full of notes etc.
- The use of public transport is generally not advisable due to safety considerations. If you intend to embark on a tour of the country you are advised to either fly, book a package tour or hire a vehicle - in which case you will need a valid drivers' licence. Please remember that in South Africa we drive on the left hand side of the road and that cars are right-hand drive!
- If you are driving, lock car doors whilst driving and in parking lots.
- If you intend to visit areas in South Africa in which malaria is prevalent (e.g. Kruger National Park) you are very strongly advised to consult your medical practitioner for the appropriate prophylactics.
- Tap water is safe to drink; it is rated as one of the cleanest in the world.

References



LITTLE EDEN is duty bound to ensure the wellbeing and safety of its charges at all times. For this reason LITTLE EDEN requires all volunteers who are unable to attend an initial interview process to submit at least one written reference from an authoritative body or person before being accepted for volunteer work. **This requirement is especially applicable to volunteer applications from overseas.** LITTLE EDEN will issue, upon request, a reference letter of volunteer service completed.

Code of conduct



LITTLE EDEN subscribes to a code of conduct and ethics and adheres to a defined work etiquette *Policy and Procedure 102 Code of Conduct and Ethics* and *Policy and Procedure 103 Work Area Etiquette*, available on request, which have been put in place to ensure that individual behaviours do not negatively impact on the best interests of LITTLE EDEN especially where residents, employees, fellow volunteers and/or members of the public at large are concerned. LITTLE EDEN expects all volunteers to subscribe to these Codes of Conduct.

Instances of gross unacceptable behaviour (as so deemed in the sole opinion of LITTLE EDEN Management) will be treated seriously and can result in the volunteer being refused further entry onto LITTLE EDEN premises.

Volunteer facilities at LITTLE EDEN



Overseas volunteers are given free board and lodging at either of the two residential facilities for volunteers depending at which Home the volunteer will be working.

St Joseph House is situated 4km from DDHH comprising five bedrooms with two single beds per bedroom and with shared bathrooms, kitchen, office, study, dining room, lounge and garden. It is within walking distance of the Edenvale town centre, shopping centres and parish church. Barbara's Bungalow is situated at ERV and, being located in a rural farming area, has no nearby shopping facilities. This facility is a wooden log cabin comprising four bedrooms with two single beds per bedroom, a communal living/dining/kitchenette area, shared bathrooms and external veranda. There is a Chapel on the premises.



Limited internet, fax and telephone connectivity is available during office hours from the administration offices. Usage of these facilities must be arranged with the Administration Manager. Usage should at all times be reasonable; long distance phone calls are for own account. LITTLE EDEN is reliant on donor funds and therefore has a duty to ensure that monies spent are stringently controlled.

To ensure a hospitable and safe environment, regular cleaning of the facilities is undertaken by LITTLE EDEN which requires access to all rooms and areas you may occupy. Due care should be taken of LITTLE EDEN equipment and property. You are requested to report damages or repairs required. On a day-to-day basis, you would be expected to leave your accommodation clean and tidy.



Climatic conditions

Both Edenvale and Bapsfontein are at an altitude of approximately 1 800m above sea level, in a summer rainfall area of approximately 760 mm per annum. Precipitation is normally via thunderstorms of short duration in the late afternoon accompanied, at times, by spectacular lightning displays and rolling thunder.

The average temperatures range from 28°C in summer to 11.1°C in winter. Winter nights can be very cold at -3°C with frost in the mornings.

What to bring and wear?



The simple answer to this is not too much!

If you are flying in from overseas, please ensure that arrangements are made with the Administration Manager for your pick-up at the O R Tambo International Airport. For traveling, wear comfortable clothing. In general, comfortable light casual clothing and rain wear is recommended in summer with warm clothing, scarf, beanie (knitted hat) and warm winter jackets in winter.

Whilst it is acceptable that volunteers may wear fashionable clothing, you are advised to take note of the **Four Bs** i.e. no bellies, no breasts, no backs and no bottoms exposed. Shoulders should be covered, clothing and footwear should at all times be appropriate for the applicable job and/or function. Slacks, jeans (without holes), shorts (only knee-length shorts) are appropriate. Casual clothing is not considered appropriate for the office environment.

Other advised items to include are:

- Sun cream
- Sun glasses
- Spare set of spectacles
- Camera
- Small rucksack (for the occasional excursion)
- Light rain gear
- Personal medication
- Drivers' licence (if applicable)
- Sun hat / Winter hat

Please also remember to bring along the various travel documents:

- Passport and entry visa (if applicable)
- Travel/health insurance policy. This is **ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL** as LITTLE EDEN insurance policies **DO NOT** cover volunteers. Please submit a copy of your insurance to LITTLE EDEN before your arrival.



Money matters

The local currency is the South African Rand (ZAR). Conversion rates between the ZAR and other major currencies vary daily and can be determined from any bank, internet and financial newspaper.

LITTLE EDEN, as noted previously, does not charge overseas volunteers board and lodging. Please be aware, however when you are budgeting for spending money that a few extra expenses will inevitably occur e.g. personal toiletries, outings, souvenirs etc. All purchases in the country are subject to a 14% tax known as VAT. All displayed prices normally include VAT. As an overseas visitor, the VAT charges can be reclaimed at the airport on departure as long as the VAT invoices are presented together with proof of the purchase (e.g. displaying the items purchased).

Credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Diners Card etc.) are widely accepted at most retail outlets. Volunteers should however be aware that there is widespread fraud in credit card usage and hence should be vigilant at all times. Credit cards handed over for payment should not be allowed out of your sight at any time. DO NOT allow anyone to assist you at an automatic teller machine (ATM). If you have a problem with an ATM machine, retrieve your card and contact the bank desk.

Currencies can be exchanged at any bank or the airport. LITTLE EDEN can also assist in this regard. LITTLE EDEN has safe storage facilities for your valuables. Please arrange with the Administration Manager if so required. Do not leave your valuables (cell-phone, purse/wallet, jewellery, iPod etc.) unattended.



General information



An information and indemnity form must be completed by all volunteers at Reception before initial commencement of work at LITTLE EDEN. Local students who are completing community service must not fill in the information form.

Food and drink for own consumption must be supplied by the local volunteer. Overseas volunteers will be catered for from the LITTLE EDEN kitchens. No alcoholic beverages are supplied by LITTLE EDEN. Upon completion of the volunteer's term of service, and if requested, LITTLE EDEN will issue a letter of confirmation of the voluntary work performed.

Whilst LITTLE EDEN strives to be the benchmark for local facilities that care for people with intellectual disabilities, there is no room for complacency. For this reason, and in support of this objective, volunteers can play a significant role in ensuring that LITTLE EDEN remains at the cutting edge of innovation in this field.

How can this be done?

Very simply by submitting a constructive critical analysis of the volunteer's time spent at LITTLE EDEN. Comments, suggestions, submissions, propositions and any ideas which can improve upon the better implementation of the LITTLE EDEN Mission will be welcome. Volunteers are encouraged to submit such written reports directly to the CEO before they terminate their stay at LITTLE EDEN as experience has shown that after returning home, such reports are generally not completed.

Caring for the residents



LITTLE EDEN has been entrusted with the duty of lifetime care for its residents. Such care is provided on a continual basis within the highest possible parameters of human dignity with due concern for the continued wellbeing, both physical and spiritual of each and every resident.

Should ANY person at LITTLE EDEN become aware of any instance which is in conflict with the above, such instance must be reported in confidence and without delay to the Care Centres Manager or the Chief Executive Officer.



LITTLE EDEN Values

LITTLE EDEN has been caring for children and adults with intellectual disabilities since 1967. No organisation or company can continue its work for so many years without solid principles and beliefs that are practised and lived daily. Treating the residents with love and care, dignity and respect and believing in them, has always been a prerequisite and a given in the work that we do. LITTLE EDEN has formalised the values that define the purpose and mission of our organisation.

The values of *Respect*, *Sanctity of Life* and *Love & Care* are encapsulated in a series of symbols that guide the way we respond to children and adults with intellectual disability.

We respect our residents, ourselves and our environment and treat each with dignity. We believe these special children are precious in the eyes of God and that they have a right to be here and to be helped to reach their full potential despite their limitations. And we offer them love and care, providing for their needs and protecting them from harm.

As one of our valued volunteers you are encouraged to embrace and truly “live” these values daily.

Conclusion



The CEO and the Management team sincerely appreciate your decision to spend some of your precious time at LITTLE EDEN and hope that it will meet your expectations and add to your greater personal fulfilment. If there is anything that you need during your stay, please contact any Management team member and we will do our best to assist you.



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