Brazil

VISITOR’S GUIDE
“Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.”

1 CHRONICLES 16:24
Considering a Trip

For over 20 years, Hope Unlimited has ministered to mortal-risk children in Brazil, successfully working to transform their lives and those of their future generations. You’re invited to be an important part of this remarkable ministry through a mission trip. A member of Hope Unlimited’s U.S. staff will guide your group through the decision-making and trip preparation process. Before we begin, though, the first step on your journey is to pray about it. Ask God if He is calling you to visit, and ask Him to prepare your way.

Once in Brazil, an English-speaking host will accompany you throughout your trip. Your time in Brazil will include introductions to our staff, exposure to Brazilian culture, quality time with our kids, and opportunities to view the streets and slums from which they come. You will see their faces, hear their stories, and join them in celebrating the goodness of God in all of our lives.

A mission trip to Hope Unlimited gives you the opportunity to truly be the hands and feet of Christ. As you prepare to come, pray that God will uniquely prepare you to minister to these precious children.
What will we do while we are there?
The Mission Team experiences with Hope Unlimited focus on:

What about the work?
We want team members to leave excited about overseas ministry.

Teams generally get involved in some type of work projects, but we don’t emphasize these projects as the primary goal of the trip. The focus is on building relationships and learning about ministry to street children. We’ve learned that some teams determined to complete a certain project are sometimes disappointed when they can’t complete it during their trip. For that reason, the type of work is usually light maintenance and not construction so your focus can remain on ministry and relationships as opposed to “getting the job done.”

The witness of coming to Brazil and actually working hard and getting dirty is a positive example for the children and community. Performing work projects does enrich team members’ experiences, but the work is mixed with times of cultural exploration, interaction, fellowship, and ministry. We consider it a ministry to impact and minister to you—the visiting team. We want team members to leave excited about overseas ministry, and ready to share with others about what God is doing around the world.

Your specific itinerary will be planned with your team leader, but here are examples of activities your team may do:

Ministry to the children
- Conduct talent shows, music, or dancing programs to share the Gospel with the children and community
- Lead arts and crafts
- Lead games and activities
- Volunteer in camp activities

Ministry to the staff
- Prepare a special time of sharing and encouragement with the staff
- Organize a special outing to give the houseparents a break
- Teach a workshop (e.g. discipleship methods, games and activities with youth, effective communication, etc.)

Ministry to the community
- Work alongside Hope students to repair houses of impoverished people in the slums
- Conduct community evangelism efforts

Enhancement of the facilities
- Painting
- Performing light maintenance
- Landscaping
- Creating murals

The most important thing to remember is that you are on mission. As such, you are the hands and feet of our Lord, serving those He called the least of these. As in His life, ministry begins with relationship. Opening your heart to those you encounter is the essence of a mission trip.
“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.”

GALATIANS 5:13
Good planning makes for a good trip. We want you to have an in-depth understanding of what a mission trip is, what you can expect while at Hope, and how to prepare most effectively for your trip. This guide will walk you through the basic information about a mission trip, how you may impact our kids, and how you may be impacted.

A mission trip is not just about getting a work project completed—as important as that is. It is much more important to learn about Hope, about our kids and staff, and about the need and the answers. It is even more about building long-lasting personal relationships, and about confirming the relationship between Hope and the sending organization or church. We intentionally plan relational time where we can get to know each other better—where you can see our heart and we can see yours.

We also want you to experience the richness of Brazilian culture (especially the food!), and understand how our place in the world shapes the work we do.
Sample Itinerary

Wednesday
- Lunch at Graduate Girls’ Transition Home
- Visit community-based homes

Thursday
- Work project
- Debriefing with Hope leadership, trip leaders, and team
- Dinner at Brazilian traditional food restaurant

Friday
- Dedicate work project
- Free time/grocery store shopping
- Pack

Saturday
- Meal at the park with “Conquer Class”
- Depart Sao Paulo (GRU) to USA

Sunday
- Arrive home

This is a sample itinerary for visiting Hope at our Campinas site. We also have a second site in Vitoria, Hope Mountain that teams can also visit.
**Travel Information**

**Passports**
Passports are required any time you leave the United States. Due to new security measures, the U.S. State Department has a backlog of passport applications, and the wait can be 3-4 months. Please plan accordingly.

U.S. Dept. of State: Passports and International Travel

**Costs**
Travel to Brazil is not inexpensive, but it is certainly a worthwhile investment. The improving exchange rate helps at this time. Here is what you can expect to spend:

- **Airfare** | $1,000-$1,500 round trip
- **Hotel** | $60-$80 per room/night | Rooms at the hotel we use will hold from 1-4 guests
- **Housing Fee** | $35 per person/day | These fees pay for a driver, a translator, your host, gas for our bus, and the meals you eat on campus. We ask that this be paid to Hope in advance of your trip.
- **Meals** | $25-35 per person/day | Breakfast is included with your hotel. Most lunches will be on campus. Dinners will vary in cost from inexpensive ($10-$15 for pizza) to expensive ($30 at the churrascaria). Your group should collect this money before coming to Brazil so the tab can be placed on one credit card.

**Project Cost** | We ask that groups pre-fund the costs of the project they will be doing in Brazil so that everything is ready to go when you arrive on campus. We will work with you to develop a detailed budget for your project. We will work to find a project that fits your needs and budget. This is also a great way to instill a sense of investment in the project for your whole church instead of the trip being on the province of those traveling.

*as of June 17, 2019 a tourist visa is no longer necessary for U.S. citizens*
Help create an environment where people can enjoy you, your culture, and your language just as you aim to enjoy theirs.

Preparing To Go

You are going to invest a significant amount of your time, resources, and, hopefully, your heart in this trip. Spending time preparing to go is requisite if you hope to see a meaningful return on your investment. There are some very important steps you should make as you prepare to be on mission.
**Team Preparation**

Have a clearly designated team coordinator (or co-coordinators). This person will communicate with the Hope staff in preparation for your trip to confirm dates, submit paperwork, transfer funds, etc.

Assign team members the tasks of blogging and interacting with Hope Unlimited on social media before and during your trip. Sharing about your experiences with our kids means a lot to the Hope family.

Meet regularly in the months and weeks leading up to your trip. Good communication is critical, as is building relationships before the trip.

**Individual Preparation**

Understanding Cross Cultural Relationships

**Guest of the culture:** Think of yourself as being a guest in someone’s home. How would you behave, react and interact? Or conversely, what expectations would you have for a guest in your home?

**Student of the culture:** Think of yourself as a person who is there to study and learn. How does a student in school get an “A”? What behaviors or factors contribute to the success?

**Servant within the culture:** Think of yourself as serving everyone you encounter in the foreign country. How does a servant approach those whom he or she is to serve? How should you respond to differences in others? Good communication is critical, as is building relationships before the trip.

**Helper or Servant?**

To help means “to aid, assist, or contribute strength; to save or rescue,” while to serve means “to act as the servant of another.” Can you recognize the difference? What do these definitions say about those who are the objects of your service? How might you expect people from another culture to respond to either approach based on your attitude toward them? Getting your attitudes right is key to a successful overseas experience; getting this wrong has sometimes caused problems for visitors overseas.

**Building Bridges With Other Cultures Involves:**

Accepting limitations: You will not completely understand people from another culture in just one trip. This is just the beginning, so don’t become too frustrated with yourself.

**Revealing prejudices:** Be aware that at times you may feel prejudice yourself. You may become frustrated with the way things are or the way people behave. Don’t deny the feelings. Own them and talk to God about them. Only then can you begin to understand the reasons behind them. Why are you frustrated? Being aware will help you grow in understanding the differences.

**Listening:** Focus on listening to others more than you talk, and ask lots of questions to understand the culture and others around you.

**Giving:** Take the initiative to reach out to the kids and staff. Some visitors tend to shy away if they aren’t fluent in Portuguese, but you can give your time, attitude of service, and smiles freely.

**Enjoying:** Enjoy the people, their culture, and their language. If you don’t take yourself too seriously, you will have more fun. Help create an environment where people can enjoy you, your culture, and your language just as you aim to enjoy theirs.
Need to Know Before You Travel

Time
Be flexible when it comes to the clock. Please be on time, but recognize that things may not start on time.

Food
One of the best ways to experience Brazilian culture is through the food! You’ll have many unforgettable meals throughout your trip and have fun trying a variety of dishes on campus and at restaurants.

Language Gap
Don’t be shy about attempting to speak Portuguese. Brazilians will love every word you try! They will be thrilled that you want to learn their language and will be forgiving of your mistakes.

Manners
Remember that everything you need to know in Brazil you learned in kindergarten. Ask questions to things you don’t know, smile often, and cross the street together.

Personal Space
Your personal space will be much smaller. Brazilians stand and sit much closer to each other than most Americans are used to. They are very social and like to stand right next to you and talk to you. Sometimes a male speaking with another male will even tug lightly on his friend’s shirt or play with his buttons as he talks.

Affection
Brazilians hug, kiss, and generally love to demonstrate affection. The children will likely be very demonstrative and excited to see you as well. Try to be understanding of their culture and backgrounds and always ask for assistance from staff if you’re unsure of how to react.

Understanding Hope & What It Means To Be On Mission
When you read the stories of Jesus’ encounters in the Gospels, He is always looking to have a positive long-term impact on those He meets. He makes every encounter about transforming a life. Unfortunately, our mission trips often are more focused on what we get out of them, rather than recreating the ministry of Christ. Reading more about the work of Hope Unlimited, our residential care, vocational training, graduate transition, and a few graduate stories will help you better understand the mission of Hope and familiarize you with the environment in which you will be serving.

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Church Preparation

It is critically important that every mission team has a supportive group behind them. Here are some ways you can more deeply engage your church in preparation and support of your trip.

1. Talk About It

Early and often. Your church should understand what you are doing, why you are doing it, and who is participating. Video and slide shows about Hope, testimonies in anticipation of the trip, and discussion of the work project should all be in front of your congregation in the weeks leading up to the trip.

2. Engage

Make funding the project you will do at Hope a church responsibility rather than a team matter. Clearly outline what you will do, develop a budget (be sure to add those contingencies!), and help your church catch a vision of why they should invest in Hope.

3. Invite a Hope Speaker

Schedule a Hope senior team member like Philip Smith or Laura Becker-Lewke to speak in your church and with your team before you go.

4. Enlist a Prayer Team

Every team member should have a support group praying for them before and during the trip.

5. Post on Social Media

Be sure the church knows you are reporting your experience and how to follow along on your blog and/or social media accounts.

6. Skype During Worship

The impact of having the team on screen during a Sunday service, surrounded by the kids they are serving, makes the mission trip real to the congregation.

7. Talk Again

Upon your return home, report back to your church. Share testimonies, videos, and photographs. Be sure to thank your church for supporting the trip through funding, prayer, and encouragement. Help them see that their investment in your team and in Hope was impactful!

8. Stay In Touch

Be sure to give us your email and mailing address so we can send you updates on what’s going on at Hope.

Time to Pack

It is critically important that every mission team has a supportive group behind them. Here are some ways you can more deeply engage your church in preparation and support of your trip.

Weather

**Campinas (City of Youth):** Generally São Paulo State is warm, but rarely intolerable. Any time between May and September, a cool, windy spell can set in, so if you are coming during this time, pack a light jacket. There is no indoor heating.

**Vitória (Hope Mountain):** Espírito Santo State gets very hot during the Brazilian summer (November to March).

Both locations have sporadic thunderstorms are common between November and March, so bring at least a rain jacket. At any time we can encounter a few days of continuous clouds and drizzle.

Clothing

How we are perceived in the community is important, and we want to communicate respect. With that in mind, we request that you observe the following guidelines.

**Neat and Clean:** Pack comfortable clothes, but make sure all items—even work and play clothes—are free of holes, excessive “wear and tear,” and noticeable stains.

**Modesty:** Please take extra care to pack modest clothing. Women should ensure tight fits around the arms and neck. Hemlines of skirts and shorts should be to the knee or longer. Bear in mind that work projects will involve bending and lifting; underwear should never show.
Footwear: If not involved in a work project, socks and shoes are preferred for male visitors; nice sandals for female visitors.

Work Clothes: If your team will be doing a work project, that is the only time you are not expected to wear nice, casual clothing. However, your work clothes should still be in reasonable condition.

Sportswear: Bring “play clothes” if you plan to participate in sport activities with the children. Pack modest swimwear as well; your hotel/camp will have a pool.

No Safari: In this land of sophisticated and well-educated people, we don’t want to give the impression of being “on safari.” This part of Brazil is no hotter than many areas of the United States, so not everyone needs a sunhat and big water bottle at all times. You want to blend in and avoid unnecessary barriers. While deciding what to pack, review your daily itinerary to know what is appropriate for each day.

Ultimately, you want to blend in and avoid unnecessary barriers.

Other

Medicines: Pack your regular medications. It’s a good idea to have only the amount you need for the trip, but be sure it is in the pharmacy bottles (in case there are any concerns going through airport security). Also, it’s wise to pack some basic first aid items and over-the-counter meds for pain, diarrhea, etc.

Spending money: Your team coordinator will work with your team to determine a recommended amount of spending money based on your specific plans (shopping, tourist activities, etc.) and how you will be handling team expenses.
“The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.”

PSALM 121:8

Your Time in Brazil

Most of the children have no viable parents of their own, so the Hope staff are the closest role models and parental figures they have. During your stay, you will be a member of our ministry team, so please take this responsibility seriously and follow the house rules.
The House Rules

1. Treat the youth as you would anyone else. Their difficult pasts are behind them, and they have new identities. Avoid asking personal questions about their pasts or using terms like “street children” or “orphans.”

2. Remember that the youth are in a structured program. Do not unintentionally encourage them to break the rules or deviate from schedules. (They may claim to have your permission.)

3. Generally observe the same house rules and manners you have in your home. Do not set a bad example (e.g. caps and sunglasses must be removed during meals; be on time for activities and events; clean up your messes; no roughhousing inside).

4. While being a friend, keep physical interaction to a minimum, including roughhousing, wrestling and prolonged embracing inside.

5. Do not behave in a manner which would suggest to a student or observer that you are flirting—even if a student initiates.

6. Do not enter dormitories or cottages without permission or unaccompanied by staff.

7. Be careful in reacting to comments made by Hope’s youth. Due to their backgrounds, they sometimes have an emotional need to shock, lie, invoke sympathy or otherwise attract attention however they can. Helping them learn that manipulation is not acceptable is part of their healing therapy. If you think this is happening, please notify a staff person.

8. Be careful about showing favoritism. Often, your favorites are everyone’s favorites; this can lead to unfair parenting in the long run. Try to pick out a quieter and more reserved student to befriend. If you think this is happening, please notify a staff person.

9. Don’t give presents of any kind to any individual youth. If you have enough for all the children, give them to a staff member to be distributed at the proper time.

10. Dress modestly. (Plan properly when packing for your trip.)

11. Do not make any promises to students, even in jest, without first checking with a staff member. Especially, do NOT promise to bring a youth back to your country. Avoid promises to write, send presents, come again, etc. Our good intentions can be forgotten, but the child has to live with the disappointment. Just let your next visit or letter be a surprise!

12. Volunteers must respect the Hope Unlimited for Children Statement of Faith and not engage in activities or discussions which offend or contradict local Christian beliefs or customs. Christians in Brazil are especially sensitive to occult activity (tarot cards, fortune telling, etc.) and certain types of secular music. If you are not sure if something is acceptable, check with a staff leader.

13. Do not provide tempting opportunities for theft by leaving valuables unattended. We often have new students with us. It would be tragic to lose a kid back to the streets because he/she gave into temptation and ran off with something valuable.

14. All visitors are subject to the rules of each Hope program and the authority of the local ministry leadership. Please do nothing to undermine this authority.

15. Feel free to take a lot of photographs. However, it is best to get to know the kids a bit first—then they will ask you to take their pictures. We also ask that you do not post any photos of the children on social media, due to their sensitive backgrounds.

16. Any illegal interaction between a visitor and a student in the program will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

17. Don’t make plans with students (activities, outings, special treats, etc.) without getting approval from a staff leader. This helps maintain the order and routine of the program and reinforces the role of the leaders.

18. Finally, please ask staff to explain any policy or rule that is unclear. There is a reason for every rule we have, and understanding the rationale will help you appreciate the structured programs we operate.
“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

MATTHEW 28:19-20

Stay Connected

Your ministry to the children at Hope doesn’t have to end when your trip does. We invite you to stay connected to our kids long after your visit.

Follow Hope Unlimited on Social Media
You can join the community passionate about supporting, discussing, and sharing Hope Unlimited’s work in the lives of children at risk. And you can find regular updates on the ministry and your favorite children!

Join The Thrive Team
Thrive Team members receive quarterly stories from children at Hope Unlimited. Thrive Team members ensure the children at Hope everything they need to thrive: education, family, home, recreation, friends, role models, and spiritual formation. You can join the Thrive Team here.

Receive E-Mail Updates
Find out what the kids are up to each month and learn how to pray for them. Each update contains photos and information exclusive to Hope supporters. Sign up here.
We Look Forward To Seeing You In Brazil

Open your heart to what God will do through and to you.