



NPH USA

Raising Children. Supporting Families.
Transforming Lives.



VISITOR'S GUIDE: NPH BOLIVIA

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Country Overview

Bolivia ranks at or near the bottom among Latin American countries in several areas of health and development, including poverty, education, malnutrition, and life expectancy.

Area: 682,625 square miles – nearly three times the size of Montana

Population: 12,186,079
2023 estimate)

Languages: Spanish, Quechua, Aymara

Bolivia's income inequality is one of the highest in the world.

Climate/Environment

- Climate: varies with altitude; humid and tropical to cold and semiarid
- Terrain: rugged Andes Mountains, hills, lowland plains of the Amazon Basin
- Natural hazards: flooding in the northeast and volcanoes
- Issues: deforestation, soil erosion, industrial pollution of water supplies

Background

Bolivia, named after independence fighter Simon Bolivar, broke away from Spanish rule in 1825; much of its subsequent history has consisted of a series of nearly 200 coups and counter coups. Democratic civilian rule was established in 1982, but leaders have faced difficult problems of deep-seated poverty, social unrest, and illegal drug production.

In December 2005, Bolivians elected Movement Toward Socialism leader Evo Morales president - by the widest margin of any leader since the restoration of civilian rule in 1982 - after he ran on a promise to change the country's traditional political class and empower the nation's poor, indigenous majority. In December 2009, President Morales easily won reelection, and his party took control of the legislative branch of the government, which will allow him to continue his process of change. In October 2011, the country held its first judicial elections to select judges for the four highest courts.

Below: Madidi National Park, Arthur Chapman/WikiCommons; Palacio del Congreso Nacional in La Paz, Rodrigo Achá/WikiCommons.

Nature

Bolivia is a wild place. And nature lovers, aesthetes and poets alike will find landscapes, views, and nature-born experiences not seen in many other places on the planet. The sheer amount of geographic, topographic, climatic and biological diversity will astound you.

Culture

The cultural, historical and spiritual depths and richness of Latin America's most indigenous nation are astounding. Officially declared a Plurinational State, Bolivia is a place to visit, learn from and experience a diverse mix of peoples. There are at-risk cultures and languages that could disappear within our lifetime, and traditions and beliefs that reach back to the days of the Inca Kings and Tiwanaku cosmologist priests.

At every corner a new snapshot, a new understanding will disrupt every stereotype, paradigm and tried-and-truism you ever had.



Sources: The CIA World Factbook, Fodor's Travel, Lonely Planet.com, UNICEF



Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos (NPH, Spanish for "Our Little Brothers and Sisters") Bolivia opened in 2005. Named for the founder of NPH, *Casa Padre William B. Wasson* is located in the lowlands near Santa Cruz de la Sierra. The weather is hot, humid and rainy. All of the children help maintain the garden, which includes native trees, and ornamental and fruit-bearing plants, as well as sheep and cows.

Bolivian law prohibits us from using photos that show the faces of minors.



Casa Padre Wasson

1. Entrance
2. School
3. Employees' home
4. Volunteers' home
5. Visitors' home
6. Sports field
7. National Director's home
8. Clinic
9. Babies' home
10. Volunteers' home
11. Younger girls' home
12. Girls' home
13. Older girls' home
14. Dining hall
15. Office
16. Younger boys' home
17. Older boys' home
18. Toddlers' home
19. Boys' home



Google



Daily Life

Highlights

- Bolivia is the second country in South America to have an NPH home.
- Construction at the permanent site began in November 2006. The children and staff moved to the permanent site on January 15, 2008. The kitchen was upgraded in 2017.
- The second school building was inaugurated in 2016. In addition, three students received full academic scholarships from the Universidad Cumbre, a private university in Santa Cruz.
- Sustainable agricultural projects were launched in 2012 and food productivity was increased in 2017 with a total value of nearly \$20,000.

Responsibility

Responsibility is one of the most important values that NPH tries to instill in their children. This is why each child is expected to not only be responsible for him or herself, but to contribute to the family. This includes doing traditional chores such as washing clothes, cleaning common areas and serving food. Everyone knows how much effort goes into caring for their home and all the people who live there.

After graduating from high school the *pequeños* give back to the home in a year of service job. Then, if the student decides to go to university with the help of NPH, they give another year of service after graduating from university.

Typical Day at Casa Padre Wasson

5:00 a.m. Wake up, clean the house, get dressed
6:00 a.m. Breakfast
6:40 a.m. Secondary students depart
7:00 a.m. Primary school students depart
7:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Classes
1:30 p.m. Lunch in *comedor*
2:30 – 4:00 p.m. Homework/study
4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Chores
5:00 p.m. Free time
6:30 p.m. Bath time
7:00 p.m. Dinner
7:30pm Free time/homework/study time
8:00 - 9:30 p.m. Bed time
(depending on age)

Godchildren

If you sponsor a child at NPH Bolivia, arrangements will be made for him/her to spend time with you during your visit. Please contact your regional office if you are interested in becoming a Godparent.





Travel Tips



Time Zone

Central Standard Time
UTC/GMT -4 hours



When traveling abroad, we recommend enrolling in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). This free service helps the U.S. government know where citizens are, so they can notify and assist them in case of emergency. To enroll, visit <http://step.state.gov>



The goal of the trip is to have fun, experience the culture of Bolivia and meet the inspiring children of NPH. Each traveler has so much to share with this great family and so much to learn. We hope that each visitor grows from their interactions with the children we support, just as your visit helps them to do the same.

Entry Requirements

A U.S. passport valid for at least six months beyond the date of entry is required to enter Bolivia. U.S. citizens must have a visa which costs \$160. Visit the website of the Consulado General de Bolivia near you for application forms and information.

Vaccinations

Before traveling to Bolivia, please consult your physician and visit www.cdc.gov/travel

Transportation

- For group trips organized by NPH USA, transportation will be provided by NPH.
- Do NOT hitchhike under any circumstances.

Accommodations

Lodging varies depending on trip package. See specific trip information or consult the coordinator for details.

Water

DRINK BOTTLED WATER ONLY.
This cannot be stressed enough.

Food

While at NPH facilities, we will eat just like the children and staff at specific mealtimes:

- Breakfast: 6:00 a.m.
- Lunch: 1:30 p.m.
- Dinner: 7:00 p.m.



Please review the NPH Visitor Policy and Guidelines, sign the form and return it to your trip leader.

Food at NPH is NEVER wasted. If you are unsure you will like what is being served, ask for only "un poquito" (a little), and if you cannot finish, please offer it to one of the children.

While on day trips, we will eat in restaurants where we are sure that food will be safely prepared.

Visitors are welcome to bring snacks to share with the group. Be sure to bring things that can withstand heat and preferably are individually wrapped.

Bathroom Etiquette

It is not possible to flush toilet paper in most Latin American countries due to the poor plumbing systems. Toilet paper and all sanitary products must be thrown in small waste baskets next to the toilet. **DO NOT flush toilet paper or sanitary products while visiting the NPH home.**

Bring travel toilet paper, or a small packet of facial tissues with you at all times. Tissue is not always available in public bathrooms.

Electricity

Most electrical currents are 220 volt/50 hertz, but most sockets are the two-pin, round-prong type, so adapters are needed. Make sure your appliance can take a 220 voltage before you plug it in. You should expect power outages, which are common in Latin America.

Travel Tips *(continued)*

E-mail & Phones

Internet cafés are common and can be used for e-mail and phone calls. Many mid-range to high-end hotels and cafés now have wi-fi.

Clothing

Comfortable, broken-in walking shoes are a must! The days can be hot, so light clothing – shorts, slacks, cotton T-shirts, sandals and/or running shoes – is appropriate. Keep in mind to dress conservatively and in a tidy manner. Please do not wear anything torn, too short or provocative. If you have any piercings other than ears, please take them out during your visit. If you have any tattoos, please keep them covered. These can be associated with gang activity and we do not want the children to have a negative impression of you.

Currency and Credit Cards

The currency in Bolivia is the boliviano, which can be divided into 100 centavos. Bolivianos come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200. Coins come in 10, 20 and 50 centavos, and 1, 2 and 5 bolivianos. U.S. dollars can be exchanged in banks and *casas de cambio* (house of change). DO NOT exchange on the street. Most larger city banks have ATMs, but never withdraw cash while alone or at night because muggings have become more common.

Visa and MasterCard are accepted in most cities and towns, but only in established hotels, restaurants and retail chains. Please remember that credit card fraud is an issue all over the world, so be cautious.

A 13% value-added tax (IVA) is added to hotel and restaurant bills and to items purchased in some stores.

Tipping

Bolivia is not a tipping culture, but you should expect to pay for “help” everywhere. A tip of 5% to 10% is customary in restaurants if you are happy with the service. Airport porters expect 5 bolivianos per cart.

Safety

Crime is not a major problem in Bolivia compared to other countries in Latin America, but it is increasing in seriousness and frequency. Outside the gates of NPH, we recommend that you never go alone anywhere. Avoid wearing flashy jewelry and watches. Be vigilant in regards to your surroundings. While at the home, we will be in a very safe and controlled environment. However, it is important to remember to watch your personal property. Our children have all come from very different backgrounds and while NPH tries to help them realize that they are safe now, many of them are still in survival mode. They are not malicious, but for many, taking is the only way they have ever survived.



See page 9 for emergency contact information.

PLEASE DO NOT give children your address, e-mail or phone number even if you are their sponsor.

Terms to Know

Good morning/afternoon/evening! - *¡Buenos días/tardes/noches!*
See you later! - *¡Hasta luego!*
How are you? - *¿Cómo está?*
Fine, thank you. - *Bien, gracias.*
Please - *Por favor*
Excuse me - *Permiso*
Do you speak English? - *¿Habla inglés?*
Yes - *Sí*
No - *No*
Thank you - *Gracias*
You're welcome - *De nada*
How old are you? - *¿Cuántos años tiene?*
How much is this? - *¿Cuánto es?*
More - *más*
A little bit - *poquito*
House - *casa*
Home - *hogar*
School - *escuela*
Backpack - *mochila*
Office - *oficina*
Kitchen - *cocina*
Water - *agua*
Food - *comida*
Rice - *arroz*
Beans - *frijoles*
Spoon - *cuchara*
Fork - *tenedor*
Cup - *vaso*
Plate - *plato*



NPH-Related

Pequeño/a - literally “little,” but it is the term used for all NPH children
Tío/a - literally aunt or uncle, but at NPH it is a caretaker
Fr. Wasson - *Padre Wasson* (Founder of NPH)
Padrino - Godfather (Sponsor)
Madrina - Godmother (Sponsor)
Ahijdo/a - Godchild
Hermano/a Mayor - Older brother/sister - the term for a former pequeño/a or graduate of NPH



Suggested Packing List

Clothes

- Lightweight travel clothes - there is no laundry facility, but you can hand wash!
- Jeans/shorts/travel pants - your preference
- Comfortable shoes for walking - tennis shoes or something with closed toes
- Poncho/lightweight rain jacket
- "Bug off" clothing - REI or Ex Officio (if sensitive to mosquitoes)
- One "nicer," but still casual outfit

Remember to dress conservatively. No visible undergarments; nothing torn, ripped or too short.

Toiletries

- Hand sanitizer
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Soap (we recommend a pack of disposable face cloths that have soap in the fibers. They work as soap and a washcloth.)
- Toothbrush/paste
- Deodorant
- Razor
- Earplugs
- Soap for washing clothes (if you want)
- Suntan lotion
- Insect repellent
- Small packet of facial tissues
- Travel toilet paper

Medicines

- Personal prescriptions (can be hard to get or expensive outside the U.S.)
- Pepto Bismol/Immodium
- Advil/Tylenol/Excedrin
- Cipro/antibiotic for travelers' diarrhea
- Benadryl/Hydrocortisone
- Bandages/Neosporin
- Emergen-C/cough drops

Personal Items

- Pillow
- Umbrella
- Water bottle
- Camera/Charger
- Fly paper
- Sunglasses
- Flashlight (plus extra batteries)
- Travel alarm clock (if desired)

Snacks/Food

While we encourage everyone to eat the food provided (it is tasty), if you are worried about not liking the food, or getting enough, consider packing some pasta or another substitution for a meal, just in case. In addition, you may also want to bring:

- Granola bars/fruit bars/popcorn/snacks to share
- Gatorade packets (it is easy to get dehydrated)
- Good ground coffee and sugar to share

Other

- Passport
- Two copies of passport and credit card information: leave one copy at home
- Pictures of your family to show kids (great conversation starters!) and/or postcards

Do NOT Bring

- Expensive or irreplaceable jewelry or other valuable items
- Flashy gifts



We often leave pillows, towels, sheets and dinnerware for the home to keep after we leave.

Gifts

Visitors often ask what items they can bring for the children. Following are some suggestions.

Clothing and Shoes

- Underwear and socks (children's sizes)
- Sandals

Education/Arts & Crafts

- Books in Spanish
- Coloring books
- Colored pencils and crayons
- Glue and tape
- Scissors
- Construction paper
- Play dough
- Yarn and pipe cleaners
- Beads
- Stickers

Toys & Games (for every age group)

- Card games
- Board games
- Jigsaw puzzles (100 pieces max.)
- Marbles

Sports Equipment

The kids spend most of their time outside, so think of items that require little or no maintenance and can be shared by everyone!

- Balls
- Jump ropes
- Air pumps with extra needles

Hygiene

- Feminine products
- Shampoo
- Soap
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes (for kids AND adults)

Health Care

- Vitamins
- Bandages
- Neosporin
- Tylenol

These items are always needed in the clinic. Please contact us if you are interested in donating other medical supplies.

Other

- Barrettes and hair accessories
- Inexpensive plastic jewelry
- Batteries of various sizes are always needed and easy to transport

When in doubt . . .

Bring things that NPH needs or wants, and that get depleted. If you are still unsure, ask!



PLEASE DO NOT

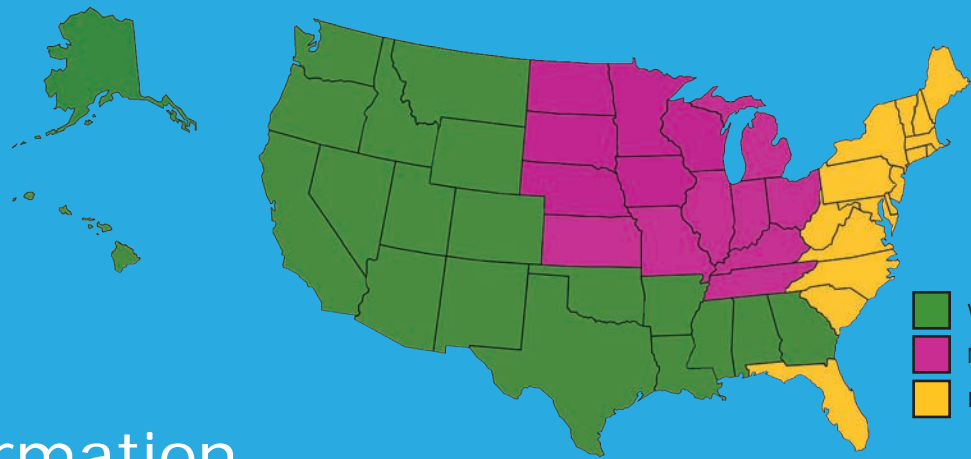
- Bring candy or small items to randomly pass out. This can result in hurt feelings among children who do not receive anything.
- Bring expensive gifts, such as music players, video games or jewelry. This may unintentionally create feelings of jealousy and cause problems for that child.
- Give gifts directly to the children. Give them to the home's Visitor Coordinator or a staff person.
- Give money to anyone at the home. This can cause confusion about how it will be used and will not qualify for a tax deduction under U.S. law. Please make all donations through NPH USA.

REMEMBER, YOUR VISIT IS A GIFT!

Neither NPH nor NPH USA want the children to associate your visit with material items. The best thing that you can bring is you! All your kind words, thoughts and affection are going to be the most lasting gift. Building relationships is the most valuable thing you can offer!



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West and South
Midwest
East

Contact Information

We suggest you leave this information as well as your flight and hotel details (if applicable) with your emergency contact.

National NPH USA Office

20 North Wacker Drive
Suite 4000
Chicago, IL 60606-3193

Phone: 888.201.8880
info@nphusa.org

NPH USA, Federal Tax ID #65-1229309, is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation that supports the homes, healthcare and educational programs of Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos.

FUNDRAISING AREAS

West and South Area

Seattle Office

2719 East Madison Street
Suite 304
Seattle, WA 98112-4752

Phone 425.646.3935
infonw@nphusa.org

Phoenix Office

5110 North 40th Street
Suite 248
Phoenix, AZ 85018-2143

Phone 480.967.9449
infosw@nphusa.org

Midwest Area

Minneapolis Office

1400 Van Buren Street NE
Suite #200-210
Minneapolis, MN 55413-4605

Phone 651.482.1703
infoupm@nphusa.org

Chicago Office

20 North Wacker Drive
Suite 4000
Chicago, IL 60606-3193

Phone 312.386.7499
infomw@nphusa.org

East Area

Quincy Office

265 Willard Street
3rd Floor
Quincy, MA 02169-1514

Phone 617.206.4940
infoma-ne@nphusa.org



NPH Bolivia Emergency Contact Information

Carretera a Santa Rosa del Sara
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Bolivia

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