



# Ons Plek Projects

for Girls at Risk of becoming Street Children

Dear Friend

Thank you for your interest in doing a volunteer internship with Ons Plek Projects. Attached is a copy of our pamphlet, which gives a basic overview of the work of Ons Plek.

Ons Plek provides a lively and warm environment with well grounded professional standards and a strong team work ethic. The work is very challenging. Interns who are emotionally balanced, sensible, reasonably flexible, able to maintain strong adult boundaries, and have a sense of humour tend to cope the best under the learning and work circumstances we offer.

### Application requirements:

In order to apply, you need to provide us with

1. your CV
2. your course requirements in terms of the placement, including:  
The proposed starting and completion dates of the placement  
The number of hours you need to work per week  
The type of activities you need to be involved in  
Possible visa requirements  
Supervision requirements
3. If your placement is part of a course you are doing, we need a letter from the educational institution you attend with regard to your application.
4. Full contact information for two referees to whom you are well known, who are not relatives. Examples would include your school principal, employer, priest/minister, lecturer etc. Please indicate that you give us permission to contact the persons to ask for a reference.
5. A recent Police clearance in the country of residence as well as a Police clearance in South Africa (Form 29).

Applications need to be done well in advance, so that proper arrangements can be made. If Ons Plek need to fill in forms for your visa, please make arrangements three months in advance at the very least.

E-mail contact is the cheapest and quickest way of communicating with us.

People who are substance/alcohol dependent may not apply. Interns who arrive at work under the influence of any substance/alcohol (in the judgement of Ons Plek staff) will be dismissed with immediate effect. People with previous convictions for any type of child abuse may not apply.

### OFFICE and ONS PLEK INTAKE SHELTER

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*Registered under Section 18A  
of the Income Tax Act*

### SIVIWE 2nd PHASE SHELTER

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### UKONDLA

Programs in Philippi

\* Community prevention

\* Homework support

\* Counselling

Tel: 021 448-6529

### PROGRAMS

\* 24-hour intake

\* 24-hour residential care

\* Family reunification

\* Family preservation

\* Counselling

\* Formal education

\* Informal education

\* Homework

\* Vocational guidance

\* Lifeskills

\* HIV/AIDS

\* Home and baby care

\* Cultural roots

\* Community outreach

training

\* Staff training

**Who are the clients?**

The children at Ons Plek are between 0 and 18 years of age, and vary greatly in social, emotional and scholastic maturity.

**Language:**

All staff at Ons Plek can speak English, in addition to our first languages. The girls speak mainly Xhosa and Afrikaans. There are usually some girls able to translate between English, Xhosa and Afrikaans, and most volunteer interns do excellent work while speaking only English.

**What does Ons Plek offer?**

Ons Plek offers the opportunity for students to do direct work in education and recreation with the girls in our children's homes in town or with our homework centres in township areas. Volunteer interns can participate in teaching numeracy, English literacy, art and some aspects of life skills. Homework tutoring, computer skills, business and social skills, sports activities and dancing are other options. During school holidays volunteer interns may participate in planning and doing fun things with girls.

Much of the educational work is done on a supportive (remedial) level.

We are not able to allow students to do any counselling, any type of therapy, casework or family work, due to the importance of continuity in these aspects of the work. Student interns are allowed to apply to attend confidential staff team meetings by special arrangement, but may not solicit any personal information from the children about their private lives, their home and family circumstances and life on the streets. Children may choose to share intimate information with an intern, but this should never be sought out. Reasons include the sense of betrayal and loss when the children realise that their new found 'friends' always leave them after a few months.

Strict confidentiality is obviously a basic requirement in this type of placement.

Good boundaries and absolute honesty about the duration and nature of the placement is essential in the intern's relationship with the girls.

All interns are required to do some kind of farewell ceremony upon termination of their time here, so that children can learn that people do not just disappear.

**Duration:**

We prefer longer term (6 months or longer) placements. Placements of less than two months will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Reasons include both the disruption in the children lives when too many people come and go on a short term basis, and the investment we make in initial support for the volunteer intern.

**Accommodation and transport:**

We are unfortunately not able to assist in these matters, since we do not own any vehicle, and we have barely enough accommodation for the girls in our care. Interns are required to be entirely responsible for their own accommodation and transport arrangements.

We usually recommend that students find (at least to start off with) a decent back-packer establishment in Woodstock, Observatory or the centre of town (the Lonely Planet or a similar guide will have information). We will be happy to give an impression of the area you are considering before you commit yourself.

### **Volunteers at Ons Plek/Siviwe**

We have two houses, one in Woodstock and one in Mowbray. Between these areas the student can take a 10 minute ride by minibus taxi (frequent, fairly cheap, fast, packed full, dangerous driving and unroadworthy vehicles), or by bus (safe, a bit more expensive and rather infrequent), or by train (cheap, safe drivers but frequent robberies).

### **Volunteers at our prevention programme in the area of Philippi.**

Philippi is about 40km outside of the central business district.

You must hire a car (driver's license is essential) at your own expense. Public transport is not safe and taking a daily cab/taxi is not advised.

### **Remuneration:**

Ons Plek Projects cannot provide any remuneration to volunteer interns.

### **Cost of activities:**

The student needs to confirm with us how the cost of equipment (e.g. pens, paper, photocopying, art materials, transport for children etc.) needed for their placement will be covered before finalising their plans.

### **Security:**

While street crime is a daily factor in South Africa, being 'security wise' can prevent many mishaps. Visible jewellery, cameras, watches, mobile phones, expensive bags, fancy jackets and brand name clothing, dark glasses and shoes are popular robbery targets. Common mugging tricks include asking a person for 50 cents, and thus finding out where they keep their purse, or for the time, thus finding out where they keep their watch.

Applicants are responsible for all their own insurance (health, professional, etc.)

### **Further questions:**

Cape Town is one of the most beautiful places on earth, and the girls we work with some of the bravest people on earth. You need to realistically consider the risks and difficulties, while not forgetting the benefits of a placement here.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Social Worker / Internship Co-ordinator  
Ons Plek Projects

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