

PWW Volunteer Gift Giving Policy

Trip volunteers frequently ask about bringing gifts to share with the families they are going to meet in Honduras. We sincerely appreciate the kindheartedness that comes with this generous offer. Unfortunately, bringing gifts with you can have unintended negative consequences.

Pure Water for the World's mission is to help Hondurans build local capacities. While we understand the good intentions that come with bringing gifts, they send a message that is in direct conflict with our mission. The inflow of material goods into the communities can actually harm the local economy as well as create unintended expectations and messages about the purpose of our international volunteers. The gifts can also create an unhealthy dependency. What's more, tensions and conflicts can arise when some families receive gifts and others do not. Finally, the families have minimal options for disposing of waste. When they receive gifts in packaging (even candies), the trash left behind will be there for many years to come.

To facilitate interaction with the local children and families, following is a list of things we feel are appropriate to bring and share:

- ◆ Digital cameras. The children find digital cameras fascinating. If you allow them to see the photos taken, it engages and amazes them.
- ◆ Polaroid cameras. Many of these families have no photos of themselves. By bringing your Polaroid camera, you can take a photo and leave it for the family to enjoy long after you are gone.
- ◆ Come equipped with your favorite hand games (patty cake) or fun songs to share.
- ◆ Bubbles are always a favorite.



We encourage you to think of other ways to connect with the children and families. They will certainly want to interact with you. Practice your Spanish by engaging in basic conversation. Honestly, simply holding their hands, smiling with them, and sharing photos is all that these children and families need to laugh and smile. Your presence and support will leave lasting memories.

If you have something that you really want to bring, and feel it won't conflict, please contact the PWW office to discuss before you purchase or accept donations from your communities. You can reach us at 802-747-0778 or info@purewaterfortheworld.org.