

Perekodu SA

ORGANISATION DESCRIPTION

Perekodu SA is an institution with different departments and services for children in Viljandi County. It has different departments: department for disabled kids in Pärsti county and orphanage departments in Väikemõisa. and Viljandi. Pärsti department has hosted international volunteers since 2005 and Väikemõisa since 2009. Altogether we have a long time experience in accepting long-term volunteers and see it beneficiary for the children as well as the staff and the volunteers themselves.

Regular activities in Perekodu SA are aimed to provide everyday care and counselling, helping to raise children's and youth awareness of themselves. It is run in cooperation with the specialists such as therapists, psychiatrists, social workers and youth-police.

The target group in Pärsti department for disabled children and youth is in age from 3 to 20.

There are around 40 children with severe mental/physical disability. This institution combines a nursery, school, rehabilitation centre and an alternative home for those who need it.

Väikemõisa department is a home for orphans and children without parental care. There are 16 children aged 6-14 at the moment. The children are divided to live in 2 "families" to give them the possibility to experience similar lifestyle as their contemporaries in biological families. Each family lives in a separate new-built house completed in spring 2012 and have their own educators. Most of the children go to school during the daytime.

There are 2 "families" for children without parental care also in Viljandi, These groups moved in in the new houses in march 2012. There are all 8 children in one "family" living with the staff.

There are 75 staff members all together in the institution.

Project context

Perekodu SA is an institution with different services for children in Viljandi County. It has two departments: department for disabled kids and orphanage in Väikemõisa.

Regular activities in Perekodu SA are aimed to provide everyday care and counselling, helping to raise children's and youth awareness of themselves. It is run in cooperation with the specialists such as therapists, psychiatrists, social workers and youth-police.

Pärsti department is the institution for disabled people in age 3 – 20. There are around 60 children with heavy or deep mental/physical disability. This institution combines a nursery, school, rehabilitation centre and an alternative home for those who need it. There are also 2 group-homes for children without parental care, each for 8 children.

Väikemõisa and Viljandi departments are homes for orphans and children without parental care. There are 32 children aged 5-12 at the moment. The children are divided to live in 4 "families" to give them the possibility to experience similar lifestyle as their contemporaries. Each family lives in a separate new-built house completed in spring 2012 and have their own educators. Most of the children go to school during the daytime.

EVS volunteer could bring the international/ European awareness, openness, new approaches, intercultural dimension to the life of children and the employees in Perekodu SA. The institution already has been cooperated with Dalarna County in Sweden for a long time and is open to contacts from other cultures.

All departments are located within 3 km from the Viljandi city centre and are easily reached by public transport.

Viljandi is the sixth largest town in Estonia with population of 19 107 (Population registry data by 1st of January 2012). Area: 14,6 km² Location: South-Estonia, the uplands of Sakala. It is 161 km from Viljandi to Tallinn and 81 km to Tartu. There are many cafes, restaurants, shopping centres, a library, a theatre, the university and many entertainments in Viljandi. The rural atmosphere of the town is balanced by the Cultural Academy of Viljandi, which organises every July the all-Estonia-famous folk music festival Viljandi Folk. The festival brings together contemporary folk music from all over the world and ca 20 000 festival visitors – a mix that creates not-to-be-missed event!

There is very good bus and train connection with the capital and other cities. Accommodation for volunteers will be organised by our coordinating organization NGO Noortevahetus Arengu Ühing ESTYES: the volunteer will live in apartment with convenient transport connectivity to the workplace, each volunteer either in a separate or shared room. Apartment is fully furnished with beds, bedclothes, bath/shower & equipped kitchen. As an alternative, the volunteer can live in a student hostel or in a respectable local family with the same conditions. Food will be prepared by the volunteer at home, money will be provided by our coordinating organisation. In addition, volunteers will be paid a monthly allowance according to EVS financing rules.

Proposed Activities

The main tasks of the volunteer in Pärsti department are looking after children, helping social workers in their daily needs and organising different activities for the kids. Volunteer's tasks depend very much on his/her interests and skills. Most of the kids need a mentor in the class or in free time. (S)he can be hands or legs for the children in a wheelchair, helping to dress, with feeding or some other basic needs what it is needed. With some children it is possible to go further than just basic help. It is possible to organise different events, games, do handicraft, sport, go to the city, cinema or do some music.

In Väikemõisa and Viljandi departments the volunteer is expected to support children in their everyday life, play with the kids and organise different activities/events. Depending on the volunteers' skills, he/she can do some sport, music, handicraft with the children. Volunteer can also participate in study visits but also help to organise different outings and excursions. Volunteer is expected to be a friend and role model for these children and help them to understand delight of the life. It is important to teach these children to evaluate surrounding and to find their way in it.

Depending on the volunteers and children's interests/abilities, following tasks can be adapted in each institution.

- arranging children's leisure time (sports, games, etc);
- planning and running creative workshops (dance, music, theatre, handicraft, etc);
- looking after children and helping teachers in managing their daily needs;
- presenting his/her own country and culture as a part of the intercultural learning;
- assisting to arrange outings and excursions and taking part in those;
- playing with children;

Hosting international volunteer will give new experience and more awareness of different cultures not only to the children but to all workers in SA Perekodu. Social workers in the Centre can share their skills and knowledge's of working with children with disadvantaged background with the volunteer, to develop his/her skills which could be useful in his/her future and/or professional career. Teachers are also hoping to get new and fresh leisure time activity ideas from the volunteer to fulfil children's days with happiness and versatile development. It is important to give a chance to the children to spend their childhood actively full of diverse activities. It broadens youth's outlook and gives more ideas of what they would like to do in the future.

In the very beginning of the project volunteers will have orientation and introduction to the workplace and in all institution to find the best activities for him/herself. Volunteer has continues contact with the mentor to prevent and solve possible crisis in cultural or language level.

Profile of Volunteer and Recruitment Process

The first priority is that the volunteer is motivated and interested in meeting and working with the target groups. Previous experience of any kind of social work with young people is preferred but not necessary. The volunteer should be active, energetic, creative, taking initiative, adaptable, open-minded, sociable, positive, responsible and reliable and willing to work with children from difficult background and/or with children with mental/physical disabilities.

Risk Prevention, Protection and Safety

The host organisation will ensure:

- 1) that the volunteer work is safe and been assessed for risk;
- 2) that every effort is made that project meets high health and safety standards;
- 3) that the volunteer is trained and familiar with the volunteering work and have access to adequate safety equipment if needed;
- 4) that the volunteer will get all the practical and psychological support from the staff.

The volunteers will have an experienced supervisor who will help the volunteer to understand the new environment and feel more comfortable. Volunteer will have the opportunity to learn Estonian language.