



Motivation and EVS experience

Please describe the motivation of your organisation to participate in European Voluntary Service as Host Organisation, Sending organisation and/or Coordinating Organisation as well as your current or previous involvement in EVS (including the approximate starting date and the frequency of your involvement).

Piccoli Passi Onlus believes that the EVS volunteer can be an extremely useful resource for their educational project with minors. What drives Piccoli Passi Onlus to undertake this EVS experience for the very first time is the European and multicultural dimension that implies the hosting of an EVS volunteer. The latter, in fact, makes a significant contribution to the education of children who live in their structure and can get in touch with persons with different habits and customs, and learn to live according to the principles of tolerance and cooperation. This is an opportunity that introduces new values to the educational process and the morals of the community enriching and supplying them with a solid relationship in a multicultural environment for children. The European dimension of EVS and its non-formal learning principles combine with the goals and values of sharing, participation, tolerance and cooperation in which the shelter home believes in. Moreover, for many years, Piccoli Passi Onlus has been committed to the promotion of local volunteering, thanks to the cooperation between the shelter home and the neighbourhood parishes. The youngsters and the adults who spend their time there daily spend a lot of their spare time in volunteering at the shelter home, thus reaffirming the centrality and importance of volunteering for the community but also the influence that the presence of Piccoli Passi Onlus has all over the territory. The collaboration between Piccoli Passi Onlus and the parishes of the territory, in particular with San Leonardo da Porto Maurizio, highlights the ideals that underpin the social work of Piccoli Passi Onlus: although secular, they show strong and obvious references to a culture of Christian inspiration, made of sharing, assistance and charity, that determine a clear direction in the life of the shelter. Indeed, it is on these principles that the educational and pedagogical mission of Piccoli Passi Onlus was based on, in accordance with the universal UN Declaration of Rights of the Childhood that the intervention of local institutions (Juvenile Court and Social Services of the City of Rome) tries to accomplish.

Piccoli Passi Onlus is certain that the exchange and the development of transversal competences of the EVS volunteer in such a situation might be fulfilling and useful, both for the individual and for the entire local community.

He can thus experience an example of a life based on the sharing of experiences and emotions, helping and being helped, especially during an experience away from home. Moreover, as a volunteer, he can actively participate in the work of the shelter home helping to improve the service and to create a healthy environment for the children accommodated in Piccoli Passi Onlus.

The association, aware of the benefit the local community and their services can draw from the presence of an EVS volunteer and of fruitful learning opportunities for the latter, is determined and eager to start the EVS project as soon as possible.

Piccoli Passi Onlus had no previous experience with EVS.

If the present expression of interest is an update or a renewal of a former accreditation, please indicate the EI reference number previously assigned:

Part II. Details of the organisation

Associazione di promozione sociale Joint Milano, Via Giovanola 25/C, 20142 Italia,
C.f. 97 36 54 50 150, P.I. 06 091 280 963

youthinaction@associazionejoint.org Tel. +39 02 45 47 23 64 Fax. 02/4507095

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Name	Piccoli Passi Onlus		
Street address	Via Ruggero Panerai, 5		
Postcode	125	City	Roma
Region	Lazio	Country	Italia
Email	piccolipassi@associazionejoint.org	Website	www.piccolipassi-onlus.it

Description of the organisation

Please present briefly your aims and regular activities. Add information about the staff of your organisation as well as the target group you generally work with.

Piccoli Passi Onlus is a non-profit organization, a shelter home for children in need, from 3 to 18 years old, including disabled, reported by the Juvenile Court and the public and private services operating in the area, coming from poor families who are not able to provide them a serene environment for growth. These are minors who have experienced a personal shock or a shock in the family or are victims of violence, and for this reason they can find temporary refuge in Piccoli Passi Onlus. The shelter's main aim is the education and the acceptance of children waiting for adoption or foster care, reintegration of young people into the original family and, in case none of the three hypotheses are feasible, to provide support up to adult age and achieve the autonomy of these youngsters.

Piccoli Passi Onlus provides its guests with moral support, taking into account studies, labour market inclusion, culture and leisure as means of discovery of nature and the environment. For this reason a team of educators whose work is supported and supervised by professionals with specific skills (e.g. psychologists) spends time in the shelter. The educators, each one with their own skills and experience, live in the house together with the children sharing space, time and activity.

The period of stay is an educational experience for both the guests, the educators and EVS volunteers, and is an opportunity for mutual enrichment

Children are involved, depending on the age, in the organization of daily life in order to grow up with a sense of responsibility and belonging. The daily routine is organized in accordance with school commitments, homework is done in the afternoon (for school-age children) and recreational and sports activities during the spare time.

The purpose of the service is to meet the needs of the child and those of his family, working on a specific project for the recovery of personal and socio-familial resources so that the child could return within the shortest possible time to his family or to an alternative one. For this reason, the home's daily organization is based on a family model, with its own rules, its routine, its dynamics. The child is at the centre of the educational process that helps him create relationships in which he will receive assistance: authentic human contact, listening skills, daily and continuous attention and care that allow to understand the problems and the needs of everyone, and especially to promote the individual potential and autonomy of each person and foster as much as possible an atmosphere of affection and trust,

These children need to be helped to have trust in others, particularly in adult figures, and receive affection. In this sense the shelter at the same time provides a "kind of parenting."

Therefore, the educational team takes great consideration to make it available for the child to experience the separation with his environment as less intensive as possible, and therefore encourages and creates opportunities for integration of the child into the territory by:

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the attendance of public schools, collaborating with their teachers;
personalized choice of sport activities;
participation in activities outside the residential community: friends' parties, village festivals, trips, camps;
the opportunity to host their friends and / or classmates and / or peer groups of the territory during play time, during celebrations, fostering collaboration for mutual enrichment;
building a relationship of trust, acceptance and esteem with the family of the child to cooperate, where possible, in the education of the child and to facilitate their reintegration into the family.
The educators, children and the volunteers actively participate in this education project, a real moral mission.

Main themes for the Activities --> Children and Education through sport and outdoor activities

Project environment:

Outline the project environment for the suggested voluntary Service, including the local community where the project will take place (e.g. geographical, social and economical environment). If the host placement is located in a live-in community, please include the rules and conditions that apply also for the volunteer.

The host community is located in the town of Casal Bernocchi at the XIII Municipality of Rome. The nearest station to the centre of the capital is "Piramide", which can be easily reached in 20 minutes thanks to the Ostiense railway, located just a few minutes walking distance to the community.

The home is situated right next to the "Tenuta del Presidente", a large green area, on the edge of Parco del Litorale, and is served by buses that allow you to get quickly to the nearest stations. Thanks to its position, on the outskirts of Rome, Piccoli Passi Onlus offers a large green space for children in a neighborhood that is not crowded, as opposed to the city center and its pace, to the landscape and the tranquility of the countryside.

The house, in fact, is located in an old restored farmhouse, surrounded by lawns and meadows, vegetable gardens and animals, in the middle of an area of about 60 acres, part of which will be used for agriculture with the creation of a teaching farm. That's to say a farm open to the public for organization of environmental educational activities which will help children discover the world around us through the use of all the senses.

The structure is composed of 3 different apartments:

- a place to stay for younger children;
- another for adolescents;
- one for the family that runs the community;

In the last apartment, Piccoli Passi Onlus provides EVS volunteers with an apartment equipped with a double bedroom, a bathroom, a recently restored large external kitchen with a toilet, fully equipped with all the comforts.

If they wish, EVS volunteers have the opportunity to use the kitchen of the community by previously making an accordance with the coordinators, on the condition that they keep it clean and tidy.

Piccoli Passi Onlus also has a football/volleyball court in its garden where youngsters can play with their friends and classmates and also a playground for the younger children. The weekend is dedicated to the visits and the home is attended by the friends of the children and their parents who come to visit them, to share their free time with them. In the building there are also an oven for baking bread / pizza, a barbecue, a vegetable garden and an



orchard. Finally, in the barn there are two horses and a pony that are ridden by all children. The educational mission of Piccoli Passi Onlus is not only marked by emotional and moral education but is also directed to the respect of nature and environmental education in a playful manner.

The shelter home therefore offers a number of educational and training activities both to children and EVS volunteers who can enjoy the greenery and the countryside though still remaining on the outskirts of Rome.

The Italian volunteers who bring their own contribution to the community represent a great opportunity to integrate with the local social fabric for the EVS volunteer who can relate well with people of different ages and backgrounds and know the situation of the place.

The EVS volunteer, relating to the youngsters who serve Piccoli Passi Onlus daily, builds a sort of a connection between them, their culture and the local territory and lays the foundation for a profound knowledge of Rome. Thanks to the opportunities of socializing and interaction, the EVS volunteer can immerse in the local culture and discover the everyday Italian life .

Finally, hosting an EVS volunteer is a great possibility of mutual exchange between children, educators and the volunteer himself, who, participating and interacting together in different ways in the same project share their experiences, transforming them into an opportunity for common growth.



Proposed activities for EVS volunteers:

Please explain:

- *what you can offer to volunteers in terms of Service and learning opportunities,*
- *what will be the role of EVS volunteers in the Host Organisation, the activities in which the volunteers could be involved and the activities the volunteers could create in your organisation. Please give examples of typical activities/tasks for the volunteers.*

For Piccoli Passi Onlus the EVS volunteer is a valuable resource. Its presence in contact with minors in the shelter home promotes exchange and creates an opportunity for growth and comparison that is fundamental to the process of development and training of our youngsters. The cultural diversity and individuality he provides is highlighted for educational purposes and connects children with a foreign reality which they learn to relate to.

In addition to the exchange relationship with the children, the EVS volunteer has the opportunity to get in touch with the local community due to the presence of about thirty young volunteers who take part in and help with the daily work of Piccoli Passi Onlus. Thanks to them, the EVS volunteer learns about the Italian reality, discovers the Roman territory, thus interacting with other young people of his age and making friends.

The EVS volunteer always assists young educators as a role of support and is never left alone. This will also contribute decisively to prevent the volunteer's service from replacing paid work. In the house there are a volunteer, one or two educators during the day and night, whereas in the afternoon there are at least three; this means that in case of emergency, the EVS volunteer is never left alone while coping with any dangerous situation.

This support is a great learning experience for volunteers who are eager to learn about educational and training processes. Assisting every day the team of educators and staying in contact with problematic minors are very important tasks that allow the volunteer to not only engage himself in the education and care of the children but also to learn about this job and therefore acquire professional and transversal skills that can be very useful for him on the job market.

Doing the European Voluntary Service at Piccoli Passi Onlus is an enriching experience for the volunteer, the children and the educators and is an important educational opportunity for all of the minors in the house and the local community.

The EVS volunteer, inside the shelter home, can perform all the tasks that do not represent danger to him nor involve a high level of responsibility. For this reason he is never left alone and is always assisted by an educator in his daily activities; ranging from watching a movie, homework assistance, taking a walk, workshops, free time activities, accompanying them to horseback riding, do the tidying up, arranging the beds, or just keeping them company while playing or in their spare time. It is up to the volunteer also to do household tasks, such as cleaning and washing of linen. The volunteer can also accompany a minor if the latter were to attend or participate in activities outside the shelter of Piccoli Passi Onlus, such as swimming, volleyball, gym, or taking him to his mate's house, to the doctor, to a walk downtown, or helping in organizing birthday parties. Even during these little trips the volunteer is never left alone with children.

The reference contact for the volunteer is always the educator who constantly monitors the work of the young and teaches him how to speak and act with minors; the volunteer must report any event or difficulty in his service to the educator in charge.



As for Piccoli Passi Onlus the EVS volunteer is a key resource, he fully participates in weekly team meetings with educators, in those of co-ordination with all the volunteers which take place every three weeks, and in those of the supervision held by a psychologist, every 15 days. In these meetings, the volunteer can discuss his own direct experience with minors, share the successes and the difficulties encountered, listen to the experiences of others and get support.

Living in the shelter implies respecting rules. The system of rules and habits that children and adults are asked to respect in the house aims to organize daily life and to ensure order. The rule is considered as "law" and should slowly become a habit, or "automatic respect of the rules". This "regulatory system" includes rules of good behaviour and manners and respect for people and for things that go well beyond the boundaries of the house, there are obviously more and less important rules. The EVS volunteer is supposed to respect and abide by the rules, though inside his apartment he can behave autonomously and independently. However, the EVS volunteer, as part of the educational team, is an example of conduct for children and for this reason has to adapt its habits and behaviour standards of living to those of the house. For this reason, he must not only comply with the rules, but also enforce them, fulfilling his educational role as part of his educational responsibility. It is very important to stress and emphasize the importance of the function of the EVS volunteer: the confidence and emotional relationship with children should activate a mechanism of imitation that leads them to the fulfillment of the example he represents and embodies.

Rules also imply times and agenda to be respected:

- 14 o'clock - lunch (or on the return of children to school, if later);
- 17 o'clock – snack break;
- 20 o'clock - dinner;

The language training course offered to EVS volunteers, organized by the Municipality of Rome, is held at the local parish; during this training the EVS volunteers have the opportunity to do additional hours of conversation with a volunteer teacher of the parish.

The rosters of the volunteer will take place from 15:00 to 21:00, Monday to Friday.

Typical week for volunteers:

Monday - after school, walk with children, accompany a child to the doctor;

Tuesday - language course – football match and other sports;

Wednesday-school clubs, horse riding - free time with children;

Thursday-language course, accompaniment, watching a movie;

Friday-housework, party organization, coordination meeting;

**Volunteer profiles and recruitment process:**

Please describe the profiles of volunteers you would like to receive in your organisation. Include information on how you ensure an open and transparent recruitment process as well as the overall accessibility of EVS to all young people. Consider further information about the type of Sending Organisation you want to cooperate with. This information can help the match-making between volunteer candidates, Sending Organisations and your organisation.

The volunteer we are looking for has to be a mature person with a strong character and personality that can easily adapt to the type of minors that Piccoli Passi Onlus shelter hosts. They are indeed sensitive youngsters, problematic and often rude for which the candidate comply with the following features: patience, tolerance, firmness and communication skills in order to establish a relationship of trust and collaboration. For this reason, the volunteer should have a strong ability to adapt and a great motivation, which are the essential requirement in the selection process for being a part of this EVS project. The volunteer should be aware that his role and his character are very important to the dynamics within the house of Piccoli Passi Onlus and for this reason, in the selection process, the priority will be given to those self-confident candidates, who have confidence in their own ability, know themselves and are determined to work well. In addition, given the difficult environment, candidates with previous experience with children and youngsters will be taken in consideration as preferential.

Finally, as the educational team and support staff carry on an educational approach whose main objective is first of all the formation of a positive relationship, the EVS volunteer should have the following features: kindness, consideration, friendliness, empathy, respect and listening skills.

Since it is a delicate role in that takes place in a problematic environment Piccoli Passi Onlus and Associazione di Promozione Sociale Joint, in order to ensure a valuable experience both to the volunteer and the community that hosts him, agreed together that they prefer working with trustful partner organizations for which we know we can rely on, based on former work.