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1. ABOUT ERC

Edmund Rice Camps (ERC) responds to the needs of children through recreational and life skills camps for 7-16 year olds that offer:

- Experiences of mutual friendship, fun and sharing;
- Positive role models in the volunteer leaders;
- Opportunities to build self-esteem and confidence and to relate to and socialise better with others.

ERC responds to the needs of young adult volunteer mentors, 17 -30 years, by offering them:

- Opportunities for growth and development through camp leadership training and accredited training programmes.

2. A BRIEF HISTORY

ERC originated at a Christian Brother's school in Melbourne, Australia in 1979. The initiative is based on the life and work of Edmund Rice, a man who was deeply committed to justice, education and serving those in need. He was also the founder of a Religious Congregation named the Congregation of Christian Brothers.

ERC, Western Cape, South Africa started in 1996 and was the first Edmund Rice Camps to be run in Africa and South Africa. The camps have grown and adapted over time to cater for the needs of marginalised communities.

Through working, praying and dreaming together we make the vision of Edmund Rice a reality in our own lives and the lives of the children, young adults, agencies, institutions and projects that are part of Edmund Rice Camps.

3. OUR SERVICES

- Recreational and life skills camps for children and youth
- Family camps for children and their parents/guardians
- Reflection and retreat days for volunteer leaders
- Camp leadership training for volunteer leaders
- Volunteer development through skills training
- Follow-up sessions to agencies and communities

4. OUR MISSION

Our mission is to journey with youth from poor and marginalised backgrounds, building self-esteem, and encouraging them to actively participate in main stream society and educational institutions, believing that they can become fulfilled, independent, integrated and responsible members of society.

5. OUR VISION

Through the ERC system we aim to produce empowered individuals that have experienced meaningful relationships on camp and developed the life coping skills necessary to become fulfilled, independent, integrated and responsible members of society that act as agents of change in their communities.

6. OUR VALUES

Relationships
Acceptance
Empowerment
Justice
Commitment
Life

7. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

ERC aims to provide weekend and holiday recreational camps, activities and continual support for children, families and young people who have experienced disadvantage. Its main aims and objectives are:

- To provide fun and recreational weekend and holiday camps for vulnerable children that build their self-esteem and confidence
- To provide marginalised and vulnerable youth with opportunities to develop their talents and abilities through life-skills and interaction with positive young adult role models
- To provide young adults with opportunities to develop their leadership skills and team work skills

8. A UNIQUE MODEL

A young adult volunteer, 17 – 30 years, is paired with a child, 7 – 12 years, on a weekend or holiday camp over a period of 3 – 5 days. The young adult volunteer's most important task is to be present in the moment with the child, also called *buddy* and to enable the buddy to learn and have fun by means of recreational and educational activities. A camp hosts 20 to 28 children and 20 to 35 volunteers, inspired and driven by a unique volunteer model. ERC hosts at least 10 camps per annum.

9. A SOCIAL JUSTICE RESPONSE

Many children and youth in the Western Cape suffer great disadvantage resulting from the effects of broken family lives, violence, poverty and HIV/AIDS.

We reach out to:

- Orphans with HIV/AIDS
- Children affected by violence, alcoholism, abuse, neglect and abandonment
- Children who are losing the joys of childhood to the effects of extreme poverty in informal settlements and in farm worker communities
- Refugee children suffering the effects of political violence experienced in their war-torn African countries. Many of these children have experienced a traumatic and unstable childhood and have lost parents and family members

10. SKILLS TRAINING AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

ERC provides opportunities for the volunteer leaders to be challenged in their leadership as well as in their personal, spiritual and professional development. These opportunities are offered not just on the camps but also through leadership training sessions for captains,

- First-aid training
- Child Protection training
- Lifeskills training
- 7 Habits for Highly Effective Youth training through our partnership with Rural Development Program (RDSP)
- Reflection and retreat sessions
- Leadership training
- Sporting events
- Accredited Training through our Umbrella Body, the Edmund Rice Network (ERN)
Accredited Courses presented to committed and responsible volunteers are:
 - Mentorship and Coaching
 - Facilitation
 - Business Writing
 - Office Management
 - Project Management

12. GEOGRAPHICAL DETAILS & CONTACT DETAILS

The ERC Office is currently based at 37 A Somerset Road, Green Point, 8001.

E-mail: administrator@edmundricecamps.org.za

www.edmundricecamps.org.za

Office: (021) 418 0757

Mobile: 073 404 6282

13. BANK DETAILS

Bank: Standard

Name of Account: Edmund Rice Camps

Acc Number: 270279938

Branch Stellenbosch

Branch code 050610

"Have courage, the good seed will grow up in the children's hearts later on." Edmund Rice