

Dear prospective youth service volunteer for Thailand.

My name is Leonard Warren. I'm from a minutely populated and scarcely known country in Southern Africa called Botswana.

Of my 19 years of existence on this planet, the most enjoyable, socially eye opening and spiritually enriching period was the 5 and a half months I spend doing service in Thailand.

Thai people are extremely friendly and helpful to those in need. The country is politically and economically stable, and quite safe.

Thailand has never been colonised and is very much 'in its own world' ie. not influenced by other countries or norms. So if you wish to do service in Thailand, you should be ready and willing to drastically adapt to speaking a different language, surviving on a different diet, understanding a different culture and living a different lifestyle.

As for those who wish to serve in Santitham School in Yasothon, as I did; the following advice might be useful: The school day ends at 4pm and thus the late afternoon and early evening are left vacant. It is therefore advisable to involve yourself in other activities in the community such as English lessons with the youth and workshop dances. It is important to be equally involved in the school and the community as the school is a significant part of the general community and the Baha'i community. Any artistic or musical talent can be fully employed in this art-appreciating country. English lessons, radio programmes, children's classes and English camps are just some of the extra activities which you'll have time for after school and on weekends. Being a native English speaker is something that is very appreciated and is a major instrument in the social and economic development of Thailand.

I hope this information has been useful and that you enjoy serving in Thailand as much as I did.

With warm Baha'i love. Leonard