



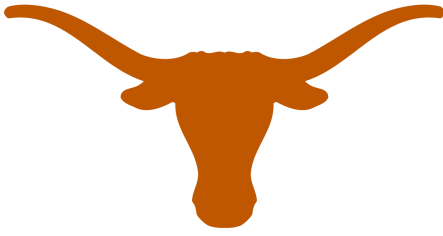
Trip Information Packet

Oaxaca, Mexico

University of Texas Athletics

July 6-14, 2025





Welcome to Courts for Kids. Most likely, this is your first trip with our organization and we are confident that this trip will impact you in ways you cannot even imagine. We work closely with our in-country partner to make sure your basic needs are met, so we can all focus on the task at hand, creating a multi-purpose sports court with the initiative, help and support of the community.

A sports court is a great project because it requires the help of many community members, provides plenty of work for everyone, and becomes an asset that provides not only safe places for children to play, but also various other benefits. The hard work of our team will be a great bridge between us and the community and we will develop a mutual respect that will help provide inroads into a rich cross-cultural experience and first-hand insight into a developing world community.

We are looking for great cultural ambassadors, so please only sign up for this trip if you are willing to step outside of your comfort zone. You will need to work hard, you will be eating different foods, sleeping and bathing in less comfortable environments. But a willingness to embrace life in the community will open you up to a truly one-of-a-kind experience.

Most importantly, we ask that you enter into this with a great sense of humility. We want you to be eager to learn and grow in this process as we are entering into a different culture with different values and norms. We want you be quick to listen and slow to speak.

We will not be giving you a detailed itinerary as things are very prone to change with this sort of construction project. But your time will be spent working on the court, taking part in various cultural activities and, most importantly, connecting with the locals.

Please look through this informational packet and feel free to contact us with any questions you may have.

If you choose to go, I can almost guarantee you will look back on this trip as a life-changing experience. You will grow so much in a week it will make you wish you could stay longer. In fact, you will probably say this was the best week of your year.

Hope you can come!

Derek Nesland
President
Courts for Kids

Community Information

You will be traveling to Oaxaca, selected by Travel and Leisure Magazine as the top travel destination in the world for two years in a row. Once there you will make your way to Icahuico, a small mountainous town located in the southwestern part of the state at an altitude of over 9,000 feet above sea level. The climate will be cold, which will make the working conditions perfect and will be a nice break from the Texas July heat. Icahuico is an indigenous, Mixtec, community with almost all of the residents able to speak the native language, also called Mixtec, due to the grandparents who still speak it regularly as part of their culture. Spanish will also be commonly spoken, but the community is especially proud of their indigenous heritage. The community has 275 inhabitants with approximately 88 houses. There is a waterfall located approximately 30 minutes away, which is 100 meters long. At the foot of the waterfall, there is a cave with cave paintings made by their ancestors.



The area is characterized by hills and mountains with various trees such as pines, oaks, cedars, magueys, pear trees, peach trees, capulinales, apple trees and flowers of different species, and in the month of July in the hills there are mushroom sprouts.



Oaxaca is world famous for its cuisine. Some of the local specialties are: pozole seco with mole de rancho, oven barbecue, mushroom mole, hand-made tortillas, quelite amargo with nopales (cactus), chilacayote with blue dough, salsa de pepitas, handmade totopos, and fresh salsas.

Playing sports is very popular in Oaxaca and indigenous communities, in particular, are passionate about basketball. The community members are very excited to have their own court thanks to their efforts and your help.

Your group will be met at the airport by the Courts for Kids Mexico Country Director who has been working closely with the community to plan all aspects of your visit. You will be staying at a community building sleeping on mattresses on the floor. The court will also be built nearby and will be used by the entire community. You will work side-by-side with the locals and although it will be challenging there are jobs for everyone of every physical capacity. During the whole trip you will be fully immersed in the local culture eating authentic food, learning local traditions, customs, and way of life. It is important to note that this court will be built with the community not for the community. The community members are very motivated to make their court a reality and from the beginning, they have been the driving factor planning this project to see it come to fruition.

*More specific lodging, packing, and trip logistics will be provided as the departure date gets closer.

**Please note, the destination community is subject to change at the discretion of Courts for Kids in order to best meet the needs and safety of the volunteer group as well as the needs of the host community.



Trip Safety

Courts for Kids makes your safety our number one priority. Being in a safe, tight knit community with strong awareness and ownership of the project will provide local people who will be personally invested in the safety of the team. Courts for Kids also has safety protocols in place that include, but are not limited to:

- A **Courts for Kids representative will lead the group** while in the destination country.
- We always contract **private transportation** to pick up and return the group to the in-country airport.
- We have a **strict behavior and conduct policy** for all trip participants which promotes the safety and security of the group. All participants are required to attend a **mandatory training**.
- We have **secure transportation** available to medical facilities in the case of any injuries.
- We will have a **first aid kit** with the group at all times.
- We only drink **clean, potable water**.
- We work with community cooks to adhere to our **Safe Cooking Practices**.
- We monitor the **US State Department** travel warnings and make travel adjustments as deemed necessary.
- We do not allow cell phones**; we require all volunteers (except staff/chaperones) to be disconnected for the entirety of the time spent in the community.
- Insurance coverage** for all trip participants that includes evacuation with a medical escort in a worst case situation. Policy details can be provided upon request.
- Courts for Kids may conduct a **behavioral background check** through a student's school and reserves the right to refuse a participant based on the information we receive.

Safety is a team effort and every trip participant is responsible for their behavior, must use common sense while traveling, and comply with Courts for Kids representatives and trip leaders at all times.

Flight Itinerary

American Flight Itinerary*

(Award points cannot be used)

Date	Fl. #	Airport	Dep.	Airport	Arrival
July 6	784	Austin	12:15pm	Dallas	1:26pm
July 6	483	Dallas	4:35pm	Oaxaca	6:25pm
July 14	482	Oaxaca	6:59am	Dallas	10:59am
July 14	795	Dallas	2:15pm	Austin	3:20pm

You are eligible for frequent flier miles on American. To enroll go to www.aa.com

*Flights and carrier are subject to change

Trip Checklist

1. **Registration:** The application process is facilitated by UT. Once approved, you will register online at www.courtsforkids.org (detailed instructions to be provided later).
2. **Passport:** Make sure you have a passport that will not expire before **January 6, 2026**. If you need a passport, go to the nearest post office for assistance. **In order to avoid the headache and stress, make sure you get your passport on time, do it ASAP.**
3. **Vaccinations:** The recommended vaccinations for travel to Mexico according to the Center for Disease Control are the following (**keep in mind these are recommended, not required. Check with your local doctor and make the decision best for you**):
 - a. Routine (DPT, MMR, Polio, Chickenpox, Flu, Shingles)
 - b. COVID-19
 - c. Hepatitis A and B
 - d. Typhoid
 - e. Rabies
4. Attend **mandatory** Courts for Kids pre-trip training, dates to be announced. At this meeting, you will go through the Courts for Kids training, receive a packing list and detail packet with more specific information.

Questions?

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