Trip Information Packet

Nepal

St Mary's International School

August 1-10, 2027

(Dates may change slightly)

Nepal

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.

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 the Asian country of Nepal, lying along the southern slope of the Himalayan Mountains It is a land-locked country located between India and the Tibetan region of China. After flying into Kathmandu, a sprawling metro area of over 1.6 million, you will be making your way to a the small Himalayan village of Takukot, which is one of the oldest fortified settlements in the Gorkha region. The village is closely associated with the history of the surrounding hill kingdoms and the cultural heritage of Gorkha.

Takukot sits at about 1,500-2,000 meters above sea level and is a peaceful, rural community. The terrain is mountainous with terraced fields, forests and freshwater streams. Its temperate climate makes it well suited for agriculture and outdoor activities. The community has a population of around 3,900 people with 902 small houses.

The majority of families practice subsistence agriculture and livestock farming with a diet based on locally produced grains, vegetables, lentils and dairy products. Many young people also migrate abroad to Malaysia, Middle Eastern countries, Australia and Europe and send remittances home as this is a significant part of household income to support education, health care and local businesses for their families.

There are two secondary schools, 9 primary schools, several temples and many smalls shops, yet there is no existing multi-use sports court in the area. Children play soccer and volleyball in open fields but are very interested in learning new sports and having a concrete court that will feature basketball, volleyball, school programs, youth activities and community events.

Your group will be met at the airport by a Courts for Kids staff who has been working closely with the community to plan all aspects of your visit. You will be staying in 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.

Funding Responsibilities

Everyone in your group will contribute to the total project costs.
Each participant will be required to fundraise/donate this amount:

$2,800 USD

All funds raised are applied to court construction costs and the following group expenses:

- Round trip airfare (award points cannot be used)
- In-country costs (food, water, lodging, and transportation)
- Entrance/exit fees
- Emergency medical insurance
- Special activities
- Court construction costs (in addition to your giving, the host community also contributes making this court a reality).

Does <u>not</u> include: passport, immunizations, travel to and from the home country airport, food or incidental costs on layovers and delays, or spending money for souvenirs.

***All donations are non-refundable** (unless the entire project is canceled by Courts for Kids, funds will be refunded less non-recoverable costs)**.** If you raise/donate more than the above amount, you can choose to apply the excess to passport or immunization costs (must submit receipts), the court construction costs, sports equipment, toward the balance of another trip participant or towards Courts for Kids in general. You will not be eligible for any other refunds or reimbursements due to IRS regulations.*

Scholarship Opportunities

Courts for Kids is committed to providing opportunities for every student, regardless of income. If you are facing financial hardship and/or qualify for free/reduced lunch in the school district in which you live (regardless of what school you go to), we encourage you to apply to our program.

If awarded a Courts for Kids scholarship half of your trip costs will be covered and you will be expected to fundraise the other half.

Information and Applications for Scholarships can be found on our website at:

https://www.courtsforkids.org/scholarships/

The participant must apply for a scholarship **within the first month** of registering for the trip.

A special thank you to all the Courts for Kids donors who have made this scholarship fund possible.

Trip Checklist

1. Students will need to register online at https://www.courtsforkids.org/upcoming-trips.

2. **Passport:** Make sure you have a passport that will not expire before **February 1, 2028** . **In order to avoid the headache and stress, make sure you get your passport on time, do it ASAP.**

3. **Fundraising deadlines**:

- **Deposit of $300 when registering (your card will not be processed until the trip minimum numbers are met)**
- **1st amount of $800 by December 1, 2026**
- **2nd amount of $800 by March 30, 2027**
- **3rd amount of $900 or remaining balance by June 30, 2027**

** All donations are non-refundable unless the entire project is canceled by Courts for Kids, in which case funds will be refunded minus unrecoverable costs.*

3. **Vaccinations:** The recommended vaccinations for travel to Nepal 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. Flu (influenza)
d. Hepatitis A and B
e. Malaria (only recommended in certain regions under 6,500 feet altitude)
f. Typhoid
g. Rabies

4. Students must attend **mandatory Courts for Kids pre-trip training on dates to be determined. One parent is also required to attend.**

Flight Itinerary

Flight information will be arranged and provided after registration is completed.

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 require all volunteers to be disconnected for the entirety of the trip. No cell phones will be allowed once in country as this is a safety concern.
- **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.
- **A Child Protection Policy** which includes background checks for all adults traveling in a group where minors are present.
- 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.

Contact Information

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