

HOW YOU DRESS WHILE IN ECUADOR

The information below relates to two important cultural issues related to how you dress while in Ecuador that we feel we need to help you understand. Please heed this information.

As a general rule, Ecuadorians dress more formally than Americans. Due to this, LDS Church authorities in Ecuador feel that flip-flops and casual shoes are inappropriate to wear to church down there. Dress shoes and nice- more formal-looking sandals would be an appropriate choice to take down for Sunday shoes. You may have to walk some distance to church—some volunteers choose to walk there in flip-flops but change into their nicer, dress shoes upon arrival.

On a more delicate note, the Ecuadorian orphanage workers have expressed confusion about our volunteers who seem to be good, moral girls, and who are in a program with very strict rules, but who wear lingerie and thong-type underwear, which they point out is obvious when the volunteers raise their arms or bend over. In their culture, such underwear is worn by strippers and immoral women. We understand that many good, moral girls in our culture feel comfortable wearing that kind of underwear. While we won't tell you what kind of underwear to wear, we will say that if you wear that kind of underwear in Ecuador and it's seen by people down there you'll be thought less of and you'll hurt the image of OSSO that we try very hard to maintain. Worse yet, you work around many impressionable young children and teenagers in the orphanages who look to you as examples, and they'll connect this type of underwear with immoral behavior, possibly justifying inappropriate behavior on their part. We'd prefer to not have the slightest clue what your underwear looks like and would suggest that you cover yourself appropriately, for example wearing a long undershirt that you can tuck in.