

YOUTH MINISTRIES (CCYM) CARE POLICY & PROCEDURES

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Christ Covenant Church (CCC) recognizes that *children, youth, and vulnerable adults are entrusted to the care of adults who lead church programs both on and off CCC campus. CCC is committed to maintaining an environment where children, youth, and vulnerable adults are protected from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and in which church staff and volunteers are protected from potential false allegations of abuse.

*Children/Youth/Minor: Any person under 18 years of age involved in programs provided at or sponsored by CCC.

Vulnerable adults: Any person 18 years of age or older who lives in or receives services from a licensed facility such as a nursing home, hospital, or treatment center for chemical dependency; has developmental delays, mental illness, or physical disabilities; or is in a family setting and would not by himself/herself report abuse or neglect because of impaired physical or mental function or emotional status.

In order to achieve these goals, CCC has developed the following procedures for staff and volunteers in the following four areas:

- Screening
- Training
- Supervision
- Reporting

Step One: Screening Process (CARE Paperwork)

- Staff members and volunteers working or serving with children, youth, or vulnerable adults are required to complete the CARE screening process (repeated every 5 years) which includes:
 - **Form A: Primary Screening Form** (volunteers) or **Employment Application Form** (employees)
 - **Form B: Agreement to Comply**
 - **Form C: Confidential Background Information**
 - **Form D: Notice to Consumer of Intent**
 - **Follow-up Quiz** with appropriate training for area of ministry
 - **A copy of your driver's license**
- In years 2, 3, and 4, complete one form:
 - **Annual Worker Renewal Form**
- All applicant forms shall be maintained in secure files and all information will be kept confidential. The Confidential Background Information form shall be kept in a sealed envelope, accessible only to the pastoral staff.
- Adults who have been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse are not permitted to work with minors and/or vulnerable adults in any church sponsored activity or program.
- Special approval is required for non-member participants on an exception basis.

Step Two: Training

- Training required for each new volunteer includes:
 - Protection of minors or vulnerable adults in CCC programs
 - Protection of providers from exposure to “high-risk” situations and false accusations
 - Awareness of the symptoms of abuse
 - Understanding of the reporting procedures and the procedures for responding to abuse or suspected abuse (see definitions on next slide)
 - Utilization of an effective check-in/check-out system for minors and vulnerable adults
 - Readiness for medical emergencies, fires, lockdowns, including secure entrances/exits

Opportunities for further training will be offered periodically to ensure CCC’s adherence to current best practices. All volunteers are encouraged to attend training updates as offered through CCC.

Step Two: Training (Cont.)

- **Abuse as referred to in this document includes emotional, physical and sexual abuse:**

* **Physical Abuse** includes any non-accidental physical injury caused or allowed to be caused by the youth's parent or caretaker. It is not, necessarily, the intent of the parent/caretaker to injure the youth. Physical abuse may result from over discipline or from punishment that is inappropriate to the youth's age or condition. Signs of physical abuse may include, but not be limited to: unexplained bruising in various stages of healing, welts, fractures or burns in various stages of healing or in the shape of an object (rope, belt, restraints, electric burner), bed sores, weight loss or dry skin and lips, clothing inappropriate for weather condition, inadequate shelter or medical care, deliberate confinement of an adult in a dangerous environment.

* **Sexual Abuse** as defined by North Carolina law is: "Any person or caretaker who has the care of a child commits, permits or encourages the commission of vaginal intercourse, any sexual act, the obscene or pornographic photographing, filming, or depicting of a child in those acts for commercial or non-commercial usage or any other offense against public morality and decency provided by wherein Article 16. Chapter 14, by, with, or upon a juvenile in violation of law; commits, permits, or encourages any act of prostitution with or by the juvenile." Signs of sexual abuse may include, but not be limited to: exhibiting sexual behavior not appropriate for the child's age, detailed and sophisticated understanding of sexual behavior, reversion to bedwetting, speech loss and thumb sucking, sleep disturbances, pain/itching/bruising/bleeding in the genital area, venereal disease, frequent urinary tract or yeast infections, signs of depression, self-injury, aggressive behavior.

* **Emotional Abuse** is characterized by a person subjecting or exposing another to behavior that may result in psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression, withdrawal, aggressive behavior towards him/herself or others, or post-traumatic stress disorder. Signs of emotional abuse may include, but not be limited to: speech disorders, delayed physical or emotional development, habits disorders such as rocking/sucking, unduly passive or undemanding, anti-social, destructive attitude, depression or suicidal thoughts, attention-seeking activities and delinquent behavior (especially in adolescents).

Step Three: Supervision

- In order to provide an environment that is safeguarding against abuse, CCC will maintain the following supervision practices:
- **Safety Committee**
 - The safety committee will be composed of, but not limited to, the Senior Director of Church Administration, Director of Children's Ministry, Senior Associate/Executive Pastor, Pastor of Youth Ministries, and CARE Coordinator. The committee will monitor the need to add additional committee members.
- **Staff Monitoring Plan**
 - Monitoring of staff members and volunteers will include regular (announced and unannounced) visits in each program to provide supervisors the opportunity to observe staff member and volunteer interaction with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

Step Four: Reporting

- CCC has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and related activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer of CCC to act in the best interest of minors and vulnerable adults in every program.
- In the event that a staff member or volunteer observes any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse or neglect (physical, sexual, or emotional), it is that individual's responsibility to immediately report his/her observations to the **appropriate supervising CCC staff member**.
- **Reporting Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors**
 - CCC is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for minors and vulnerable adults and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law to the Department of Social Services of Mecklenburg County.
 - Because sexual abusers “groom” minors and vulnerable adults for abuse, it is possible for a staff member or volunteer to witness behavior intended to “groom” minor or vulnerable adult for abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report “grooming” behavior, policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to the appropriate supervising CCC staff member. ***Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child's trust (and the trust of the child's parent or 'gatekeeper'), manipulate the child into sexual activity, and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.***

Step Four: Reporting (Cont.)

- **Enforcement of Policies**

- CCC staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all CCC policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from ministry positions for both volunteers and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Safety Committee.

- **Reporting Suspicions of Abuse to Law Enforcement Agencies**

- North Carolina law requires mandatory reporting by any person or institution **with cause to suspect that any minor or vulnerable adult is abused**. Incidents of abuse or reasonably suspected incidents of abuse shall be reported immediately to the **appropriate supervising CCC Staff Member**. It will then be reported to the **Manager of Campus Safety & Security** and the **Senior Director of Church Administration**. Incidents of abuse must be reported within 24 hours to the Director of the Department of Social Services of Mecklenburg County. Ministry Staff and Security Staff will work with appropriate, involved personnel in making a report.
- North Carolina statutes provide protection from civil or criminal liability for any person making a report in good faith.
- The reporter's name remains confidential unless DSS is court ordered to release that information.

Safety Policies

Two-Adult Rule (Accountability for Volunteers)

- **The “two adult rule” shall be observed at all times.** This rule requires an adult working with minors or vulnerable adults be accompanied by an adult partner. Exceptions to this policy are when youth participate in large group activities taking place on the CCC campus. At the discretion of the Senior Director of Church Administration (DCA) and with appropriate pastoral oversight, other exceptions may apply when mitigating circumstances exist.
- Adults should avoid spontaneous situations where there is just one adult present with one youth. Counseling type meetings between students and leaders should always be between members of the same sex. These meetings must be held only in a highly public place where other people are present, in a room with an open door, or with a door that has a window. Time and frequency are to be limited.
- One-on-one is not allowed in restrooms at any time.
- Youth in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected back to the group.

Electronic Communication

- The content of any electronic communications should be readily available to share with the student's family.
- **PHONE CALLS:**
Staff/volunteers and youth may phone each other between the hours of 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., except in an emergency.
- **EMAIL and similar electronic communications:**
Staff/volunteers and youth may use email to communicate. Emails from a staff/volunteer to a youth should include a copy to youth's parents/guardians. Email communication is only allowed during the hours of 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **TEXTING and similar electronic communications:**
Texting is only allowed between staff/volunteers and youth with the following caveats. Texting communication is only allowed during the hours of 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., unless there is an emergency. Text messages with groups are encouraged rather than individual messaging. If a staff/adult volunteer receives a one-on-one text from a youth, the staff/adult volunteer must follow the **"3 text rule."** This means the staff/adult volunteer may respond TWO times (with short texts), and then another staff/volunteer, parent, or student must be added to the messaging stream, OR the text conversation should be discontinued.
- **REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE:**
The parent/guardian may request in writing that their youth should not be contacted by staff/volunteers through any electronic communication or that photographs or videography may not be posted on ministry or ministry associated websites.

Electronic Communication (Cont.)

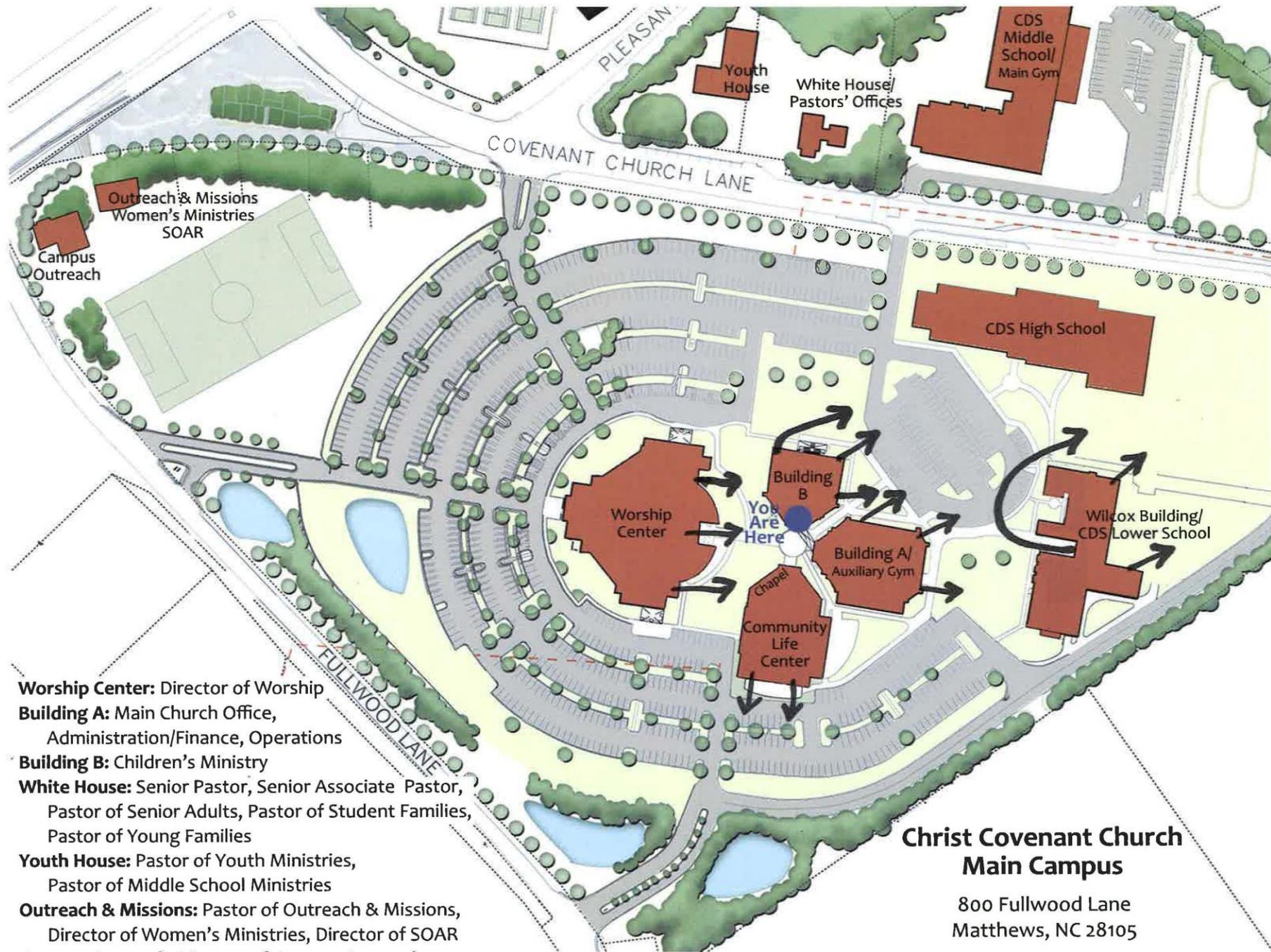
- **SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS & APPS SUCH AS FACEBOOK/BLOGS/TWITTER/SNAPCHAT/INSTAGRAM** and similar sites:
 - Staff/volunteers are reminded that their presence on Social Media represents Christ Covenant Church and Christ himself, and their posts and interactions should reflect that truth.
 - Staff/volunteers and students may join a personal social media page and “follow” each other.
 - Staff/volunteers may not “retweet” or “repost” student message posts & photos, unless it is of a CCC group event. Interactions with personal pages that can be publicly sent are acceptable.
 - Staff/volunteers are not permitted to have private one-on-one communications via social media platforms and apps with minors. No “direct messaging” with minors.
- **ELECTRONIC IMAGERY:**
 - Digital photos, videos and other publicly obtainable images may be taken and used for instruction, ministry related videos, and ministry associated websites, or they may be offered to the families. Electronic imagery is allowed as long as the students are in public view, and such imagery is both appropriate and in the best interest of the student and church.
 - Parents will be given the opportunity to sign a photo release form to “opt-out” of having their child’s photo used for church purposes.

Electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- Drugs or alcohol use
- Sexually oriented conversations, sexually explicit language, or sexual activity
- Inappropriate information regarding an adult’s personal life, social activities, relationship, or family issues
- Inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures

What do I do if the FIRE ALARM goes off?

- Exit with your teens to the nearest grassy area or parking lot away from the fire. Staff and volunteers should clear the area prior to exiting.
- Do not mingle with other classrooms.
- Parents are not allowed to take teens until after the evacuation is complete.
- On Sundays, Worship Coordinators are trained in evacuation procedures. Elders, deacons, and church staff will be on-site to give instructions in the event of an emergency.
- The campus map on the next slide denotes exits during emergencies.



- Worship Center:** Director of Worship
- Building A:** Main Church Office, Administration/Finance, Operations
- Building B:** Children's Ministry
- White House:** Senior Pastor, Senior Associate Pastor, Pastor of Senior Adults, Pastor of Student Families, Pastor of Young Families
- Youth House:** Pastor of Youth Ministries, Pastor of Middle School Ministries
- Outreach & Missions:** Pastor of Outreach & Missions, Director of Women's Ministries, Director of SOAR

**Christ Covenant Church
Main Campus**

800 Fullwood Lane
Matthews, NC 28105

What do I do if there is a LOCKDOWN?

A lockdown is an instance where the entire campus is completely secured in an effort to bar a suspected perpetrator from entering the premises or causing harm to someone on campus.

- In the event of a lockdown, you will be notified by either a bullhorn, walkie-talkie, or intercom.
- Close all doors and if possible, confirm they are locked.
- If you are unable to lock your door, place heavy objects behind the closed door. Turn off the lights and close all window shades. If you have a window in the door, there is a black paper hanging on the door; place over window.
- Put your cell phone on vibrate.
- Keep youth as quiet as possible and spread children throughout the room. Hide youth (as you are able) under tables, in closets, or in the bathroom.
- An announcement will come over the bullhorn, walkie-talkie, or intercom stating that the campus is “ALL CLEAR.”

Youth Workers/Student Leader Requirements

- Adults working with youth/vulnerable adults MUST be at least 18 years old and at least 5 years older than the youth with whom they work.
- Youth in small group leadership roles must be at least 3 grades older than the students in their group. Exceptions must be approved by the Student Ministries Department and the Safety Committee.

Planning for Overnight Trips

- All overnight youth activities must be approved in advance by the Pastor of Youth Ministries or the youth ministry staff member accountable for that program.
- The Christ Covenant Youth Ministry (CCYM) staff must communicate the following information to those going on the trip: cost; deadline to submit registration fees; and all details regarding the trip.
- Prior to the trip, any youth leaving early or arriving late must give an explanation to the CCYM staff.
- All relevant information will be given to each youth and his/her parent/guardian including: trip departure, return, relevant phone numbers, plus any other pertinent details.

Attendance/Check In Procedures for Overnight Trips

- A list of all youth and adults attending a trip will be provided to the CCYM staff.
- If the registered youth or adult is not present at the time of departure, the CCYM staff member must confirm his/her non-attendance before departure.
- If a youth is not traveling with the group, he/she must have prior approval from and make arrangements with the CCYM staff leader to meet the group en-route or at the destination.
- All forms (CCYM Medical/Medication & Liability Release Agreement, CCYM Conduct Agreement and CCYM Medication Administration form, if applicable) must be submitted to CCYM staff prior to departure.
- An attendance count is to be taken any time the group departs from a location.
- CCYM staff or youth workers will be responsible to check the building and surroundings for a safe environment. Volunteers and staff are to ensure that every restroom is checked for minors and vulnerable adults prior to leaving the building.

Sleeping Arrangements

- Females and males will have designated separate sleeping areas.
- Staff and volunteers will monitor sleeping students by periodically conducting visual bed checks to ensure that sleeping students remain in designated sleeping areas.
- At no time may youth enter the sleeping area or bathroom area of the opposite sex.
- Common areas for youth to congregate will be established by the youth workers and the CCYM staff on the trip and will be supervised by adults at all times.
- Two youth will not be allowed in a closed area by themselves.
- Designated adults will inspect the sleeping area at the beginning and end of a trip for lost items.
- Youth may not leave designated areas after curfew. These areas will be established by the CCYM staff and communicated to all attendees.
- Rooms should be assigned for maximum supervision by leadership, with a desired ratio and two-adult rule to be followed. Individuals must have their own bed; exceptions are with siblings and with parental approval. On retreats, 1 adult/8 youth is a desired ratio.
- No R-Rated movies.
- Appropriate modest sleeping attire must be worn – both tops and bottoms.

Transportation-Large Groups

- 15 passenger vans will never be used under any circumstances.
- Youth must abide by any safe vehicle directions given by the approved youth workers and CCYM staff.
- Adult supervision is at a ratio of 1 adult: 8 youth in a bus and two adults with students in a 12 passenger van.
- When renting buses or small capacity vans is not practical, a private vehicle and volunteer drivers may be considered subject to driver qualifications.
- When traveling through the night in a bus or van, students will be asked to sit next to someone of the same sex at midnight. If seating mandates boys and girls share a seat, it must be nearest the driver or an adult.

Transportation- Personal Vehicles

- Transportation to and from the church is the responsibility of the parents/guardian.
- Youth Workers and CCYM drivers of students MUST be:
 - 25 years of age
 - Sign the CCYM Approved Driver Application Form
 - Pass the DMV report
 - Adhere to the Driver Qualifications
- Vehicles are required to be insured for the following minimum limits: \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 per occurrence/\$100,000 per property.
- Vehicles are required to have a valid and current registration and license plate.
- If a youth must ride in a personal vehicle of a youth or CCYM staff, a minimum of TWO youth must be in the vehicle. If a situation arises that a youth and a youth worker/staff are alone in the car, the following must be observed:
 - Parents of the youth must be contacted about the situation.
 - The current location, ETA for the destination, and any changes en route must be communicated to the parents.
 - The Youth worker or CCYM staff must stay in contact with the parents and remain accountable to them until they are no longer alone with the youth.

Trip Rules

- Each student must be securely seat-belted. Placing more than one student in a seatbelt is NOT permitted.
- Drivers should not deviate from the route/plan.
- Students are to be kept together at all times, and the driver is responsible for each student during the event.
- Drivers are to obey ALL posted speed limits and follow other vehicles at a safe and appropriate distance.
- Drivers MUST refrain from using their cell phones and texting while driving.

Commitment and Behavior

Expected Staff, Adult, and Youth Volunteer Behavior

Appropriate Behavior

- Show respect to others – including adults, youth volunteers, and peers.
- Listen carefully.
- Participate fully.
- Obey policies and procedures.
- Speak appropriately. Refrain from swearing or speaking to a minor in a way that is harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
- Recognize an individual's physical and mental well being and act accordingly.
- Behave with another person's safety in mind.
- Maintain appropriate physical contact at all times.
- For Seek the City, your 24/7 Leader must know when you leave the site.

***Inappropriate Behavior**

- Illegal activities
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, electronic cigarettes (including VAPING and JUULING, but not limited to), and/or illegal drugs
- Use of firearms or weapons
- Inappropriate contact of a sexual nature, including nudity
- Any physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- Anything in violation of the Youth Ministry (CCYM) CARE Policy and Procedures and Youth Activities Policy & Procedures

**If the offense involves any of the above mentioned behaviors, the student(s) may be sent home immediately at the parent's/guardian's expense.*

Commitment and Behavior (Cont.)

- Sexually Oriented Conversations:
 - Staff and volunteers are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating, or sexual activities with any minor.
 - Discussions and lessons regarding purity, dating, sex, and human sexuality will occur in group settings and will convey CCC's view on these topics.
 - Discipling opportunities initiated by students regarding these topics are appropriate. Parents will be informed of the topic of the conversation.
- Sexually Oriented Materials:
 - Staff and volunteers are prohibited from possessing or transmitting to students any sexually oriented materials, including those in electronic form.
 - If any such materials are purportedly needed for instruction, they must be approved by the Pastor of Youth Ministries.

Physical Contact

- Only forms of appropriate physical affection that are generally suitable in the church setting may occur between staff, volunteers, and minors.
- Any inappropriate touching and displays of affection should be immediately reported to the Pastor of Youth Ministries.
 - What's NOT OK?
 - Kissing
 - Piggy Back Rides
 - Lap sitting
- Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other students/staff/volunteers.
- **Do not force any physical contact, touch, or affection upon a reluctant student**

How do I handle a discipline issue?

- CCYM staff will address behavioral concerns in the following ways, depending upon the severity of the behavior:
 - If the offense involves any of the previously mentioned inappropriate behaviors (P. 23), the student(s) may be sent home immediately at the parent's/guardian's expense.
 - Verbal warning given to the youth
 - If needed, the youth will be brought before one or more CCYM staff.
 - If needed, the parent/guardian will be notified, and a decision will be made between the CCYM staff and the parent/guardian about how to resolve the issue.

Individual Meetings

- Staff members and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interactions with minors and vulnerable adults while participating in Youth Ministry activities or programs.

Gift Giving and Medication Dispensing

- Staff and volunteers are prohibited from providing special gifts to any individual youth/vulnerable adult.
- Special occasions and accomplishments should be rewarded with group recognition.
- Staff and volunteers may not administer medication to any youth/vulnerable adult while serving. The only exception would be if the parent/guardian has completed the CCYM Medication Administration form and provided all medications.

Parent Contact and Involvement

- Parents will be contacted in the event of:
 - Illness
 - Injury
 - Disciplinary problems
- Parents have open invitations to observe all programs and activities.
- Parents who wish to have ongoing contact with the ministries in which their children are involved will be required to complete the CARE screening process and training.

Physical Safety Issues

- Youth workers/CCYM staff should be conscious of safety concerns when leading activities and games.
- Proper equipment and adequate supervision of the activity should always be in place.

Youth Ministry Contact Information

- **Pastor of Youth Ministries**
 - Stewart Neely (sneely@christcovenant.org or 704-708-6117)
- **Director of Middle School Ministry**
 - David Chambers (dchambers@christcovenant.org or 704-708-6114)
- **Asst. Director of High School Ministry**
 - Michelle Gustavson (mgustavson@christcovenant.org or 704-814-1089)
- **Asst. Director of Middle School Ministry**
 - Becky Creswell (rcreswell@christcovenant.org or 704-708-6116)
- **Ministry Administrator for Youth**
 - Jan Adams (jadams@christcovenant.org or 704-708-6112)
- **Youth Administrative Assistant**
 - Peggy Wekall (pwekall@christcovenant.org or 704-708-6123)