



Policy Manual

About Us:

Our focus is to lead students into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

Mission:

To create irresistible environments led by skilled staff and volunteers where students are encouraged and equipped to pursue intimacy with God, community with insiders, and influence with outsiders.

FCC Student Ministries Values:

REAL

We value an environment that is transparent and genuine.

RELEVANT

The most effective way to reach students is to present the gospel in a relevant way. Ex: leaders and environment that reflect and respect the student's life stage.

RELATIONAL

We purposefully build relationships with students and facilitate them building relationships with one another.

RELAXED

Students are under enormous stress. We strive to create a ministry that helps relieve the stresses of life, not add to them.

General Policies and Procedures

- **Communication**

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to come and participate in our student activities at any time.

E-mail is our primary means of communication. We have an extensive database of addresses and we regularly send out information updates to parents/guardians, students and/or Volunteer Leaders. If you don't have e-mail, the best thing is to find someone who regularly checks email and have them give the information to you.

Announcements in the Supplemental Bulletin and the FCC Connection will be a secondary form of information.

Facebook is a primary means of communication for students. We will utilize it extensively.

We also have a tumblr account for you as parents to follow us along on our various journeys of experiential God-times. <http://fcchhstudents.tumblr.com>

Flyers will often be available for special events.

Our website (www.fcchh.org) will increasingly be another source for information about our ministry.

Questions or concerns should be directed to Zachariah Mays by email at zmays@fcchh.org or by phone (513) 218-6053. **In an event of a serious matter please make an appointment to talk with me in person.**

- **Events**

We will provide a variety of activities throughout the year including weekly Sunday night Student Events, Retreats, Service Projects, Lock-ins, and other fun events.

Videos, Movies & Music

We sometimes utilize videos, movies and music in our Student Ministry events. But rather than using them as mere mindless entertainment, we emphasize the importance of thinking Christianly about our media choices. These forms of media can be great opportunities for discussions of truth. We'll do our best to show appropriate content as a way to honor the standards of parents/guardians, and where sin is depicted, we will ensure that it is put in its proper context in accordance with the truth of Scripture. If you have any questions about media choices, please let us know.

Costs

It will be our goal to keep costs as low as possible for activities. Our events will be characterized by frugality rather than extravagance. No one should ever be prevented from attending because of cost.

- **Financial Aid Policies**

In cases where a lack of finances would keep a student from participating in an event, please talk to Zachariah Mays about your situation. If your family is struggling financially*, scholarship money may be available following the biblical principle of those in the church sharing with those who are in need (Acts 2:45). For less serious needs, another possibility is to earn “credit” money as you work for the church, youth program or staff. This plan follows the biblical principle “if a man will not work, he shall not eat” (2 Thes. 3:7-13). The following guidelines will apply to those working for money:

Work must be arranged in advance at a time that is convenient for any needed supervisors.

There will be a direct relationship between the amount and quality of work and credit dollars earned.

In all events a scholarship application needs to be filled out completely and submitted for approval at LEAST 2 weeks prior to the event being requested.

**This is for those with legitimate financial needs. A student who squanders his money on excessive living should not expect to be subsidized by the church because in that case it is a priority problem, not a money problem.*

- **Offsite Event Policies**

Attendance

It’s imperative to us not to lose track of anyone on our trips. This section identifies ways to prevent losing students, and what we will do in the unlikely event that someone ever becomes lost.

Any time we transport students we will make a list of the names of everyone aboard with a phone number where parents/guardians can be reached. Also, we will take the Medical Form notebook and a first aid kit with us in case of emergencies.

If parents/guardians drive their students to and/or from an event, we expect them to personally contact a Volunteer Leader to let us know the student is now under our supervision. We also need to be informed when students are being picked up so we know when the student is released from our supervision.

In the unlikely event that a student does not show up when it is time to depart and the bus needs to leave, our standard procedure will be to leave a Volunteer Leader (or suitable adult) behind to wait until we discover where the student is. At that time it will be necessary to call his/her parent/guardian to inform them of the situation and after the student is located, to make arrangements to reconnect the Volunteer Leader and the student with the group.

Arrival and Departure Times

We will promote a departure and an arrival time for most events. We will always strive to return earlier than the stated arrival time, so parents/guardians should be ready to pick students up by then. Rarely should we be late.

It's important to us not to waste time waiting for kids to be picked up and it's important to parents/guardians not to have to wait around for us to arrive.

In the event that it appears we will be 30 minutes late or more due to an unforeseen event we will have students call their parents to update them.

Certain local events such as a concert or ball game are uncertain in their ending times. In such cases we will suggest that the students call their parents to let them know the estimated time of arrival.

For long-distance trips where the return time may vary depending on road conditions, we may have students call their parents to inform them of the situation at hand as well as a projected time of arrival.

Safety

All students must have a liability/ medical release on file and a participation agreement filled out and turned in before they are allowed to leave with the group on any event.

Students will generally be required to stay in groups of three or more in all public places (amusement parks, water parks, campgrounds, etc.) They must also be in the vicinity of a Volunteer Leader while in their group of three (i.e. in the same building, park or section of a street.)

We will particularly keep close tabs on Jr. High students. Depending on the setting, older students will be given more latitude.

- **Transportation Policies**

Church Rented Vehicles

It's important to us that we take good care of the vehicles with which God has blessed us. When using church vehicles, the group leader is responsible for complying with the following conduct guidelines.

1. There will always be two Volunteer (or approved adults) in the vehicle.
2. No hands, arms, legs or trash will be put out of windows.
3. No standing in front of the first row of seats (state law).
4. Emergency exits (rear, side, roof) should generally not be used by passengers as an alternative method of entry or exit when there is no emergency.
5. No screaming or excessive noise. The driver will determine a suitable volume level—other Volunteer Leaders are to help enforce these expectations.
6. No open beverage containers will be allowed unless they are in someone's hand. (i.e. no open pop cans sitting on the floor, seat cushions or seat backs)
7. Only a Volunteer Leader or bus driver may supervise the operation of the CB radio, AM/FM cassette, PA unit or TV/VCR if so equipped.
8. When vehicles are parked, no one should climb onto or sit on the exterior of vehicles, including the roof and hood.
9. Passengers must not deface the interior of the vehicle. This includes seats, flooring, windows and equipment.
10. When riding in the church rented vehicle, all youth in any seat shall wear seat belts. Seat belts shall not be used in the buses.

Private Vehicles

In situations where cars, mini-vans or vans are needed, it will be necessary that Volunteer Leaders and other responsible adults drive. Drivers for official Student Ministry events should be 21 years of age or older due to insurance concerns. In addition to the age requirement, drivers must also have and prove minimal auto insurance coverage before being cleared to drive.

High school students will not be encouraged to drive during an activity unless they have permission from their parent/guardian and the Student Minister or Volunteer Leader.

Additionally, anyone who wishes to ride with a driver younger than 21 years old at a church-sponsored event must be a sibling to the driver.

Rides Between Church and Home

To remain above reproach, we discourage Volunteer Leaders giving rides alone to members of the opposite sex. In the event that this policy would be a senseless inconvenience, such rides may be given, but only with the advance knowledge and permission of the parent/guardian. However, this should be a rare exception.

Students can ride to church or home from church with other students, but this is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to monitor. We cannot be responsible for students before they arrive at a student activity or after they leave.

- **Student Ministry Conduct Expectations**

The following rules reflect our ministry values and for the most part apply during all Student Ministry activities as well as off-site events.

Decision Making. All Volunteer Leaders have the authority to make decisions and are to be obeyed at all times. If questions or concerns arise, Zachariah Mays will make all final decisions.

Respect. Every team member has the right to be treated respectfully at all times.

Safety. For safety reasons, you must always remain in the vicinity of a Volunteer Leader, usually in groups of 2-3. We must always know how to reach you in case of an emergency. Be where you are supposed to be when asked so the group is not waiting for you. Also, do not give out your address, phone number or email to individuals you meet.

Graded Programming, We support the idea of graded programming. Graded programming is simply programs that are determined based on grade. To avoid disunity among the Junior High and High School all students are required to be in the programming based upon what grade they are in. However, in the event that someone is held back, we will allow them to be moved with the grade they are supposed to be in, in order to let them be with already established friends. Also, when students who bring a friend that is entirely new to the church and are of a different grade we will allow the friend to go with that student the first 5 times.

PDA. To avoid awkwardness, cliquiness and distracting from the purpose of our trip, we do not allow PDA (public displays of affection) between couples, unless you are married - in which case it is required. Our trip is not a date; it is a group experience, where we

treat each other equally as brothers and sisters. This means couples may not hold hands, cuddle, lay on one another, isolate themselves, etc.

Sleep. Stay out of sleeping areas of opposite sex. Bedtime is firm: no staying up past or getting up before the times designated by Zachariah and/or the Volunteer Leaders.

Courtesy. Our focus will be on building relationships and on creating a spiritually uplifting atmosphere. Therefore, there will be no gambling (poker, blackjack, etc), profanity, electronic devices (mp3s, electronic games, etc) or immodest attire. Also, we ask that no major body alterations be done without parental permission (piercings, tattoos, etc).

Modesty. These are the modesty guidelines for everyone (guys and girls).

Because we represent Christ as well as represent our church we want to avoid attire that might distract or be a stumbling block to anyone. (This dress code is encouraged during weekly Student Ministry activities and required during extended-duration events like trips and retreats.)

Tops: T-shirts with sleeves only: no tank tops, muscle shirts, halter tops, tube tops, bare midriffs, etc.

Bottoms: Shorts must extend down as far as your fingertips when your arms are extended straight down. Lettering/advertising across the back, just below the waste is prohibited.

Swimsuits: Make sure they're modest, no torso-revealing, cleavage-showing or bikini-style suits.

Pajamas: Same "tops" and "bottom" rules from above apply when in the presence of the opposite sex.

Churchwear on trips: Guys: non-jean pants and collared shirt.

Girls: modest dress, or skirt or non-jean pants and blouse.

Serious Discipline must be required for the following and will likely result in a call home to your parent/guardian to discuss how best to send you home:

- Sexual activity
- Wandering off by yourself
- Tobacco, drug or alcohol use
- Blatant or repeated disrespect and/or disobedience to Volunteer Leaders.