

# Student Ministry Policies and Procedures



“...let your roots grow down into him and draw up nourishment from him, so you will grow in faith, strong and vigorous in the truth you were taught.” [NLT]

24/7 STUDENT MINISTRIES OF  
FBC WINNFIELD

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The Youth Minister reserves the right to remove an adult from the list of approved Youth Sponsors or Youth Sponsor Assistants at any time, if conditions warrant.

**Involvement of Youth Sponsors**

Youth Sponsors and/or Youth Sponsor Assistants are selected for the purpose of calendaring, planning, and carrying out activities.

**The “Two-Person” Rule**

No adult of either sex may be alone with a teenager of the opposite sex. One-on-one counseling must be done in areas where others are visibly present. When possible, at least two adults must remain on church property when only one student is present. One adult and one student may not occupy lodging rooms.

The only acceptable exception is when a student is waiting to be picked up, from the church following an event sponsored by the church, by his parent and only one adult is available to be present. The teenager's parent, before the fact, must approve the “two-person” rule. For example, if a Youth Sponsor needs to provide3 transportation to or from a teenager’s home, the Youth Sponsor must call the parent ahead of time to get permission to travel home.

**The Intent of These Policies and Procedures**

The formation of these policies and procedures is for the express purpose of protecting the students who participate in the activities of the First Baptist Church Student Ministry and to serve as protection and accountability for those adults who volunteer their service to this ministry.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT NOTICE**

THE PRECEDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HAVE BEEN MADE EFFECTIVE FOR THE PROTECTION OF STUDENTS AND ADULTS INVOLVED IN THE STUDENT MINISTRY. IN AN EFFORT TO PROVIDE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS TO READ, ACCEPT AND ABIDE BY THESE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, PLEASE SIGN AND DATE THIS NOTICE AND RETURN IT TO THE STUDENT MINISTRY OFFICE.

THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, LOCATED IN THIS HANDBOOK, ARE EFFECTIVE FOR ALL STUDENTS AND ADULTS INVOLVED IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE FBC STUDENT MINISTRY, WHETHER OR NOT THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN SIGNED AND RETURNED.

I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES LOCATED IN THIS HANDBOOK.

PARENT(S): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT(S): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PLEASE HAVE ALL STUDENTS IN YOUR FAMILY, WHO ARE OR MAY BE INVOLVED IN STUDENT MINISTRY ACTIVITIES, SIGN AND DATE THIS NOTICE. USE THE BACK IF NEEDED.

## Application

Parents and other adults may make request, to the Youth Minister, to serve as Youth Sponsor or Youth Sponsor Assistant.

The Youth Minister and existing Youth Committee will consider approving an adult as a Youth Sponsor Assistant if...

1. The adult has been an active member of FBC for a period of one year or longer and has been involved in Sunday School, worship, and the full life of the congregation.
2. The adult exhibits a thorough knowledge of the Bible as understood by our full congregation, and at all times demonstrates a respect for the church, the Youth Minister, church staff members, and other adults.
3. The adult has made a clear commitment to avoid any romantic gesture toward any teenager. A Youth Sponsor Assistant who develops a romantic interest in a middle school or high school student agrees to immediately relinquish all duties as a Youth Sponsor Assistant.
4. The adult signs a leadership covenant as required by the Youth Minister.

The Youth Minister and the existing Youth Committee will consider approving an adult as a Youth Sponsor if...

1. the adult has been an active member FBC for a period of one year or longer and has been involved in Sunday School, worship, and the full life of the congregation.
2. The adult exhibits a thorough knowledge of the Bible as understood by our full congregation, and at all times demonstrates a respect for the church, the Youth Minister, church staff members, and other adults.
3. The adult agrees to never develop a romantic interest in/with any teenager in the Student Ministry.
4. The adult signs a leadership covenant as required by the Youth Minister.

## Policies and Procedures

The following Student Ministry Policies and Procedures are intended to serve as “standard operating procedures” for the Student Ministry of First Baptist Church.

The primary purpose of these policies is meant to serve as protection for the students who participate in the activities of the First Baptist Church Student Ministry. A secondary, yet equally important function is to serve as protection and accountability for those adults who volunteer their service to this ministry

## Student Ministry Policies and Procedures

### Worship and Classroom Behavior

Times of teaching and worship are primary in church. Teenagers and other members who come to church in order to learn and grow deserve to study and worship in an atmosphere where that is possible without hindrance. Leaders have a responsibility to maintain that atmosphere.

Teenagers who make study or worship impossible for those around them need to be moved to an alternative study location. Generally, this will mean spending the remainder of the time with the Youth Minister. Before dismissing a student from a class or service, leaders have a responsibility to tell a student that his behavior warrants dismissal. In most cases, leaders should inform parents when a dismissal has taken place and a student who has been dismissed from a group should be welcomed at the next meeting.

At the same time, leaders need to try and discover what is motivating a student to misbehave. The Student Ministry family should seek to meet those needs if possible.

### Respect Toward Leaders

Youth who choose to participate in FBC Student Ministry activities agree to follow the instructions of the leaders. Obeying those instructions and exhibiting respect toward leaders is a condition for remaining at an activity.

### Trip Policies

The church assumes heavy responsibility when taking teenagers out of town. For the youth group to function well out of the city, obeying and respecting sponsors is essential. A serious breakdown in these areas must result in the teenager returning home to parents. Whenever possible, a leader will provide transportation home for the teenager. If that is not logistically possible, then the parent of the teenager will pay for commercial transportation home. Parents agree to support sponsors' decisions about sending a student home, knowing that only those present on the trip can know all the variables involved.

### The Positions of Youth Sponsor and Youth Teacher

In a society increasingly filled with moral breakdown, we must surround our teenagers at all times with adults who are emotionally, morally and spiritually healthy. Our church's ministry to middle school and high school students must be channeled through seasoned adults and college students who are committed to following the teachings of the Bible as understood by our full congregation.

Adults working with the students are defined in one of the following groups:

1. **Church Staff:** The Youth Minister makes ultimate decisions about the Student Ministry of the church, and is responsible for those decisions to the Pastor and full congregation.
2. **Youth Sponsors:** Adults who are at least 25 years old and have been approved by the Youth Minister. These adults are responsible for all aspects of Student Ministry activities including discipline, transportation, securing medical treatment, counseling, ensuring safety of teenagers, and other responsibilities assigned by the Youth Minister and appropriate leadership personnel.
3. **Youth Sponsor Assistants:** Adults who have been approved by the Youth Minister, and are less than 25 years old. These individuals serve with specific tasks that assist the Youth Sponsors and Youth Ministers. Although they may occupy a leadership role with the teenagers, they are not primarily responsible of ultimate discipline decisions, transportation, and medical treatment. However, they must support decisions of the Youth Minister and Youth Sponsors.
4. **Youth Teachers:** Adults who are selected by the Nominating Committee and must meet the criteria listed above in addition to church criteria unique to their teaching role. Youth Teachers are those who teach Sunday School, discipleship classes or groups, evangelism classes, music and worship leadership, drama, or coach sport teams on a regular basis.

Youth Teachers are automatically approved at Youth Sponsors or Youth Sponsor Assistants since they must meet the criteria above.

### Location of Students

Church leaders can only be responsible for teenagers who are actually in an area designated for a Student Ministry activity. Parents have no way of knowing whether teenagers are where they should be and, consequently, whether leader supervision is being provided. Therefore, it is the policy of our Student Ministry that all teenagers on church property must be in the actual area where the announced activity is taking place. The only options open to teenagers are to be in the designated class or activity area or to leave the church property.

Church leaders only provide supervision for 15 minutes after the end of a Student Ministry activity at church. Parents providing transportation home are responsible for knowing the end times of the activity and arriving within those 15 minutes. Students wanting to remain on church property after the ending time of activities must have the Youth Minister's permission.

### In-Town Transportation

The church provides adult-driven vehicles for every activity away from the church. For all trips further than approximately 10 miles, adult-driven transportation is the only option for students. Licensed drivers may take their cars on activities closer to home. Church leaders always announce when it is possible for students to drive. Parents have the responsibility to clarify with their teenager whether teenage-driven vehicles are an option. Church leaders cannot be responsible for the safety of student-driven cars and cannot guarantee the quality of driving. A list, provided by parents, of student-drivers whom their teenager has permission to ride with is kept in the Student Ministry Office; however, church leaders cannot be responsible for students who leave activities in student-driven cars. The timely return of students to church can only be guaranteed to students in church-provided transportation.

### Vandalism

The church requests that parents insure that their teenager pays for any vandalism or willful damage to property in-town or out-of-town.

### Adult Leader Policies

#### Transition to Adulthood

Recent high school graduates may participate in the full student ministry of the church until the end of August after graduation. After September 1, they only may participate with the Student Ministry as selected Youth Sponsor, Youth Sponsor Assistant or Youth Teacher.

On all trips, being sent home will be the normal result of breaking curfew, receiving body piercing or permanent tattooing, possessing alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products, leaving the group, intimate petting, stealing, assault, lying, or the possession of pornography or a dangerous weapon. Any other failure to follow trip guidelines will result in a trip home.

### Weapons

The physical safety of the youth group is one of our church's top priorities. Therefore, no teenager may possess a gun, knife over 3.5 inches closed, open knife, martial arts item, or any other weapon at any FBC Student Ministry activity at the church or away. The presence of a dangerous weapon will result in an immediate call to 911 and full cooperation with the authorities that respond. In the meantime, the sponsor in charge will coordinate a plan with other leaders to best protect the safety of the students present. Actual confrontation with a teenager with a gun will be left to the proper authorities. If practical, parents of the involved student will be contacted.

### In-Town Policies

Assault alcohol, illegal drugs, weapons as described above, pornography and tobacco products are not permitted at FBC Student Ministry activities. The breaking of this policy, including any other serious failure to follow Student Ministry guidelines, will result in the parents being notified of the incident and the teenager not being permitted to participate in the next major youth trip.

### Physical Discipline

Parents have not assigned to church leaders the right to physically discipline teenagers. Therefore, leaders only make physical contact with a teenager in order to prevent a greater harm, such as during a fight or an attempt to harm one's self. With rare exceptions, no other physical restraint is appropriate.

### Physical Affection

Interest in showing physical affection toward the opposite sex is considered a normal and healthy part of maturing teenage relationships. Our Student Ministry also believes that appropriateness should dictate the extent of affection shown at FBC Student Ministry activities. Holding hands and light hugs are almost always appropriate. However, our Student Ministry believes that kissing is never appropriate during any Student Ministry or church function. Couples should postpone all other types of physical affection until they can be alone and not part of a church activity. Any violation of this policy receives the same response as any other broken guideline.