

# FCC Student's Ministry Policy



rev. March 2020

Dear Faith Community Church Student's Volunteer or Staff Member,

At Faith Community Church, we take our responsibility to care for student very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which student can grow in relationship with Jesus Christ. The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for Faith Community Church volunteers and staff members. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for student, protecting student, you, and the mission of Faith Community Church. The following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced. After you have carefully read this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,

Faith Community Church Elders

FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH POLICIES & PROCEDURES FOR  
STUDENT’S MINISTRIES

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## OVERVIEW OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH SAFETY SYSTEM

Because we love children and desire to protect them, Faith Community Church requires all staff members and volunteers working with children or students (and other vulnerable populations) to complete **4 SAFETY STEPS** before ministry work or volunteer placements begin.

### **STEP ONE: Screening Process**

Staff members and volunteers are required to complete the Faith Community Church Screening Process, which requires a staff member or volunteer to:

- complete an Employment Application (employees only)
- complete the Safety Application (employees and volunteers)
- complete a face-to-face interview (employees and volunteers)
- provide references to be checked (employees and volunteers)

\*a volunteer must attend Faith Community Church for three months before being eligible to serve in positions providing access to children, students or vulnerable populations.

### **STEP TWO: Policies & Procedures**

Staff members and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

### **STEP THREE: Criminal Background Check**

Faith Community Church requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in children's or student activities or programming undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required.

### **STEP FOUR: Agree to the FCC Code of Conduct**

Faith Community Church requires that all staff members and volunteers sign our Code of Conduct agreement.

## STUDENT SAFETY POLICY

### **Abuse tolerance**

Faith Community Church has a **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff and volunteer at Faith Community Church to act in the best interest of all students in every program. In the event that staff or volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their responsibility to immediately report their observations to the Student's Ministry Director, any pastor, or Elder.

### **REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS**

Faith Community Church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for students and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the Student's Ministry Director or any pastor, and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency. An element of the safe environment referenced above includes the fostering of a culture of reporting relevant information to the Student's Ministry Director or any pastor. Because sexual abusers 'groom' student for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report 'grooming' behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to the Student's Ministry Director, any pastor, or Elder.

### **Enforcement of policies**

Faith Community Church staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all Faith Community Church policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from Student's Ministry positions for both volunteers and staff members. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Sr. Pastor and the Board of Elders.

## **Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse**

### **Reporting violation of policy**

In order to maintain a safe environment for our student, Faith Community Church staff members and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to the Student's Ministry Director, any pastor, or Elder.

### **Consequences of violation**

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the church to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in Student's

Ministries. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies. Any person found to have committed a prohibited act should be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves student, students or vulnerable populations at Faith Community Church. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from Faith Community Church. Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination of employment of a staff member or employee. Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving students or vulnerable populations at Faith Community Church.

### **Reporting suspicions of abuse to law enforcement agencies**

Staff members and volunteers at Faith Community Church are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or any inappropriate behavior of a colleague or co-worker, to the Student's Ministry Director, any pastor, or Elder. Pennsylvania law requires that any person having cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect must make a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency. A staff member or volunteer *may* report to the Student's Ministry Director, any pastor, or Elder and allow supervisory personnel to make the appropriate report to law enforcement agencies. Staff members and volunteers are required to verbally report an incident to supervisory staff as soon as possible after the incident. After receiving a report from a staff member or volunteer in Student's Ministries, the Sr. Pastor or an Elder will speak with the person or volunteer to whom the child spoke in order to get detailed information about the entire conversation. The Sr. Pastor or Elder will be notified as soon as reasonably possible. If appropriate, the Sr. Pastor or Chairman of the Elder Board will inform Childline.

### **Response to report of abuse**

The Faith Community Church Safety Committee will take appropriate action on behalf of the church when a report of abuse occurs.

## **Faith Community Church Safety Committee**

### **SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for student, Faith Community Church will appoint and maintain a Safety Committee, which will meet once each quarter.

### **Mission statement**

The purpose of the Safety Committee is to enable Faith Community Church Student's Ministries to carry out appropriate ministry activities while safeguarding program participants against emotional, physical or sexual abuse.

## Composition

The Safety Committee will be comprised of the following members:

1. the Sr. Pastor
2. Associate Pastors
3. the Chairman of the Elders
4. the Student's Director
5. the Youth Director

## Meetings

The Sr. Pastor will chair the meeting of the Safety Committee on a quarterly basis to discuss risk management practices and updates. The Safety Committee will also meet on an emergency basis upon the recommendation of a member or following the report of any incident or allegation.

## Responsibilities

The Safety Committee will be charged with the following duties:

1. Applying existing Faith Community Church policies and procedures related to student's safety and risk management issues.
2. Monitoring all Student's Ministries programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
3. Making recommendations to the Faith Community Church Board of Elders regarding safety issues.

## STUDENT'S MINISTRIES STAFF MONITORING PLAN

Monitoring of staff and volunteers will include regular (announced and unannounced) visits in each program to provide supervisors the opportunity to observe staff members and volunteer interactions with student.

- 1. The Sr. Pastor** meets with the Student's Director once monthly to discuss Student's Ministry.
- 2. The Elder Board** meets with the Student's Director once each year to discuss Student's Ministry, including safety training and procedures.
- 3. The Student's Director** conducts an unscheduled periodic observation for programs occurring regularly.

## BUILDING SAFETY

The Youth Director will be responsible for ensuring that the Youth Ministry Building is monitored during classes or programming. This will include unobserved monitoring of staff members, volunteers and students in student classrooms. No student will ever be left unattended or unsupervised during youth ministry programming or meetings. Youth Ministry staff members or volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual student in any room or building. In the event a staff member or volunteer finds himself/herself alone with a single student, that staff member or volunteer will take the student to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: If a student desires additional conversation or counsel with a staff member or volunteer after regular programming has concluded, move to an adjoining room where other staff members are present.) Any two students together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area.

## STAFF TO STUDENT RATIO

Faith Community Church is committed to providing adequate staff and volunteer supervision in all Student Ministry activities and programs. Accordingly, the following ratios will be observed for Student Ministry activities and programs: For groups, up to and including 10 students, there will be at least 1 staff member or volunteer supervising. For groups ranging 11 to 29 students, there will be at least 2 staff members or volunteers supervising. For groups larger than 30 students, there will be at least 3 staff members or volunteers supervising. If a worker is out of ratio it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the responsible Youth Director or the Student Ministry Team Leader. The responsible Youth Director or the Student Ministry Team Leader will make diligent efforts to immediately bring staff member/volunteer to student ratios into compliance with this policy.

## DISCIPLINE

It is the policy of Faith Community Church that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behavior management of children or students. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.** This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction or inappropriate behaviors by students. If a student is unruly or fails to comply with verbal warnings or instructions from staff/volunteers, that student will be asked to leave (if not endangered by doing so) or the student's parent will be contacted to pick up the student. In the event of a fight or physical altercation, staff/volunteer will verbally redirect students involved and will try to avoid physical intervention. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to parents and the Youth Director.

## INTOXICANTS

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in any Faith Community Church facility, while traveling with student, or while working with or supervising student.

## NUDITY

Staff and volunteers in Faith Community Church's student ministry should never be nude in the presence of students in their care (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.).

## ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENT

Staff members and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with student while participating in Faith Community Church Student's Ministry program. Another adult who has completed the Faith Community Church application and screening process should always be present.

### **Individual Meetings**

Staff members and volunteers should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual student at a time when others are present and where interactions can be



easily observed unless prior approval is obtained from the Youth Director. In the event a closed-door meeting must occur, the student staff member must inform another staff member and ensure the door remains unlocked. Staff members and volunteers should conduct one-to-one meetings with an individual student at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed.

## TRANSPORTATION

Staff members and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for student. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when workers are involved in the transportation of student:

1. Student should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one child in transport.
2. Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with student while in vehicles.
3. No drivers under age 21 may drive Faith Community Church owned or rented vehicles.

## PARENTAL CONTACT

Parents who leave a child in the care of Faith Community Church staff members and volunteers during church services or activities will be contacted if their child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in Student's Ministries programs.

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to visit any and all services and programs in which their child is involved at Faith Community Church. Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their student's programs at Faith Community Church will be required to complete the Faith Community Church volunteer application and screening process.

## PHYSICAL CONTACT

Faith Community Church is committed to protecting student in its care. To this end, Faith Community Church has implemented a 'physical contact policy' which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our Student's Ministries while protecting student. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working in Student's Ministries programs:

1. Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and student are important for student's development, and are generally suitable in the church setting.
2. Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor, the Student's Director or the Sr. Pastor.
3. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the child, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.

4. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other student or student's staff members and volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.
5. Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or volunteers in Student's Ministries must foster trust at all times. Personal conduct must be above reproach.
6. Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant child. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected.
7. Student's staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting student under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.
8. Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor, the Student's Director or the Sr. Pastor.

### SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with student, and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any child in the program. However, it is expected that from time to time student's ministry discussions and lessons may address issues related to purity, dating, sex and human sexuality. These lessons will convey to the students the church's views on these topics.

### SEXUALLY ORIENTED MATERIALS

Staff members and volunteers in Student's Ministries at Faith Community Church are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property or in the presence of student that are not a part of the approved curriculum.

### SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS

It is anticipated that certain Student Ministry activities may occasionally require that overnight sleeping arrangements be made for students and staff/volunteers (i.e. lock-ins, mission trips, ski trips, etc.). In the event an activity requires sleeping arrangements, staff members and volunteers will strictly observe the following rules:

1. The 2-adult rule will be followed. The 2 adult leaders present must have previously completed Faith Community Church's application and screening process.
2. Leaders should check with parents and use good judgment regarding PG or PG-13 movies. No R-rated movies are permitted.
3. Appropriately modest sleeping attire must be worn.
4. In the event of a sleepover on campus that involves both boys and girls, boys and girls must sleep in separate rooms, properly supervised by student leaders of the same gender.
5. Whenever possible, at least one staff or volunteer will sleep in the same room as students or in an adjoining room with the door between the rooms kept open.
9. In the event that overnight arrangements do not include standard beds, each staff, volunteer, and student will use single sleeping bags or blankets. In these instances a "one-person-to-one bag or blanket" rule will be observed.

## TOBACCO USE

Faith Community Church requires staff members and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products in church facilities, while in the presence of student or their parents, or during Faith Community Church activities or programs. Faith Community Church is a tobacco-free facility.

## VERBAL INTERACTIONS

Verbal interactions between staff members or volunteers and student should be positive and uplifting. Faith Community Church staff members and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of student. To this end, staff members and volunteers should not talk to student in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In addition, staff members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of student.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement**

I have received and read a copy of Faith Community Church's Student Ministry Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at Faith Community Church. Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guidelines may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by Faith Community Church. I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in my ministry position description. While, ideally, I will serve in this ministry for the full term specified in the position description, I understand that my service is volunteer and that I can choose to end this relationship at any time (if possible, by providing two weeks' notice to my supervisor). I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between Faith Community Church and me. If I am applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation for hours that I have worked. Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted. I hereby acknowledge receipt of the volunteer policies and procedures manual.

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Staff Member or Volunteer's name (please print)

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Staff Member or Volunteer's signature

Date:

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[This page to **remain attached** to the Faith Community Church Policies and Procedures.]

## Policies and Procedures Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of Faith Community Church's Student Ministry Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at Faith Community Church. Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guidelines may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by Faith Community Church. I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in my ministry position description. While, ideally, I will serve in this ministry for the full term specified in the position description, I understand that my service is volunteer and that I can choose to end this relationship at any time (if possible, by providing two weeks' notice to my supervisor). I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between Faith Community Church and me. If I am applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation for hours that I have worked. Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted. I hereby acknowledge receipt of the volunteer policies and procedures manual.

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Staff Member or Volunteer's name (please print)

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Staff Member or Volunteer's signature

Date:

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[This page to be **signed, detached and delivered** to the Faith Community Church Safety Administrator]