

Southeast Youth Group Guidelines

Romans 12:1—"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship."

Luke 9:23—"Then he said to them all: 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.'"

John 13:34-35--"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Student Involvement in SEYG

All 6th-12th grade students are invited and encouraged to participate in any programs and events in our Student Ministry. Grade promotions occur in June, so that recent 5th graders enter Jr. High, recent 8th graders enter Sr. High, and Seniors "graduate." Graduates are invited to participate in the Student Ministry during the summer after their graduation, and will then enter the college/young professionals' ministry when school starts in August.

General Guidelines

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship." Romans 12:1

- No obscene language.
- No drug, alcohol, or tobacco use.
- No weapons of any kind. This includes pocket knives, guns, ninja throwing stars, etc.
- Public display of affection with your significant other while at church functions is inappropriate. This detracts from our purpose as we meet together.
- For the safety and well being of all, every meeting and event has physical boundaries. Do not leave the event location.
- Student safety is a primary concern. Always make sure an adult knows where you are. Do not wander off by yourself. This goes for both on-site and off-site activities.
- Respect the facilities. Follow posted rules and/or verbal instructions. As an example, do not throw or kick basketballs at the doors or walls.
 - Throw trash away after you're done with it.
 - If the room is messed up while you're in it (chairs thrown about or generally made untidy), straighten it up before you leave.
- Keep a positive attitude.
- Remember that you are an ambassador for Christ and this church, and your actions and words can provide a good or bad example.

Speech

- We are not here to put others down by gossip, sarcasm, negative remarks, or name-calling. Instead we treat each other with kindness, offering words of encouragement. Youth Group is to help us better understand ourselves and God, not to criticize others.
- Any words that have a suggestive meaning behind them will also not be tolerated (example – 'that's what she said' jokes).

- Allow the person speaking to finish their thought or idea before interjecting your own. If it's not beneficial to the topic, please keep your comments for later. Don't talk just to talk.
- Youth group discussions are to remain confidential. Do not share anything heard without permission, even to members of Southeast's Youth group. They shared with you, not everyone you know. Show the same respect you'd expect.

Respecting Adult Leaders

- Adult volunteers are here to support your spiritual journey and safety. No talking back, interrupting, or disrespecting them. Students who choose to participate in Southeast's youth activities agree to follow the instructions of the leaders.
- No sleeping in class. Please go to bed at a time that will allow you to stay awake all the way through youth activities.

Dress

- Do not wear any revealing or suggestive clothes, not becoming of a Christian. No bare back, bare stomach, strapless shirts or short shorts. Underwear should be worn under your clothes (not sticking out).
- Girls will wear a shirt and shorts over their swimsuits. In the case of a one piece suit, shorts only. Shorts must extend past fingers when standing with arms at side. *You will be asked to change swimwear or asked not to participate in an SEYG event if you do not comply with the guidelines or if attire is determined to be inappropriate.*
- No offensive language or images on clothing, including hats, etc.
- If you are dressed inappropriately, you will be asked to change.

Technology

- Cell phones are to be turned off at the door. There is to be no text messaging, phone calls or any other use of phones at group. Messages may be checked after group is over.
- Unless instructed by an adult leader at the current meeting, please do not touch the electronic equipment (computer, DVD player, TV, projector, etc)
- Any other technological devices (iPods, DS's, PSP's, etc.), are to be turned off at the door.

Trip/Transportation

- When attending a youth activity that is off church property and transportation is provided by the church, students are not allowed to drive their own vehicles (unless arrangements are made in advance between the parent and youth minister).
- No student can ride with another student to and from church activities unless they are a sibling or arrangements are made between parents of teens and youth minister.
- State law requires that all passengers must wear seatbelts in all vehicles. This is especially true in all church vans.
- When a 15-passenger van is used for transportation, the last row will remain unoccupied and free of luggage. This is a safety measure to reduce the van roll-over risk.
- On trips over 6 hours from Southeast, two drivers will be required for relief and safety reasons.
- To transport teens, an individual must be 25 years old or older and have a valid driver's license.
- For overnight trips, there must be at least 1 chaperone per 7 teens of a particular gender. As an example, if there are 15 guys and 13 girls then there needs to be 3 guys adult chaperones and 2 female chaperones.

Consequences

Consequences of violating these rules will be immediate and certain.

Consequences for Disruption Behavior During Class

We gather together three times a week for a period of worship and study. We cannot allow disruptive behavior to detract from our time together and our focus on Christ. Disruptive classroom behavior will result in the following progressive consequences:

- First Occurrence: Student will receive a verbal warning from the teacher or assisting adult in the classroom.
- Second Occurrence: Student will be removed from class by an assisting adult. A private discussion should resolve the problem and the student may return to class.
- Third Occurrence: The student will be removed from class by an assisting adult and taken to their parent(s) immediately. Resolution of the issue will be determined in a meeting attended by the student, parents, youth minister and teacher prior to the student returning to the next scheduled class.

Consequences of Inappropriate Behavior While on Trips

The church assumes heavy responsibility when taking youth out of town. For the youth group to function well out of the city, obeying and respecting sponsors is essential. Disruptive or unsafe behavior on trips will not be tolerated. Disruptive and unsafe behavior includes any violation of the Youth Group Rules as well as specific rules imposed for that trip. The final authority determining of disruptive and unsafe behavior will be the Youth Minister.

Consequences will be progressive:

- First offense: Student will contact his (or her) parents to explain the problem. An adult will then speak to the parent in order to ensure that the parent understands the situation. Appropriate consequences will be enforced on the trip.
 - Example: A student intentionally disregards the physical boundaries, walks across the street to Starbucks. The student will call their parents, everyone will have a discussion. As an appropriate consequence, that student will be required to stay in close proximity to an adult chaperone for the remainder of the trip (thus having an opportunity to form a lasting relationship with the chaperone!)
- Second offense: Student will be sent home at his own expense. The student will contact his (or her) parents to explain the problem and arrange for transportation home. An adult will then speak to the parent in order to ensure that the parent understands the situation.
- Additionally, the student will not be allowed to participate in ANY SEYG activities away from the church building for a minimum of three months. Further determination of appropriate consequences will be made by the Youth Team.

Southeast Youth Group Guidelines

As a student in the Southeast Youth Group, I have prayerfully read and understand SEYG's General Conduct Code and choose to adhere to it at all SEYG functions.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

As a parent of a teen in the Southeast Youth Group, I have prayerfully read and understand SEYG's General Conduct Code. I support this Code of Conduct and expect my child to adhere to it at all times.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Guidelines for Relational Ministry

All Staff members have been interviewed and screened for permission to be in direct and weekly relationships with our students. The attached "Guidelines for Relational Ministry" is our standard of Christian integrity in our ministries.

Guidelines

- The Youth Minister, Youth Ministry Intern, or an adult volunteer (at least 21 years of age) must be present at all official youth ministry events. Depending on the size of the event and the number of teens who attend, multiple adult volunteers/chaperones will be needed. When adequate supervision is not available, the event will be cancelled. It is preferable that both male and females serve as chaperones for our events.
- We require a "Medical & Photo Release" form for each student who is participating in any out-of-town trips. These must be in the hands of the adult in charge of the trip before the student is given permission to attend. See the SEYG station outside the Worship Center for copies.

Church-Sponsored Activities

When we are participating in a church-sponsored activity, the following rules and expectations apply:

- We will do our best to stay on schedule, which includes leaving and returning from off-campus events. Usually, there will be a contact person who will inform parents if our schedule has to change (especially on out-of-town trips).
- We will do what we have planned to do, unless situations arise that require a change in plans.
- The Youth Minister assumes responsibility for transportation in the use of church vans and/or parents' vehicles unless otherwise noted. *All drivers have their riders buckle up!!* We encourage all students to participate in and ride together to events *as a group*. Students, who do not want to ride with the group, are encouraged to meet the group at the event. We want to discourage students who plan to drive themselves from meeting at the church property and following the group to the event.
- Please plan to pick up your child(ren) at the time events are concluded. For meetings at the Porters' home, students that have their own transportation are free to stay and hang out afterward until Billy and/or Alicia are ready to "kick you out." ☺
- Only approved music will be played in church-sponsored vehicles and before and after student meetings. Students can bring iPods *only* on out-of-town trips and can listen to the music of their choice. We discourage any inappropriate music brought on church-sponsored trips and will confiscate any music containing "explicit lyrics." (Remember, van rides are *great* times for students to actually interact with each other and build better friendships!)
- Coming to the church property means a student is the responsibility of the Youth Minister. Therefore, students must stay with the group and/or with adult chaperones during the times of events. We expect all students to participate in events for the entire time unless an adult sponsor is notified.
- Students are expected to behave appropriately in public. There's a difference between how we may behave (for example) at a lock-in and how we behave in a public place!
- Watching a movie means that an adult has previewed the movie first, the rating is PG-13 or better, and will be low on sexual content, violence, and language.
- Because of the need to plan YM events adequately, we have a final payment date for each event in which you can turn in payments and still attend. The date for each event will be announced at

least two weeks in advance in the Worship Guide every Sunday. *There will be NO refunds on Student Ministry event payments.*

Non-Church-Sponsored Activities

Staff members and I *love* to hang out with students outside of church-sponsored activities. The following rules and expectations would then apply:

- It is the students' responsibility to let family members know where they are, what they're doing, and when they'll be home.
- Students don't *have* to stay with the Youth Minister because he's not directly responsible for them during these times. The Youth Minister is not responsible for transportation.
- If seeing a movie or participating in any other activity, it is ultimately the students' responsibility to know what their parents consider permissible and to act accordingly.

Spiritual Counseling

The Youth Minister, Youth Ministry Intern, and any adult volunteers must give special consideration to their daily involvement with the teenagers in the 6-12 grade youth group. Special situations involving counseling, giving advice, talking with students, etc., is a vital part of youth ministry. To avoid the very appearance of impropriety, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Spiritual counseling and talk sessions should take place during church office hours and/or at a time when at least one other staff member is in the building. The counselor should always be seated behind his desk and the student should be seated in a chair across from the desk. The office window must not be obstructed in any way.
- The Youth Minister must not be involved in therapeutic counseling where professional help is needed. Examples: obvious cases of clinical depression, suicidal tendencies, deep-seated family problems, etc.
- Any youth being counseled should understand that parental notification is a possibility that the youth director will use when he feels it necessary. The student should also understand that parents and law enforcement officials will be notified of any situation that involves a criminal activity. There are only two (2) possible situations in which this policy of confidentiality will not apply: 1) any potential suicide, homicide, or physical or sexual abuse; or 2) if the information shared is of a nature that it is deemed necessary to bring parents in on the situation, such as involvement in any criminal or other activity that may result in considerable consequences for the students or other parties involved.

Billy's Personal Guidelines

I *always* want to be available to Southeast, especially to students and their families, for any spiritual guidance, suggestions, prayer requests, or questions or concerns of any kind. Please feel free to grab me at church, call me, email me, text me, or stop by the office if you would like to visit. I love to talk with you and spend time with you. Out of mutual respect, let us agree to the following:

- Feel free to call Billy any time before 9pm. However, if an emergency arises call him any time day or night.
- All teens are welcome at Billy's house, however, the following criteria must be met:
 - Please do not come over alone; there must always be more than one.
 - Female visitors must include at least one male in addition to Billy.
 - It must be before 9pm.
 - You should call in advance.