



Youth Ministry Policies and Procedures

CrossRoads Church Volunteers,

At CrossRoads Church, we take our responsibility to care for students very seriously. These guidelines are intended to facilitate a safe and nurturing environment in which students can begin and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for CrossRoads Church staff members and volunteers. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment students and volunteers while supporting the mission of CrossRoads Church to Come as you are, Contribute where you can, and Connect with a community group. 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,
CrossRoads Church Leadership

Youth Staff

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Youth Pastor

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Youth Ministries Policies and Procedures

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Overview of Volunteer Safety System

Because we love students and desire to protect them, CrossRoads Church requires all staff members and volunteers working with students (and other vulnerable populations) to complete THREE SAFETY STEPS before ministry work or volunteer placement begins.

STEP ONE: Screening Process

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

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

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

CrossRoads Church requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in student activities undergo a criminal background check. The background check must be completed before service can begin. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required.

Ministry Areas

Middle School Students

Middle School consists of 6th through 8th graders and meets weekly in the evenings. This time offers students a chance to build relationships with other students, participate in fun games, activities and engage in meaningful discussion about what it means to be in relationship with Jesus.

High School Students

High School consists of 9th through 12th graders and meets on Sunday nights. This time allows students to build relationships with other students, participate in fun games, activities and engage in meaningful discussion about what it means to be in relationship with Jesus.

Volunteer Expectations

Arrive on time

All volunteers should arrive at their assigned volunteer time.

Be prepared

Please come fully prepared and ready to go. That means lessons, readings, or whatever else is needed to present, play or teach. Also take a moment to prepare your heart for service through prayer.

Absences

If you're going to be absent, please inform the Director or Youth Pastor as soon as possible. You are needed and necessary for the function of your ministry and your communication allows leadership to find a replacement volunteer.

Phones

Volunteers should not be on their cellphones for any reason while serving, unless for ministry purposes or an emergency.

Develop

We want to foster the spiritual growth of students. We expect all volunteers and leaders to be living out CrossRoads' mission:

Come As You Are

Serving is great, but it doesn't take the place of attending a service. Stay connected to how God is leading our church by participating in Sunday morning services.

Contribute Where You Can

Christ wants his church Body to be fully resourced so the many ministries of the church can continue to expand and serve others. Be willing to ask God how he wants you to use your finances, resources and time to further His work.

Connect to a Community Group

We believe that life-change happens best in the context of relationships. This could include a small group, having an accountability partner or just getting connected to someone who will help you grow spiritually. Model for students what it looks like to be in authentic relationships.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Zero Tolerance on Abuse

CrossRoads Church has **zero tolerance for abuse** in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff and volunteer at CrossRoads Church to act in the best interest of kids in every program.

Reporting Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors

CrossRoads Church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children 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 CrossRoads Church Safety Committee and the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

The Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-362-2178 (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). *Iowa Department of Human Services*

To report suspected abuse

In the event that staff or volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their personal responsibility to immediately report their observations to the Nest Director, Kids Director, Youth Pastor, other CrossRoads Leadership, or Elders.

*If a volunteer or staff are a mandatory reporter due to their profession and are required to report suspected abuse to the proper authorities immediately, or if any staff or volunteer chooses to directly report abuse or neglect to the appropriate law enforcement agency, they must also inform church leadership. **Reporting abuse needs to occur immediately after inappropriate behaviors are observed.**

Response to Report of Abuse

All reports of abuse will be directed to The CrossRoads Church Safety Committee, which will take appropriate action on behalf of the church when a report of abuse occurs.

The Safety Committee will be comprised of the following members:

- Lead Pastor
- Associate Pastor
- Youth Pastor
- Kids Church Director
- At least one Elder

See It... Say It to Staff... Report It

Youth Ministry Safety Policies

One-on-One Interactions with Students

CrossRoads Church recognizes that meeting the emotional needs of students may occasionally require staff members and volunteers to minister to them on an individual basis. Staff Members and volunteers should observe the following guidelines when interacting with students.

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 Pastor and parent.
- In the event a closed-door meeting must occur, the student staff member or volunteer must obtain permission from the Youth Pastor and ensure the door remains unlocked.

Transportation

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

- Students should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a nonpublic place should be avoided.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one student in transport, and can only be done with parental permission.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with students while in vehicles.
- No cell phones may be utilized by the driver while driving students, unless in an emergency.

Parental Contact and Involvement

Parents who leave a student in the care of CrossRoads 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 Youth Ministry programs.

Parents are encouraged to ask about visiting any services and programs in which their student is involved at CrossRoads Church. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with Youth Ministry programs will be required to complete the CrossRoads Church volunteer application and screening process.

Physical Contact

CrossRoads Church is committed to protecting students in its care. To this end, it has implemented a 'physical contact policy' which promotes a positive, nurturing environment for our Youth Ministry program. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by anyone working or volunteering in student ministry:

- Hugging, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between staff members or volunteers and students are important for student's development and are generally suitable in the church setting.
- Inappropriate touching and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touching or displays of affection should be immediately reported to the Youth Pastor or other church leadership.
- Physical contact should be for the benefit of the student, and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.

- Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other students or student staff members and volunteers. It is much less likely that touch will be inappropriate or misinterpreted as such when physical contact is open to observation.
- Do not force any physical contact, touch or affection upon a reluctant student. A student's preference not to be touched must be respected.
- Student staff and volunteers are responsible for protecting students under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others.

Sexually-Oriented Conversations

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. Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in inappropriate sexually-oriented conversations with students.

Intoxicants

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while at any CrossRoads Church function, while traveling with students, or while working with or supervising students.

Nudity

Staff and volunteers in CrossRoads Church's student ministry should never be nude in the presence of students in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), staff member/volunteer will submit a plan to the Youth Pastor concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

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. mission trips, conferences, etc.). In the event an activity requires sleeping arrangements, staff members and volunteers will strictly observe the following rules:

- The multiple student rule must be followed, i.e. no adult will room together with a single student. Under no circumstances will an adult share a bed with a student unless that student is an immediate family member. The adult leaders present

must have previously completed CrossRoads Church's application and screening process.

- Preliminary overnight sleeping arrangements must be planned and submitted in writing to the Youth Pastor and approved by the Lead Pastor prior to the activity. Adjustments for unexpected additions or cancellations will be made as necessary.
- As long as any student is engaging in activities, one of the leaders must also be awake and monitoring students to ensure safe behavior.
- Leaders should check with parents and use good judgment regarding the screening of any and all movies.
- Appropriately modest sleeping attire must be worn.
- Boys and girls must sleep in separate rooms, properly supervised by student leaders of the same gender.
- 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.

Tobacco

CrossRoads Church requires staff and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products during church activities, and while in the presence of students or their parents.

Verbal Interactions

Verbal interactions between staff members or volunteers and students should be positive and uplifting. CrossRoads Church staff and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and be ever mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of their children.

To this end, staff members and volunteers should not talk to students 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 and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of students.

Policies and Procedures

Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of CrossRoads Church Kids and Youth 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 CrossRoads Church.

Violations of these policies, or failure to report a prohibited act, 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 church leadership.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by CrossRoads Church.

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 CrossRoads 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 policies and procedures manual.

Staff Member or Volunteer's name (please print)

Staff Member or Volunteer's signature

Date