

Suggested Guidelines for Youth Ministry

These are guidelines recommended by the Diocese of Atlanta Youth Department. They are intended for youth in grades 6-12. The purpose is to protect youth, the adults who work with them and the Church.

- The ratio for adults to youth are as followed:
 - 1 to 10 for daytime youth group activities
 - 1 to 7 for daytime youth group activities that require travel
 - 1 to 5 for overnight events
- There should be at least 2 adults present at any youth event.
- The gender of adults should match that of the youth.
- Adults are expected to complete the Safeguarding Gods Children Training.
- Adults (25 or older) with a current license and proof of insurance should be allowed to drive youth.
- No adult should be alone in private with a youth. If it is necessary for a youth and adult to have a private conversation, it should be done in a public and visible place.
- On trips, adults should either have separate shower facilities or shower at other times than the youth. Separate dressing facilities should also be provided.
- On trips and at overnights, every youth and adult should be able to have at least eight hours of sleep each 24 hour period.
- A Community Covenant should be signed and honored by all youth and adults at events. These standards of behavior should prohibit the use and possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco products and weapons. They should also prohibit acts of violence and sexual activity.
- Each event should require a permission form (with a parent/guardian's signature for their youth to participate), a medical information and release form (listing food/drug allergies, health insurance information, emergency contact information and a parent/guardian's signed permission for their youth to be treated for emergencies) and a media release form (with youth and parent/guardian's signature)
- Keep a stocked first aid kit at all events
- Be sure to document all incidents (medical and behavioral) in writing.
- Any suspicious behavior or allegation of abuse or neglect of a youth must be reported.
- Alcohol must not be present at a youth event. Events that take place where adults and youth are present together should have non alcoholic drinks available.

Example #1 of an Event Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please check the appropriate space: Youth: _____ Adult: _____

Grade: _____ Gender: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Birth date: _____ Parish: _____

Parent/Guardian name: _____

Phone: H: _____ W: _____

C: _____

Medical Information/History

Date of last Tetanus Booster: _____

Please list any current medications, pertinent medical conditions, allergies, physical limitations, dietary or health requirements, etc..

Name of Insurance Company: _____

Policy Number: _____ Phone Number: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Medical Treatment Release

_____, my daughter/son has my permission to participate in the *event name*. If I can not be reached by telephone in case of an emergency, I authorize such medical treatment as necessary and such additional procedures as are considered necessary during the course of medical examination.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please give an emergency contact other than the parent/guardian listed above. If the parent/guardian can not be reached the emergency person will be contacted.

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

Community Covenant (for Youth and Adults)

- No use of or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco products, fireworks, firearms or any other kind of weapons.
- No touching or exposure of breast, buttocks or genitalia.
- No one may enter the sleeping area of the opposite sex.
- Every participant-youth and adult-is expected to be at all planned activities.
- All participants will treat others with respect and not use behavior in a manner disruptive or harmful to the community or facility.

I, _____ agree to live by the community norms while attending *event name*. I understand that violation of any of these norms will result in being sent home at my expense.

Signature of Participant-Adult and/or youth: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Media Release

"I hereby give my consent to all photographs, audio recordings, academic work, and/or video recordings taken of me or my minor child by staff or their designee. I understand that any such photographs, audio recordings, academic work, and/or video recordings become the property of *event name or Church* and may be used by the parish, diocese, or others with their consent, for educational, instructional, or promotional purposes determined by the Diocesan Youth Coordinator and/or other leaders in the Youth Ministry in broadcast and media formats now existing or created in the future, including print and audiovisual presentations."

Signature of Participant-Adult and/or youth: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____