



Student Ministry
Policies and Procedures



Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to Cypress Methodist Church!

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

This handbook provides a general overview of procedures and guidelines for Cypress Methodist Church staff members and volunteers providing services to students from 6th through 12th grades. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for students.

After you have carefully read these policies, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page. If you have questions, please contact the Cypress Youth Director.

Sincerely,

Cypress Methodist Church Leadership



Cypress Methodist Church Student Ministry Policies & Procedures

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Overview of the Cypress Methodist Church Safety System

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

STEP ONE: 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 TWO: Screening Process

Staff members and volunteers are required to complete the Cypress Methodist Church Screening Process, which includes:

- Safety Application
- Face-to-Face Interview
- Reference Checks

**A volunteer must attend Cypress Methodist Church services for six months before being eligible to serve in positions with access to children, students or vulnerable populations.*

STEP THREE: Background Check

Cypress Methodist Church requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in children or student activities or programming undergo a Background Check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of Background Check may be required. Individuals who have committed sexually-oriented or sex-related crimes may not serve in any area providing services to children or students. In addition, certain other past criminal acts *may* preclude an applicant from serving minors.

The policy segment above is intended to clearly identify for an applicant with inappropriate motives the barriers to gaining access to children or students at Cypress Methodist Church. In addition, the segment describes measures meant to equip staff members and volunteers to recognize abuser characteristics and behavior, as well as reporting requirements. These policy segments provide an **opt-out opportunity for would-be abusers.*



Student Safety Policy

ABUSE TOLERANCE

Cypress Methodist Church supports and maintains a **zero tolerance** policy concerning child abuse and neglect. It is a violation of Texas law for any staff member or volunteer to physically, sexually, or emotionally abuse or neglect any student participating in Cypress Methodist Church programs. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at Cypress Methodist Church to act in the best interest of all students in every program.

In the event that staff members 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 their immediate Supervisor, the Student Director or the Senior Pastor.

Designations may vary depending on the size, structure or reporting relationships within a church. This segment should identify the position or title of the individual to whom staff members or volunteers are to report.

*Note: In some states, mandatory reporting to law enforcement or child protective services is a **NON-DELEGABLE DUTY** for teachers, school staff members and school administrators. In other words, telling a supervisor or principal does **NOT** fulfill the mandatory reporting obligation.*

*In several states, employers **MAY NOT require** an employee to notify a supervisor or employer of the occurrence of a mandatory report.*

KNOW YOUR STATE'S LAW!

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

Cypress Methodist Church staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all Cypress Methodist Church policies. Anyone working with children or students at Cypress Methodist Church is subject to the supervision and evaluation of the ministry staff members and must follow these guidelines. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from a position in Student Ministry – for both staff members and volunteers. Final decisions related to policy violations will be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor and the Board of Stewards.



These positions or titles may vary depending on the structure or reporting relationships within a church body.

Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

Cypress Methodist 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 local law enforcement (or Child Protective Services) and the Cypress Methodist Church Safety Committee Chair.

An element of the safe environment referenced above includes the fostering of a culture of reporting relevant information to a supervisor or a member of the Cypress Methodist Church Safety Committee. Because sexual abusers 'groom' students for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a student for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report *grooming* behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor or a member of the Cypress Methodist Church Safety Committee.

REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY

In order to maintain a safe environment for our students, Cypress Methodist 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 an immediate Supervisor in the Ministry area, the Student Pastor, or the Senior Pastor.

These positions or titles may vary depending on the structure or reporting relationships within the church body.

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the church to be harmful to a student will be immediately suspended from participation in Cypress Methodist Church Student Ministry. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement, Child Protective agencies or Cypress Methodist Church.



Any person found to have committed a prohibited act should be precluded from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children, students or vulnerable populations at Cypress Methodist Church. If the person is a staff member, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from Cypress Methodist Church.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination (staff member) or removal (volunteer). Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children, students or vulnerable populations at Cypress Methodist Church.

Staff members and volunteers should discuss immediately with their supervisor any inappropriate action or breaking of this policy and will seek counsel from the church leadership and attorney, if needed.

REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

We report all suspected or alleged abuse or neglect of children and students to local law enforcement or the Texas Child Protective Services Emergency Response Hotline:

1-800-252-5400

Because many adults are unfamiliar with Texas reporting requirements and may be fearful of the process, Cypress Methodist Church utilizes a 'tandem or dual report' model, where permitted. A 'dual report' occurs when a Cypress Methodist Church supervisor reports the suspicion or allegation *together* with the individual who saw, heard or received information causing him or her to suspect abuse or neglect.

THIS PRACTICE IS NOT REQUIRED, OR INTENDED TO INHIBIT ANY STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER FROM REPORTING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT, CPS OR THE ABUSE HOTLINE *DIRECTLY*. Instead, it is meant to facilitate reporting, protect children and students, and support individuals who may not feel able or willing to report alone.



NO PERMISSION IS NEEDED from Cypress Methodist Church before reporting to law enforcement personnel or the Child Abuse Hotline. In addition, a report may be made without involving or informing Cypress Methodist Church personnel.

While not required by state law, please report all suspicions of child abuse or neglect (or any inappropriate or 'grooming' behaviors of a colleague or coworker) to an immediate supervisor or a member of the Cypress Methodist Church Safety Committee. This request is intended to assist the church in properly protecting students involved in Cypress Methodist Church programs.

When in doubt, report.

State reporting requirements vary state by state. Research your state's law for specific reporting requirements for your church.

NOTE: A church should never investigate as a condition of reporting.

Safety Committee

SAFETY COMMITTEE

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for children and students, Cypress Methodist Church will appoint and maintain a Safety Committee, which will meet once each quarter.

The purpose of the Safety Committee is to enable the Cypress Methodist Church Student Ministry 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:

- the Senior Pastor
- Student Director

**These positions or titles may vary depending on the structure or reporting relationships within a church body.*



RESPONSIBILITIES

The Safety Committee will be charged with the following duties:

1. Applying existing Cypress Methodist Church Policies and Procedures related to student safety and risk management issues.
2. Monitoring all Student Ministry programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
3. Making recommendations to the Board of Stewards regarding safety issues.

Student Ministry Staff Monitoring Plan

BUILDING SAFETY

Every ministry supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the ministry program area is monitored during youth programming. No student will ever be left unattended in a ministry area during regular programming, class or activities. All students should be easily observable during regular programming, class or activities.

SUPERVISION

Only screened church staff members, screened volunteers, and students are allowed in areas where ministry to students is occurring. All other adults should be asked for identification and immediately escorted out of the area. If questions or concerns arise related to any person in the area, a ministry supervisor or security team member should be notified immediately.

Two trained, screened adults should supervise students at all times.

Cypress Methodist Church practices the *Two Adult Rule* which requires a reasonable number of adult leaders (with a minimum of two) to be maintained when supervising students. A married couple or two family members comprise *one adult* for the purposes of compliance with the *Two Adult Rule*.

Avoid being alone with an individual student in any room or during any ministry program. If one supervising adult must leave a group of students, another staff member or volunteer must be notified so that the *Two Adult Rule* can be followed.

If two individuals serving in a room are related to one another, a third unrelated staff member or volunteer must be present.



If an unusual circumstance occurs and you find yourself alone with a single student, move to a room or building occupied by others or to a location easily observed by others. (For example, if a student is the last in a class to be picked up by a parent, move to an adjoining room where other staff members or volunteers are present.)

If you need to talk with a student alone, do it in the hallway or a highly visible area, or have another leader with you.

Avoid distractions that would impact your ability to effectively supervise students and maintain situational awareness (i.e., cell phone use, wearing headphones, etc.). After every ministry event, ensure that every room, area and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

WORKER-TO-STUDENT RATIOS

Cypress Methodist Church is committed to providing appropriate supervision in all Student Ministry programs. Accordingly, the following worker-to-student **minimum ratios** will be observed:

Students	Workers
1 - 10	at least 2 staff members or volunteers (Two Adult Rule)
11 - 29	at least 2 staff members or volunteers
30+	at least 3 staff members or volunteers

**The above ratios are MinistrySafe minimum recommendations.
Where supervision is concerned, more is generally better.*

If a worker is 'out of ratio' it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the program supervisor or the Student Director. Supervisors will make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to immediately bring ratios into compliance with Church policy.

Communicating with Families

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are invited to observe all programs and activities in which their student is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing



contact with their student's programs at Cypress Methodist Church will be required to complete the Cypress Methodist Church volunteer application and screening process.

Parents who leave a student in the care of Cypress Methodist 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 Ministry programs.

Disciplinary Policies

DISCIPLINE

It is Cypress Methodist Church's policy that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of students.

No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes the use of any physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors.

Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to parents and a Student Ministry staff member. Any behavior problems will be handled in the following sequence:

1. The student will be asked to correct the behavior.
2. A staff member will talk with the student to discuss the problem behavior.
3. Parents will be notified of discipline or behavior problems.
4. The student will not be allowed to attend a ministry event. (This is a final measure, but not desired.)

NEVER...

- Yell at a student.
- Grab a student.
- Threaten a student. Always follow through with your word.
- Hit a student.
- Confront a parent in front of others.
- Openly humiliate a student in front of their peers.

If a student is unruly or fails to comply with verbal warnings or instructions, 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. Any damage to property will be reported to parents,



who will be responsible for repairs, including damage incurred at off-campus ministry events.

In the event of a fight or physical altercation, verbally redirect those involved and avoid physical intervention unless necessary for the safety of *other* students. In these instances, staff members and volunteers are allowed to restrain a student with appropriate physical force, as needed.

BULLYING

Verbal, physical or emotional bullying is not acceptable in Cypress Methodist Church ministry programs.

At the first sign of bullying in any form, act decisively and inform your ministry supervisor. There is no *harmless put-down* where bullying is concerned.

1. *First Offense*: Issue a warning to the student and a general reminder to the group that this kind of interaction is inappropriate. Try not to embarrass or chastise.
2. *Second Offense*: Pull the offending student(s) from the group (in a seen or supervised location) and discuss the inappropriate interaction or behavior. Set clear parameters and behavioral goals. Let the student know that the next step is communication with a pastor and the student's parents. Notify an immediate supervisor of ANY signs of bullying or verbal abuse.
 - a. Privately, but with another adult present, confirm that a student who was the target of the bullying behaviors is not in danger of continued harassment and is physically and emotionally stable. **DO NOT SINGLE A STUDENT OUT IN FRONT OF THE GROUP** – be discreet.
3. *Third Offense*: Send the student to a pastor or ministry supervisor for a phone call (or communication onsite) with his or her parent(s) and possible removal from the activity or event.

Restroom Policies

Be aware if a student repeatedly leaves to use the restroom and stays there for unusual periods of time. Report this behavior to a supervisor. In public contexts, send students to use the restroom in groups of at least three, when possible.



During regular meeting times, designate 'student only' restrooms, prop the restroom doors open, and designate a hall monitor outside the restroom area to monitor restroom use. Utilize *verbal supervision*, outside the restroom door, when necessary.

Verbal Interactions with Students

Verbal interactions between staff members or volunteers and students should be positive and uplifting. Cypress Methodist Church staff members and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, and mindful of our mission to aid parents in students' spiritual growth and development.

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 members and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing in the presence of students.

One-To-One Interactions with Students

Meeting the emotional or spiritual needs of students may occasionally involve interaction on an individual basis. Please observe the following guidelines when interacting with minors:

The Two Adult Rule should be diligently followed during ministry programs. Do not interact *alone* with an individual student in any room or building. In the event you find yourself alone with a single student, move to a room or area occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others.

One-to-one meetings with an individual student must occur at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed. *Example:* If a student desires additional conversation after regular programming has concluded, move to an adjoining room where other staff members or volunteers are present, or into a public space.

Never hold a one-to-one meeting with a student who is the opposite gender.

If a closed-door meeting must occur, it should occur on church property, with a second adult present. The door must remain unlocked, and any window treatments *open*.



Any ongoing meetings with students (such as counseling, one-to-one discipleship, etc.) should be discussed with a Student Ministry staff member, and should comply with the Two Adult Rule OR occur in a public, easily observed location.

Staff members and adult volunteers may not date (or have *any* sort of romantic interaction with) students in the Student Ministry.

Sexually Oriented Conversations

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with students and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any student in the program.

However, it is expected that student ministry discussions and lessons may occasionally address issues related to purity, dating, sex and human sexuality. These lessons will convey the church's views on these topics to the students.

Students may have questions/struggles in this area and desire to confide in a trusted adult leader for guidance. Proceed with great caution, teaching with sensitivity and from a biblical perspective.

- Avoid discussing anything of a sexual nature with students of the opposite gender.
- If a student's questions or comments on a sexual matter become too detailed or explicit in a group setting, the leader should use discretion and set up another time to meet with this student. For any follow-up meeting: inform a Student Ministry staff member *first*, comply with the Two Adult Rule OR meet in a public, easily observed location.
- When in doubt as to whether a conversation could be interpreted as a "sexually oriented conversation," treat the conversation as such and follow this policy. When possible, clarify the question/topic with a Student Ministry staff member.



Sexually Oriented Materials

Staff members and volunteers in the Student Ministry at Cypress Methodist Church are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, etc.) on church property or in the presence of students.

Physical Contact

Appropriate touch is needed and encouraged, but it is vital that staff members and volunteers do not blur or cross the lines. In light of this, the following guidelines should be observed:

- Physical contact in any form should be above reproach, for the benefit of the student, and never based upon *your* emotional needs.
- Physical contact in any form should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The personal behavior of staff members or volunteers in the Student Ministry must foster trust at all times.
- Pat a hand, shoulder or back in an encouraging manner.
- Side hugs: in public view and kept brief. When hugging someone of the opposite gender, hugs should be limited to side hugs.
- Look for opportunities to give plenty of “high fives” and “fist bumps”, unless this makes a student feel uncomfortable.
- Shake hands, or briefly put an arm around the student’s shoulder.

AVOID the following interactions:

- A sexual relationship with a student is never acceptable.
- Never touch a student in sensitive areas (breasts, buttocks, genitals) even if a student has been injured in one of these areas. Never allow casual contact in these areas, under or over clothing.
- No sitting on laps.
- No hand-holding, unless part of a worship/prayer service or a group game.
- Never touch in anger or disgust.
- Never touch in a manner that may be construed as sexually suggestive.



- Avoid touching a student between the navel and the knees.
- Never carry a student piggy-back, or on your shoulders.
- Never kiss a student, or give (or receive) a massage.
- Never place hands beneath a student's clothing to play, rub, or comfort.
- Never tickle, participate in 'horse-play' or wrestle with a student.

Do not force physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant student. A student's preference *not* to be touched must be respected.

Physical affection should occur only in observable locations or when in the presence of others. It is much less likely that touch will be misinterpreted when physical contact is open to observation.

Staff members and volunteers are responsible for protecting students under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others, including other students.

Inappropriate touch and inappropriate displays of affection are forbidden. Any inappropriate physical contact, touch or display of affection should be immediately reported to an immediate supervisor, the Student Director or the Senior Pastor.

Any inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse by a staff member or volunteer must be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor, the Student Director or the Senior Pastor.

Electronic Communication

All communication with students must be above reproach and indicative of healthy boundaries. As with any communication, the content of any electronic communication should be readily available to share with ministry leadership or a parent.

TEXTING

Texting between staff members/volunteers and students is permissible only as outlined below.



In general, texts should occur in 'group' form, whenever possible. Though students may reply individually, make every effort to text in group form and encourage replies to the group. When possible, staff members should send and receive texts using a ministry-provided device or account.

Prudent judgment must be used in the timing and content of texts. **Do not text before 7:00 am or after 10:00 pm** unless the texting occurs as part of a programmed ministry activity.

Avoid discussion of ANY sexual topic via texts.

It is not permissible to text photos or videos to a student. Likewise, it is not permissible to request photos or videos from a student.

No one-to-one texting communication may occur with a student of the opposite gender.

COMMUNICATION APPLICATIONS

It is permissible for the Student Ministry to use applications that have messaging features – using a Student Ministry account. At least one other staff member must have credentials to access the application and regularly review the messaging, comments and postings.

It is not permissible for staff members to use personal accounts to direct message students. All group and direct messaging to/from students should be above reproach, available for supervisory access and originate from the Student Ministry account – not a personal account.

In the event a student direct messages a staff member's personal account, the staff member will transfer the thread to the Student Ministry account if a reply is necessary. All students will be counseled to direct communication to the Student Ministry account.

Staff members and volunteers should avoid discussion of ANY sexual topic via social media.

It is not permissible for staff members or volunteers to send photos or videos to a student, or to request photos or videos from a student.



Staff members and volunteers may not comment or reply to a student's post that is inappropriate or questionable.

All interactions should be above reproach and reflect the integrity and values of Cypress Methodist Church Student Ministry.

Staff members and volunteers may not post inappropriate or off-color content, or comment on inappropriate or off-color posts. When in doubt, treat a post as inappropriate.

No one-to-one social media communication may occur with a student of the opposite gender.

The use of Snapchat (or other similar applications designed for communication to disappear) with students is not permitted.

Applications that allow anonymous messaging are not permissible.

'HOOK-UP' APPLICATIONS

Though the use of dating applications is commonplace and acceptable, staff members and volunteers are prohibited from participating in applications intended to facilitate sexual encounters.

PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA

Staff members and volunteers must maintain a high moral standard in social media presence. Inappropriate social media content may be a basis for suspension from participation in Cypress Methodist Church's Student Ministry. Please be cautious about the content of the posts on your personal social media. Please ensure that photos or videos posted on social media reflect Cypress Methodist Church guidelines related to alcohol, tobacco and modesty (dress, posture and content).

Tobacco Use

Cypress Methodist Church requires staff members and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products in church facilities, while in the presence of students or their parents, or during Cypress Methodist Church activities or programs, whether on campus or away. Cypress Methodist Church is a tobacco-free facility.



Intoxicants

Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug while in any Cypress Methodist Church facility, while traveling with students, or while working with or supervising students during any Cypress Methodist Church program or activity.



Nudity

Staff members and volunteers in Cypress Methodist Church's Student Ministry should never be nude in the presence of students. 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.), a staff member/volunteer will submit a plan to the Student Director concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

Physical Appearance

Please dress in modest, comfortable attire. Please do not wear thin-strapped shirts or low cut shirts while serving. First impressions are important; please take this into consideration while serving. Please:

- No revealing swimsuits
- No revealing/form-fitting clothes
- No shirts with low necklines or that show midriff
- No short dresses, skirts or shorts

Medication

Do not administer medication of any kind to any student while serving in ministry programs, including 'over-the-counter' drugs. For certain trips or activities (i.e., mission trips, beach/ski retreats), Cypress Methodist Church will bring a medical professional who will dispense appropriate medications consistent with other policies and signed parent permission forms.

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 ministry workers are involved in the transportation of students:

- Students should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place must be avoided.



- Staff members and volunteers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one student in transport.
- Staff members and volunteers should avoid physical contact with students while in vehicles.
- Absent an emergency, **drivers may not use cell phones** while transporting minors (other than navigation applications for directions). In an emergency, stop the vehicle to use the cell phone, unless a stop cannot safely occur. Texting or other cell phone use is strictly prohibited while driving.
- No drivers under age 25 may drive Cypress Methodist Church owned or rented vehicles.
- In transportation, the TWO ADULT RULE or *RULE OF THREE* must be followed.
- Never be alone in a vehicle with a student of the opposite sex.
- Never instruct a student to drive other students to a ministry event.
- Transport only the number of students for whom you have seatbelts.
- Seatbelts should be worn at all times while in the vehicle.
- No one should be double-buckled.
- Use extra caution when driving students.

Out-of-Program Contact with Students

Cypress Methodist Church safety standards established to protect students and ensure healthy relationships should be respected *outside* ministry programs as well. In addition to ministry safety standards, the following policies should be respected in all interactions with students occurring *outside* ministry programs.

- Never be alone with a minor in an unobserved context or location.
- Limit connections by gender. Do not initiate or maintain contact with students of the opposite gender.
- Any dating or sexual relationship of any kind with a minor is strictly prohibited.
- **Never** spend the night at a student's home or invite a student to spend the night at your home.
- Do not spend the night in an 'away' location with any student (vacation, etc.).



Planning Group Events

When planning a group event outside of regular programming, volunteer leaders should keep parents and staff members informed of details and abide by Cypress Methodist Church policies. Some events may require a release form.

OVERNIGHT EVENTS

Some Student Ministry activities/events require overnight sleeping arrangements for students, staff members and volunteers (i.e., camp, mission trips, etc.). All programmed overnights must be approved by a ministry supervisor and receive permission from parents. No overnights are allowed on Cypress Methodist Church property unless part of a ministry-sponsored event.

No overnight between any church staff member or volunteer and an *unrelated* minor may occur in any context. If pre-existing family relationships exist wherein overnights may occur between 'family friends', these relationships must be communicated to a ministry supervisor.

For each overnight event, Student Ministry staff members must create a safety plan that will supplement this policy document to provide specific student protection steps unique to the event (activity, travel, location, other groups present).



Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of Cypress Methodist Church Student Ministry Policies and Procedures and understand the importance of the material in the manual. I understand and agree to abide by these policies while serving or working at Cypress Methodist Church.

I understand the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by Cypress Methodist Church.

I have reviewed the duties listed in my ministry position description, and I agree to fulfill these duties. I understand I may choose to end my employment or voluntary service at Cypress Methodist Church at any time (if possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor).

I acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this manual in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between Cypress Methodist Church and me. If applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no monetary compensation for hours worked.

I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed.

I acknowledge receipt of the Cypress Methodist Church policies and procedures manual.

Staff member or volunteer name (please print)

Staff member or volunteer signature

Date

This page is to be signed delivered to the Student Director. youth@cypressmc.org