



all SOULS

CHARLOTTESVILLE

YOUTH MINISTRY
POLICIES

WELCOME

Dear Youth Ministry Volunteer,

Welcome to All Souls Cville!

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

The pages of this handbook provide a general overview of procedures and guidelines for volunteers and staff members providing services to youth from 6th through 12th grades at All Souls Cville. Our policies are intended to create a safe environment for children and students, protecting students, you, and the mission of All Souls Cville.

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 your ministry director.

Thank you for serving, loving and protecting our students.

Sincerely,

All Souls Cville Staff

ALL SOULS CVILLE YOUTH MINISTRY SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Contents:

- Overview of Safety System4
- Youth Safety Policy5
- Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse6
- Safety Committee7
- Youth Ministry Monitoring Plan8
- Child Safety Measures8
- Parental Involvement.....9
- Disciplinary Policies9
- Restroom Policies11
- Employee/Volunteer Policies11
- Electronic Communication.....14
- Transportation16
- Out-of-Program Contact with Students.....16
- Planning Events for Groups.....17
- Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement18

OVERVIEW OF THE ALL SOULS CVILLE YOUTH MINISTRY SAFETY SYSTEM

Because we desire to protect students involved in our ministries, all volunteers and staff members must complete the All Souls Cville screening process, including a background check. All volunteers must be approved by the student ministry staff in order to serve.

STEP ONE: Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

All staff members and volunteers should have a basic understanding of the characteristics of sexual abusers and their behaviors in “grooming” a child for sexual abuse. Grooming is the process used by an abuser to select a child, win the child’s trust (and the trust of the child’s parent or ‘gatekeeper’), manipulate the child into sexual activity and keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip All Souls Cville staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, All Souls Cville requires all staff members and child-serving volunteers to complete MinistrySafe’s Sexual Abuse Awareness Training (live or online at www.MinistrySafe.com). This training will be renewed every two years.

STEP TWO: Screening Process

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

- Complete an Employment Application (employees only)
- Complete the Background Check (employees and volunteers)
- Complete a face-to-face interview (employees and volunteers)

A volunteer must attend All Souls Cville for six months before being eligible to serve in volunteer positions providing access to children, students, or vulnerable populations. This amount of time can be shortened or lengthened at the discretion of the Director of Youth Formation and the Senior Pastor.

STEP THREE: Policies & Procedures

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

STEP FOUR: Criminal Background Check

All staff members and volunteers working with children must undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon the ministry position, differing levels or intensity of criminal 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 minors. In addition, certain other past criminal acts *may* preclude an applicant from serving minors.

YOUTH SAFETY POLICY

ABUSE TOLERANCE

All Souls Cville supports and maintains a **zero tolerance** policy concerning child abuse and neglect. It is a violation of Virginia State law for any volunteer or staff member to physically, sexually, or emotionally abuse or neglect any child participating in All Souls Cville programs.

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

Student ministries maintains the highest standards in order to protect both the volunteers and students in our ministry. Anyone working with children or students at All Souls Cville is subject to the supervision and evaluation of the ministry staff and must follow these guidelines. Staff members and volunteers in supervisory positions must diligently enforce all policies.

All Souls Cville staff reserves the right to dismiss volunteers who fail to follow the policies and guidelines.

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

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

Any person found to have violated this policy may be prohibited from future participation in all activities and programming involving minors. If the person is an employee, such conduct may result in termination of employment.

Failure to report a policy violation is grounds for termination of an employee. Volunteers who fail to report a policy violation may be restricted from participation in any future activities involving minors at All Souls Cville.

Staff members and volunteer leaders 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 ABUSE OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

All Souls Cville is committed to protecting the students in this ministry from any form of abuse. All Souls Cville has a Zero-Tolerance Policy that prohibits any act of sexual, emotional or physical abuse. This zero-tolerance policy requires all All Souls Cville employees and volunteer leaders (those who work directly with students) to immediately report any occurrence (or suspected occurrence) of child abuse to a member of our staff. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to Child Protective Services or criminal law enforcement.

Because sexual abusers ‘groom’ children for abuse, it is possible that a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to groom a child for sexual abuse. Please report ‘grooming’ behavior, policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to an immediate supervisor, such that the church may take appropriate action to safeguard children in the program.

REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

We report all suspected or alleged abuse or neglect of children to the Virginia Department of Family and Protective Services.

Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

Because many adults are unfamiliar with Virginia reporting requirements and may be fearful of the process, All Souls Cville utilizes a ‘tandem or dual report’ model, where permitted. A ‘dual report’ occurs when an All Souls Cville 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 OR CPS DIRECTLY. Instead, it is meant to facilitate reporting, protect children and support individuals who may not feel able or willing to report alone.

NO PERMISSION IS NEEDED from All Souls Cville before reporting to law enforcement personnel or the Child Abuse Hotline. In addition, a report may be made without involving or informing All Souls Cville 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 All Souls Cville Elder Board. This request is intended to assist the church in properly protecting children involved in All Souls Cville programs.

When in doubt, report.

SAFETY COMMITTEE

SAFETY COMMITTEE

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for children, All Souls Cville will appoint and maintain a Safety Committee, which will meet once each quarter.

The purpose of the Safety Committee is to enable All Souls Cville Children'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:

- + The Senior Pastor
- + The Director of Children's Formation
- + The Associate Pastor

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Safety Committee will be charged with the following duties:

1. Applying existing All Souls Cville policies and procedures related to children's safety and risk management issues.

2. Monitoring all Children's Ministries programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
3. Making recommendations to the All Souls Cville Board of Elders regarding safety issues.

YOUTH MINISTRY 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 activity. All students should be easily observable during regular programming, class or activity. Cameras are placed in classrooms and throughout the building. Footage is periodically reviewed for safety.

SUPERVISION

Only screened ministry volunteers, church staff members, 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 Adult Rule, and the Rule of Three:

Two Adult Rule - Two trained, screened adults are present to supervise students during youth events. If two individuals serving in a room are related to one another, a third unrelated volunteer or staff member must be present. This rule is our preference at all times.

Rule of Three - We recognize that occasionally it might be necessary for one trained, screened adult to be in a room with at least two students. In this case, we encourage the volunteer to meet in a public space. Keep doors open and window treatments open.

A single adult volunteer should never be alone with an individual student.

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. (Example: if a middle school 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., use of cell phones, wearing headphones).

STAFF MEMBER / VOLUNTEER TO STUDENT RATIO

All Souls Cville is committed to providing appropriate supervision in all ministry programs. Accordingly, the following worker-to-student **minimum ratios** will be observed:

1 - 10 students	at least 2 staff members or volunteers (2 adult rule)
11 - 29 students	at least 2 staff members or volunteers
30+ students	at least 3 staff members or volunteers

SECURITY

After every ministry programming event, ensure that every room, area and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES

Parents have an open invitation 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 program will be required to complete the All Souls Cville volunteer application and screening process.

PARENTAL CONTACT

Parents will be contacted if a student becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in ministry programs.

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

DISCIPLINE

No physical discipline may be used for behavior management of students, including spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, biting or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors.

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 leaders are allowed to restrain a student with appropriate physical force, as needed. 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.)

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 of property will be reported to parents, who will be responsible for repairs, including damage incurred at off-campus ministry events.

BULLYING

Verbal, physical or emotional bullying is not acceptable in All Souls Cville 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 for a phone call to his or her parents and possible removal from the trip, camp 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.

EMPLOYEE / VOLUNTEER POLICIES

TOBACCO USE

Please abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products in church facilities, while in the presence of students or their parents, or during All Souls Cville ministry activities or programs, whether on campus or away. All Souls Cville 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 church facility, while traveling with students, or while working with or supervising minors during any All Souls Cville program or activity.

NUDITY

Never be nude in the presence of students in ministry programs. In the event a situation arises that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc.), the staff member or volunteer leading the event will submit a plan to the ministry supervisor concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

All volunteers, regardless of age or gender are asked to please dress in modest, comfortable attire.

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* or *Rule of Three* 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.

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 volunteer leaders 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 from time to time student ministry discussions and lessons may address issues related to chastity, dating, and sex.

- 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

Sexually oriented materials (images or videos) are prohibited on church property or in the presence of students participating in any ministry program.

PHYSICAL INTERACTION / APPROPRIATE DISPLAYS OF AFFECTIONS

Appropriate touch is needed and encouraged, but it is vital that staff members and volunteer leaders 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.
- Any physical contact requires consent. Your personal behavior must foster trust at all times.
 - Pat a hand, shoulder or back in an encouraging manner.
 - Side hugs: in public view and kept brief.
 - Look for opportunities to give plenty of “high fives” and “fist bumps”, unless this makes a student feel uncomfortable.
 - Shake hands, or put an arm around the student’s shoulder, briefly.

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, except in cases of necessary restraint for the protection of the child or others.

A student’s preference *not* to be touched must be respected.

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

VERBAL INTERACTION

Verbal interaction with students should be positive and uplifting. All verbal interaction should be encouraging, constructive, and mindful of our mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of students.

To this end, do not talk to students in a way that is or could be construed as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Do not swear in the presence of students.

In general, verbal interaction should occur in a location where others may observe what is happening. At no time should a student and adult disappear behind a closed door, or interact in an area which cannot be seen by others.

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 the student ministry leader or a parent.

TEXTING

Texting between ministry leaders and students is permissible only as outlined below.

In general, texts should occur in 'group' form, whenever possible. Though students will often reply individually, make effort to text in group form and encourage replies to the group. When possible, ministry leaders should send and receive texts using a ministry-provided device/account.

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

Do not share photos and/or videos of a sexual or suggestive nature.

Avoid discussion of ANY sexual topic via texts.

Do not post inappropriate or off-color content, or comment on inappropriate or off-color posts. When in doubt, treat a post as inappropriate.

No social media communication may occur between a volunteer or staff member and a single student on a non-All Souls account. As much as possible, avoid texting with an individual student.

COMMUNICATION APPLICATIONS

It is permissible for the ministry to use applications that have messaging features (i.e., Instagram, Facebook Messenger) – a ministry account. At least one other ministry leader must have credentials to access the application and regularly review the messaging, comments and postings.

It is not permissible for ministry leaders 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 a ministry account – not a personal account.

In the event a student direct messages a ministry leader's personal account, the ministry leader will transfer the thread to the ministry account for reply, if necessary. All students will be counseled to direct communication to the ministry account.

Avoid discussion of ANY sexual topic via social media.

Do not comment or reply to a student's post that is inappropriate or questionable. All interaction should be above reproach and reflect the integrity and values of All Souls Cville Student Ministry.

The use of Snapchat (or other similar applications) with students is not permitted.
The use of Houseparty (or other similar applications) with students is not permitted.

Applications that allow anonymous messaging are not permissible.

'HOOK-UP' APPLICATIONS

Though the use of relationship applications are commonplace and acceptable, Ministry leaders are prohibited from participating in Meet & Date or Meet & Chat applications (those applications intended to facilitate sexual encounters).

PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA

As a ministry leader, maintain a high moral standard in your social media presence. Inappropriate social media content may be a basis for suspension from participation in

student ministry at All Souls Cville. 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 All Souls Cville ministry guidelines related to alcohol, tobacco and modesty (dress, posture and content).

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.
- Avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one student in transport.
- Avoid physical contact with students while in vehicles.
- Absent an emergency, **cell phones may not be used by drivers** 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 All Souls Cville owned or rented vehicles.
- In transportation, the TWO ADULT RULE or 'RULE OF 3' must be followed.
- Avoid transporting a single student.
- 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

All Souls Cville 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.
- Any dating or sexual relationship of any kind with a minor is strictly prohibited.

PLANNING EVENTS FOR GROUPS

When planning a group event outside of regular programming, volunteer leaders should keep parents and staff members informed of details and abide by All Souls Cville 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 All Souls Cville 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 must create a child safety plan that will supplement this policy document to provide specific child protection steps unique to the event (activity, travel, location, other groups present).

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), All Souls Cville will collaborate with families to put together a plan for dispensing appropriate medications consistent with other policies and signed parent permission forms.

Policies and Procedures

Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement

This page is to be signed, detached, and delivered to the Ministry Supervisor.

Staff members and volunteer leaders are required to read and understand this student safety policy. Additionally, each staff member and volunteer leader must execute an acknowledgment form that this policy has been read, understood, and will be followed. Staff members and volunteer leaders who fail to adhere to this policy may be asked to step down from their role.

I have received and read a copy of All Souls Cville Student Ministry Policies and Procedures on the date listed below, and I understand the importance of the matters set forth herein. I understand and agree to abide by these policies during my service at All Souls Cville.

I understand that these policies may be modified or eliminated at any time by All Souls Cville.

While, ideally, I will serve in this ministry for the agreed term, I understand that I may choose to end this relationship at any time. If possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor.

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

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

Staff member or volunteer's name (please print)

Staff member or volunteer's signature

Date