

Providence 

STUDENTS

Student Ministry Policies & Procedures

HANDBOOK

Philosophy of the Student Ministry

Purpose & Objective

The Providence Student Ministry exists to help students and parents worship and enjoy God and lead others to do the same. With the Gospel leading this way, we call our students to 4 simple action points: Gather, Grow, Serve and Go

We **Gather** Sunday mornings at 10:30 with our church family for worship. The weekly worship gathering of the church is a priority at Providence. We read God's Word together, pray together, sing together, and listen attentively to the preached Word together.

We **Grow** in the word and in community during our Sunday Morning Bible Study at 9:00am and our Wednesday night Train at 6:30pm. An important element of these times is a small groups structure where students can learn and discuss with their peers.

We encourage our students to **Serve** our church and the community of Nolensville. Students have opportunities to serve in our kids area on Sunday mornings and play an important role in our VBS.

We challenge our students to **Go**. Go to their neighbors and the nations. Go to the students in their neighborhoods, their classrooms, on their sports teams, dance teams, whatever it is they are involved in. We challenge them to think missional in the places God has them. We also teach them need to go to the nations. We have both domestic and international mission opportunities for students.

The purpose for establishing a Student Protection Policy is to demonstrate our clear commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of our students. Providence also recognizes the need to have a formal, written policy to (1) prevent the occurrence and/or appearance of abuse of our students, (2) protect our adults from false accusations and/or suspicions, (3) protect the reputation and the financial and emotional well-being of the entire church.

Core Values & Expectations:

Parents will take the primary responsibility for discipleship of students. (*Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Ephesians 6:1-4*)

The primary minister in a young person's life is his/her parents. While it is true that student ministry is important, its role is not to assume the responsibility God has entrusted to the parents. Therefore, the Student Ministry Team will seek to partner with parents to support them in accomplishing the task God has given them. We will not usurp the parents' role, but come along side to support, encourage and love them in this process.

The word of God will be the foundation of all that we do. (*2 Tim 4:1-2; James 1:22-24; Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; John 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 4:12*)

The Holy Spirit uses the Bible to transform lives. Without the centrality of scripture, ministry loses its focus and, as a result, opportunities for lasting spiritual impact are diminished or lost. Therefore, from start to finish, Scripture will remain foundational and permeate all that we do.

The Gospel of Christ will be the primary message. (*John 14:1-6; Acts 4:12*)

Games, events, and craziness of all kinds is great, but only when they work to accomplish the ultimate goal- *saving faith in Christ Jesus*. For this reason, all that we do will be designed with salvation and Christ-likeness in mind. Our goal is not to entertain our young people or have the coolest, most cutting edge ministry in town, but to remain true to the gospel, trusting that it is God who draws people unto Himself. We will do this by never assuming that our young people already have a sufficient understanding of the gospel and never exhorting the students to obey God's word apart from the gospel.

The church is the body of Christ and the student ministry will learn and submit to the overall purposes of the church. (*1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4:1-16; Colossians 3:15; Titus 2:6-8; 1 Peter 5:1-5*)

The student ministry is not a separate church. It exists under the umbrella of Christ as the head of the Church, and the elders who shepherd the local church. Accordingly, we will teach our students what the Bible says about their responsibility to the church as a whole and encourage them to be involved in the local church.

Every young person will be encouraged to pursue accountability relationships where they can learn and grow alongside other believers (*Luke 6:12-13; Matthew 18:15-20; Phil 3:17; Hebrews 3:13*)

There shouldn't be any "lone ranger" Christians. The Christian life is not to be lived in isolation. God has given believers the local church as a support system. For this reason we seek to connect our young people to mature believers for the purpose of discipleship and accountability.

We will speak the truth in love while being patient with all believers in the process of spiritual growth (*1 Corinthians 3:5-8; Ephesians 5:17-24; Philippians 2:12-13; Romans 6:4; 2 Ti 4:2*).

There are differences between justification, sanctification, and glorification. In justification God declares sinners righteous by crediting them with the perfect righteousness of Christ. This free gift is received by faith alone. Sanctification is the process by which the Holy Spirit works godliness into the hearts and lives of believers. Glorification comes when we see Jesus face to face and are transformed into His very image. Whereas justification and glorification are instantaneous, sanctification is an on-going process that will never be fully completed or fully realized in this life. As with all of us, no young person will ever be without sin on this earth. Therefore, we will seek to be patient with all young people in the process of spiritual growth, believing that "He who began a good work in them will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Phil 1:6 – paraphrased)

There will be no semblance of favoritism within the ministry because all young people matter to God (*Psalms 139:13-16; Luke 15; Luke 19:10; Romans 5:8; 1 Timothy 1:15-17; James 2:1-5; 2 Peter 3:9*)

Each young person is fearfully and wonderfully made and unique in God's eyes. Regardless of dress, lifestyle, or personal background, God loves each young person equally. Therefore, we will seek to demonstrate that same love through fairness and impartiality. We will encourage each young person to interact freely and openly with each other, while discouraging "cliques" of any kind. We will remain equally accessible to everyone.

Student Ministry Protection Policies:

Guidelines

- A minimum of two leaders should always be present with minors. Never leave minors unsupervised. When counseling a minor, make sure you are visible to other leaders.
- Classrooms will be open fifteen minutes prior to Sunday morning gatherings and 5 minutes prior to Wednesday evening Train.
- Student (6th through 12th graders) may serve in Providence Kids alongside an adult leader. Students will not serve more than once every two weeks on Sunday mornings. Students will not serve during Bible Study or Train unless approved by an elder.
- Medications may only be administered with written permission from parents or guardians. The pastor or director will be responsible for all medications. If a student uses an emergency medicine, a plan will be developed with the parent to administer this medication appropriately.
- All our student ministries are age graded. This allows us to minister to specific needs and development levels. All students are expected to attend their assigned class or group based on school grade. The elders must approve any rare exceptions.
- If a guest comes with a Providence attender, the guest and their host will attend the class or group designed for the younger person. After 1 or 2 sessions both will then need to attend the class or group designed for their age.
- There will be no consumption of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substances during any family ministry gathering, event, or trip.
- In student ministry we are working with minors, so guest information is required for security, record keeping, and emergencies.
- If there is a unique need for an adult to talk with a student in private, the adult should choose a quiet place that is in plain, public view. Examples of this may include open areas around the church (courtyards or hotel lobbies if on a trip), short walks down a sidewalk, a restaurant or other location where people are present in the area.

Teaching

- Be a loving example of Jesus. Jesus' ministry was characterized by his love. No one could say that Jesus did not deal with problems, but he always maintained a loving spirit. "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death," 1 John 3:14.
- Teach Jesus through Bible guided by the organization of the approved curriculum.
- Pray before, during, and after every session.
- Prepare for the teaching session by studying the Scripture passage and teaching materials.

- Inspect your room or area for safety before every session.
- Be ready to teach fifteen minutes before your scheduled class time.
- Greet visitors and introduce yourself. If you are responsible for taking role, make sure all guests or their parent/guardians record basic information about themselves.

Physical Contact

Use of appropriate physical contact in a public setting to show support, encouragement and healthy affection toward students who are receptive to this form of emotional expression is acceptable. However leaders must exercise good judgement and never force any physical contact.

Inappropriate Displays of Affection

- Any form of sexual contact
- kissing
- initiating full frontal hugs or “bear hugs”
- Massages
- Lying down or sleeping beside
- Tickling or wrestling
- Touching or hugging from behind
- Comments that relate to physique or body development
- Patting on the thigh, knee or leg
- inappropriate or lengthy embraces
- piggyback rides

Appropriate Displays of Affection

- Holding hands during prayers or if a student is upset
- Side-hugs
- High-fives, hand slaps, and fist bumps
- Verbal praise
- Arms and shoulders
- Pats on the shoulders or back

Appropriate Discipline

Adults will employ positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourages, builds self-esteem, self-control and self-direction. Examples of

positive discipline includes:

- Use of praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior
- Reminding students of behavior expectations by using clear, positive statements
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements
- Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the students age and development
- Use the following corrective discipline plan:
 1. Warning: Remind the student of the rules or explain the appropriate behavior in the situation.
 2. Consequence: Remind the student of the rule or explain the appropriate behavior and provide a natural consequence for the students behavior, such as sitting out of an activity, separating students who are unruly.
 3. Parental Contact: If the inappropriate behavior persists or in an extreme case, remove the student from the classroom and take him to a director or a pastor. They will contact the student's parents.

Harsh, cruel or unusual treatment under the guise of discipline is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Trips and Events

- All trips and events must be scheduled with the guidance of an elder.
- All trips and events will have adult leadership. Desired rations of adults to minors: preschool, 1:5, children, 1:6; student 1:8. Minimum ratios of adults to minors: preschool, 1:7, children, 1:10; student 1:12. If the minimum ration cannot be achieved, the event will be canceled or postponed. Student servants may serve alongside adult leaders with children and preschoolers. In such circumstances ratios may be adjusted by an elder.
- Middle School Students (6th-8th graders) will be assigned an adult leader and a group of students with whom they are required to stay at all times through the event, including free time. Middle School Students must be within visible range of an adult leader. If in a camp or event setting, responsibility for middle school students may be transferred to other adults for special activities but the same guidelines apply.
- High School Students (9th -12th graders) must stay in groups of three during all event activities, including free time. They will be assigned an adult leader to whom they are accountable and must check in face to face periodically during the event for accountability. Failure to check in on time will result in the student(s) foregoing any free time and if necessary being sent home from the event at the expense of their parents.
- Trips and activities involving physical exertion require a notarized Medical Release/ Permission Form. (Students only).
- Transportation is one of the key roles for which our leaders will be responsible during trips. Drivers must be an adult 25 years old or older and must complete a motor vehicle record check.
- No minor is allowed to transport any other minors during events or trips, even with parental consent.
- Drivers must submit to a motor vehicle background check and be submitted to our insurance carrier before driving for any trip or event.
- Drivers must follow all posted laws regarding speed and safety. Failure to do will result in removal from service.
- Key Control must be maintained at all times by adults responsible for driving church sanctioned vehicles (ie. rental or church owned vans/buses or personal vehicles used at a church event). There should never be a time when an adult leaves a started vehicle unattended or hand a key to a minor.
- If a minor has an appointment during an in-town event or trip, a parent/legal guardian must notify a pastor/director of this engagement prior to the event.

- Participants will be sent home at the parent's expense if their behavior does not comply with ministry standards. Future participation in events will be dependent on visible signs of repentance and parents' willingness to find solutions with a pastor or director. Participants may be forced to miss an event\events as part of a discipline plan.
- Parents will be notified of any incidents involving their children as soon as possible after the incident.

Overnight Events

- Adults must always respect the privacy of students and each other. Likewise students must respect the privacy of adults and each other.
- When the group includes both males and females, and stays overnight, both male and female adults must be present.
- Sleeping areas and access to bathroom facilities should be segregated between males and females. Adults are not allowed to share a bed with a student unless it is their own child. If absolutely necessary, beds may be shared by students of the same gender. If separate bathroom facilities are not available, times for male and female and youth/adults use should be scheduled and posted prominently.
- When one room is used for sleeping, students and adults of the opposite gender will sleep an appropriate distance apart as determined by the adult in charge.
- Both students and adults shall wear appropriate sleeping apparel.
- In booking hotel rooms, reservations should be made, if possible, with all rooms on the same floor or location in the hotel. Adjacent rooms allow for enhanced supervision and safety.
- No student(s) should be allowed to leave the premises without authorized and appropriate adult supervision.
- Curfews must be established and adhered to by all participants.

Who Can Serve With Minors

- Providence will perform a background check on all prospective preschool, children, and student servants every 2 years. The information will be confidential, and will only be viewed by the appropriate pastor. All background check information will be stored in a secure location.
- A list will be maintained for all approved servants. Only the elders will know of individuals not approved.
- Individuals will not be approved who have committed violent crimes, sexual crimes, or crimes against minors.

- Those who are willing to drive for trips or events will also have to submit to a motor vehicle background check. Individuals with clear trends of reckless or careless driving will not be approved.
- All weekly leaders will need to provide a certificate of completion for Stewards of Children Child Abuse Prevention course by Darkness to Light. (The church will reimburse you for the \$10 fee if desired). www.d2l.org
- Servants should commit to the moral (Church Covenant) and doctrinal (Statement of Faith) expectations of the church and be members of the church.
- All leaders in a weekly role will be provided a leadership covenant for their role which they will be asked to sign yearly.
- The goal and expectation of student leaders is to connect and disciple students. Regular church attendance is expected from those who lead. We want to model the importance of gathering with the body at our appointed worship times.

Procedures for Reporting Alleged Abuse

In order to protect families and any individual involved, Providence will respond to all alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse. We are not legally required to prove whether or not the allegations are true in reporting incidents. The proper authorities will conduct investigations.

Upon suspecting or learning of an alleged abuse at and event, trip, or gathering:

1. Report the situation to the person in charge of the event.
2. The person in charge of the event should remove the suspected individual from the event immediately
3. The elders should be immediately informed of the situation.
4. The staff person in charge will obtain necessary information such as name of alleged victim, address, and family contact information, nature of allegation, and name of alleged perpetrator.
5. The person in charge will report and consult with a task force including at least 2 elders.
6. The person in charge of the event and the elders will implement a response plan formulated in the consultation. If the allegations fall within the list of child abuse offenses found in the Tennessee code 19-7-5, which requires mandatory reporting, the person shall make the report to the proper authorities. Providence will cooperate fully with the investigation.
7. The parents of the student shall be contacted and informed of the alleged incident and appropriately assisted by the staff persons and/or elders.
8. The person suspected of abuse will be removed from further contact with minors until an appropriate investigation had taken place. In the event that the respondent

is the person in charge of the activity, the report should be made to the elders. The Elders may place the person on a leave of absence during the investigation or will at least restrict their contact with minors.

9. All matters concerning the alleged incident will be kept in the strictest of confidence and will only be discussed with authorities, elders, and parents of the alleged victim.

Upon suspicion or learning of abuse at a home or family function

1. Report the alleged abuse to an elder.
2. If the allegations fall within the list of child abuse offenses found in the Tennessee code 19-7-5, which requires mandatory reporting, the elder or person shall make the report to the proper authorities. The individuals involved will cooperate fully with the investigation.
3. If applicable, reasonable, and desired, the elder or a pastor shall counsel and offer available assistance to the family.

Counseling

Bear in mind, Student Ministry volunteers are not professional counselors. Consequently this occasionally poses a significant boundary issue when working with young people. As they begin to trust the Student Ministry Team, they will begin to confide in them. Problems arise when a young person confides in a volunteer, expecting them to maintain confidentiality. Unfortunately, not all counseling issues can remain confidential.

Student Ministry volunteers are required to report immediately to the Student Pastor if:

- A young person is being abused sexually
- A young person is threatening to hurt him/herself (suicide, cutting, etc)
- A young person is threatening to hurt someone else (homicide, revenge, etc)
- A young person reveals a personal crisis/endangerment (pregnancy, drug abuse addictions, criminal activity, etc).

If any of these situations arise, the Student Pastor will take the appropriate course of action, including the consulting of authorities and/or parents or pursuing professional counseling options. The Student Pastor is available to give counsel and guidance on any issues or concerns that arise.

Because we are ministering to minors, we will use the utmost discretion as to who to involve in various issues. We desire to build trust with our young people, but not to the extent of keeping parents excluded from their child's life.

Dress Code

- Modesty is important and all student participants should consider their outfits prior to attending any event.
- Clothes with inappropriate messages or images are not permitted
- When in doubt, don't wear it. Short shirts or skirts, low tops, etc., are best left at home.
- Swim wear should not be low cut or reveal midriff

Injuries & Medical Emergencies

- Be calm, speak softly, and comfort a minor when hurt. They need your love and reassurance.
- If there is an emergency, first call 911 first. Notify an elder or director next.
- Never use CPR or the AED unless you have Red Cross certification.
- Always use disposable gloves if there is any chance of body fluid exchange.
- Cover wounds with an adhesive bandage.
- Report head injuries to a pastor or director and they will notify minor's parents. Also, fill out an Incident Report Form.
- If there is a possibility of bruising, a scrape, or blood flow, fill out an Incident Report Form. An elder or director will inform the parents.
- Contact an elder or director if you are not sure what to do or need help.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after administering first aid.
- Do not give medication of any kind without written permission from parents. Pastors, elders, and directors will be responsible for all medications.
- If caring for a minor requires you to leave your group, notify an elder or director immediately.
- Immediately call 911 if a child has a seizure.

Body Fluids Precautions

- Control the bleeding immediately with a compress or direct pressure. Only apply a tourniquet with a doctor, nurse, or emergency responders guidance or in the case of massive blood loss.
- Always wear disposable gloves when dealing with body fluids.
- Use caution no matter how minor the body fluid spill may appear.
- Clean blood spills as soon as possible and soak contaminated surfaces including the carpet with Basic G.
- Put clean clothing on the minor as needed. Place the dirty clothing in a plastic bag for the minor's parents/guardians.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Record the incident on Incident Report Form.
- Call 911 if there is an emergency and alert the director, elders, or safety team..

Student Cell Phone Usage

Cell phones are an intricate part of our lives in today's world. The same is true for our students. We want to make sure that cell phone usage at Providence Student events is done properly and respectfully. Phones are useful tools during events for communication, safety and so students are able to take photos and capture and preserve these moments in their lives. They can also be used improperly. While the Student Ministry staff and volunteers will monitor students and their phone usage to the best of their ability the best way to prevent a student from viewing something that they should not online is for parents to set up restrictions on their students phone. All smartphones have parental controls and restrictions that can limit what students are able to see online. With that in mind here are the guidelines for cell phone usage.

- Having a cell phone is a privilege and not a right. The Student Ministry Team reserves the right to ask students to put away or take up cell phones at any time. The phones will be kept and returned to the student or parent at the end of the Student Ministry Event.
- ANY student caught looking at inappropriate content on their phones will have it immediately taken away and their parents or guardians called.
- Any student who uses their phone for cyber bullying, sending threatening messages, messages with inappropriate language or photos, or messages that "make fun of" or demean another student or leader, will have their phone taken away and their parents called.

- If a student is suspected of using their phone for inappropriate behavior they will be subject to having their phone's message and web history searched by the Student Pastor. If they refuse, their phone will be taken up and their parents called.

Refunds

Providence will work with students and parents to refund money paid for deposits and payments for events should the student not be able to attend. Some venues and events require non-refundable deposits and/or minimum number of participants payed or have a deadline of cancelation. In those cases a refund may not be possible.

Inclement Weather

The elders/pastors will determine if conditions are not safe for our normal programming due to inclement weather. We will do our best to notify students and parents via email, Facebook, The Providence Students app and Instagram.

III. VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

Volunteer Covenant

The Student Ministry Handbook/Policy & Procedures Manual contains important information about Providence Baptist Church. I understand that I should consult the Student Pastor if I have any questions that are not answered in this handbook.

I also acknowledge that revisions to this handbook may occur at any time.

My signature below acknowledges that I have received and read this entire handbook/manual. My signature also indicates that I agree to serve faithfully and to comply with and adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook/manual.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____

**Medical Release/Permission Form
Providence Baptist Church
P.O. Box 35*Nolensville, TN 37135**

This consent form gives permission to seek whatever medical attention is deemed necessary, and releases the Church and its staff of any liability against personal losses of named child.

Child's Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Primary Phone: _____ Birth date: _____

Phone: Mother _____ Father _____

Emergency Contact:

(Name, Phone, Relationship)

Name of Physician: _____

Phone: _____

Insurance Company or Group: _____

Policy #: _____

List any food/medical/insect allergies and the reaction, or any other medical needs of which we need to be aware. (Use the back of this page if necessary)

I/We the undersigned have legal custody of the student named above, a minor, and have given our consent for him/her to attend events being organized by Providence Baptist Fellowship. I/ We understand that there are inherent risks involved in any ministry or athletic event, and I/we hereby release the Church, its ministers, pastors, employees, agents, and volunteer workers from any and all liability for any injury, loss, or damage to person or property that may occur during the course of my/our child's involvement. In the event that he/she is injured and requires the attention of a doctor, I/we consent to any reasonable medical treatment as deemed necessary by a licensed physician. In the event treatment is required from a physician and/or hospital personnel designated by the Church, I/we agree to hold such person free and harmless of any claims, demands, or suits for damages arising from the giving of such consent. I/We also acknowledge that we will be ultimately responsible for the cost of any medical care should the cost of that medical care not be reimbursed by the health insurance provider. Further, I/we affirm

that the health insurance information provided above is accurate at this date and will, to the best of my/our knowledge, still be enforce for the student named above.

Parent/guardian signature: _____

NOTARIZATION

On this ____ day of _____, _____, before me, the undersigned, personally appeared _____, personally known to me (or proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence) to be the person whose name is subscribed to this instrument, and acknowledged that he or she executed the 2009 Annual Medical Permission & Release Form.

Notary Public Seal _____

My Commission Expires: _____

**Incident Report Form
Providence Baptist Church
P.O. Box 35
Nolensville, Rd. 37135**

Date _____

Your Name _____

Date of incident _____

Time of incident _____

Location of incident _____

Persons involved in the Incident

Persons who witnessed the incident

Description of the incident

Actions you took to resolve the incident

Signature

