



River's Edge Church

Youth

General Guidelines

- Do not be alone with a young person under 18 unless in a public place with written/typed parent permission (e.g. "I allow my child to meet with you in public places")
- Avoid praying for the opposite sex alone, instead find a leader of the same sex as the young person to pray together
- Avoid taking any young person to dark or solitary places
- Do not counsel the opposite sex, pass them on to the pastors or their connect group leader
- Do not interact with a young person in a way that is deemed intimate or sexual
- Always ask for parental consent for social activities and always keep the parents informed
- Do not discuss your young person's matters with other young people
- Maintain your connect groups trust and only discuss real issues with the pastors
- Do not have any sleep overs with any young person. (We understand a young person to be under 18 and/or in the Youth program)
- Do not get changed in the same room as a young person
- Be positive about other leaders in front of young people
- Be entirely supportive of the pastors, especially in front of other young people
- If any young person tells you of physical or sexual abuse you MUST tell the pastors immediately
- Where possible avoid sharing places of compromise such as bathrooms, dressing rooms and bedrooms

Transport Guidelines

- Obey all road rules at all times for safety and exemplary reasons
- Obtain written parental consent before driving a young person anywhere
- Only carry the number of passengers that is appropriate to the vehicle capacity
- Arrange to never be alone in the car with a young person
- All drivers must have completed the "Approved Driver Application" Form

Social and Off-Site Activities Guidelines

- Obtain written parental consent for all off-site and social activities
- Leaders should not organise age inappropriate activities. Do the research beforehand.
 - E.g. movies: always a minimum of two leaders and two young people
- Leaders should not encourage young people to engage with violent, sexual or explicit activities
- Leaders should not organise activities that put young people at risk.
- Leaders must understand that they represent River's Edge Church and must act accordingly
- All sleepover activities must be held on-site and must have two or more leaders present.

Communications

Types of Contact	Year 7-10 Students	Year 11-12
Phone Calls	To be avoided. Always speak with parents first and ask permission to speak with the young person.	Avoid anything secretive or developing any 'special' relationships. It is advisable to speak with parents first and ask permission to speak with the young person.
Text Message	For logistical purposes or brief general encouragement only	For logistical purposes or brief general encouragement only
Social Media (Email, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and etc)	Use your discretion and keep in mind the 10 key principles. E.g. no disappearing messages/visuals. No individual messaging on social media, groups only	Use your discretion and keep in mind the 10 key principles. E.g. no disappearing messages/visuals. No individual messaging on social media, groups only
Video Calls/Streaming chats	Never unless with a group	Never unless with a group

Ten Key Communication Principles

1. Above reproach

Communication should always be above reproach, both in terms of the content and the way you communicate. Be careful and consider how others may see your communication. Even if your motives are pure, misunderstandings can arise.

2. In person is best

Face to face interactions are the preferred way to communicate. Remember to be careful when talking face to face, at an appropriate location and time. Contact the pastor about urgent issues that require communication outside of regular service/connect group/event times.

3. Be transparent

Be aware that those who wish to abuse young people may build secretive or exclusive relationships through electronic communications. Always aim to keep communication public and brief. Always keep conversation online in case an accusation or misunderstanding arises.

4. Don't initiate social media friendships

Let young people initiate social media friendship/follow requests, the action of accepting and/or following back is up to your discretion.

5. Safety in numbers

Wherever possible, communicate electronically with groups rather than individuals. Talking in a group setting prevents misunderstanding.

6. Build up the Church

If you are posting on social media, think carefully about the impact of what you communicate on the entire church community. Remember you're a leader who people look up to so be careful at all times.

7. Respect others

Observe confidentiality and privacy in electronic communications – for example do not publish/share contact details or personal information.

8. Be truthful

Don't ever hide your identity or pretend to be someone else. Be honest to your pastor and mentor about anything you have an issue with.

9. Know the digital terrain

If you're using social media, be aware of and comply with the terms of use, age, restrictions, privacy options and controls of each site prior to using it in your ministry.

10. Use Common Sense