

Volunteer Requirements

- All volunteers should be members of IPC. If a volunteer is not a member, they should be regular attenders of IPC for a minimum of 6 months and pursuing membership with a pastor at IPC.
- All volunteers must give their consent to and pass a background check, as required by IPC policy.
- All volunteers must fill out the IPC Volunteer Application, as required by IPC policy.

Interacting with Students**A. Public Meetings**

- Leaders (staff and volunteers) should interact with students in public places and spaces.
- Volunteers should not be alone in a private or public space with a student of the opposite sex. There may be a reason for a staff person to meet with a student of the opposite sex in a public space. In that case, the staff person should have the permission of a parent and communicate the location of the meeting (an office at the church) to a parent.
- When a leader is meeting with a student or students at the church:
 - Others should know about the meeting and its location.
 - All lights should be on in the room.
 - All doors should be open in the room.

B. Car Rides and Transportation

- Leaders should avoid being alone with a student in their car. It is best for parents to drop off and pick up students from public places. However, in the event that a student needs a ride to a public place, the following process should happen:
 - The leader will pick the student up and begin a text message chain with one of the student's parents and the Pastor of Student Ministries stating the destination they are heading to.
 - When the leader and student have arrived at their destination (a public place), the leader will send a message to the text chain informing the others that they have arrived at their destination.
 - When the leader and student leave the public place, another text should be sent in the text chain stating that they have left and are returning the student.
 - When the leader drops the student off, a final text should be sent stating that the leader is no longer with the student.
- All leaders must obey the law while driving and observe required speed limits.
- Leaders should not allow a student to drive the leader's vehicle.
- Leaders should always ask students to put seatbelts on before leaving.
- Leaders should make sure that each student has their own individual seatbelt in the car (no sharing seatbelts, students sitting on the floor).
- Students will not be allowed to drive other students for special events unless in unique circumstances, and only when a staff person has obtained the permission of all parents of students driving in a car without a leader.

- Leaders should not drive students after drinking alcohol, or if they are under the influence of any drug or substance.
- If a leader is in a car accident while driving students in their car, they must give their consent to be screened for drugs or alcohol immediately after the accident by the law authorities.

C. Communication

- Leaders may communicate with students of the same sex through text messaging and social media. It is wise for leaders to keep their text messages with students saved on their phones or social media accounts for at least one year.
- Volunteers should not text, send direct messages through social media, or make phone calls to students of the opposite sex. If a staff person needs to contact a student of the opposite sex, it is wise to include a third party in the text message chain or direct message (a staff person who is the same gender as the student, or one of the student's parents).
- If a student sends inappropriate calls, messages or pictures to a volunteer or leader, it should immediately be brought to the attention of the Pastor of Student Ministries.
- It is wise for leaders to communicate details (when, where, length of time) with parents when they set up a meeting with students, particularly students in middle school. Follow up messages with parents are always helpful. For example: "I enjoyed meeting with your son today at Chickfila."
- Leaders and volunteers should never promise "confidentiality" to a student. If a student ever vaguely or clearly mentions harming themselves in any way or if they vaguely or clearly mention that they have been abused (physically, sexually, or emotionally) by someone else, you must immediately inform the Pastor of Student Ministries. The Pastor of Student Ministries will then follow the protocol for mandatory reporting laid out in the IPC Child Protection Policy if he and his superiors determine it to be necessary.

D. Discipline

- Every means of guidance and correction should be loving, and not hinder the faith of a growing student.
- No form of physical punishment should ever be used (e.g., hitting, spanking, paddling, smacking, punching, pushing). Furthermore, discipline should never include yelling, shaming, or belittling a student.
- If there is a serious incident that requires discipline, it should be brought to the attention of and handled by the Pastor of Student Ministries (or his designee) and the parent of the child involved, not the volunteer or intern.

E. Physical Contact

- Healthy, caring touch can edify and encourage a student; yet, unhealthy touch causes distress and is abusive. Staff and volunteers shall observe the following guidelines:
 - Touch should always be open and public rather than secretive. A hug given in the context of a group is very different than a hug given behind closed doors.
 - Touch should be in response to the need of the child, and not the need of the adult.

- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the adult.
- Touch should be with the child's permission. If the child resists, the staff member shall respect the child's response and stop.
- Touch should not include violent behavior. Adults and other youth or children should not hit, slap, pinch, push, hold a child against his/her will, or in any way assault a child.
- The following signs of affection are generally appropriate within specific contexts:
 - Verbal praise; side hugs; shoulder to shoulder hugs; pats on the shoulder, back, or head (when culturally appropriate).
- The following behaviors are inappropriate or may be perceived as inappropriate; therefore, leaders and volunteers shall refrain from:
 - touching a child's buttocks, chest, genital area, or thighs;
 - Giving a student a massage or neck rub;
 - showing affection in isolated areas or when alone with a student;
 - sleeping in bed with a student;
 - making inappropriate comments that relate to physique or body development;
 - making flirtatious or seductive looks (even in a joking way);
 - showing any form of affection that is unwanted by the student;
 - showing sexually-suggestive videos or playing sexually-suggestive games with a student;
 - engaging in any behavior that could be interpreted as sexual in nature;
 - making or participating in jokes that are sexual, degrade other people groups, or cut down others.
- Adult staff and volunteers shall monitor each other regarding physical contact with students and hold each other accountable by pointing out anything that could be misinterpreted. It is always better to confront gently someone whom you believe is behaving in a way that could be interpreted as inappropriate. The goal is to create a culture where students are safe and adult leaders strive to remain above reproach regarding interaction with students. In all cases where you witness a leader or volunteer violate these guidelines, you must inform the Pastor of Student Ministries immediately.

Special Events and Overnight Trips

- It is desired that there would be 1 leader for every 7 students for junior high special events and overnight trips.
- It is desired that there would be 1 leader for every 10 students for high school special events and overnight trips.
- At least one male and one female leader (preferably staff) should wait together until all students leave or are picked up from a student ministry event, program, or trip.
- Leaders should never sleep in a bed with another student while on an overnight trip.
- Leaders should only change clothes in a bathroom with the door closed.

- Leaders should not sleep in their underwear, and should wear appropriate and modest nighttime clothing.
- Leaders are expected to eat and be with students in designated dining halls during meals on overnight trips and to not place food orders for delivery.

Alcohol and Drugs

- Leaders should avoid drinking alcohol in public places when they know students are present. Caution is always best.
- Leaders should not drink alcohol before or during a student ministry program, event or overnight trip.
- Leaders should not be under the influence of any drugs before, during, or after a student ministry program, event, or trip.

Self Reporting

As Christians we should be committed to living above reproach. As a leader or volunteer in the student ministry of IPC, if you violate the terms laid out in this guidebook, you promise that you will inform the Pastor of Student Ministries of your violation.