

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



fbcva.org/students



Partnering with
Parents in the
discipleship of their
children

TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

We cannot thank you enough for participating in the life of Fellowship Students.

Here at FBC, we seek to remind teenagers that they are not just the future of the Church, but also the present Body of Christ, capable of growing in the grace and knowledge of Him. We are here to prepare and deploy dependent disciples in 7th-12th grade with that in mind.

God has entrusted us with many families that we minister to on a weekly basis and we believe that healthy relationships with adult leaders foster and encourage spiritual growth. We desire adult leaders who have a strong commitment to Christ and a wish to care for students. The quality of adult leadership is extremely important. Because we emphasize a high commitment and care for our students, I encourage you to prayerfully look over this handbook to understand the expectations of our Youth Volunteers.

Welcome!

— Caleb

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PARTNERING WITH PARENTS

Our Philosophy of Discipleship

Our student ministry seeks to be a resource for parents in the discipleship of their students.

First, this involves providing venues for supplementing the parent's education of students in biblical truths. Second, we provide a context parents can use for their students to experience Christian community, where relationships with peers are built around learning to spur one another on to love and good deeds. Finally, our student ministry provides opportunities for students to exercise their faith in evangelism, missions, and service.

A resource for parents discipling their students in 3 main areas.



STAFF

Fellowship Students Staff and Ministry Team

Caleb Pearson | Director

Serves as our Spiritual and Discipleship Coordinator

Caleb has been a member of FBC for his entire life. He met his wife Hannah in Keystone, FBC's Young Adult ministry, and they have been serving together ever since! They have been blessed with two beautiful boys: Sammy and Charlie. Caleb's passion for ministry in response to the gospel rests in the completed work of Christ. He is fueled by the forever standing of God's word (Isaiah 40) and the joyous privilege it is to suffer for Jesus' name (James 1). He is a zealous teacher, knows a tremendous amount about the TV show *Lost*, and enjoys making people laugh! You can find Caleb working with our Youth, on our weekly podcasts, and preaching in the pulpit.

Emma Kate Culler | Associate Director

Serves as our Wednesday Coordinator

Emma Culler has been attending FBC since the summer of 2017. She learned early on that it was better to follow God's plans rather than make her own plans. Following God has lead Emma on a few different paths, but He has been so good and so faithful to lead her here to FBC to be the Associate Director of Student Ministries. Emma's desire is that each student would truly embrace their identity in Christ and grow in their knowledge of Christ's love for them. When Emma is not at church you can find her playing tennis, hanging out with friends at Rose Hill Park, or hosting a Lord of the Rings movie night.

Micah Doerksen | Associate Director

Serves as our Sunday Coordinator

Micah is married to Taylor and they have three kids – Tyler, Cody, and Allie. Micah grew up at a missionary kid in West Africa and Papua New Guinea. He later attended Ethnos 360 Bible Institute where he met Taylor, who grew up at FBC. After getting married, Micah served at a church in Michigan for several years before moving to FBC. Micah is passionate about sharing with others who God is and what Christ has accomplished on the cross for them.

Amber Connor | Administrative Assistant

Serves as our Resource Coordinator

Amber and her husband, Kevin, both grew up in the Winchester area, and have been attending FBC since they were young. They have one daughter, Sage, who keeps them very busy. Amber and Kevin have served in multiple areas at FBC including Keystone Young Adults, Children's and Youth Ministry. Amber was a teacher at a local elementary school for several years and has a heart for teaching and administrative work. She is excited to use those skills in the local church body at FBC!

Student Ministry Team

Derrick Kekic

Jeff Child

Rodney Stanley

Esther Bouchillon

Daniel McManigle

Naomi McManigle

VOLUNTEERS

With a ministry this large, there are several facets of volunteer leadership worth knowing about! We have: Sunday school teachers, small group leaders, and special events personnel. These work in unison with one another to provide adult supervision and generational discipleship across the youth context.

Additionally, we have a Student Leadership Team (SLT) that is made up of 9th-12th graders who help plan and execute many of our youth gatherings.

The vision for volunteering in Youth Ministry is based on a heart of service, and the FBC Elders call to embrace Ephesians 4. Staff exists to “equip the saints for the work of the ministry” as they serve alongside our adults and students.

This handbook, regardless of your specific role, will be critical for your awareness of, and ability to articulate, the vision for Fellowship Students.

Please refer to the following QR codes for access to the many facets of our ministry!



JOIN FLOCKNOTE

We use Flocknote to send email and texts about youth events and activities.



FELLOWSHIP STUDENTS WEBPAGE

Our webpage includes up-to-date and relevant information for events, serving, our regular schedule, and more.



FACEBOOK GROUP

Fellowship Student's Facebook page is used to post announcements, ministry updates, pictures from trips/events and more.

VOLUNTEER ROLES

Within Student Ministry

Partnering with parents in the discipleship of their children is an exciting endeavor requiring many people with different, unique gifts. Below are the different opportunities to serve in Student Ministry. Each of these opportunities requires a different commitment level. Volunteers can choose to serve in one or more of the below roles.

SMALL GROUP LEADERS

Small Group leaders are responsible for leading a small group of students in an intentional time of discipleship two times a month on the first and third Wednesday and during the dedicated small group time at Large Group on second Wednesdays of the month. Small Group leaders play a vital role at Fall Retreat, bonding with the students during small group time and building relationships that will grow throughout the year. Small Group leaders can choose the content method in which they want to come alongside their small group whether it be a set book study, a roundtable discussion on a passage of Scripture or topical issue, or any other methods that encourage the students to learn more about who God is and grow in their faith. Materials are provided by Student Ministry to equip and encourage small group leaders to lead their group. At minimum, there will always be two small group leaders per small group.

SPECIAL EVENTS PERSONNEL

On 4th Wednesdays, Youth Community Nights take various shapes and sizes. For volunteers with less or sporadic availability, this is a great way to work with Student Leadership to execute invitational evenings for students and even their families. This type of Youth Personnel can range from greeting people on a worship night to hand out lyrics to traveling with the team on a retreat or trip!

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER

Sunday School Teachers are responsible for leading the classes that take place on Sunday mornings each week. The teacher is expected to commit to regularly teaching either a middle school class or a high school class for a particular service. Teachers commit to teaching at least every 2-3 weeks in a rotation with other teachers. Under the oversight of the Student Ministry Team, teachers are expected to study and prepare Biblically based and relevant lessons so that the students can engage with the Word of God and experience how the Scripture speaks to their every-day life. Teachers will work closely with the other teachers, Student Ministry staff, and teaching assistants.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHING ASSISTANT

Teaching Assistants are responsible for assisting the Sunday School Teacher with the overall classroom experience. The various responsibilities of a teaching assistant include: taking attendance, tracking when kids leave and come back to the classroom, mitigating disruptions, being a second pair of eyes and hands for the teacher.

VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

Within Student Ministry

- **Ministry is all about people** – so to be effective in ministry, you'll need to reflect God's heart for people. So with students, parents, other volunteer, and the FBC staff, always treat others with gentleness, forgiveness, patience, kindness, and love. Be like Jesus! Ephesians 5:1-2. Do not display or treat students, other youth leaders, parents, or FBC staff with sinful anger. James 1:20
- **Youth leaders: students are watching us!** Our position, our words, choices, and relationship with Christ will be carefully observed and replicated by the students that we influence. While we don't expect any of us will be perfect by any means, we do desire all of us to be striving to make wise decisions and glorify God with our life and choices. We've identified a few areas in particular, in which a Youth Leader must practice the utmost degree of wisdom and discernment.
- Youth Leaders are directed to avoid all forms and degrees of extramarital sex. Homosexual activity, pornography, and any kind of sexual impurity
- **Alcohol and drug use (including tobacco and weed)** – We expect leaders to exercise wisdom and restraint, understanding that our personal freedom in Christ must first be subject to the spiritual growth and well being of other believers.
- **Online Activity** – When online and particularly when using social media, we should separate ourselves from all questionable photos, videos, language, or content – maintaining an online presence that is above reproach.
- **Attitude** – sometimes it's the little things that disqualify us from effective ministry. All FBC volunteers need to seek to apply Phil 2:1-5 and be like Jesus by exhibiting humble, teachable spirits, particularly in the midst of conflict or correction, and not voice critical opinions of any FBC staff volunteer, parent, or student in front of another student or leader. Let's protect one another's reputations and not harm others with our words. James 3:1-11

CONTENT

2025-2026 Wednesdays & Sundays

MIDDLE SCHOOL

HIGH SCHOOL

Sunday School

THE GOSPEL PROJECT

A chronological study of the Bible, teaching the major themes of the Bible: who God is and how we fit into His story (working in unison with Fellowship Kids ministry).

Wednesday Large Group

GOD AND CULTURE

Middle school students will be examining the culture of today with a Biblical framework. This will enhance their ability to evaluate and recognize worldly messaging, counteracting it with Biblical Truth.

Sunday School

PAULINE EPISTLES

High school students will be going through Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. This verse-by-verse format will train young minds to process Bible truth and model expositional learning.

Wednesday Large Group

CHARACTER OF GOD

High school students will be studying God's nature and attitude towards creation, and ultimately His people.

CALENDAR

August 2025 - June 2026

Sun	Aug 17, 2025	SLT Launch	Youth rooms
Wed	Aug 20, 2025	Youth Launch	Youth+F3
Wed	Aug 27, 2025	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Sep 3, 2025	Large Group	Youth + F3
Wed	Sep 10, 2025	Small Groups	Various
Fri-Sun	9/12-9/14	Fall Retreat	Off-Campus
Wed	Sep 17, 2025	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Sep 24, 2025	Youth Community Night	Various
Wed	Oct 1, 2025	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Oct 8, 2025	Large Group	Youth+F3
Fri	Oct 10, 2025	Family Fall Festival (GCW)	Various
Wed	Oct 15, 2025	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Oct 22, 2025	Youth Community Night	Various
Wed	Oct 29, 2025	Volunteer Night	F3 and lower level
Wed	Nov 5, 2025	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Nov 12, 2025	Large Group	Youth+F3
Wed	Nov 19, 2025	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Nov 26, 2025	NO MEETING	N/A
Wed	Dec 3, 2025	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Dec 10, 2025	Christmas Party	Various
Wed	Dec 17, 2025	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Dec 24, 2025	NO MEETING	N/A
Wed	Dec 31, 2025	NO MEETING	N/A

Wed	Jan 7, 2026	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Jan 14, 2026	Large Group	Youth+F3
Wed	Jan 21, 2026	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Jan 28, 2026	Youth Community Night	F3 and lower level
Wed	Feb 4, 2026	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Feb 11, 2026	Large Group	Youth+F3
Wed	Feb 18, 2026	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Feb 25, 2026	Youth Community Night	Various
Wed	Mar 4, 2026	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Mar 11, 2026	Large Group	Youth+F3
Wed	Mar 18, 2026	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Mar 25, 2026	Youth Community Night	Various
Wed	Apr 1, 2026	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Apr 8, 2026	Large Group	Youth+F3
Wed	Apr 15, 2026	Small Groups	Various
Wed	Apr 22, 2026	Youth Community Night	Various
Fri-Sun	4/24-4/26?	MSWA	Off-Campus
Wed	Apr 29, 2026	Volunteer Night	F3 and lower level
Wed	May 6, 2026	Small Groups	Various
Wed	May 13, 2026	Senior Large Group	Youth+F3
Sun	May 17, 2026	Senior Luncheon	
Wed	May 20, 2026	Small Groups	
Wed	May 27, 2026	Youth Graduation / Final Large Group	Off-Campus
Sun	May 31, 2026	End of Year Volunteer Night	
Mon-Fri	15-19 Jun	Discipleship Conference	
Fri	July TBD	Summer Large Group	Off-Campus
Wed	Jul 25, 2026	Youth Community Night	Outdoor FBC Games
TBD	July	High School Missions Trip	Off-Campus

POLICIES

CHILD PROTECTION

- At least two trained, screened adults should supervise students at all times. 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 volunteer or employee must be notified so that the Two Adult Rule can be followed.
 - 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.
- Volunteers should never drive alone with one student on any Student-Ministry or Church-Related activity*

***The sole exception for the above policy is parent permission for 1-on-1 or Small Group discipleship (see Page 14)**

TECHNOLOGY

- Students are permitted to have smart devices on their person, but are not allowed to use it during Large Group, Small Group, Sunday School, or any Student Ministry Event.
- Students are also prohibited from wearing headphones, earpods, or any personal auditory device, unless they are medically necessary. This becomes a safety issue if they are unable to hear what is going on around them.
- Cell Phones may not be used to read the Bible, physical Bibles are available and can be distributed to students who do not have a Bible.
- Any other smart device use should result in Disciplinary Action as follows:
 - First Offense: Volunteer Warning/ Staff Warning and explanation of the above rules.
 - Second Offense: Volunteer/Staff Removal of device and return at end of event. Discuss with Parent/Guardian Volunteer/Staff can decide to return the device to the student or to the student's parent/legal guardian.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Volunteers should avoid text/engaging in private messaging with a student. If a student messages in a one-on-one setting, do not delete the text, and notify student ministry leadership about any sensitive information. This protects the volunteer as well as the student.*
- If a student initiates individual messaging, please keep a log of (and access to) the correspondence per FBC's safety policy, and let the student know you're happy to continue the conversation in person (1), with parents (2), or through our Fellowship Students communication system (Flocknote, Facebook, Instagram, etc. for staff access (3), and cease further communication.
- Youth Volunteers are encouraged to have staff communicate on their behalf. Any emails/details/announcements can be sent to AmberC@fbcva.org with a request to be sent to a group of students/families. Additionally, Small Group Leaders are welcome to:
 - Create email strands with parents/students/families
 - Utilize Flocknote themselves to send their group messages
 - Utilize social media to broadly communicate to their group
- Fellowship Students communicates through three avenues
 - **Church Database:** Email and text system that is capable of sending out group emails and contacting individuals and documenting each interaction. Each volunteer has login capabilities for this as primary use.
 - **Facebook:** Fellowship Student's Facebook page is used to post announcements, ministry updates, pictures from trips/events and more. All announcements posted on Facebook are also sent via email
 - **Instagram:** Fellowship Student's Instagram page is used to post announcements and pictures from trips/events. All announcements posted on Instagram are also sent via email.

***The sole exception for the above policy is parent permission for 1-on-1 or Small Group discipleship (see Page 14)**


OFF CAMPUS / OVERNIGHT

- No volunteers will ever lodge alone with a student or students in a cabin or room.
- Volunteers must reside in a volunteer-only room, or a student room with at least one other volunteer when required by an off campus venue.
- In transition scenarios, a single volunteer that find themselves alone with student(s) in a cabin or room are asked to exit the room (1), find a second volunteer (2), or ask the student to wait/leave while a door is propped open if possible (3).
- Most student lodging will consist of student-only rooms adjacent/near volunteer rooms. Student rooms must have a minimum of three students per room.
- All other FBC policies remain in effect during these trips, including technology and MinistrySafe policies.
- Certain rules and procedures may change in accordance with venue policy. ALL relevant rules and procedure changes will be reviewed with the entire group upon arrival at the venue.
- When in doubt, use an abundance of caution and discretion. Contact youth staff with questions or concerns. Document clearly anything that could be a concern.

PARENT PERMISSION FOR DISCIPLESHIP (DCONNECT FORM)

A huge aspect of Student Ministry is our ability to build relationships (1) and be accessible (2) to these teenagers and their families. Because of this, we want to prioritize our Volunteer body's ability to meet with students to truly partner with parents. In an effort to promote safe environments, and leaders with integrity, our policy is parent permission for same-sex discipleship and is to be given as follows:

After a student or parent has vocalized support for discipleship meetings to occur:

- Volunteers are to share a “Discipleship Connect” online form that can be easily filled out and completed via smartphone. This form gathers the appropriate contact information, the parent/guardian consent for the meeting(s) to take place, and is sent to Student Ministry staff to keep a record of discipleship relationships that are happening within the ministry.
 - Volunteers and Parents (per the Discipleship Connect form) are expected to work out the logistics and parameters of meetings, as they can vary greatly based on the student(s) or their needs.
 - Once the form has been received by staff, the volunteer will receive approval from the Director of Student Ministry. This signals that we have everything we need from a safety/liability standpoint.
 - Periodically, staff will communicate with students, parents, or volunteers to check-in on discipleship relationships, all in an effort to come alongside and encourage the spiritual growth of our students.
 - The Discipleship Connect Form is a Cognito form and can be found (and saved in your phone!) by scanning the QR code:
- 
- This policy applies to 1-on-1s, Small Group outings, and any intentional interactions between volunteers and students that take place outside of the Youth context.
 - While most logistics and parameters are up to the parents, these meetings must occur in either (1) a public place or (2) a private setting with other volunteers/parents present. *We are asking you to use discretion and prudence by not meeting alone in the privacy of a home or traveling in a car without at least one other person (student or leader) present.*
 - Volunteers will be expected to follow-up with parents on at least a quarterly basis (with increased frequency in certain cases up to the discretion of the volunteer).

REPORTING ABUSE

Fellowship Bible Church is committed to protecting the students in this ministry from any form of abuse. FBC has a Zero-Tolerance Policy that prohibits any act of sexual, emotional or physical abuse. This zero-tolerance policy requires all FBC 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

Because many adults are unfamiliar with reporting requirements and may be fearful of the process, FBC utilizes a 'tandem or dual report' model, where permitted. A 'dual report' occurs when an FBC staff member 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 FBC before reporting to law enforcement personnel or the Child Abuse Hotline. In addition, a report may be made without involving or informing FBC personnel.

If a student reports abuse to a volunteer

- Do not promise confidentiality – you may communicate that your primary concern is for their safety and for their relationship with Christ
- Do not try to provide medical/other professional advice. Any advice given should be Biblical instruction and encouragement.
- Listen carefully! Ask questions to gain insight in the following ways: severity and frequency of the behavior, how aware/involved are the parents.
- Encourage the student to communicate with their parents (If the situation demands it, you might have to give them the choice of the student telling the parents or a member of the Youth Ministry Team will notify the parents of the behavior).
- Let the student know that you will be discussing the situation with the Student Ministries Director or Associate Directors - and that we are trained to handle it safely.
- Pray with the student.
- Reassure the student that they are doing the right thing by bringing the activity out into the open.

After speaking with the student:

- Consult immediately (no more than 24 hours after the initial conversation) with the Student Ministries Director or Associate Directors.
- Make notes of your conversation.
- As needed keep the Student Ministry Team in the loop with any further conversations regarding the issue.

Forms of abuse include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual, Verbal, Emotional, or Physical Abuse
- Bullying, Cyberbullying
- Self Harm

GENERAL DISCIPLINE AND PROHIBITED ITEMS POLICY

In general, volunteers in Fellowship Students are expected to exercise the following Disciplinary Action using their own discretion:

- First Offense: Verbal Warning and Communication of Expectations/Rules
- Second Offense: Verbal Warning with documentation; Share with Youth Staff
- Third+ Offense: Youth Staff private meeting to discuss further action

Prohibited items beyond illegal substances include, but are not limited to:

- pocket knives (*volunteers can carry*)
- vape pens, cigarettes, weed, alcohol
- weapons of any kind

If a volunteer confiscates any of the above items or sees a student in possession of one, staff must be notified.

BUILDING USE

A huge priority (and Biblical mandate) is to be good stewards of what we've been given. This will often apply to our use of the FBC campus. Volunteers are expected to "leave it as you found it"

- Use common sense when it comes to hazards, messes, and pre-existing conditions.
- All logistical and practical use of the building falls under administrative duties, and volunteers are expected to communicate with Amber to reserve spaces, ask questions, etc.
- If a part of the building is damaged during a youth activity or is found damaged upon arrival, please notify staff immediately so actions can be taken to repair what is broken.

DRESS CODE

We encourage students to follow the dress code below for all youth activities and events:

- Dress modestly and respectfully.
- Avoid offensive or inappropriate graphics/messages on clothing.
- Girls - no crop tops or visible under garments at any time (i.e. bra straps). Modest one-piece bathing suits during water activities.
- Boys - must wear a shirt at all times unless swimming; no visible undergarments at any point (i.e. boxers). No tight/short-shorts.
- Youth Staff/FBC will have extra t-shirts to remedy dress-code situations.

PDA POLICY

PDA (Public Displays of Affection) are not appropriate during youth group events, meetings, retreats, or while representing our church. It is a distraction, creates discomfort for others, and is inconsistent with the biblical call to a witness of purity.

Examples of PDA include but are not limited to:

- kissing
- holding hands
- sitting on laps
- extended hugging
- cuddling
- any physical contact that draws attention to a romantic relationship.

Volunteers should notify staff who will handle these incidents.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Volunteers should use discretion, when it comes to emergency circumstances. In the event that Fire/Medical/Police are called, please notify Youth Staff immediately. Our use of the FBC building, and other venues, will be accompanied by procedures set forth and present on classroom walls, or otherwise noted and reflected on premises.

- FBC operates using “Incident Reports” to help promote transparency (1), protect our leadership (2), and facilitate the proper help needed (3) when it comes to problems that arise. If an incident report is needed, a staff member will provide one.
- Staff are expected to fill out an Incident Report for any incident, no matter how minor. Volunteers are expected to help provide the pertinent information as requested by Youth Staff.
- Please contact youth staff as soon as possible after an incident occurs.

NAVIGATING TEENAGE LIFE

Within Student Ministry

TROUBLED TEEN

All volunteers should be prepared for the scenario where a specific student (or students) overwhelm and compromise an environment. While rare, it happens and should result in that teen's removal from the immediate social context, initiating a pursuit of disciplinary action (see page 8).

Staff are trained and experienced with this, and should be brought into the fold as soon as possible, to help maintain volunteer focus on the task(s) at hand.

As always: document well, and recruit help immediately.

TEENS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Many FBC families and guests will have teenagers with disabilities. Some of these disabilities will be well-noted and properly understood, others will not. Volunteers are expected to treat all students the same, and await staff instruction on any specific accommodations beyond that. Staff will initiate and maintain open dialogue with parents as needed to help foster a productive environment for all of our students.

COMBATIVE PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Our volunteers are not expected to communicate with or respond to difficult or combative parents. Use your own discretion in terms of engaging with questions and frustrations. Otherwise, please refer all questions/concerns/inquiries to Caleb, Micah, or Emma Kate who are equipped to handle conflict.

As always, our staff act in accordance with official FBC policy and thus are able to communicate more effectively with families about any issues.

TIPS & TRICKS

From Caleb Pearson

The following is a compilation of things I have learned in Youth Ministry, and encourage you to consider during your leadership role!

1. True Maturity is not “acting your age.” It’s knowing when to act what age.

Sometimes, it can bear fruit to be “silly” with them for 20 minutes, so they can be serious with you for 40.

2. Don’t underestimate the power of humility and transparency in your leadership.

Our students often fail to realize that we too are growing in our faith and obedience to Christ. Remind them! Don’t focus on performing and posturing as a leader when all that a moment really demands sometimes is a humble friend and a listening ear.

3. Listening does more than speaking.

While teaching and communicating is critical to leadership, nothing breaks down the walls of a teenager like demonstrating a safe space.

4. We are not spiritual babysitters nor the primary disciplers of these teens!

Remember, our philosophy of Discipleship is to partner with parents in discipleship. Find ways to tie the youth experience into the student’s weekly life. Don’t forget about resources (beyond your primary resource of Youth Staff) like the FBC home center, parents of your students that may love to be involved, etc. You’d be surprised how many parents are willing to provide snacks or come share their story!

5. We are in the business of seed planting, not spiritual reaping.

I am continually humbled by the amount of graduates that will recall a youth lesson or experience later in life that didn’t seem to have an impact in the moment. Don’t forget about the unseen difference you are making!

6. We are here to be obedient to God, not “successful” in our own right. Trust the Lord!