

E Y C

D I O

A H L

MINISTRY BEST PRACTICES
2021-2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Why Youth Ministry?	Page 2
You've Got Help	Page 4
Youth Ministry Basics	Page 5
Contact Work	Page 7
Inclusive Hospitality	Page 9
Small Groups	Page 10
Best Practices	Page 11
Adults Working with Youth	Page 11
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safe Church / Safeguarding God's Children• Insurance• Adult Volunteers	
Supervision	Page 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two or More Rule• 1:5 Ratio• Open Door Policy• Overnight Supervision	
Communication	Page 13
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Covenant• Email/Texting/Social Media/Video• Publication and Web	
Medical Supervision	Page 14
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical Forms• First Aid Kits• Injury/Incident Report	

Continued on next page

Transportation

Page 14

- Youth and Young Adult Drivers
- Driver's License
- Car Seatbelts
- Cell Phones
- Two Adults Per Vehicle
- 15 Passenger Vans/Church Buses

Personal Space

Page 15

Appropriate Dress

Page 16

- Appropriate Clothing
- Swimwear
- Undergarments

Games

Page 16

- Personal Space
- Safe Environment
- Inclusive vs. Exclusive

Inappropriate Games

Page 16

Employer Guidelines

Page 17

Sample Forms

Page 18

WHY YOUTH MINISTRY?

Our purpose for youth ministry is already given to us in both our Baptismal Covenant and Scripture: *Go, therefore, and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.* (Matthew 28:19)

Making Disciples

We exist to make disciples: followers of Jesus who choose to be formed and reformed by the good news of the Gospel. There are two parts to this:

Baptizing Them

In our tradition, a rule of life specifically includes our Baptismal Vows (breaking of the bread, prayers, apostles' teaching, serving, etc.)

Teaching Them

Helping students develop a healthy understanding of God, faith, scripture, and the Church.

We make disciples by helping youth build solid relationships with mature followers of Christ.

Strategy

Christ provides us an example of intentional, strategic, and relational ministry. The three and a half years of Jesus' public work are expressed in:

- Growth ("let me teach you the basics of the Kingdom of God")
- Ministry ("go two by two and try this out")
- Leadership ("YOU feed them")
- Evangelism ("free miracles!"... He knew how to draw a crowd).

Our methodology should be flexible, changing with the culture and the needs of the youth in each parish. There are a host of resources to try available through the Diocesan Resource Office, but this area is the one that needs to be tailored to each youth community.

YOU'VE GOT HELP

You're not alone! Parish youth leaders in the Diocese of Atlanta have the below resources at their fingertips.



Holle Tubbs

Director of Diocesan Youth Ministries

Holle's entire job is to make sure parish rectors and youth leaders get the support they need to have a thriving ministry for youth and young adults. She oversees diocesan youth leadership teams, events, and ministry development. Contact Holle if you need help, have a question, or just want to chat!

Contact Holle

206.498.1637 (mobile) | htubbs@episcopalatlanta.org | 404.601.5354 (office)

Other Resources

- EYCDIOATL website | Everything youth and young adult ministry lives here: our events calendar, registrations, updates, and resources for youth ministry leaders. Visit eycdioatl.org to learn more.
- @eycdioatl on Instagram | We're always posting news, updates, and reminders!
- Youth Workers Facebook | This is a private page where youth workers can connect with each other and get updates. Contact Holle if you would like to join.

YOUTH MINISTRY BASICS

Build Relationships

- Introduce yourself first!
- Talk to them – get to know names, interests, activities; make sure everyone is included in the conversation and feels welcome.
- Affirm, affirm, affirm: compliment their t-shirt, shoes, hairstyle. Tell them thank you after they share during discussion time. Tell them thank you for listening after you explain a game or activity. Anything positive!
- Say, “I noticed that...” and fill in the blank with something completely non-judgmental. For example, “I noticed that you like to draw.”
- Respect youth.

Supervise

- The safety of our youth is our top priority. Please ask youth to stop behavior that puts them or others at risk.
- Sit among the youth at all activities.
- Help direct traffic. Check sleeping rooms or other meeting areas as we transition to a new location to make sure the group is staying together.
- Handle discipline issues, don't assume someone else will.

LBE – Lead By Example

- Help communicate what's going on.
- Be an active participant in all activities (and don't be afraid to get messy).
- Help get (and keep) youth quiet when someone is talking.
- Be the first to clap and sing.
- Practice and model ALL behaviors we expect to see from youth.

Be An Adult

- Be prepared to be made fun of (and not do it back...).
- Do the right thing.
- Listen! Don't talk first and don't talk more than the youth (and don't "talk-back" when an adult is giving instructions).
- Be honest, but appropriate (don't "overshare").
- Practice servant leadership:
 - Be last in line to get food
 - Give up your seat or microphone or craft supplies to encourage youth to take your place and be more actively involved
 - Do something out of your comfort zone because it encourages the youth to do it, too.
 - Pray. A lot.
 - Have fun and help the youth do the same!

What NOT To Do

DON'T be too cool for school.

The youth shouldn't do all the work or have all the fun – join in!

DON'T be a dictator.

It's not our job to "be the boss" in a way that alienates or disempowers the kids.

DON'T be a butler.

We want to give students opportunities to do, serve, and lead. When appropriate, allow students to make decisions and potentially fail.

DON'T freak out.

It's okay to feel your feelings, but work on your poker face for when things go wrong. Practice being a steady, non-anxious presence for our students!

DON'T leave real-time Yelp reviews.

Many things in youth ministry (camps, travel, food) aren't fancy. It's okay to give critical feedback to leaders, but it's inappropriate to use students as an audience for frustration. Try to either solve problems or model what it looks like to make the best of things!

CONTACT WORK

We do contact work for the same reason God clothed God's self in the humanity of Jesus: **to share the love of God with no strings attached.**

Contact Work Is...

- Active listening
- Building a bridge of friendship
- Winning the right to be trusted and heard
- Identifying with people where they are
- Understanding and penetrating a culture

Guiding Thoughts

1. Remember the goal: for every young person to have the opportunity to see and hear God's love for them through what we do and say.
2. We must seek to be led by the Holy Spirit and not get distracted by who we think the leaders or "key kids" are. There are students on the margins who are hungry for opportunities to lead!
3. It is important to remember that we are representing Christ to all kids; therefore, it is essential that we are not always aligned with the socially "in" crowd. Spend quality time with all sorts of kids and interest groups.

What Does Contact Work Look Like?

- Have a conversation with a young person.
- Enjoy activities with students.
- Support a student by attending their concert, play, sports competition, etc. (Invite others along!)

Contact Work Basics

- Practice the discipline of learning names
- Look for ways to serve and include young people
- Do not attempt to “be one of the kids.” It is crucial for leaders to be positive, adult role models while showing genuine, loving interest in youth and their affairs.
- Avoid teasing young people (unless you are very sure of the situation and your relationship with the student in question). Words, even if spoken in jest, can powerfully impact young people in particular.
- Avoid talking too much about your own accomplishments or experiences. Leave room for them to share.
- Be yourself. Perhaps one of the best examples we can provide for teens is that of an adult who is comfortable in their own skin and knows who they are.
- Ask God for a sincere interest in young people and an authentic presence.
- Be yourself – don’t work too hard at being friendly.
- Enthusiasm is contagious!

**Remember: contact work is identifying with people
the way Jesus identified with us.**

INCLUSIVE HOSPITALITY

Adapted from the Peer Ministry Leadership Manual by Dr. Barbara Varenhorst

The 5-Step Welcome

1. **H**ang with students (not other adults).
2. **E**ngage teenagers (take another youth with you to meet a new person).
3. **L**ook for opportunities to include students who aren't engaged.
4. **L**isten for items of interest...and introduce them to others with similar interests.
5. **O**pen your hands to appropriate touch. Pat a student on the back, shake their hand, give them a hug. Let them know that you care for them and are really glad to see them.

Tips

- Introduce yourself to the student.
- Seek topics of common interest.
- Focus on the student speaking.
- Ask follow-up questions!
- Volunteer appropriate information about yourself; don't interrogate.
- Ask questions that invite storytelling instead of a 'yes' or 'no' response.
- Be sincere, not mechanical.
- Let trust build naturally over time; don't probe for uninvited personal subjects.
- Give people time to consider answers or think of new topics; don't interrupt silences, they're normal.

Starting a conversation...

Begin with an observation:

- That is a beautiful necklace, where did you get it?
- It's getting cloudy, have you heard if it's supposed to rain?
- You have a Bulls shirt on, did you see them play the other night?

W – Where (Where are you from? What school do you go to?)

H – Hobbies (What do you like to do? How'd you get into that? What do you like about it?)

E – Events (What did you do this summer? Weekend? Over break? How was that?)

A – Acquaintance (Do you know...? Have you met...?)

T – Travel (Have you been to...? What is the best vacation you've been on?)

SMALL GROUPS

Your job is to keep the youth on task, not teach or lecture. **As the group facilitator, you have power – even if it may not feel that way to you.** You are an adult and therefore your voice will (metaphorically) be louder than everyone else's. Remember: if the person with the power speaks first, it can be difficult for students to speak up or feel heard.

Leading A Group

- Have your group sit in a circle on the ground, “knee to knee” (or around a table with chairs. Couches can make it hard to keep students engaged).
- Don't let people sit outside the circle, bring them in.
- Get to know your group members by name.
- Youth are more likely to remember what they say than what you say. Don't monopolize!
- Talk to your group members outside of the small group: during worship, meals, activities, on Facebook, etc.
- Use extra time to check-in and see how they are.
- Have fun and enjoy being together.
- Avoid sarcasm and ridicule.

Start a discussion... and keep it going.

- Encourage your students to share their thoughts, however unorthodox they may be.
- Be grateful for every answer. Literally. Always say, “Thank you for sharing.”
- Respect confidentiality.
- Listen, understand, but do not fix.
- Don't be satisfied with the first response to a question.
- Keep the discussion moving (don't let 1-2 students monopolize the conversation).
- Don't be afraid of silence. Wait it out – students will speak if you're quiet.
- Check in. Some students lack confidence and need to be invited to speak, others want to be left alone. Feel free to ask, “Are you comfortable answering that question?”
- Use “I” statements to share feelings or talk about your own experiences.
- Turn difficult questions back to the group. (“What do the rest of you think?”)
- Be flexible with the mood of the group (e.g. restless, tired, anxious) and respond appropriately.

EYCDIOATL BEST PRACTICES

Young people are one of the highest priorities of the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta. Those who work with our children and young people are entrusted with the protection, care and guidance of our students in a safe and healthy Christian environment. This document offers guidelines for those working with minors to provide a safe ministry environment.

- ★ *The term Youth will refer to all persons from infancy to 18 years old.*
- ★ *Young Adult will refer to all persons ages 18 (post-high school) to 29 years old; young adults should be out of high school for at least one year prior to volunteering with any youth program.*
- ★ *Adult will refer to all persons ages 24 & older working with youth in parish and/or diocesan programs. The policies below apply to all adults and young adults who work with youth, except when stated otherwise.*

● **Leader Requirements**

- A. **Safeguarding God's Children** | Adult leaders (paid and volunteer) working with youth on a regular basis must remain up-to-date with their Safe Church Training certification. *Visit the Safe Church website to see which training is required for your team.*
- B. **Insurance** | Before an event, adult leaders should review both their church's policy and their own personal policies for liability coverage.
- C. **Adult Volunteers** | These should be active participants in their parish for at least six months prior to working with youth.

● **Supervision Policies**

- A. **Two or More** | There should always be two or more adults present with any one or more youth.
- B. **One-to-Five** | For groups of 10 or more students, the ratio should be at least one adult to every five youth. Young adults may be counted as adults when there is at least one adult (24+ years) present, though they should not be left in a supervisory role.
- C. **Open Door Policy** | Two people together should be observable at any time, especially when it is a youth and adult.

D. Overnight Events

1. Male and female students should sleep in separate spaces. If conditions force both genders to sleep in the same room, a physical boundary should be created to separate the sexes.
 - a) Please note that transgender students attending diocesan youth events will be housed according to their gender identity;
 - b) Please note that nonbinary students attending diocesan events will be housed according to their sex assigned at birth.
2. The schedule of an overnight event must allow for at least 8 hours of sleep.
3. There must be at least two adults present if they are in a sleeping area with students.
4. Adult leaders should shower in a separate place or at a separate time than students.

E. Pastoral Care

1. Parent Notification: When meeting with a youth outside of regular youth group activities, the adult leader should notify parents/guardians of the student regarding when, where, and why the meeting will take place.
2. Open Door Policy: When meeting with a student outside of regular youth group activities, the adult leader must follow the Open Door policy: all meetings must be physically visible to other adults.
3. Professional Counseling: Adult leaders need to recognize the limits of their counseling expertise and the severity of any issue brought to them by a student. If a leader believes a student would benefit from professional mental health support, they should consult their priest and/or the parents of the student before making any professional counseling referrals.

- F. **Emergency Intervention** | If there is a concern of self-harm or harm to another person, the youth leader must follow Safe Church guidelines (see end of document) by immediately reporting their concern to the youth director or rector.

● **Communication**

- A. **Community Covenant** | All youth groups should create a community covenant that will be signed by each student and their parents. The covenant should clarify rules and expectations.

- B. **Digital Communication** | Clear expectations on the use of smartphones, social media, texting, email, etc. should be defined in the Community Covenant.
1. **Email & Texting:** Adult leaders should normally confine emailing and texting to the whole group and not to individual students; there should be no texting between youth and adult leaders during school hours or after 10 PM. There will be times when youth text adult leaders. If this happens, leaders must keep a record of the conversation. If the conversation turns more personal (e.g., life problems, peer pressure, relationships) let your parish youth minister and screenshot the conversation for documentation. Protect yourself!
 2. **Social Media:** Social media is a very effective tool when used appropriately. Do not use your personal account for youth group purposes; instead, use a ministry account for all social media and keep the account public. Use Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. primarily for 1-way communication – this is where you share your ministry events and inspirational content.
 - a) If you choose to use Snapchat, let youth know you will not respond to snaps, so they should not send you snaps. Snapchat is an effective tool, but our best practice is to use it for the story functionality only.
 3. **FaceTime, Zoom, etc.:** Adult leaders should refrain from using video chats for one-on-one conversations with students.
- C. **Publications** | Adult leaders must obtain written permission from parents to print, publish and upload on a website any photos or video of youth. Students' last names, as well as any photos of youth in swim or sleepwear, should not be displayed on the web.

- **Medical Supervision**

- A. **Medical Forms** | A current medical form for all students and adults should be completed and accessible during all youth programs, whether on church property or an offsite location.
- B. **First Aid Kits** | A Red Cross First Aid kit (or the equivalent) should be easily accessible during all youth programs. Included in this kit should be a notebook to record all transactions involving administration of first aid and/or disbursement of medications. Youth and young adults should not distribute any medications!

- C. **Injury/Incident Report** | Should an injury or accident occur during a youth event, a report should be completed describing the incident and any actions taken. A copy should be given to the parents, with the original kept on file at the church.
- D. **Emergency Plan** | Adult leaders should develop an emergency plan prior to any event. This plan should include location of the closest medical facility, what two individuals (two adults or an adult and another youth) will accompany the injured youth to the hospital and what adult would contact the parents of the injured youth.

- **Transportation**

- A. **Youth and Young Adult Drivers** | Youth and young adults should not be permitted to drive students during any youth event.
- B. **Driver's License** | Churches should request a copy of all adult leaders' drivers' licenses; A DMV Driver's Record should be checked for all youth leaders.
- C. **Seatbelts** | All passengers and the driver **MUST** wear a seatbelt at all times while the vehicle's engine is running.
- D. **Cell Phones** | No drivers should use a cell phone for calls or texting while the vehicle is in motion.
- E. **Two Adults** | For trips eight hours or longer, it is recommended that there be at least two adult drivers who will rotate driving responsibilities. It is highly discouraged that one adult drives with one youth; should circumstances force this arrangement, the driver should call the parents of the youth and one other adult from the group at the time of departure and arrival.
- F. **Large Vans & Church Buses** | Adult leaders should check the insurance policy of their church for regulations about use of vans and buses. If either of these vehicles is to be used, it is recommended that the driver(s) receive special driving/safety training.

- **Personal Space**

- A. No lap-sitting
- B. No wrestling
- C. No hugs from behind
- D. No body massages
- E. No intimate contact
- F. No unwanted/unsolicited body contact

- **Appropriate Dress**

- A. **Clothing** | No offensive slogans or messages should be visible.
- B. **Swimwear** | Females should wear bathing suits that cover the torso with shoulder straps; Males should not wear spandex suits. Swimsuits should only be worn at the beach or pool or any other kind of recreational water activity.
- C. **Revealing or Tight Clothing** | Females should wear tops that completely cover bras; Males should wear pants/shorts high enough to cover the underwear or boxers. Shirts should be worn by both genders in sleeping quarters.

- **Games**

- A. **Personal Space** | All games should be reviewed for appropriateness in terms of body contact, familiarity of the group, and physical and emotional safety.
- B. **Safety** | Youth leaders should assess the space for games concerning safety. Are there rocks or holes in the field? Is there adequate lighting and space? What are the limitations of the facility?
- C. **Inclusive vs Exclusive** | Youth leaders should assess the game(s) with regard to how inclusive the game is for individuals in the group. What are the physical limitations of the members of your group? Are participants eliminated and for how long? How well do the participants know each other?
- D. **Purpose and Goals** | Youth leaders should assess the games for their overall purpose. What are you trying to accomplish; getting the group to know each other, building community or perhaps just releasing energy? How can the game relate to the overall theme of the program? How can you process with the group to evaluate what they have learned from the experience?
- E. **Games to Avoid:**

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Food games | 6. Red Rover, Red Rover |
| 2. Suck and Blow | 7. Napoleon Sit/Lap Sit |
| 3. Lifesaver/Toothpick | 8. Twister |
| 4. Songs You Can Sing | |
| 5. Honey, If You Love Me | |

See appendix for samples of the following forms:

- Consent, Medical, Liability, and Media Release form
- Community Covenant



EMPLOYER GUIDELINES

- Confidentiality and Reporting form

JOB DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE

Youth Minister/Director, Full-time

Hours: 40/week

Benefits: Health, Pension, Continuing Education

Summary: Youth Minister/Director will oversee a ministry for students (grades 6-12) that will encourage, educate, and empower them toward deeper maturity in Christ, full participation in the Church, and Gospel-centered citizenship in our world.

Primary Responsibilities

- Build relationships with youth and their families.
- Plan, develop, and implement all aspects of a balanced youth ministry in the areas of group building, worship, discipleship, mission, and outreach.
- Evaluate the vision and goals of the youth ministry.
- Recruit and train volunteers who work with youth in all aspects of youth ministry.
- Direct monthly planning sessions with volunteers.
- Mentor youth in developing leadership skills.
- Coordinate and teach confirmation classes and provide leadership for confirmands, mentors, and parents beyond the classroom.
- Prepare, submit, and administer a youth budget and annual goals for the church fiscal year in consultation with the finance committee and submit to the vestry.
- Develop and/or distribute control and compliance documents (youth directory, youth ministry calendar, event and trip registration forms, background checks, safeguarding certificates, etc.).
- Personally follow up with all visitors within a week of their visit.
- Keep the parish regularly updated on Youth Ministry via newsletters, announcements, bulletins, and photography.

Other Responsibilities

- Attend Weekly staff meetings
- Attend vestry meetings quarterly
- Give regular updates to the youth ministry representative on the vestry

Qualifications & Accountability

- Remain current in required Safe Church training
- Participate in relevant continuing education
- Maintain partnership with Diocesan Youth Ministries (EYCDIOATL)

Responsibilities of the Rector

- Create a positive environment where YD and youth ministry can flourish.
- Meet regularly with YD to ensure that adequate resources are available for the program and assist in resolving challenges.
- Provide an annual review of YD's performance and concerns.
- Advocate for youth ministry to Wardens and Vestry.
- Pay an annual salary of _____ on a bi-monthly basis.
- Provide two weeks' vacation and an additional two Sundays of leave

JOB DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE

Youth Director/Coordinator, Part-time

Hours: 20/week

Benefits: Health, Pension, Continuing Education

Summary: Youth Director/Coordinator will serve in a part-time capacity to oversee the day-to-day operation of the youth ministry. This position is administrative and deals with the behind-the-scenes tasks that support the youth ministry.

Primary Responsibilities

- Plan and publicize all the youth ministry events.
- Recruit and train volunteers to work with youth in all aspects of youth ministry.
- Direct monthly planning sessions with volunteers.
- Coordinate with volunteers, mentors, and parents beyond the classroom. Keep track of schedules, attendance, and make sure curriculum and supplies are available.
- Develop and/or distribute control and compliance documents (youth directory, youth ministry calendar, event and trip registration forms, background checks, safeguarding certificates, etc.).
- Create and update event notebooks for each major event.
- Know at least 75% of the parents on the rolls by name.
- Personally follow up with all visitors within a week of their visit.
- Keeps the parish updates on Youth Ministry through newsletters, announcements, bulletins, and photography regularly.

Other Responsibilities

- Attend Weekly staff meetings
- Give regular updates to the youth ministry representative on the vestry

Qualifications & Accountability

- Remain current in required Safe Church training
- Participate in relevant continuing education
- Maintain partnership with Diocesan Youth Ministries (EYCDIOATL)

Responsibilities of the Rector

- Create a positive environment where YD and youth ministry can flourish.
- Meet regularly with YD to ensure that adequate resources are available for the program and assist in resolving challenges.
- Provide an annual review of YD's performance and concerns.
- Advocate for youth ministry to Wardens and Vestry.
- Pay an annual salary of _____ on a bi-monthly basis.
- Provide two weeks' vacation and an additional two Sundays of leave

YOUTH MINISTRY COMPENSATION GUIDE

While every parish is unique, the goal when hiring a youth ministry professional should be to retain an individual with a calling to youth ministry and the requisite experience and/or professional training to succeed. The salary for a youth ministry professional will significantly influence their tenure in this position. While determining salary is not an exact science, the information below is intended to serve as a frame of reference when making these decisions.

According to Dr. Jeremiah Gibbs, Director of the Lantz Center for Christian Vocation and Spiritual Formation at the University of Indianapolis, "it is generally considered good practice to pay a trained youth minister the rough equivalent of a public school teacher in your region." Dr. Gibbs further suggests that such a salary "with regular raises is usually what keeps a youth minister for a long tenure."

The tables below reflect data collected and published in The Youth Cartel's 2020 Full-Time Youth Pastor Compensation Survey. These numbers represent average compensation amounts across denominations and do not account for pension payments made to the Pension Fund or any other standard employee benefit of the Episcopal Church.

Youth Director compensation by youth ministry budget size

Annual Youth Budget	Average Youth Director Salary
No Budget	\$38,079
3k or less	\$38,672
3-5k	\$42,241
5-7k	\$42,863
7-10k	\$44,430
10-15k	\$47,747
15-20k	\$50,510
20-25k	\$50,257
25-30k	\$50,712
30k+	\$61,682

Youth Director compensation by church budget size

Annual Parish Budget	Youth Director Compensation Average
Less than 250k	\$35,893
251-500k	\$41,829
501-750k	\$44,697
751k-1M	\$47,887
1.5-2M	\$52,854
2-2.5M	\$55,504
2.5-3M	\$58,646
3-3.5M	\$54,161
3.5-4M	\$54,067
4M+	\$62,358

Youth Director compensation by youth ministry size

<20	\$41,202
20-30	\$42,800
31-40	\$45,276
41-50	\$49,047
51-60	\$47,751
61-70	\$50,564
71-80	\$47,423
81-90	\$51,595
91-100	\$49,096
101-125	\$56,504
126-150	\$56,496

Where you see lines in title places, insert your church.

_____ Waiver & Parental Consent Form
Emergency Medical Release and Liability Waiver

Participant's Name _____ Birth _____

Date _____

School _____ Grade _____

Address _____ City _____

Zip Code _____

Participant's Home Phone # _____ Participant's Cell Phone # _____

Participant's E-Mail _____

Family E-Mail _____

Emergency Information

Mother's Name _____ Home # _____

Cell/Alternate # _____

Father's Name _____ Home # _____

Cell/Alternate # _____

In an emergency when parent/guardian cannot be reached, please contact the following:

Name _____

Relationship _____

Home# _____

Cell#/Alternate # _____

Name _____

Relationship _____

Home# _____

Cell#/Alternate # _____

HEALTH CONCERNS (Please identify any allergies (to include foods), all medications/doses, and other health concerns):

Family Physician: _____ **Phone**

_____

Dental Provider: _____

Phone# _____

Medical/Hospital Insurance Company _____

Grp# _____

Policy Holder's Name _____

Policy # _____

Additional Information that May Be Helpful

This authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment must be completed before participant can participate in any activities. Treatment for injury will be based on information provided herein.

DISCLAIMER

_____ and its leaders, directors, officers, employees, contractors, agents, volunteers, members and representatives, are not responsible for any injury, loss or damage of any kind whatsoever sustained by any person or their property while participating in events, activities or travel with EYC and all related activities associated with EYC, including injury, loss or damage.

ASSUMPTION OF RISKS

IN CONSIDERATION OF _____ allowing me or my child to participate in events, activities, or travel with _____ and all related activities associated with the EYC, including participation in the EYC from **DATES** inclusive, and all activities related to the EYC (collectively referred to as the "Activities"), I acknowledge that I am aware of the possible Risks, Dangers and Hazards associated with participation in the Activities including the possible risk of severe or fatal injury to myself or others.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY and AGREEMENT

IN CONSIDERATION OF _____ allowing me or my child to participate in the Activities, I agree on behalf of myself and/or my child:

1. **TO ASSUME and ACCEPT ALL RISKS** arising out of, associated with or related to my or my child's participation in the Activities.
2. **TO WAIVE and RELEASE** _____ from any and all liability for any loss, damage, injury or expense that I or my child may suffer, or that my next of kin may suffer as a result of my or my child's participation in the activities due to any cause whatsoever.
3. **TO INDEMNIFY and HOLD HARMLESS** _____ from any and all liability for any damage to the personal property of, or personal injury to, any third party resulting from my or my child's participation in the activities.
4. **TO INDEMNIFY and HOLD HARMLESS** _____ from any and all claims, demands, actions and costs for any loss, injury, damage or expense whatsoever that might arise out of my or my child's participation in the Activities.

YOUTH PARTICPATION CONSENT

Acknowledgment of Participant:

I, the undersigned Participant, understand that I am responsible to act in a safe and responsible fashion, to follow the instructions or directions of the persons in charge of the EYC, and to obey requests to comply with safety regulations as directed by the persons in charge of the EYC, including designated leaders and drivers of private or public transportation. I will be solely responsible for myself, will wear a seat-belt when available and will not disturb or distract the driver when using private or public transportation to travel to and from EYC activities. At all EYC sports events or other activities, I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to obtain and wear appropriate safety equipment. I will not endanger the safety of others or myself at any activities, outings or sports events of the EYC or when using private or public transportation for travel to and from such activities. I also understand that I may be photographed or appear in video for such purposes as _____ deems necessary.

Acknowledgment of Parent or Guardian of Participant:

We, the undersigned Parents or Guardians of the Participant, hereby authorize and consent to the Participant's involvement in the EYC, including any use of private or public transportation deemed necessary by the persons in charge of the EYC for Participant travel to and from EYC activities, or to the NEAREST SUITABLE MEDICAL or HOSPITAL FACILITY in the event that emergency or other medical treatment not available at the site of a EYC activity is deemed advisable. We hereby consent to and authorize such emergency or other medical treatment of the Participant as may be deemed advisable in the event of accident, injury, or illness during the activities of the EYC. We also understand that the participant may be photographed or appear in video for such purposes as _____ deems necessary.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT and SIGNATURE

I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS A LEGAL AGREEMENT that is binding upon myself and my heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns. **I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE TERMS OF THIS AGREEMENT** and **I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT** by signing this agreement voluntarily, I am agreeing to abide by its terms and I am waiving certain legal rights that my child or I may have.

This Consent, Authorization and Acknowledgment shall be effective from and including DATE to and including DATE.

Signature of Parent or Guardian Date
(if Participant is under 18 years of age)

Signature of Participant Date

Printed Name of Parent Date

Printed Name of Participant Date

Creating a Community Covenant

It is important that you establish behavioral expectations early. I recommend that you create a covenant with your group early in the year. The Covenant not only creates boundaries within which each individual agrees to operate and the potential consequences, but it also helps you as a leader readily identify behavior that needs to be corrected and how to go about it. A Covenant also establishes a sense of “safety” and “predictability” for all group members. Remember that it is your job as the Leader to enforce this Covenant. Your Team is depending on YOU to ensure this happens.

To help with buy-in, make sure the youth get to help create the Community Covenant, and make sure each attendee has the opportunity to provide input. Write it on a large piece of poster board, display it prominently in your regular meeting space, and have everyone sign it. If everyone helps come up with the rules, they will be much more likely to also help each other follow the rules. It’s best to word each rule positively (as in, here’s what I *will* do vs. here’s what I *won’t* do.) Here are some suggestions for basic rules to start with:

1. Respect God.
2. Respect others, including the leaders.
3. Respect the property.

One idea: start with these three rules, then have the youth come up with additional ones they want to add. “When you have broad Biblical rules, you’ll find less is more. They give students an opportunity to learn to think Biblically about their own conduct. It’s much better for them to seek to conduct themselves in line with broad Biblical principles than to just stay within concrete rules.”

Be sure your covenant addresses:

- Drug use
- Alcohol use
- Sleeping arrangements, curfew, and quiet time
- Participation
- Interpersonal treatment
- Behavior
- Appropriate displays of affection
- Appropriate attire
- Language
- Restrictions around leaving
- Use of technology

You may want to draft an initial covenant one meeting, and then review it the following meeting before making it final. This allows people to think about it and come up with new ideas or reconsider certain items. Distribute the final version of the Covenant to all participants and parents/guardians.

Information taken from “Rules: Less is More” by Mark Marshall, see the complete article on rules here: <http://youthspecialties.com/articles/rules-less-is-more/> and from The Episcopal Church Office of Youth Ministries Youth in Mission Manual: <https://episcopoyouth.org/episcopal-youth-in-mission-manual/>

We encourage you to write your own Covenant with your youth – let them help you create it. Here is the example for Diocesan Youth Ministries.

**Policy and Guidelines (Community Covenant)
for Events and Activities of the Diocese of
Atlanta Involving Children and Youth**

It is the policy of the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta (the “Diocese”) that all events and activities conducted by the Diocese or on its property observe the following guidelines, which are to be interpreted in a manner consistent with the mission and doctrine of the Episcopal Church.

1. Responsible officials will model and promote behavior of and towards all Participants in keeping with the baptismal covenant of the Book of Common Prayer, including the covenant to respect the dignity of every human being.
2. Aggressive behavior towards Participants by any person will not to be tolerated.
3. Bullying, fighting, abusive or offensive language, and engaging in threats or coercion ~~are~~ will not be tolerated.
4. Any activity that presents a serious risk of personal injury or emotional harm to any Participant or other person is prohibited.
5. Sexual advances towards or unwanted, inappropriate, or offensive touching of Participants is prohibited. (See Appendix A, *Appropriate Displays of Affection* in the “Diocesan Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse”.)
6. Weapons or items that appear to be or create the impression of dangerous weapons are prohibited. Props for plays and games, kitchen utensils, utilitarian equipment and tools, and other items with a benign purpose that do not threaten Participants or create realistic and actual fear of harm are permitted if otherwise appropriate. For example, a bow and arrow at an archery event or a cutting tool on a camping trip may be appropriate under all the circumstances.
7. Dorms for Participants are to be single gender. (See the Transgender Policy of the Diocese for additional clarification).
8. In organizing and directing events, Responsible Officials shall consider the personal privacy interests and desires of all Participants, consistent with the type of event involved, the nature of the facilities and activities, and the interests of others.
9. Tobacco products are not permitted and shall not be used.
10. Participants below the legal drinking age shall not use or have possession of alcoholic beverages. Of course, this guideline has no application to proper participation in communion.

11. Illegal drugs and other controlled substances for which the person in possession has no prescription are prohibited.
12. Age appropriate play or normal physical activities are permitted if they do not entail or threaten injury, offensive physical contact, or other offensive or improper conduct. (See Appendix A, *Appropriate Displays of Affection* in the “Diocesan Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse”).
13. Discrimination on any basis prohibited by the Episcopal Church is not to be tolerated, consistent with other Diocesan policies.
14. Responsible Officials shall apply these rules using common sense and good judgment, and not in an arbitrary or unreasonable manner.
15. For purposes of this policy, the following terms have the stated meaning:
 - “Participants” means children or youth participating in Diocesan events.
 - “Responsible Officials” means persons who are acting for or in cooperation with the Diocese or have any responsibilities or authority in connection with an event.

Confidentiality and Reporting

What is Confidentiality?

An important quality of a good adult volunteer is trustworthiness and the ability to keep boundaries. Confidentiality means that anything shared of a personal nature is a gift to the listener and not the listener's to give away through gossip or idle talk with others. Everything students share with us is "personal." It is not for listeners to decide whether something is personal, or whether the person will or won't mind if it's shared.

When to break confidentiality

Confidentiality must be broken when serious help is required because a person:

- Intends to harm him or herself (including alcohol/drug use, cutting, or thoughts of suicide)
- Intends to harm another.
- Is being harmed or abused by someone (physically, sexually, or emotionally).

If a youth says, "Can I tell you something if you promise not to tell anyone?" We recommend that you say something like, "You can talk to me and I will keep it confidential as long as no one is getting hurt." Don't make promises you can't keep.

Reporting Crisis Issues

Adult volunteers must report any issues students reveal which merit breaking confidentiality. These issues should be reported directly to the Rector of your parish or the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas Youth Missioner. These personnel will report to families and the proper authorities as necessary.

CONFIDENTIAL NOTICE OF CONCERN

Individual(s) of Concern:			
Date of occurrence:			
Time of occurrence:			
Type of Concern:	<input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate behavior with a child or youth <input type="checkbox"/> Policy violation with a child or youth <input type="checkbox"/> Possible risk of abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate behavior with an adult <input type="checkbox"/> Other Concern:		
Describe the situation: What happened, where it happened, when it happened, who was involved, who was present, who was notified? If reported to the State, what was their recommendation about investigating?		
Has this situation ever occurred previously?		
What action was taken? How was the situation handled, who was involved, who was questioned, were police called?		
What is the follow-up plan? Does anyone else need to be notified? Will the situation need monitoring? Would you like someone to call you to discuss this situation?		
Pastoral responses: Who was involved, how was the situation handled?		
Submitted by:		Telephone number:	
Location and address:			
Signature:		Date:	
Reviewed by:			

Please provide as much detail as possible, using additional sheets wherever necessary. The completed form together with the additional pages must then be sent to the Diocese of Atlanta-Attn: Easton Davis-Diocesan Youth Coordinator-2744 Peachtree Road, NW-Atlanta, Ga. 30305