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## Procedures and Guidelines for

## GraceYouth Volunteers

**Procedures for GraceYouth Volunteers**

Grace Church is committed to providing a safe and encouraging environment for all of the students who attend GraceYouth.

In order to uphold this standard we ask that all of our volunteers complete the following:

**Interview and Shadowing Experience** -The Site Lead will provide you with an opportunity to shadow in your preferred area for GraceYouth. Once you have shadowed, the Site Lead will ask you a few questions to get to know you better. We would love to hear your testimony! You are part of influencing the next generation for Christ so we value your story and want to walk with you in that journey!

**Completion of Application** - All GraceYouth volunteers must complete and sign an application form.

The state of Pennsylvania has mandated that all volunteers undergo the following background screenings as of July 1, 2015:

**PA Criminal History Screening** - The Central Office Manager will use the information on your application to run a PA Criminal History Screening. (We can accept copies from within the past year)

**PA Child Abuse Screening** - In your new family ministry volunteer folder you will find a form to complete a PA Child Abuse Screening. Once the form is completed and the consent form is signed, the Central Office Manager will mail your screening. (We can accept copies from within the past year)

**FBI Fingerprint Screening** - If you have lived outside of PA in the past 10 years or EVER established

residency outside the USA, you are required to obtain an FBI Fingerprint Screening. Your GY Site Lead

can help you through this process. (We cannot accept copies of FBI Screenings)

**Mandated Reporter Training** - Grace Church highly recommends that ALL Family Ministry volunteers complete the mandated reporter training. However, Site Leads, Team Leaders, Student Life Group Leaders, Weekly Volunteers, and Childcare Volunteers are REQUIRED to complete the mandated reporter.

**References** - After gaining the applicant's permission, the Central Office Manager will contact references listed by applicant. The church may also contact employers, former ministers, and others who have supervised applicants in previous church volunteering.

**Signed Agreement to Follow Guidelines** - All volunteers must sign the agreement at the end of these guidelines to show their commitment to observe these guidelines.

## Guidelines for GraceYouth Volunteers

## Touching Policy

We live in an age where child abuse is a reality in our society. The church should deal with this issue as a good shepherd, by taking steps to protect the children in our care. Grace Church has implemented a touching policy that will safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be carefully followed by anyone working with children and students.

1. Hugging, kisses and other forms of appropriate physical affection between volunteers and children are important for a child's development and are generally suitable in our church setting.
2. Physical affection should be appropriate to the age of the child or student. (For example, it is generally appropriate for a four‑year‑old to sit in a preschool volunteer's lap and give a kiss on the cheek, but it is not appropriate for a teenager and student leader to behave this way.)
3. Touching should be initiated by the child or student. It should be a response to the child's need for comforting, encouragement, or affection. It should not be based upon the adult's emotional need.
4. Touching and affection should only be given when in the presence of other children's ministry or student volunteers. It is much less likely that touches will be inappropriate or misconstrued as such when two adult volunteers are present and the touching is open to observation. This rule is especially important when diapering a baby or helping a child change clothes or use the restroom.
5. Touching behavior should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. As ministry volunteers our behavior must foster trust at all times; it should be above reproach.
6. A child's preference not to be touched should be respected. Do not force affection upon a reluctant child.
7. Church volunteers are responsible to protect children under their supervision from inappropriate touching by others.
8. Church volunteers must promptly discuss inappropriate touching or other questionable behavior by other volunteers with their ministry leader or the Children’s or Student Pastor.

**Mandatory Reporting:**

When one of the following conditions is met, these must be reported. Begin with your Site Lead, who will talk with the GraceYouth Central Lead.

1. When you suspect a student is being harmed by another person.
2. When you suspect a student is or has plans to harm themselves.
3. When you suspect a student has intentions to harm another person.

**Practicing Safe Boundaries**

1. Whenever feasible, a student will not be in the primary care of only one adult. Teams of adults (preferably male and female) will supervise activities.
2. A male leader is never to be alone with a female student.
3. A female leader is never to be alone with a male student.
4. At least two adults present on overnight activities.
5. Never use physical force on a student – slapping, hitting, punching, etc.
6. When spending time/counseling students, public places are the best. Do not have a student over to your house or spend time at theirs without prior approval of parents and Site Lead.

**Regarding Sexual Behavior**

We teach that sex was created by God as an expression of intimacy between a man and woman within the context of marriage. Volunteers who embrace lifestyles or behaviors that conflict with this teaching will eventually find themselves having to pretend to be something they are not or believe something they don’t. In an effort to protect you from a potentially awkward situation, we ask the following:

1. If you are involved in a sexual relationship and are not married, we ask that you not volunteer in family ministry at this time.
2. If you are pursuing a same sex relationship, we ask that you not volunteer in family ministry at this time.
3. In the spirit of being a good role model, if you are single and living with a member of the opposite sex, we ask that you not volunteer at this time. We do not want to put you in the awkward position of having to explain your arrangement if members of your group visit your home.
4. If you are married and are currently involved in a sexual relationship outside of your marriage, we ask that you not volunteer at this time.

**Set An Example**

By taking this step to volunteer, we understand that students will be watching us and looking to us to set an example of a Christian lifestyle. Everyone is on their journey, so we’re not looking for perfection, but evidence of a pursuit to be more like Jesus.

* Our mouths (sarcasm, joking and language)
* Social Media
* Dress
* You are the leader, not the student.

**Volunteers who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from the GraceYouth Team at the sole discretion of the Site Lead and the Central Lead.**

**Please sign and return this page to the GraceYouth Site Lead.**

**I have read the GraceYouth Procedures and Guidelines. I agree to observe them faithfully:**

Your Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_