

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES FOR THE STUDENT MINISTRY OF LAKESIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

The student ministry of Lakeside Church of Christ believes an atmosphere of Christ-like, unconditional love and affirmation provides more motivation to grow and change than an atmosphere of criticism. However, there needs to be healthy parameters for any group to function. Because ministers, parents and leaders are all partners in the rearing of youth, it is important for each of these groups to approach discipline and guidance at church from the same perspective.

BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM AND DURING WORSHIP LOCALLY OR AWAY

In the life of the church, times of teaching and worship are primary. Youth and other members who come to church in order to learn and grow deserve to study and worship in an atmosphere where that is possible without hindrance. The leaders have a responsibility to maintain that atmosphere. (Cell phones must have the ringers turned off and NO text messaging at any time). Youth who make study or worship impossible for those around them need to be moved to an alternative study location. Generally, this will mean spending the remainder of the time with his or her parents. Before a youth is dismissed from a class or service, leaders have a responsibility to tell the youth that his or her behavior warrants dismissal. Youth who choose to continue disrupting will be dismissed. In most cases, the leaders will inform the parents when a dismissal has taken place. Depending on the circumstances, a youth who has been dismissed from a group should be welcome at the next meeting.

RESPECT TOWARD LEADERS

Youth who choose to participate at Lakeside Church of Christ youth activities agree to follow the instructions of the leaders. Obeying those instructions and exhibiting respect toward leaders is a condition for remaining at an activity. If a family has any concerns with how chaperones or leaders are acting towards their children please let George Richards know immediately.

SEND HOME POLICY

Lakeside Church of Christ assumes a lot of responsibility when taking youth out of town. Obeying and respecting leaders is essential for the youth group to function well out of the city. A serious breakdown in these areas must result in the youth returning home to the parents. When a student has broken that behavior agreement (possessing prohibited items which includes cell phones, actively engaging in immoral talk or behavior, disrespecting trip leaders, etc) it is the responsibility of the parents to pick up their child the day of being notified. **If the distance of the trip makes that impossible, then the parents of the youth will pay for commercial transportation home.** Parents agree to support leaders' decisions about sending a youth home, knowing that only those present on the trip can know all the variables involved. Boys and girls are not allowed to visit in the same room without an adult chaperone present when staying in a motel, at a camp, or retreat.

CELL PHONES

It has been our experience that students are more focused on the purpose of the trip (worship, service, fellowship) when cell phones are not present. Additionally, the absence of cell phones helps remove temptations to act inappropriately with cell phones in the church van or service location (inappropriate pictures being taken, conversations of gossip, pornography, or calling new locals to sneak out and meet in dangerous locations). We are aware of the benefits of cell phones but when the measured risk/rewards are taken, **we have made it a policy that for all trips students's cell phones are to remain home and if found in violation they will be sent home.** Adult leaders will always have the cell phones present for emergencies, wake up alarms, as well communicating back home or capturing special moments on the trip.

WEAPONS & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The physical safety of the youth group is one of our church's top priorities. Therefore, no youth may possess a gun, knife, martial arts item, or any other weapon at any youth group activity at the church or away. The presence of a dangerous weapon may result in an immediate call to 911 and full cooperation with the authorities who respond. In the meantime, the sponsor in charge will coordinate a plan with other leaders to best protect the safety of the youth present. Actual confrontation with a youth who has a gun will be left to the proper authorities. If practical, parents of the involved youth will be contacted. Alcohol, illegal drugs, weapons as described above, pornography and tobacco products are not permitted at youth group activities. The breaking of this policy, including any other serious failure to follow youth group guidelines, will result in the youth not being permitted to participate in the next youth trip.

WATER SAFETY

Lakeside Church of Christ assumes no responsibility for accidents, injury, or death on or near the water. We recommend that everyone, swimmers and non-swimmers wear a life jacket at all times, while on or in the water. Parents should instruct their children as to the safety hazards associated with boating, swimming, and all water related activities. We recommend using a "Buddy" system, in that you always know where your "Buddy" is, while in and on the water.

For any youth to participate in retreats or trips led by the Lakeside Church of Christ we must have a medical form, (filled out and signed by a parent), a discipline guideline for, (signed by a parent and youth), on file at the church on all youth. See George Richards or the church website for forms. Upon reading and discussing these youth discipline guidelines found in the Student Ministry Discipline Agreement, please sign and return to the church office.

Having read the policies and guidelines for the Student Ministry of Lakeside Church of Christ, we (youth and parent) agree to adhere to the Discipline Guidelines as set forth by the Lakeside Church of Christ.

Youth Participant's Signature - Date

Parents' Signature - Date