



**CROSS CHURCH**

NEXT GEN MINISTRIES TEAM



# **POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**



8.5.2024



Next Gen Team,

Thanks for your commitment to pouring your lives into the Next Generation of the Church. Our desire for every young person is that they experience God's best plans in regards to our Core Values: People Need Jesus, People Need Each Other, People Change the World, and People Leave Legacies. We also desire that our young people are safe and protected. The Next Gen safety policies & procedures of Cross Church present our plan to diligently partner with you in providing safe environments as we reach and disciple our pre-schoolers, kids and students. Thank you for your commitment to these policies & procedures, and thank you for your commitment to reaching the Next Generation for Jesus.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Phil Kuehn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "P" and "K".



# **STUDENT MINISTRY**



# SECTION 1

## SECURITY POLICIES

### 1. CHECK IN AND CHECK-OUT PROCEDURE

When students arrive on campus for student ministry specific programming:

- Cross Church student ministry staff and/or trained, background check approved Dream Team members should be in place ready to ensure proper check-in procedures for safety purposes as well as record-keeping.
- There should be clear, visible signage present to welcome students, leaders, and first-time visitors to any student programming.
- Students will be dismissed by either a student staff member or student Dream Team member, with students having a plan previously discussed with their parent/guardian for pickup or meet up.

### 2. HALL MONITOR

- There will be uniformed police officers and/or church-approved security volunteers on site monitoring student space during on-site programming to ensure the physical safety of all participants in Cross Church Student Ministry.
- Student staff members and student Dream Team members will walk around during student programming and group time to ensure that students and adults are not alone together in a closed room or environment.

### 3. PARENT CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION POLICY

- Parents may be around students as a vetted, background check approved member of the Cross Church Student Ministry Dream Team.
- Parents may be around students if accompanied by a member of the Cross Church Student Staff during student ministry programming or group time, particularly for families attending for the first time or as a visitor.
- Parents may be around students for special nights such as Family Worship nights.

If a parent would like to be more involved with the student ministry or physically be around students during actual programming or group time, he or she must speak with a student

ministry staff member to begin the onboarding process through Dream Team membership.

### 4. SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION POLICY

For Student Ministry Staff:

In order to minister to students and families, student ministry staff on occasion will need to communicate with students and families about important activities as well as day-to-day ministry. Listed below are the standards for communicating with students and families as well as social media activity.

- Absolutely no inappropriate content (sexting, nude or pornographic images) is to be shared with anyone, including minors.
- Student ministry staff should communicate pertinent information about ministry, events, etc, to parents as the primary audience via email, text, phone call, social media.
- Student ministry staff should not initiate or continually reach out to students of the opposite sex via phone or social media.
- Utilize the “Rule of Three” by including several people in the conversation if possible.
- Brief, non-emotional communication is expected among staff members to students and other Dream Team members, whether through text message, letter writing, etc.
- For social media purposes, a ministry specific social media page (Cross Church Pinnacle Hills Student Ministry Instagram page, for example) is allowed to interact with students as needed.
- Student ministry staff should be above reproach in what they post online in terms of content as well, having no hint of any sort of impropriety (Ephesians 5:3).
- Ministry specific social media accounts should assign multiple people as administrators to the account for accountability purposes as well.

- If a student reaches out to a student ministry staff individually through text or social media, move the conversation to fit the “rule of 3” immediately.

For Student Ministry “Dream Team” Members:

- “Dream Team” members should only contact students pertaining to their role (11th grade guys small group leader can and should contact 11th grade guys over text and social media).
- The “Rule of Three” is to be implemented regarding communication to their students via text or social media.
- DT members should be above reproach in what they post online in terms of content as well, having no hint of any sort of impropriety (Ephesians 5:3).
- If a student reaches out to a dream teamer individually through text or social media, move the conversation to fit the “rule of 3” immediately.

# SECTION 2

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

### 1. RULE OF THREE

- No student should be alone in a closed environment with another student or adult without a third person present. For example, 2 students and 1 adult is acceptable OR 2 adults 1 student is acceptable.
- Social Media, Texting, Email -- No student should be in a virtual conversation with an adult without a third person in that conversation. If a student reaches out to a leader virtually, that leaders responses should be very brief. If the student is persistent in continuing the conversation, the leader should let the student know they are adding another person to the conversation, and then add someone to the conversation – either another leader or one or more students.
- A student is allowed to be alone with a parent/guardian.
- If a situation arises where a student approaches a student staff member or student Dream Team member in a closed environment (where others cannot visibly or openly see the interaction taking place), the adult should move the interaction to a more visibly open environment to ensure that no accusations can be made regarding either party.
- If for whatever reason this option is not viable (a student is waiting for a ride from a parent and there is one unrelated adult left at the church building, for example), the adult should call another student staff or church staff member for accountability.
- Dream Teamers should stick around to make sure students and student staff are not left alone.

### 2. WORKERS UNDER THE AGE OF 18

- Students are permitted to serve in other ministries such as Preschool and Children's ministry, as long as the "Rule of Three" is implemented, and they have been gone through the steps to join the Cross Church Dream Team.

### 3. KNOWN TO YOUR CHURCH RULE

Any adults who serve in the student ministry should be known and vetted by other church members before serving. In order to serve in the student ministry, an adult must go through the following process:

- A. Become a member of Cross Church through the Growth Track, which helps ensure that an adult is spiritually qualified to serve.

- B. Be plugged in to the life of the church through worship service attendance.
- C. Fill out an application and meet with a Cross Church Student Ministry Staff member as they express interest in serving in student ministry based off of their Growth Track spiritual gifts assessment.
- D. Within this application, two previous character references will be required to ensure the spiritual maturity and background of the volunteer.
- E. Voluntarily submit a background check
- F. Observe student ministry programming/small groups accompanied by a student ministry staff member.
- G. Meet again with a student ministry staff member to continue to get to know the potential volunteer and finalize the best specific role within the ministry.
- H. Sign a student ministry specific covenant walking through the guidelines, including the Caring Well initiatives to prevent the abuse of minors.
- I. Begin serving with the student ministry.

### 4. OPEN DOORS POLICY

Similar to the "Rule of 3," Cross Church will ensure all programming and small group spaces are observable and interruptible at all times. No one-on-one conversations or ministry should be done in a private, closed-off environment under any circumstance.

### 5. TRANSPORTATION POLICY

- No student should ever ride with an unrelated adult in a one-on-one situation. See "Rule of Three."
- For student events/activities where a student staff member or adult leader is providing transportation for a group of students, written permission should be granted from a parent/guardian via a signed waiver, or a text or email to the person who is driving and copied to a person from the Student Ministry Staff.

- No Dream Team member or other adult will be asked by a student staff member to drop a student off from a ministry event or gathering.
- Student ministry staff also should be aware of how students are being picked up from ministry events and making sure that their rides home are legitimate and appropriate in nature.

## 6. PETS

Because of the potential of an animal attacking a student, student allergies to the animal, and distractions of children, it is against our policies to allow any pets in the student ministry areas.

## 7. OVERNIGHT POLICY

- All overnight activities at the church will maintain the “Rule of Three” adult policy, avoiding any times of isolation between an adult and a child.
- No adult should share a bed with a student.
- Adult chaperones will be present throughout the entire event.
- Chaperones should be provided for each gender. (i.e., male chaperones for male sleeping arrangements and female chaperones for female sleeping arrangements).

## 8. RESPECT FOR CHILD’S PRIVACY

- Student staff members and adult leaders must respect and ensure appropriate physical boundaries as well with students in regard to using the restroom, changing clothes, etc.
- Students and Adults should be given personal space and privacy to shower, change clothes, etc.
- Students are only allowed to use restrooms based on gender at birth.

Any and all inappropriate behavior should be reported to student ministry staff IMMEDIATELY.

# SECTION 3

## HEALTH & WELLNESS POLICIES

### 1. WHEN TO CALL 911

Call 911 if the following emergencies occur:

- A student begins choking.
- A student is knocked unconscious or suffers a serious injury.
- A student starts to have serious trouble breathing, especially if he/she is an allergy--alert student. He/she may be having a fatal allergic reaction.
- If there is a fire, serious security issue or act of violence.

In the event of a potentially life threatening illness or injury, any adult has authority to immediately call 911.

In non-life threatening instances, immediately report any medical needs or concerns to a service coordinator/coach or staff member. The notified person will contact the Cross Church Security Team to decide if 911 should be called. The notified coordinator, coach or staff person will also initiate the Accident and Incident Reporting process.

### 2. ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTING

The approved “Accident and Incident Report” form will be filled out each and every time a student is injured, damage occurs to property, a security issue arises, or any other related issue takes place: when in doubt – fill it out.

- The “Accident and Incident Report” form needs to be filled out by the person who administers first aid and the Staff Member(s) who witnessed the accident.
- Record all details as soon as possible.
- Parents of any students, who have been injured in any way, verbally abused or physically abused in any way will be informed of the incident only and not the name of the other student involved.
- The “Accident and Incident Report” form can be downloaded from the Cross Church intranet site or from the HR department at Springdale campus. Copies should be available in each campus student’s ministry office.

- The “Accident and Incident Report” form must be signed by the parent, the student staff and student (when applicable).
- All completed and signed “Accident & Incident Report” forms will need to be turned in to each campus’s student ministry office and HR.

### 3. NO MEDICATION POLICY

- No medication may be administered by Cross Student staff or volunteers with the exception of an EpiPen® in the case of life--threatening reactions. We must have a Medical Release Form on file to administer the EpiPen®.
- The parent of the student must administer all other medication.
- Cross Student staff and volunteers are prohibited from opening or taking medication while in the classroom. In the event that medication is needed, the staff member or volunteer must leave the classroom to administer medication.

### 4. CHILDREN & DREAM TEAM HEALTH POLICY

If there is concern that a student may be sick, notify someone from the church staff. They will take necessary steps to assess the student’s health. Do not admit a student who currently or within the last 24 hours has had one or more of the following symptoms. NOTE: These guidelines also apply to any Dream Team member working in Cross Students.

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Has tested positive for Covid-19, has been in contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19, or has traveled to an area deemed “high risk” for Covid-19 in the last 10 days.
- Diarrhea or Vomiting, currently or within the last 24 hours.

# SECTION 4 CHILD ABUSE AND PROTECTION POLICIES AGAINST CHILD ABUSE

## 1. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT?

According to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, Public Law 93-274: Child abuse and neglect means; the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, negligent treatment, or maltreatment of a child under the age of eighteen by a person who is responsible for the child's welfare, under circumstances which indicate that the child's health or welfare is harmed or threatened thereby. An "incident of abuse" means any occurrence in which any person:

- Has threatened to inflict or has inflicted physical injury upon a child, youth worker, or vulnerable adult, other than by accidental means, or is reasonably suspected to have done so.
- Commits or allows to be committed any sexual offense against a child, youth, or vulnerable adult, or is reasonably suspected to have done so.
- With respect to a child, youth, or vulnerable adult makes any kind of sexual advance, or makes a request for sexual favors, or engages in sexually motivated physical contact, or is reasonably suspected to have done so.
- Exposes a child, youth, or vulnerable adult to verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or is reasonably suspected to have done so.

## 2. WHAT IS ARKANSAS LAW FOR REPORTING?

- Arkansas law mandates that any person who is eighteen years of age or older and observes child abuse, sexual abuse, or sexual exploitation of a child immediately report it by calling the Arkansas mandated reporter hotline at 1-800-482-5964 OR file a report online at [mandatedreporter.arkansas.gov](http://mandatedreporter.arkansas.gov).
- If you have not personally witnessed abuse, but have reason to suspect that a child has been subjected to maltreatment/abuse or has died as a result of child maltreatment/abuse, we urge you to immediately report it by calling the Arkansas mandated reporter hotline at 1-800-482-5964 OR file an online report at [mandatedreporter.arkansas.gov](http://mandatedreporter.arkansas.gov).
- Whether you file a report, need help to file a report, or if you need assistance in determining whether you should file a report, be sure to immediately let a Cross Church minister or director know of any observed or suspected child maltreatment/abuse. If you filed a report, please give a Cross Church minister or director the case number provided to you – as this will help us to take appropriate ministry & legal steps.

## 3. ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

Cross Church reserves the right to refuse membership, to dismiss, or to exclude from affiliation with Cross Church any Dream Team member or employee who is or has been convicted of child abuse or neglect of any child. Cross Church also reserves the right to exclude from serving with minors any Dream Team Member who has been accused of child abuse of any kind. Cross Church will neither condone nor tolerate:

- Infliction of bodily injury upon any child or physically or sexually abusive behavior towards a child.
- Physical neglect of children, including failure to provide adequate safety measures, care, and supervision in relation to church activities.
- Emotional mistreatment of children, including verbal abuse and/or verbal attacks.



# **SCREENING AND PLACEMENT**



# SCREENING AND PLACEMENT

## 1. SCREENING

1. Each potential dream team member will attend all four sessions of the Growth Track and become a covenant member of Cross Church.
2. Each potential dream team member will fill out an online application. The application for preschool and children's ministry will be the same for all campuses. The student ministry application, although unique from preschool and children's, will also be consistent among all Cross Church campuses.
3. Once the online application is received, it will be reviewed and approved by the respective campus minister, director, or an assigned Dream Team leader.
4. A background check will be conducted on the potential Dream Team Member. This background check will be consistent with our current process, which includes the signed consent waiver by potential Dream Team Members.
5. The social media of the potential Dream Team Member will be checked by the respective campus minister, director, or an assigned Dream Team leader.
6. Upon approval of the application and an approved background check, an in-person interview will be scheduled and conducted by the respective campus minister. This interview will not simply be an informal introduction at the Growth Track. It will be a face-to-face interview. If a question has arisen with the potential Dream Teamer's background check, it can be discussed in the interview. Topics to be covered in interview:

1. Who we are
2. Why the ministry is important
3. Why we want/need them
4. Salvation story/what God is presently doing in their life
5. Why do they want to serve
6. Different opportunities for service
7. Tour of ministry area
8. Go over child protection policies
9. Planning Center or other tools
10. Review of ministry covenant and one-year serve commitment

If an informal interview has already been conducted in the recruitment process, this follow-up, upon receipt of application and background check, can be completed over the phone (input must be 'regulated').

7. Known to Church – The applicant must be involved in

ministry at Cross Church for 6 months before working with minors.

If the applicant has been known to the Director of the ministry in which they are applying to serve for 6 months or longer, or if they are known to a Ministry Team member for longer than 6 months, then the applicant may begin serving prior to the 6 month waiting period following church membership.

If the applicant is a college student and is new to the church, an exception to the 6 month rule may be made on a case by case basis. College students must still be involved in ministry at Cross Church for at least 4 months before working with minors. If this exception is made, then an additional character reference will be checked from a pastor at the applicant's previous church.

- a. Data Base records must support minimum tenure of involvement at Cross Church.
- b. Two Character References checked. At least one must be from a Cross Church pastor or Dream Teamer.
- c. Students (18 and younger) serving with minors will be required to go through the same application process as adults. However, since background checks cannot be done on minors, they will be required to provide three adult references.

The campus minister, director or assigned Dream Team leader checks the two or three character references provided by potential Dream Team applicant.

- a. How do you know this individual and how long have you known them?
- b. Would you trust this individual with your children/students?
- c. Is there any reason this person is not fit to work with children under the age of 18?

## 2. TRAINING & PLACEMENT

1. For the first two weeks on their new Dream Team, the Dream Team applicant will train with an experienced leader in the group for which they are interested in serving. For example, if a lady is interested in serving as a second grade small group leader, she will participate in small group training for two weeks with an experienced small group leader. After the two-week training, the respective pastor/assigned Dream Team leader will follow-up with a meeting or phone call to determine “fit”.
2. Upon completion of “on-the-job training”, the Dream Team will be placed in their Dream Team role. After the first week of serving, the respective pastor or ministry director will call them to check in to see if Dream Teamer enjoyed the group, experienced any challenges, and if they believe they need additional training.
3. After one quarter, the minister will sit down with the Dream Teamer to discuss how they are doing, get feedback on how to improve, and generally check in to determine the effectiveness for the ministry.
4. Next Gen Ministries will train all Dream Teamers 60 minutes per semester on safety. This includes 30 minutes on abuse reporting and 30 minutes on safety procedures.