



2022-2023

TEAM MEMBER HANDBOOK



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WELCOME

Hey, there!

So, you want to serve with teenagers, huh? Some people might think you're crazy, but we know better. Middle and high school students are awesome. They're hilarious (sometimes on purpose). They're dramatic. They're complicated. And they're a ton of fun.

Most importantly, middle and high school students are at a time in their lives when they desperately need someone like you to hang out with them, love them (and like them), and show them what it looks like to follow Jesus.

Whatever your role is in our ministry this year, this handbook will show you some of the ways you can begin making a lasting impact in the lives and faith of teenagers.

Thanks for being willing to serve. Thanks for caring about young people. And thanks for letting God use you.

-Traders Point Youth Team

MEET THE TEAM

Central Team

Anne Wilson // Lead Youth Minister

Tyler Lemmel // Youth Operations Lead

Mary Dziwlik // Youth Resident

Campus Team

Downtown

Natalie Evans // Youth Pastor

North

Jake Perry // Youth Pastor

Northwest

Eric Pendley // High School Pastor

Lauren Mallory // Middle School Pastor

West

Josiah Brock // Youth Pastor

ABOUT TRADERS POINT YOUTH

Purpose

Traders Point Youth exists to connect youth to Jesus, community, and kingdom purpose.

Values

- 1. Consistency**
We show up ready to engage, and when we do, we're not distracted.
- 2. Connection**
We look for ways to connect with teens and look for those on the fringe.
- 3. Encouragement**
We want to be a safe place and a haven for teenagers, recognizing that many spaces in their lives are discouraging. We want to be a place that is warm and encouraging.

Strategy

We win when a teenager takes a step toward owning their faith and joining God on his mission. There is no finish line or certificate of completion when it comes to spiritual growth. It's a lifelong journey and no two journeys are identical. But what does it look like for a teenager to own their faith? There are three main outcomes:

- 1. Friendship with God // Follow Jesus**
We point students to Jesus to accept him as their Lord and Savior, follow him, and grow in friendship with God through prayer, worship, and Bible engagement.
- 2. Christlike Relationships // Be in a Group**
We give young people opportunities to practice community with their group and create ways for them to make and build friendships at church that extend beyond Sundays.
- 3. Knowing and Using Their Gifts // Discover Kingdom Purpose**
We provide opportunities for young people to identify and use their gifts for the kingdom by serving others throughout the church and their community.



WAYS FOR YOUTH TO ENGAGE

Summer Nights x YTH

Summer Nights x YTH is designed to facilitate fun, provide a low-stakes opportunity for teens to invite their friends and connect new youth to Traders Point. We meet a few times during the months of June and July for games, food, and a short devotional thought at each campus.

Youth Night

Youth Night is a youth-focused event that encourages students in grades 7-12 to look beyond themselves and connect to Jesus and kingdom purpose. We gather youth together at one campus four times per semester to open the door wide for them to participate in Traders Point Youth, to invite them to join groups and serve in leadership, to speak about youth-specific issues throughout the year, and to give them the opportunity to put their faith in action through kingdom work.

Sunday Gathering

Studies show that involvement in all-church worship during adolescence is more consistently linked with mature faith in both high school and college than any other form of church participation. We encourage families with youth to attend the 5 pm service and sit in the youth section in order to encourage teens to participate in an intergenerational worship environment with their peers.

Groups

Groups meet from August to May. Groups help teens grow in their relationships with each other and with God. Teens go to groups where they can connect with their crew and be real, ask questions, and learn from God's word together. Before groups on Sunday nights, teens have the chance to connect and have fun with other youth from their campus over food and games. Group content is based on the message from that week's Sunday gathering.

CIY MIX & MOVE

CIY MIX (for students entering grades 7 and 8) and CIY MOVE (for students entering grade 9-graduated seniors) are week-long experiences hosted by Christ in Youth at camps and colleges. These summer trips are designed to create moments and conversations that help young people follow Jesus and live a life of kingdom purpose.

Serve

We help students uncover their kingdom purpose both at their campus and in their community. Whether that's using their gift to serve on a serving team at Traders Point, serving a local partner, or serving at Youth on Sunday nights, we want youth to serve—because serving and living a life of kingdom purpose are vital to the development of a lifelong faith.

TEAM MEMBER ROLES

Experience Team

Experience team members win when youth feel valued and like they belong. They have the opportunity to begin breaking down barriers the moment teens walk through our doors so that they are more open to connect with others, with group leaders, and with Jesus. Experience team members are often the first people teenagers see when they arrive and some of the last people they see before they leave. It's not just about holding signs in the auditorium, setting up 9-square, or preparing food. It's about making teenagers feel seen, cared for, and valued.

Group Leaders

Group leaders serve as spiritual navigators in the lives of teenagers. Without a relationship, it's nearly impossible to influence a young person's faith in a significant way. That's why it's so important for group leaders to build strong relationships with the teenagers they lead. Group leaders aren't teachers, they instead ask good questions, guide conversation, and remember that the best group times are those where the leader talks about 20% of the time, and the group talks 80%!

Group Leader Coaches

Group leader coaches win when they help group leaders feel known, supported, and celebrated. Being a group leader is a hard job, and they need someone to lead them. That's exactly what a group leader coach does. They pour into group leaders and invest in them spiritually and personally. They empower their team while offering prayer, support, and advice.

Youth Crew

Youth crew team members win when they decide to take the next step and come not just to consume, but to contribute. The Youth Crew is made up of teens in grades 7-12 who serve in meaningful ways in Traders Point Youth. It's an opportunity for youth to use their gifts and make a difference within our ministry.

Events Team

Events team members serve at Youth Night! This is a great way to serve in Youth for those who can't be consistent but still want to serve when they can. Whether it's holding doors, taking photos at photo booths, or serving food, there are so many ways to serve at Youth Night.



SAFETY GUIDELINES

As a member of our ministry team, it is absolutely essential that you practice healthy boundaries with teenagers at all times, for their safety and yours. These guidelines exist to protect teens from harm and to protect you from false allegations.

Be mindful when you're alone with a student.

If you need to have a private conversation with a student, have the conversation in a public place at a campus or in a public space—not behind closed doors or in a room alone. Here are some tips to help you navigate through this particular guideline:

- In an effort to partner with parents, when setting up meetings one-on-one with students, make sure parents know you and are aware you're meeting.
- If a teenager needs a ride, try to arrange to have another adult or teenager ride with you. Always make sure the parent is aware.

Maintain physical boundaries.

Be wise. Maintain healthy and safe physical boundaries with teenagers at all times. This means setting boundaries for yourself, but it may also mean setting and enforcing boundaries with teens who push physical limits. If you have any questions about what is or isn't appropriate, talk with our staff and always err on the side of caution.

For example:

1. **Never** physically harm or discipline a student.
2. **High fives, handshakes, side hugs, and fist bumps** are great ways to exhibit physical touch. Hugs are okay but be mindful of appropriate boundaries with youth and their level of comfort.

Log electronic conversations.

When you find yourself in the midst of a sensitive conversation with a teenager, keep in mind that words and intentions can be misconstrued—intentionally or unintentionally. Any time you are engaged in a serious conversation with a student, log your conversations (take screen shots, save text messages and emails). This may seem excessive, but if you're ever falsely accused of misconduct from a teenager or parent, you'll be glad you did it.

Report dangerous situations, or any suspicion of abuse or neglect.

As a member of our ministry team, you are a mandated reporter. This means you are legally required to report any dangerous or potentially dangerous situations to our staff immediately. This includes:

- If a teenager is being harmed, neglected, or abused.
- If a teenager is harming or abusing someone else.
- If a teenager is harming or at risk of harming themselves.

If you suspect a teenager is experiencing abuse, please contact your campus team leader right away to let them know. Do not go more than a couple of hours, as a report needs to be made within 12 hours for everyone's safety.

If for some reason you cannot talk to your campus youth minister right away, you can call the CPS hotline yourself at 1-800-800-5556. When you make the call, the receiver will guide you through the process. Let your youth minister know right away when you've done so.

HOUSE PARTY RULES

While Youth leaders are encouraged to gather with students outside of Traders Point Youth environments, in addition to the aforementioned safety guidelines, we ask that you abide by the following guidelines when hosting or organizing an event for Traders Point Youth outside of a Traders Point facility.

There must always be at least two unrelated adults in attendance.

- If needed, invite a parent or another leader to join you.
- Consider a parent who already serves in a ministry at TPCC.
- Consider another adult who already serves in a ministry at TPCC.

All persons over 18 that will be present must have a current background check.

- Youth staff can advise if a person has a current check on file.
- Youth staff can begin a background check for any adult without a current one.

Whatever the venue, the group must use only the common areas (living room, kitchen, etc.).

- No member of the small group shall be in a bedroom or other room with a door (den, etc.).
- The group should stay together on one level of the home (all in basement, all on first floor).

Do not be alone with a student.

- Make sure you are always in a common area of the venue.
- If the student needs timely counsel, consider asking another leader to join the conversation or find a quieter place in a common room (e.g., the kitchen). If the counsel is not urgently needed, set up an appropriate time and location outside of the House Party event.
- If you must give a student a ride to and/or from the event, another person must always be there as well. At least three people in the vehicle, always. Also, you must confirm with a parent that they approve of this arrangement.

Maintain physical boundaries.

- In a House Party environment, be wise about where you sit and the proximity to a student. Consider not sitting on the couch if two students are already occupying the couch. Instead, consider sitting on an individual chair.

Bathroom Policy

- No adult should ever be in the bathroom with a student.
- If the gathering is held at a venue that has bathrooms with multiple stalls, adults must not be in the restroom at the same time as the student. Adults should attempt to find a separate restroom.

CODE OF CONDUCT

We already talked about the big win for our ministry—seeing students take a step toward owning their faith and joining God on his mission. But not every member of our team has the same role in trying to see that goal accomplished.

No matter what your role is on our team—whether you help prepare food, help with setup and tear down, coach group leaders, or lead a group of squirrely 7th grade guys, team members win when they seek to be humble, hungry, and healthy.

Humble

Being humble is a key part to serving in any ministry area, but specifically youth ministry. Being coachable, willing to receive feedback, and flexible when needed are key components of remaining humble. With teenagers, parents, other team members, and our staff, treat people with gentleness, forgiveness, patience, kindness, and love.

“Get along amongst yourselves...And be careful that when you get on each other’s nerves you don’t snap at each other. Look for the best in each other, and always do your best to bring it out.” (1 Thessalonians 5:13-15)

Hungry

Remaining hungry before God is pivotal when serving others—we cannot give to anyone what we don’t have. Being focused on the role we have to play, motivating others to join in, and looking for ways to connect with young people are all parts of seeking to grow in servant leadership.

“Do your best...keep in mind always that the ultimate master you’re serving is Christ...” (Colossians 3:23)

Healthy

Perhaps most important for any of our team members, coaches, and staff, are that we’re in a healthy place spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically. Our own personal development and spiritual formation are essential to helping teenagers grow. In other words, make sure you show up filled up. Personal Bible study and prayer, weekly church attendance, and being involved in a group who can pour into you are three ways you can safeguard yourself into staying spiritually healthy.

More than any other serving role, group leaders have a lot of influence in the lives of young people, and therefore, a lot of responsibility. While we don’t expect anyone to be perfect, we do expect every group leader to be striving to make wise decisions, remain above reproach, to glorify God with their lives, and to strive to look more like Jesus every day—especially in areas youth notice, like their treatment of other people, social media presence, drug or alcohol use, and sexuality.

“Watch what God does, and then do it.” (Ephesians 5:1)

“Don’t let anyone think less of you because you are young. Be an example to all believers in what you say, in the way you live, in your love, your faith, and your purity.” (1 Timothy 4:12)