

In Town Transportation

The church provides adult driven vehicles for every activity away from the church. For all trips further than approximately 30 miles, adult driven vehicles are the only option for youth. Licensed drivers may take their cars on activities closer to home. Church leaders always announce when it is possible for youth to drive. Parents have the responsibility to clarify with their teenager whether teenage driven vehicles are an option.

While adult church leaders are bound to follow the state laws in agreement to driving vehicles for youth activities, we can not be responsible for the safety of youth driven cars or guarantee the quality of driving and their observance of the law. Similarly, we can not be responsible for youth who leave activities in youth driven cars. A timely, safe return of students can only be guaranteed in adult driven vehicles. Church provided vehicles must have a seat belt available for every passenger and will be required to be worn. Adult drivers who willfully violate the law may be removed from the driving list by recommendation of the youth committee.

To avoid the violation of local curfew laws (week nights 11pm or weekends 1am), any trips returning after such times will require adult driven vehicles to take youth home, regardless of the location of their vehicle. Youth should make arrangements ahead of time to either get a ride to the church or one to get their vehicle the next day. Leaders will try to remind youth when this is in affect.

The church requests that parents insure that they or their student pays for any vandalism or willful damage to the property.

These policies are provided as a proactive way to insure clear communication among members of the youth ministry family. For many years, Reidland Baptist Church has provided positive, loving, and affirming atmosphere for students. Thankfully, students and leaders enjoy a mutual respect that results in very few discipline issues.

REIDLAND BAPTIST CHURCH YOUTH MINISTRY POLICIES

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The youth ministry of Reidland Baptist Church is well known for its positive attitude and demeanor toward teenagers. All the adults invited to serve as leaders tend to affirm and encourage rather than criticize and condemn. Leaders believe an atmosphere of Christ-like, unconditional love and confirmation provides more motivation to grow and change than an atmosphere of bombastic criticism.

Leaders recognize that for any group to function, healthy parameters are important. Teenagers who have grown up in the church need structure and guidance, and for the growing number of teenagers with no upbringing in the faith, this is doubly true. Many teenagers in the community struggle with serious issues. When becoming involved at church they bring those problems with them. Because ministers, leaders, and parents are all partners in the rearing of teenagers, it is important for all three groups to approach discipline and guidance at church from the same perspective. The following guidelines have been developed to help these groups as a guide to those who touch the lives of teenagers.

Times of teaching and worship are primary in church life. Teenagers who come to learn and grow deserve to study and worship in an atmosphere where that is possible without hindrance. Leaders have a responsibility to maintain that atmosphere.

Students 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 a leader in an openly visible space. Before dismissing a youth from a class or service, leaders have a responsibility to tell a youth that his behavior is distracting and warranting dismissal. Youth who choose to continue disrupting should then be dismissed. Leaders should inform parents when a dismissal has taken place. In most cases, a youth who has been dismissed, is more than welcome at the next meeting. Only after several or severe instances will longer dismissal be required after review by the Youth Committee. At the same time, leaders need to try and discover what is motivating a student to misbehave. The youth ministry family should seek to meet those needs if possible.

Youth who choose to participate at RBC youth activities agree to follow the instructions of leaders. Obeying those instructions and exhibiting respect towards leaders is a condition for remaining at an activity.

The church assumes heavy responsibility when taking teenagers out of town. For the youth group to function well out of Paducah, obeying and respecting leaders is essential. A serious breakdown in these areas must result in the student returning home to parents. Whenever possible, a leader will provide transportation home for the student. If that is not logistically possible, then the parents of the teenager will pay for commercial transportation home. Parents agree to support the leaders' decisions about sending a youth home, knowing that only those present on the trip can know all the variables involved.

On all trips, being sent home will be the result of breaking curfew, body piercing or permanent tattooing, possessing or consuming alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products, leaving the group, intimate petting, stealing, assault, or the possession of pornography or a dangerous weapon. Any other serious failure to follow trip guidelines will result in a trip home.

Weapons

The physical safety of the youth is one of our church's top priorities. Therefore, no teenager may possess a gun, knife over 3.5 inches closed, open knife, martial arts item, pepper spray, or any other weapon at a youth ministry activity at the church or away. The presence of a dangerous weapon amongst youth will result in an immediate call to 911 and full cooperation with authorities who respond. In the meantime, the leader in charge will coordinate a plan with other leaders to best protect the safety of the youth present. Confrontation with a teenager with a gun will be left to the proper authorities. Parents of the involved youth will be contacted as soon as possible.

Physical Discipline

Parents have not assigned to church leaders the right to physically discipline teenagers. Therefore, leaders only make physical contact to restrain a teenager in order to prevent a greater harm, such as during a fight or an attempt to harm one's self. With rare exceptions, no other physical restraint is appropriate.

In Town Policies

Assault, alcohol, illegal drugs, pornography, tobacco products, and weapons as described above are not permitted at any youth ministry activities. The breaking of this policy, including any other serious failure to follow guidelines or instructions, will result in a teenager not being permitted to participate in the next major youth trip or event.

Interest in showing physical affection toward the opposite sex is considered a normal and healthy part of maturing teenager relationships. Our youth ministry also believes that appropriateness should dictate the extent of affection shown at youth activities. Because adults on trips model the behavior desired we consider holding hands and a light hug as almost always appropriate. On special occasions, such as at the end of a day on a retreat, a light kiss or two is fine in public areas. Couples should restrain all other types of physical affection and at no time should youth be under blankets together. "Making out" in trip vehicles, at the church, or during any activity is not appropriate and receives the same treatment as other broken guidelines.

Leaders can only be responsible for students who are actually in an area designated for a youth activity. Parents have no way of knowing whether students are where they should be and consequently, whether leader supervision is being provided. Therefore, it is the policy of our youth ministry that all students on church property must be in the actual area where the announced activity is taking place. The only options to students, outside of direct parental supervision, are to be in the designated area or to leave the church property.

Church leaders only provide supervision for 15 minutes after the end of a youth activity at the church. Parents providing transportation are responsible for knowing the ending time and arriving within 15 minutes. If parents are involved in some type of ministry of the church and there is no youth activity taking place, those youth must be in visual range of the parent. The expanse of the church property is out of bounds for all youth outside a sponsored activity.