



EST. 1947

YOUTH LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS

**A Ministry Manual for Youth Leaders
at Arbor Road Church**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

iv | Welcome!

vi | Terminology Cheat Sheet

Vision

2 | Church and Ministry Purpose Statements

7 | Our Values

9 | Leaders are Learners and Listeners

11 | Our Web of Support

Volunteers

15 | Volunteer Roles and Expectations

19 | Appropriate Dress for Leaders

21 | How We Protect our Kids and Students

36 | Disciplinary Policies and Techniques

39 | One-on-one Policies

44 | How to Report Suspected Abuse

48 | Emergency Procedures

Students

59 | Life Stage and Human Development

67 | What We Teach and Why

77 | Interests, Hurts, and Needs

80 | Human Sexuality

Parents

85 | Parents as Primary Disciplers

87 | Parent Partnership

89 | Parent Participation

Shepherding

93 | Why Small Groups?

95 | Six Phases of a Weekly Small Group

99 | How to use Curriculum and Questions in Small Groups

101 | Incorporating God's Word

103 | Walking a Child or Student Through the Gospel

107 | Counseling a Student

111 | Connecting with Students Outside of Small Groups

Support

117 | Games and Activities

120 | Events

122 | Camp

124 | Student Leadership Teams

126 | Connecting With a Graduate

128 | Interns

130 | Promotion Sunday

133 | Bullying

137 | Special Needs

End Notes

142 | Acknowledgements

143 | End Notes

Notes

WELCOME!

Hello There!

Welcome to the Arbor Road Church Youth Leadership Essentials Ministry Manual. Around here, we like to call it “The Brick Book.” These pages are the foundation and structure for our unified training. Whether you are serving for the first time in Student Ministries or are a veteran volunteer, we want you to use this resource as a launch-pad to become the leader God has uniquely created you to be.

The first edition of this manual was written and published in 2016. The project was spearheaded by Nicole (Lawrence) To—a third-generation member of Arbor Road who has served as a Small Group Leader, Intern, and Director of Communications—and Trent Lewis, who has served on staff at Arbor Road Church for over a decade in Youth Ministry and Leadership Development.

Since the first edition, culture has shifted in significant ways, presenting our ministries with new and important issues to tackle as our students pursue the Lord. It was essential to update our training manual to address the needs of our students and reflect the most updated protocol.

This second edition of the Arbor Road Church Youth Leadership Essentials Ministry Manual was lead by Phoebe Morris, who was then an intern and now one of our High School Pastors. She turned our first edition inside and out to look for ways to ensure our policies stay relevant, that our message is clear, and that our equipping sections continue to bring value to our volunteers and the ministries they serve.

We hope that as you read this manual, you will see yourself in it. This is us! We wrote it with you in mind, which means that we know how busy your schedules can be. Bottom line: you do not need to read this entire book. Think of it like your car manual! Your ministry’s initial orientation and onboarding process will clarify what you need to know. And as you continue serving, you will return to small sections of this manual for training and equipping.

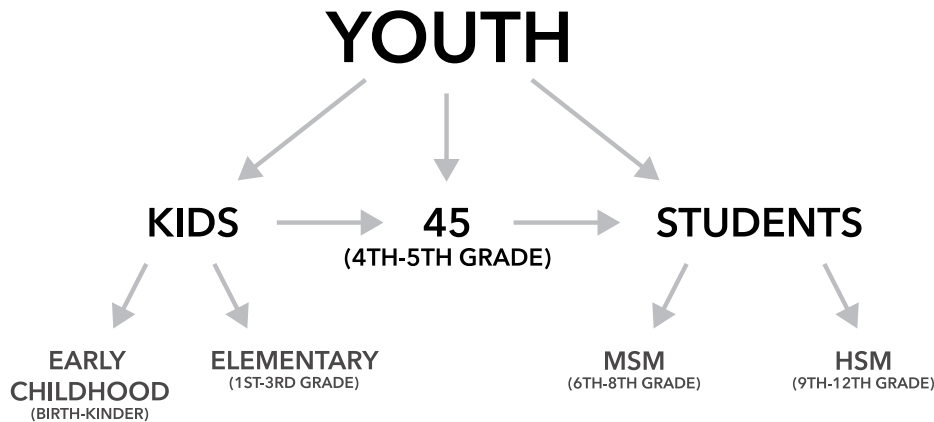
We are so grateful for the time you are taking to invest in our kids and students. It is exciting to think about the ways God is going to use this tool in the hands of leaders like you.

Blessings,

The Arbor Road Church Youth Ministries Team

TERMINOLOGY CHEAT SHEET

The following are clarifications of the terminology we will use throughout this manual:



- **45:** Our Ministry for children in 4th and 5th grade; 45 is the bridge between Kids and Student Ministries
- **Early Childhood:** Our Ministry for children birth to Kindergarten
- **Elementary:** Our Ministry for children from 1st through 3rd grade
- **HSM:** Our Ministry for students in 9th through 12th grade
- **Intern:** Typically a college-aged student who is interning for a Ministry Department Lead
- **Kids:** Our Ministry for children birth through 3rd grade
- **Ministry Department Lead:** The Pastor(s) that lead the specific ministries
- **Ministry Associate (MA):** Someone who works part time for a Ministry Department Lead in a specific ministry

- **MSM:** Our Ministry for students in 6th through 8th grade
- **Resident Intern:** Someone who is interning full time under a Ministry Department Lead for a semester or year
- **Students:** Our Ministry for adolescents in 6th through 12th grade
- **Youth:** An umbrella term for ministries from birth to 12th grade



Use this QR code to find a PDF version of this book as well as view things like our current ministry leaders.

CHAPTER 1

VISION

We exist to know God and
make Him known.

CHURCH AND MINISTRY PURPOSE STATEMENTS

Serving in youth ministry at Arbor Road Church means that you know and understand what is important to our church. The following is a look at our church's history and values. We value unity, and we would like you to be on the same page with us as you serve in our ministry.

Most importantly, please review our **Vision and Statement of Faith** below. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to ask your ministry's Department Lead. Each of our ministries bring these purposes and strategies into the context of the age you are working with.

HISTORY

Our church was founded as First Baptist Church of Lakewood in 1947 as our neighborhood was being built. With so many decades of ministry, we have used various programs over the years to share Jesus in a way that is effective and relevant. As a church that is over 75 years old, we enjoy being an intergenerational community. While our style may have changed, our commitment to preaching the gospel has never wavered.

VISION

To Know God and Make Him Known.

Gather, Grow, Give, Go: The words gather, grow, give, go are what drive the mission of Arbor Road Church. These words help us fulfill our vision:

- **Gather:** Joining Together to Celebrate Jesus. As a people who believe that Christ is our Savior, it is important that we meet together regularly so that we can study Scripture and learn how to further develop our relationship with Jesus Christ.

- **Grow:** Cultivating Our Relationship with Christ and Each Other. Our desire is that God would work through these weekly ministries to guide, equip, and shape your relationship with Him and those around you.
- **Give:** Sacrificially Giving Our Resources for the Sake of God's Kingdom.
- **Go:** Living As Ambassadors of the Gospel. We share the great news of Jesus through a number of opportunities, extending God's love to others.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Word of God

(2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21)

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

The Trinity

(Is. 6:3; Is. 63:7-14; Matt. 3:16-17)

We believe that there is one living and true God – eternally existing in three persons, that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption.

God the Father

(Ps. 145:8-9; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; John 1:12-13; Rom. 8:15)

We believe in God, the Father – an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ

(Matt. 1:18-25; Phil. 2:6-8; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22-24; Jn. 20:22; Ac. 1:9-12)

We believe in Jesus Christ – God’s only begotten son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth.

The Holy Spirit

(Matt. 28:19; Jn. 3:3-8; Tit. 3:5; Rom. 8:26-27; 1 Jn. 2:27; 1 Cor. 12:1-31; Jn. 15:26-27; 16:8-11)

We believe in the Holy Spirit – who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, unrighteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ and that He is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide.

Regeneration

(Rom. 3:23; 6:23; 5:6-8; 10:9; 1 Cor. 2:14-16; 2 Cor. 5:17; Phil. 3:12-14)

We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

The Church

(1 Cor. 10:31; Eph. 1:3-14; 1 Pet. 4:10-11; Eph. 4:1-16; Ac. 1:8; Matt. 28:18-20)

We believe in the universal Church—a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work, and fellowship. We

believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task for giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

Christian Conduct

(Phil. 3:12-14; Matt. 5:16; 2 Cor. 5:20-21)

We believe that a Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of his fellow men, that his conduct should be blameless before the world, that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions, and that he should seek to realize for himself and others the full stature of maturity in Christ.

The Ordinances

(Matt. 28:18-20; 1 Cor. 11:17-30)

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord’s Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord’s Supper was instituted by Christ for the commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Religious Liberty

(Mark 12:17)

We believe that every human being has direct relations with God alone in all matters of faith, that each church is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority, and, therefore, that Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions – each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other.

Church Cooperation

(Hebrews 10:24-25; Ephesians 3:14-19)

We believe that local churches can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another in a denominational

organization. Such an organization, whether a regional or district conference, exists and functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Churches may likewise cooperate with interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary, independent basis.

The Last Things

(Jn. 14:1-3; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Lk. 16:22-31; 1 Cor. 15:35-49; Rev. 20:1-15; Rev. 21-22)

We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal felicity of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked.

OUR VALUES

Arbor Road Church exists to Know God and Make Him Known, but how are we doing that?

Below are the values that move our mission into action.

CORE VALUES

These are the overarching values that we hope to infuse into each of our ministries.

While these are not the only things that happen on our campus, we hope that these values are felt by each member of our church:

- Authenticity
- Shepherding
- Life Transformation
- Shared Leadership
- Intergenerational Community

KIDS + 45 MINISTRY VALUES

Our Kids and 45 Ministries are building a foundation of faith through these values:

- Creative Bible Teaching
- Safe Environment
- Age Appropriate
- Fun
- Relationships

STUDENT MINISTRY VALUES

Our Middle School and High School Ministries desire for students to be transformed by their faith through these values:

- We Like to Party
- Let's Be Real
- All are Welcome
- We Build Up
- Jesus is Greater
- We Seek Truth
- We Love Our City
- Everyone Contributes

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

- Where do you see these values embodied in Scripture?
- How do your gifts and passions line up with these values?
- What value might you find difficult to carry out? Why?

LEADERS ARE LEARNERS AND LISTENERS

Two qualities that are consistently necessary for an effective leader are a hunger to **learn** and an eagerness to **listen**. We look to Jesus as our perfect example of leadership, the one we strive to be more like every day. Questions are central to Jesus's ministry. In fact, Jesus asks 307 questions throughout the gospels – many more questions than he gives answers. With these questions, Jesus takes on the posture of a learner and a listener. He learns about the people he is healing. He listens to their requests. Jesus remains curious. He leans in.

LEARNERS

The following are some ideas of ways to cultivate a learning posture as a leader:

- As you read through the gospels, rewrite Jesus's questions in your journal. (He asks some pretty good ones and we give you permission to steal them!)
- Engage in learning about students' "obsessions" such as tv characters, books, and social media trends.
- Being out-of-the-know is not all bad. Children are often being talked *at* by adults. It is refreshing for a child to teach someone older about something they know a lot about. Ask questions if you want to learn from them!
- Learn to love. In addition to asking first-tier circumstantial questions such as "what did you do today?," ask second-tier personal questions such as "what is that like for you?" that are age appropriate. Ask your Department Lead for guidance, if you need it.
- Ask your ministry leads for any resources they have to help you learn more about your students in their age and stage as well as how to be a better leader for them.

- Take a parent out to coffee to learn more about their child and the family.

LISTENERS

The following are some ideas of ways to be cultivating a listening posture as a leader:

- Practice listening more than talking in conversations with students and parents.
- Ask clarifying questions about how a student is feeling by reiterating what they have said in your own words, giving them a chance to correct anything you missed so that you are on the same page.
- Notice your posture and body language in your conversations. Facing a student, leaning in, and giving non-verbal cues, such as nodding, helps to encourage the conversation along and make the student feel understood.
- Refrain from jumping in with your own stories; often times, students want to know that they are not alone in their experiences, but do not need you to “story-top.”
- Each week try to remember one thing a student was telling you about and bring it back up with them the following week. Maybe it was their favorite food, or a music performance they had that week, or a friend who was not being nice to them at school. The best listeners are the ones that actually remember the words of the person they listened to.

OUR WEB OF SUPPORT

As a Volunteer Leader, you play an important role in the life of a child or student. Yet, the burden of leading a student towards Jesus does not solely fall on you. Our hope is that you are one of many people in their Web of Support.

A web of support is a group of people who are investing into the life of a child or student. These people can include parents, teachers, coaches, church members, and more. God has graciously and purposefully placed people around our children and students to support them in their walk with Him. We believe this will be beneficial for the lives of our children and students knowing they have a stable group of people praying and caring for them.

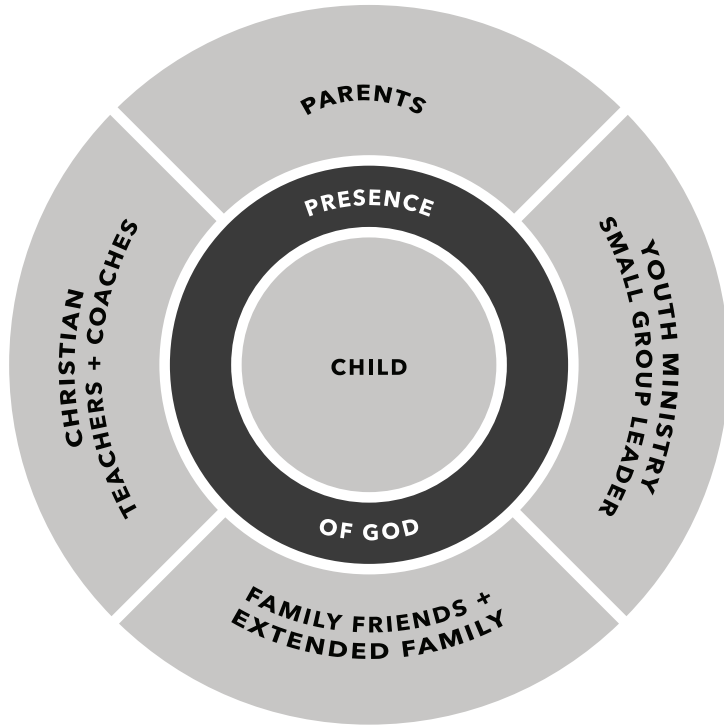
At Arbor Road, a goal of our youth ministries is to foster lifelong, intergenerational relationships that outlast a student’s season of youth.

Research shows that these relationships are one of the main factors in students remaining connected with the Church beyond their time in Youth Ministry. That means your investment will outlast your time with the student in that ministry!

LONG TERM VISION

As you lead, see your role within the context of a child’s or student’s entire web of support that can be developed over time. The more that we affirm other influences that are united by the Spirit of God through the clarity and consistency of Scripture, the greater impact we can have together. God can use Arbor Road Church as a safe place for students, a place that is united in love for an individual as we consistently show up for students throughout their childhood. Every part of the web plays a critical role. Consider the impact that 4 Christian adults can have over an 18 year period!

Over a few years, God can use you as a part of many individuals' Webs of Support.



QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Who were five people in your life other than family members that played an important role in your life of faith as a child, student, or young Christian?
- Who was someone in a “support role” (i.e. not your small group leader or mentor) that had an impact on your life of faith?
- Who have you reached back to when times were tough?
- **Activity:** Write a letter to, text, or call one of these people who impacted your relationship with God, thanking them for their role in your life.

CHAPTER 2

VOLUNTEERS

“Good youth workers are everywhere; you just have to know what to look for. I look for two characteristics in potential youth workers:

1. They love God.
2. They like students.”

- Doug Fields

VOLUNTEER ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS

ROLES

These are the two major types of weekly volunteer roles in our Youth Ministry:

- **Support Staff:** uses specific skills and abilities to help our Youth Ministry programs run smoothly. Their role may include running tech, helping to set up and tear down, or to be a helping hand when a child needs more one-on-one attention.
- **Small Group Leader:** shepherds students to know God, experience His love through community, and make God known. Their role includes leading small group time and participating in activities alongside kids in their small group.

SUPPORT STAFF EXPECTATIONS

Qualified

- Have a personal relationship with Christ.
- Gather, Grow, Give, and Go as an active member at Arbor Road Church

Prepared

Be physically prepared to participate in the activities of that day.

- Arrive promptly at your call time (typically 15 min before meeting starts), dressed appropriately, and alert.
- Lead consistently in the ministry and on the days that you have committed to.

- If you plan on missing a meeting or event, give your Ministry Lead at least a week’s notice.
- Be mentally prepared to interact with kids or students and their families.
- Review materials for the meeting and be ready to engage with kids and students, and ready to be attentive.

Caring

Kids, Students, and Parents

- Communicate care while interacting with kids and students, parents and fellow leaders during the weekly meeting or event.
- Be attentive to the students in your ministry, follow up with them directly, with their family, or with your Ministry Lead if something significant is shared in conversation with them.
- Understand that your role is different than a friend. You are there to support them and to point them to Jesus by speaking the truth in love.

Leaders

- Respect the leadership of Arbor Road Church and those you serve alongside.

Flexible

Willing to help out in any way that they are needed for the events and weeks that they have committed to (this may be monthly, weekly, or on an event-by-event bases).

SMALL GROUP LEADER EXPECTATIONS:

Qualified

- Have a personal relationship with Christ.
- Live within the qualifications for leadership in 1 Tim 3:8-13.

- Gather, Grow, Give, and Go as an active member at Arbor Road Church.

Prepared

Be physically prepared to participate in the activities of that day

- Arrive promptly at your call time (typically 15 min before the meeting starts), dressed appropriately, and alert.

Lead consistently in the ministry and on the days that you have committed to.

- If you plan on missing a meeting or event, give your Ministry Lead at least a week’s notice.

Regularly participate in Events & Training.

- Look at the most recent calendar of events and respond to or engage with emails from your Ministry Lead regarding upcoming events.
- Be at scheduled Staff Meetings (Every 6-8 weeks).

Be mentally prepared to interact with kids or students and their families.

- Review the materials sent by your Ministry Lead and be ready to engage with kids and students. Be ready to be attentive.

Pray consistently.

- Ask God to guide your small group members.

Caring

Small Group

- See Chapter 5.1 *Why Small Groups?* for more guidance.

Parents

- Our hope is that you will come alongside the students’ parents to give them opportunities to be passionate Christ followers and lead their child well.

- See Chapter 4 *Parents* for more guidance on how to support parents.

Leaders

- Respect the leadership of Arbor Road Church and those you serve alongside.

Flexible

Be willing to adapt in your role to the needs of the day.



APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR LEADERS

We want to clarify a few simple things so that clothing is Safe & Modest while you are serving with kids and students. Sometimes the areas you serve in will have practical or safety needs. You may have to consider these needs so that while you're serving, you are presenting yourself as modest to other kids, students, leaders, and parents. We trust you as leaders, and we want to highlight these terms so that an outfit will not be distracting from the overall goal of the activity or event.

SAFE

Consider the activities of the day as well as any potential injury and dress accordingly.

- Participating in an active game? Consider your feet and the surface you play on.
- Holding a toddler? Remove jewelry that could cause injury to you or a child.

MODEST

Consider the words, symbols, or designs you wear and how they will be perceived by kids and parents.

- Please do not wear t-shirts that are blatantly or subtly of a sexual or violent nature.
- Please cover any tattoos that are inappropriate for the ministry setting you are in.

Consider the activities required for your role and do not wear clothing that is revealing.

- A good rule of thumb is if you can see any undergarments or midsection while mimicking the activities in the mirror (playing a game, picking up a child, or sitting on the ground), choose a different outfit. When in doubt,

play it safe!

- Have a question? Please talk with a Department Lead of your same gender for clarification as needed.

POOL OR BEACH ACTIVITIES

If swimwear is required, leaders are required to align with the guidelines from our camps and will maintain them for all events.

- Female leaders should wear a modest one-piece or dark t-shirt over swimwear.
- Male leaders should wear board shorts – no speedos.

If you need clarification, please don't hesitate to ask.

HOW WE PROTECT OUR KIDS AND STUDENTS

Every volunteer working with children from birth to 12th grade will be expected to clear a background check and complete a set of trainings before spending any time with our kids and students.



For the most up to date policies and procedures for your specific role, please scan the QR code or visit: arborroad.com/brickbook-links

The following policies are for the purpose of providing a safe environment for every child and student who attends Arbor Road Church. These policies are in place so that we can share Jesus and build trust with families.

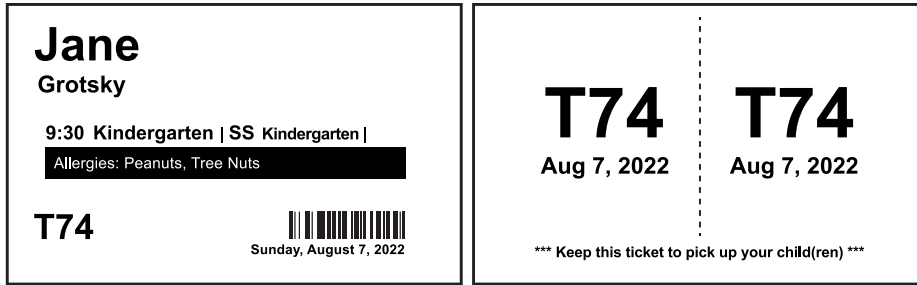
The Bible asks leaders in the church to be “above reproach” in their behaviors at home and at church (1 Timothy 3:2). In youth ministry, this means that we should be protecting the students, the leaders, and the ministry as a whole in the way we interact with kids and students.

Go ahead and focus in on your specific ministry. We know that this is a lot of information and at times may seem excessive in some areas. However, it is imperative that volunteers and staff follow the same policies to ensure our campus is as safe as possible.

KIDS | EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH 3RD GRADE

Name Tags

As parents are checking in their young children, it is important that each child receives a Name Tag with a corresponding Pickup Tag. (example on the next page)



Each Name Tag will include the child's

- Name
- Grade
- Allergy information or special instructions
- Text Message barcode
- Pickup code

The pickup code will correspond to a separate Pickup Tag that their parents will bring when they pick up their child.

Do not release a child to anyone without the right pickup tag.

- Even if you know the parent, we ask that you always confirm the pickup code. (This code may either be a physical paper or in the form of a picture.)
- We do this to communicate our commitment to safety on our campus.
- **If parents come to pick up their child and they do not have the pickup tag or a picture of it, you will need to contact your ministry's Department Lead to check their drivers license before you can release their child to them.**

Be aware of any allergies or medical conditions that your small group members may have. They will be highlighted by a black bar on their Name Tag.

There may also be special pickup instructions that will be written as: Non-Custodial Issue; this might mean that only one person is allowed to pick them up.

- When you see this, please talk with your ministry's Department Lead to get information on releasing that child when the time comes.

Classroom Policies

Children need to be placed in age appropriate rooms.

- This is for the safety of the children and effectiveness of the leaders in each classroom

During a weekly meeting, there should always be at least two adults in the room with any group of children.

- Parents may occasionally ask to sit in on a class with the permission of a Department Lead, but they do not count as a second adult and should only be interacting with their own children.

Restroom Policies

- Never take only one student to the restroom.
- Do not enter the restroom with a child.
- Never touch or assist children after using the restroom. Instruct the child verbally if necessary.
- Men will not escort girls to the restroom.
- If a child needs help with clothing after using the restroom, have them come out of the restroom and help them where others can see you.

Diapering Policies

- Only adult women volunteers (18+) may change diapers.
- When changing a diaper, do so in plain view of another adult.
- Men may not change diapers. (If accompanied by the Department Lead or Area Coordinator they may change their own child's diaper.)

Appropriate Touch

As we work with children, our touch should have a Godly purpose. Here are some guidelines to be sure our actions remain above reproach:

Safe touch and behavior includes:

- Patting on top of head, shoulder, or upper back.
- High-fives, knuckle bumps, hand shakes.
- Hugs are appropriate when initiated by the child. (Age 2-5: Hug around upper shoulder. Kindergarten-5th grade: Side hugs are best.)
- Children age 2 and under may be picked up in the presence of another adult. (Please do not always hold the same child.)

Unsafe touch and behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Kissing a child in any way. You, as a volunteer, should not ask for hugs or kisses. These also should not be forced upon the child.
- Allowing children to hang from your legs or waist.
- Allowing children who are age 3 and above sit on your lap. Have them stand or sit at your side.
- Hitting, spanking, pushing, pulling, kicking, shaking a child, or yanking a child by the arm.
- Pulling a child's hair or pulling them by the ear.
- Demeaning, belittling, swearing at a child, or calling a child names.
- If you need to physically restrain a child to prevent possible physical danger, or if a child is physically harmful to him or herself, another child, or an adult, make sure another adult is in the room with you and can see what you are doing.

Having private conversations with kids

- When needing to have a private conversation with a child in early childhood or elementary school, find a fellow volunteer who can be present (in visual contact) during your meeting or conversation.
- At this age, it is not appropriate to meet with a child outside of regular church meeting times.

Photographs and Social Media

Taking photos of students and posting them on social media is generally appropriate when the content is edifying to the child, to you, and to the ministry as a whole and when a relationship with the child and parent has been established.

In special circumstances where pictures of a specific child are not allowed, you will be notified by the lead teacher or it will be listed in the special information section on their Name Tag; respecting these special instructions regarding photos will honor the child's parents and safety.

Youth Volunteers should not use their cell phones when serving with children and should not post any photos to social media.

Any mobile or internet interaction with a child must always occur with parent permission and through the parent's phone or computer account.

Volunteer-Planned Off Campus Trips or Activities

These types of events are not appropriate for kids at this age.

4TH & 5TH GRADE

Name Tags

As parents are checking in their 4th or 5th grade students, it is important that they receive a Pickup Tag that corresponds to their student's Name Tag. (Look for the example name tag in the previous section.)

Each Name Tag will include the student's

- Name
- Grade
- Allergy information or special instructions regarding that child
- Text Message Barcode
- Pickup code

The pickup code will correspond to a separate Pickup Tag that their parents will bring when they pick up their student.

Do not release a student to anyone without the right pickup tag.

- Even if you know the parent, we ask that you always confirm the pickup code. (This code may either be a physical paper or in the form of a picture.)
- We do this to communicate our commitment to safety on our campus.
- **If parents come to pick up their student and they do not have the pickup tag or a picture of it, you will need to contact your ministry's Department Lead to check their drivers license before you can release their student to them.**

Be aware of any allergies or medical conditions that your small group members may have.

There may also be special pickup instructions that will be written as: Non-Custodial Issue; this might mean that only one person is allowed to pick them up.

When you see this, please talk with your ministry's Department Lead to get information on releasing that student when the time comes.

During Weekly Meetings

Be sure that you are keeping track of students during weekly meetings and events.

They should not be allowed to separate from the main group, and if you see this happening ask them to rejoin the group.

- If the student is consistently separating from the group, notify their small group leader or your ministry's Department Lead.
- A good rule of thumb is: "once they're here, they're here."
- Once a student shows up, they are our responsibility until the time our gathering or event has concluded.
- It is also important to know that we use our check-in information in the event of an emergency; we will want to know that all of our students are accounted for when we execute emergency procedures.

Appropriate Touch

As we work with students, our touch should have a Godly purpose. Here are some guidelines to be sure our actions remain above reproach:

Safe touch and behavior includes:

- Patting on top of head, shoulder, or upper back.
- High-fives, knuckle bumps, hand shakes.
- Hugs are appropriate when initiated by the student, we recommend side hugs at this age.

Unsafe touch and behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Kissing a student in any way. You, as a volunteer leader, should not ask for hugs or kisses; these also should not be forced upon the child.

- Allowing students to hang from your legs or waist.
- Allowing students to sit on your lap. Have them stand or sit at your side.
- Hitting, spanking, pushing, pulling, kicking, shaking a student, or yanking a student by the arm.
- Pulling a student's hair or pulling them by the ear.
- Demeaning, belittling, swearing at a student, or calling them names.

If you need to physically restrain a student to prevent possible physical danger, or if they are physically harmful to themselves, another student, or an adult, make sure another adult is in the room with you and can see what you are doing. If this interaction is elevated, complete an incident report.

Having private conversations with students

- When needing to have a private conversation with a student in 4th or 5th grade, find a fellow volunteer who can be present (in visual contact) during your meeting or conversation.
- At this age, it is not appropriate to have one on one meetings with a student.

Photographs & Social Media

Taking photos of students and posting them on social media is generally appropriate when the content is edifying to the student, to you, and to the ministry as a whole and a relationship with the student and parents has been established.

- In special circumstances where pictures of a specific child is not allowed, you will be notified by the lead teacher or it will be listed in the special information section on their Name Tag; respecting these special instructions regarding photos will honor the child's parents and safety.

Platforms such as Instagram and Facebook that have public profiles are safe for interacting with students as long as those interactions remain in the public view of others, i.e. posting on their public profile. Direct Messaging is ok, if you have let your director know that that is the means of communication you are using to communicate. Commenting on an Instagram story is OK.

Mobile Communication

Any mobile communication or texting with a student in 4th or 5th grade must always occur with parent permission and through the parent's phone or internet account.

Best Practices

Use discernment when using any form of mobile communication or social media.

Social Media

If you choose to use platforms that delete content automatically:

- It is wise to always send group messages and even include another leader or another student on the messages.
- These platforms could be especially dangerous in the event someone is accused of suspicious interactions with a student.
- It is not required, but for some leaders it is simply easier not to connect with students or students of the opposite gender on social media platforms.

We encourage each leader to consider what is best for them to remain above reproach and focused on great ministry.

Volunteer-Planned Off Campus Trips or Activities

Planning

- All activities outside of group meeting times, either on or off campus, must be communicated to your Department Lead and to your students' parents.
- With groups of both boys and girls, there must be both men and women leaders present at all times.
- With groups of only one gender, leaders of the opposite gender should not attend.
- These events should always include one parent, who is not a small group leader.

Transportation

- The student's parents must drop them off and pick them up from the event location.

Overnight Events

- Outside of camps, overnight events are not appropriate with students at this stage.

STUDENTS | MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL

Check In

Middle School and High School students are not required to have a Name Tag, and it is more common for them to check themselves into weekly meetings and planned events.

During Weekly Meetings

Be sure that you are keeping track of students during weekly meetings and events

They should not be allowed to separate from the main group, and if you see this happening ask them to rejoin the group.

- If the student is consistently separating from the group, notify their small group leader or your ministry's

Department Lead.

- A good rule of thumb is: "once they're here, they're here."
- Once a student shows up, they are our responsibility until the time our event is over.
- It is also important to know that we use our check-in information in the event of an emergency; we will want to know that all of our students are accounted for when we execute emergency procedures.

After Wednesday night meetings and other events, students will almost always be picked up at the end of the Breezeway near the East Parking Lot depending on the main location of meeting on that particular year.

- There must be at least 2 volunteers or staff members waiting with students until the last student is picked up.

Sunday meetings end at 12pm, and Wednesday meetings end at 8:15pm.

- If a student has a fixed schedule that might require them to leave early, be sure to hear from the parent—in person or on the phone—before you let them leave.

Appropriate Behavior with Students

As we work with students, our behavior should have a Godly purpose. Here are some guidelines to be sure our actions remain above reproach:

- At this age, side hugs are recommended.
- Leaders may not be alone with the opposite gender; this is to protect our ministry at Arbor Road, protect you and the student from any appearance of romantic relationship, and to build trust with parents.
- We ask that you also be aware of same-sex attraction; be sure to guard the students' hearts as well as keep their and your safety in mind.

Social Media & Mobile Communication

The following are our Policies as well as Best Practices regarding Mobile Communication and Social Media between students attending and leaders serving in Middle School and High School Ministries. Our goal with these policies is to protect the students in our ministry as well as protect leaders from inappropriate behavior so that we can keep our focus on knowing God and making Him known.

Social Media

- Taking photos of students and posting them on social media is generally appropriate when the content is edifying to the student, to you, and to the ministry as a whole and a relationship has been established with the student and parents.
- Platforms such as Instagram and Facebook that have public profiles are safe for interacting with students as long as those interactions remain in the public view of others, i.e. posting on their public profile.
- Direct Messaging is ok, if you have let your director know that that is the means of communication you are using to communicate. Commenting on an Instagram story is ok.

Mobile Communication

- Texting and other mobile communication with students is generally appropriate between students and leaders of the same gender.
- Texting and other mobile communication with students of the opposite gender is generally appropriate when an event or service opportunity requires it.
- Example: A male volunteer is scheduling an event or service opportunity for students, and knows one of the girl students can help.
- When any mobile or Internet interaction with a student becomes inappropriate, notify your Department Lead

immediately and include screenshots with the content of the conversation.

- We realize that the majority of the time, this is not initiated by the leader. The Department Lead can discern whether follow up is required. This step simply brings accountability.
- We want to keep all interactions in the light in order to continue to protect the student and the leader.

Best Practices

Use discernment when using any form of mobile communication or social media.

Social Media

If you choose to use platforms that delete content automatically:

- It is wise to always send group messages and even include another leader or another student on the messages.
- These platforms could be especially dangerous in the event someone is accused of suspicious interactions with a student.
- It is not required, but for some leaders it is simply easier not to connect with students or students of the opposite gender on social media platforms.

We encourage each leader to consider what is best for them to remain above reproach and focused on great ministry.

Mobile Communication

When communicating with a student of the opposite gender for an event or service opportunity:

It is best to send messages as a group text.

In the event that a student of the opposite gender contacts you privately.

Reply back on the group thread.

If they contact you again privately, ask them to keep the conversation in the group thread.

If they continue to contact you privately, take a screenshot and notify your ministry's Department Lead; they will be able to provide direction from there.

Volunteer-Planned Off Campus Trips or Activities

Planning

- All trips, overnights, or activities either on or off campus should be communicated to your Department Lead and to your students' parents.
- With groups of both boys and girls, there must be both men and women leaders present at all times.
- With groups of only one gender, leaders of the opposite gender should not attend.

Transportation

- When transporting students, seat belts are required for all passengers.
- If you have to transport a student of the opposite gender, be sure to take another leader of the opposite gender with you.
- At the end of an off-campus event, never leave a student unsupervised.
- There must be at least 2 leaders present (one of which must be the same gender as the child).

Overnight Events

- Students and leaders must be the same gender, and students or leaders of the opposite gender may not attend.
- Discuss with your ministry's Department Lead before you make plans.

- Have a parent partner with you in planning the event.
- A best practice for these events would be to have the event at that parent's home.
- Be sure that two leaders can be present, one of which may be the parent.
- Leaders of these events must talk directly with a parent of each student (either on the phone or in person).

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES AND TECHNIQUES

Here are a few things to remember when faced with kids or students who are being disrespectful, distracting, or who may be harming someone:

NO WAITING | ACT IN THE MOMENT

- Verbally acknowledge the issue or conflict right away.
- Waiting to redirect distracting or harmful behaviors will not help the child or student improve.

NO PHYSICAL DISCIPLINE | HELP REDIRECT THEIR ACTIONS

- It is never appropriate to use physical means of disciplining a child or a student. This includes and is not limited to: hitting them in any way, telling them to go run a lap, pulling or pushing them, etc.
- Focus on redirecting the behavior towards something positive that keeps them engaged and not distracting others .
- Consider their needs. Three factors will impact your method of discipline: their developmental stage, their personality, and their special needs. Read Chapter 6.9 *Special Needs* for more guidance.

NO SHAME | SPEAK WITH GRACE AND TRUTH

Kids

Politely explain that their behavior is not appropriate and offer an alternative. If they continue misbehaving, RISE to the occasion.

- **REMOVE** them from the situation for a period of time.

- **INCLUDE** your Department Lead or Area Coordinator if you are unable to redirect this behavior. See if they have suggestions or if they could consult the child's parents.
- **SPEAK** clearly and simply, being sure you are also being edifying and respectful to the child.
- **EXPECT** kids to make mistakes. Forgive the child and move on; keep no record of wrong.

Students

Give them a couple of chances to improve their behavior before you take **OFFER** help to the situation.

- **OWN** the moment by politely removing them from the situation/what is distracting or put yourself in the seat between those who are misbehaving.
- **FOCUS** on the student's behavior; this is not a time to attack their character, but to communicate that certain behaviors are not appropriate to the moment.
- **FOLLOW UP** with the student as soon as possible after the meeting.
- **EMPOWER** their leader to participate in the conversation. Never follow up with a student of the opposite gender without a leader of the student's gender present. We will always encourage same gender interactions in order to be "above reproach" as it is the best practice.
- **REFER** to your ministry's Department Lead if you have a recurring issue with a student's behavior. You may or may not want to bring that student with you when you talk to the Department Lead. If they are not your student, this conversation should also include their Small Group Leader if possible.

Discipline Requires Discernment; Petition the Holy Spirit.

A SHEPHERD'S HEART

There will be times when a child or student acts in a way that gets on your nerves. It is easy to take out that frustration on them and see them as their mistakes. In these moments, consider Jesus standing right behind them, pointing at them and saying "This one. I died for this one." Even the worst-behaved kids are beloved children of the King Most High. Jesus died for them. And we get to love them.



ONE-ON-ONE POLICIES

The following are our policies for appropriate interactions between a child and their leader while they are at Arbor Road Church. We have broken down these policies into three sections: policies that are always in effect, policies for events on campus, and policies for events off campus.

KIDS

Always

- There must always be at least 2 adults present in any classroom.
- Anyone working with children on a regular basis must be approved through the volunteer application and training process as successfully completing a background check.
- Parents are permitted to observe with permission of the ministry's Department Lead, but must never be left alone in a room with someone else's children.
- Middle School- and High School-age volunteers serving in Kid's Ministries must never be alone with younger children.

Restroom policies

- Never take only one child to the restroom.
- Do not enter the restroom with a child.
- Never touch or assist children after using the restroom; instruct the child verbally if necessary.
- Men may not escort girls to the restroom.
- If a child needs help with clothing after using the restroom, have them come out of the restroom and help them where others can see you.

Diapering Policies

- Only adult women volunteers (18+) may change diapers.

- Change diapers, in plain view of another adult.
- Men will not change diapers.

On Campus

When needing to have a private conversation with a child during an on-campus meeting, find a fellow volunteer who can be present (in visual contact) during your conversation.

Off Campus

- One-on-one relationships with kids outside of church events are not appropriate at this stage in life.
- A great way to foster a relationship with a child outside of church may include postcards or encouraging handwritten notes sent to the home. Consider sending a video message to the phone of the parent as well.

NOTE: You may be invited into a home by parents and into a shared family experience, such as a meal, vacation, or hired as a babysitter. These independent interactions are between you and the parents; Arbor Road Church is not responsible for these times together.

45 MINISTRY

The policies that pertain to the 45 Ministry will generally be the same as kids with a few nuances and exceptions. Read further for exact policies regarding this age group.

Always

- Anyone working with children on a regular basis must be approved through the volunteer application and training process as successfully completing a background check.
- Parents are permitted to observe with permission of the ministry's Department Lead, but must never be left alone in a room with someone else's children.
- Middle School-and High School-age volunteers serving in Kid's Ministries may never be alone with young children.

Restroom policies

Children at this age are fairly dependent; however, follow these policies when needed:

- Never take only one child to the restroom.
- Do not enter the restroom with a child.
- Never touch or assist children after using the restroom; instruct the child verbally if necessary.
- Men may not escort girls to the restroom.
- If a child needs help with clothing after using the restroom, have them come out of the restroom and help them where others can see you.

On Campus

When needing to have a private conversation with a child during an on-campus meeting, find a fellow volunteer who can be present (in visual contact) during your conversation.

Off Campus

One-on-one relationships with kids outside of church events are not appropriate at this stage in life.

NOTE: You may be invited into a home by parents and into a shared family experience, such as a meal, vacation, or hired as a babysitter. These independent interactions are between you and the parents; Arbor Road Church is not responsible or liable for these times together.

STUDENTS

The following are our policies for appropriate interactions between a student and their leader while they are at Arbor Road Church. We have broken these policies down into three sections: policies that are always in effect, policies for events on campus, and policies for events off campus.

Always

Anyone working with students on a regular basis must be approved through the volunteer application and training process.

Parents are permitted to observe with permission of the ministry's Department Lead, but must never be left alone in a room with someone else's student.

On Campus

When needing to have a private conversation with a student during an on-campus meeting, first let your Department Lead know where you are and with whom. Second, find a public space such as a hallway or open sitting area to have the conversation.

Off Campus

One-on-one relationships with Middle and High School students are generally appropriate with parent approval.

Planning

- When you plan on meeting with a student off campus, you must receive approval from their parent. If you cannot contact the parent at all, be sure that your ministry's Department Lead is aware of your meeting.
- You do not need to have a specific permission slip for each event like this, but you must make sure that their family has filled out the general off-campus permission slip for the year. (Speak with your Department Lead about this if you have questions.)
- With groups of both boys and girls, there must be both men and women leaders present at all times.
- With groups of only one gender, adult leaders of the opposite gender should not attend.

Transportation

- Only adult volunteers (18 and above) who have cleared the DMV and Background Check can drive students. You can confirm whether you have this clearance through the Department Lead.
- When transporting students, seat belts are required for all passengers.
- Never transport a student in a car without the parent's permission. If you have to transport a child of the opposite gender, be sure to take another leader of the opposite gender with you.
- At the end of an off-campus event, never leave a student unsupervised.

HOW TO REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE

Child Protective Services: 1 (800) 540-4000
Call 911 in an Emergency.

Abuse is one of the most disheartening realities of the fallen and broken world that we live in. By no means will the words that follow fully equip you to respond to suspected abuse. It is our hope that through the Holy Spirit's work in you, your awareness of this protocol, and Arbor Road Church's dedication to safety, our kids and students will be in the hands of leaders who are as prepared as possible to move toward pain and ask for help. One of the most important things is to keep the circle of communication as small as possible for the protection of the student and those in their life. If you do need to process with someone, the Department Lead, another Pastor on staff, or a counselor are great options.

SEE SOMETHING — SAY SOMETHING

Calling 911: Urgent

If a child or student is actively or in imminent danger of being abused sexually or physically, your first call should be to the authorities. Simply call 911 immediately to intervene.

- Provide basic details of what the abuse is, and where it is taking place for authorities to respond quickly.
- If it is clear that the abuse is currently happening or that the abuse is imminent, you do not need to inform the child/student that you are calling the police.
- Keep in mind that an active abuser can inflict more harm if they hear that someone is calling the police.

As soon as the police have been contacted, call your Ministry's Department Lead. In the event that you cannot reach that individual, reach out to another Pastor on staff at Arbor Road.

Identifying types of abuse

- **Physical Abuse:** Child/student is purposely harmed by an adult, teenager or older child leaving lasting marks.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Any sexual activity with a child/student whether in the home, daycare situation, foster/residential setting or in any other setting, including by a person unknown to the child/student.
- **Neglect:** May be difficult to determine. Generally, neglect is when a child/student is denied sufficient nutrition, shelter, clothing or supervision, due to a parent or guardian's purposeful inattention. Neglect might be suspected if the child/student appears malnourished, disheveled, poorly cared for or consistently dirty.
- **Emotional/Verbal Abuse:** This type of abuse may also be difficult to determine, but consists of the child/student repeatedly being verbally threatened, insulted, or put down by an adult, teenager or another child. They may not be allowed to visit or see friends outside of school responsibilities. Their abuser may destroy things that are valuable to them and find ways to deliberately embarrass them. Their abuser may also blame the child/student for their abusive or unhealthy behavior. See Chapter 6.8 *Bullying* for guidance on bullying situations that are not necessarily abusive.

If you are questioning whether a situation is considered abuse, your Department Lead can help you discern the situation. If you are certain, do not hesitate to contact Child Protective Services immediately documenting your concern by calling (800) 540-4000.

If you are unsure whether a student is in active or imminent danger, err on the side of caution and call 911 immediately.

Reporting suspected abuse

When there is reasonable suspicion of abuse, your Ministry's Department Lead is already responsible as a state-mandated

reporter (even if you have not told them about your suspicion of abuse). Therefore, you must do one of two things:

1. Notify your Department Lead of your suspicion of abuse within 24 hours of when you learn of the suspected abuse.
2. Call Child Protective Services or local law enforcement yourself within 24 hours of when you learned of the suspected abuse.

Neglecting to do one of the two of these will put you, your Ministry Lead, and Arbor Road Church in a liable position.

NOTE: In the event that the suspected abuser is your Department Lead/Pastor, do not report it to that person. Contact any other Pastor on staff (or Call Child Protective Services or local law enforcement yourself within 24 hours of when you learned of the suspected abuse), and they will go through the appropriate steps for assessing the accusation.

Demystifying the Process:

What happens when you call Child Protective Services?

- Your role is to report. Child Protective Services' role is to investigate and determine the abuse.
- You will call the number (800) 540-4000 and say "I have a reasonable suspicion of abuse."
- If you are not sure whether it is reportable, ask to speak with someone to help determine if the information reaches the standard of reasonable suspicion.
- They will transfer you over to a counselor who will ask you to recount the details you know of so that they can determine what further steps to take.
- Rarely anything major will happen after you report.

Is it mandatory that you report suspected abuse?

A "mandatory reporter" is someone who must, under the law, make a report to Child Protective Services, if they suspect abuse.

- Pastors, doctors, counselors, teachers, and Ministry Directors/Pastors are mandated by law to report any suspected abuse to Child Protective Services.
- We require our volunteers to inform the Department Lead/Pastor of their ministry in order to assess the situation and begin to file a report if it seems to fit the category of abuse.
- Our volunteers are considered "permissive reporters", which means that you are able, on your own, to file a report with Child Protective Services documenting your concern by calling (800) 540-4000.

Self Harm:

This type of abuse is self-inflicted; therefore, reporting to authorities is not necessary. Self harm is the direct injuring of body tissue, done without the intent to commit suicide. "Cutting" is the most common; other forms include behavior such as burning, scratching or hitting body parts. Although self harm is not an attempt to commit suicide, it is behavior indicative of poor mental health that can lead to suicidal thoughts and actions. For this reason, it is crucial to immediately communicate any signs—physical or verbal—of self harm to your ministry's Department Lead. They will determine further action steps (talking with the student's parents, caring for the student, etc.) from there.

SEE SOMETHING — SAY SOMETHING

If you see something that you suspect could be abuse, get the support and perspective of your Department Lead immediately.

More information on suspected abuse can be found here: <https://dcfs.lacounty.gov/contact/report-child-abuse/>

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Knowing these procedures will help you to act quickly and appropriately in threatening situations while you are on campus. In addition, knowing the vocabulary in each step will help us communicate the situation clearly to each other and to people outside our organization if we need assistance. Thank you for committing this to memory in preparation for safety on our campus.

LEADERS:

If you perceive a threat or emergency situation, notify the person leading the event or meeting and follow procedure for Shelter in Place, Lockdown, Active Shooter, or Evacuation (defined below).

SHELTER IN PLACE:

When a matter arises that puts Arbor Road Church in a place of concern, a Shelter in Place code will put all staff on alert. Shelter in Place is categorized as a threatening, but non-emergency situation.

Example: Someone who appears drunk or disruptive walks on campus.

Follow the three steps of Shelter in Place:

1. Go to a Safe Room

- Everyone must go into designated safe rooms on campus.
- Doors must be locked.
- All the rooms we meet in within the Arbor and Tanglewood buildings can be locked and are considered safe rooms.
- In MacPherson, keep the doors closed.
- In the Lower Auditorium, close the stairwell doors, and, if safe to do so, pull the stop button on the elevator.

- Cover windows that face the outside of the building.
- Lights may remain on.
- Check your list of students for that day to be sure that everyone in your group is accounted for.

2. Stay Inside

- Passage to other rooms or the bathroom is permitted but no one is to use outer doors (doors facing Arbor Rd. or Tanglewood St.).
- Please use inside hallways and/or outside breezeway as little as possible.

3. Lower the Volume

- Normal routines are encouraged, but keep the volume of your meetings and discussions lowered so that you can remain alert and able to receive information about what to do next.
- Wait for further instructions from a Safety Leader.

LOCKDOWN

When there is an immediate threat to anyone or any part of our campus, the Safety Leaders may put a Lockdown code into effect. Lockdown is categorized as an emergency situation when there is a recognized threat.

Example: Someone walks on campus and appears to be holding a weapon or is acting aggressively.

Follow the three steps of Lockdown below:

1. Go to a Safe Room

- All children and adults must go into designated safe rooms on campus.
- All rooms in the Arbor and Tanglewood buildings that can be locked are considered safe.
- In MacPherson, usher the children backstage.

- In the Lower Auditorium, close the stairwell doors, and if safe to do so, pull the stop button inside the elevator.
- If you are outside, move to a safe room quickly and quietly.
- Check your list of students for that day to be sure that everyone in your group is accounted for.

2. **Secure the Room**

- Look to the Emergency Response Placard in the room, which will give you specific instructions on how to secure the room.
- Doors must be locked.
- Windows must be covered.
- Lights must be turned off.
- Make sure that there is no way for an intruder to see into or easily access the room.

3. **Stay Silent**

- End your discussions and keep the room silent so that you can remain alert for further instructions.
- No one may leave a safe room unless given permission by a Safety Leader or Emergency Personnel.
- Silence cell phones, but keep them on for communication with a Safety Leader.
- Please wait to be contacted by a Safety Leader unless you or a child in your care is facing imminent danger.

ACTIVE SHOOTER

An Active Shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area. Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Because active shooter situations are often over within 10 to 15 minutes, before law enforcement arrives on the scene, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal

with an active shooter situation.

How to Respond when an Active Shooter is in Your Vicinity:

1. **Run**

- Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Don't take anything with you.

2. **Hide**

- Hide in an area out of the shooter's view.
- Block entry to your hiding place and lock the doors.
- Silence cell phones and keep students quiet.

3. **Fight**

- As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger:
- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter.
- Act with physical aggression and throw items at the active shooter.

How to Respond when Law Enforcement Arrives:

1. Remain calm and follow instructions.
2. Put down any items in your hands.
3. Raise hands and spread fingers.
4. Keep hands visible at all times.
5. Avoid quick movements toward officers such as holding on to them for safety.
6. Avoid pointing, screaming or yelling.
7. Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating.

EVACUATION

When a natural event such as a fire occurs during a weekly meeting or event it may be necessary to evacuate the building.

Follow the three Evacuation steps below:

1. **Evacuation Map**

- Locate the Evacuation Map on the Emergency Response Placard in the room and follow the plan to your Evacuation Location.
- Two main Evacuation Locations:
- If you are in the Tanglewood building, exit the building and turn onto Tanglewood Street.
- If you are in the Arbor building or outside, use the exits that face the road and continue out to Arbor Road.
- Continue all the way off campus to either Tanglewood St. or Arbor Road.
- Do not use the elevators, unless instructed to do so by Emergency Personnel.

2. **Stay Together** Be sure everyone in your group is accounted for and stay together.

3. **Await Further Instruction** Stay in your Evacuation Location until you hear further information from a Safety Leader or Emergency Personnel.

EARTHQUAKES

In the event of an earthquake, be alert and use discernment in your response to the situation. Be prepared to Drop, Cover, and Hold On (defined below). Here are a few specifics for small and large earthquakes when you are inside, as well as when you are outside.

Drop, Cover, Hold On

1. **Drop** down onto your hands and knees so the earthquake doesn't knock you down. Drop to the ground (before the earthquake drops you!)
2. **Cover** your head and neck with your arms to protect yourself from falling debris.
 - If you are in danger from falling objects, and you can move safely, crawl for more cover under a sturdy desk or table.
 - If there is low furniture or an interior wall or corner nearby, and the path is clear, these may also provide some additional cover.
 - Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall (light fixtures or furniture).
3. **Hold on** to any sturdy covering so you can move with it until the shaking stops. Stay where you are until the shaking stops.

Smaller Earthquakes

1. Stay where you are until the shaking stops.
2. You may have your small group practice the three steps of earthquake safety.
 - Drop, Cover, Hold On

If you're wondering if an earthquake is small or large, treat the situation as a Larger Earthquake.

Larger Earthquakes

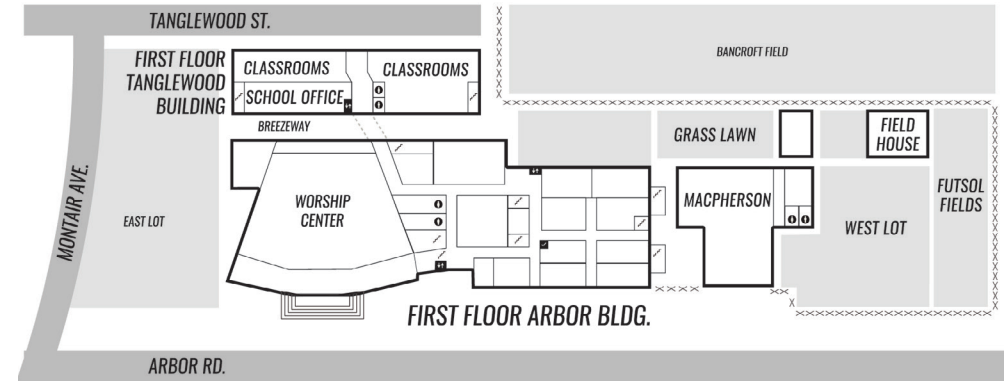
1. Stay where you are until the shaking stops.
 - Drop, Cover, Hold On
2. When the earthquake is over, look for a path to exit the building.
3. If you are trapped, make noise so that Emergency Personnel can rescue you.

Outside

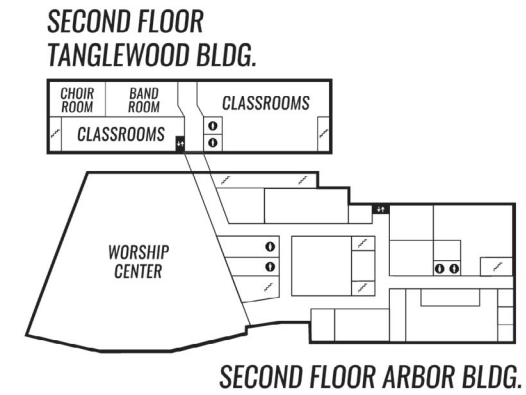
1. Stay outside until the shaking stops.
2. Get to an open area away from buildings and exposed electrical lines.
3. Drop and Hold On

CAMPUS MAP

MAIN FLOOR



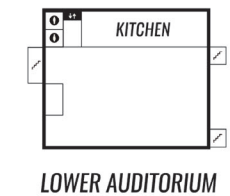
SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



BASEMENT



KIDS MINISTRY ARBOR BUILDING	RESTROOMS
MIDDLE SCHOOL ARBOR BUILDING	STAIRS
HIGH SCHOOL MACPHERSON	ELEVATORS
	KIDS CHECK IN STATIONS

CHAPTER 3

STUDENTS

“Then our sons in their youth will
be like well-nurtured plants, And
our daughters will be like pillars
carved to adorn a palace”

- Psalm 144:12

LIFE STAGE AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Each of our grade level programs – Early Childhood, 1st-3rd Grade, 4th & 5th Grade, Middle School, and High School – have been specifically geared toward the appropriate age-range and stage of development for the children who attend.

We want you to be generally aware of what each age-range is for learning and processing while they are in your care. Below are some basic points to know about the physical, mental, and social stages of the kids or students you will work with. This information is not complete or extensive, but we hope it will give you a general idea of the kinds of strengths and struggles you may experience with your small group members. Feel free to browse through the different age ranges or to focus in on the section that applies to the students you are leading.

ABSTRACT VS. CONCRETE THINKING

As a child matures and develops, they will move from being concrete thinkers to abstract thinkers. The following info will help you keep track of the two:

Concrete Thinkers...

Will not understand metaphors, symbolism, or spacial references.

Example: A kindergartener will have difficulty understanding an analogy that connects the symbol of a dove to the meaning of peace. She will also have difficulty visualizing something “two football fields away.”

It is best to explain things in a literal sense in order for children to understand what you are saying. Children will gradually gain abstract thought concepts.

Abstract Thinkers...

Will be able to understand metaphors and symbolism and information about people and things that are not present

Example: A high school student will be able to talk about issues of politics, because he understands that there are circumstances outside of himself.

Each child and student will be at different stages of understanding abstract thought. Be aware of the topics and methods you use to explain certain concepts.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

2 & 3 Year Olds are still developing all of their senses and basic skills.

Learning the Basics

- Short attention spans, may quickly to new activities
- Figuring out who they can trust and getting used to being away from their parents
- Learning toilet training and clothing themselves
- Start making small decisions on their own
- Limited vocabulary

Concrete Thinkers

- Young children enjoy repetition
- They will believe everything they hear, and will not understand symbolism
- They will learn best by asking questions

Self Involved

- Typically are timid and will enjoy playing alone or alongside other children
- Still figuring out who they are & will be self-centered in their interactions

PRESCHOOL

4 & 5 Year Olds are growing rapidly and still learning how to interact with others well.

Dynamic Learners

- Will have lots of energy and a short attention span
- Beginning to be able to memorize simple phrases
- Watching their leaders and peers and will follow what they see/hear others doing
- Learn best through what they can hear, see, taste, smell, and touch

Concrete Thinkers

- Literal minded and will not understand symbolism
- Their emotions will be intense, and may react strongly to disappointment, happiness, anger, fear, etc.

1ST-3RD GRADE

6 & 7 Year Olds will have slower physical growth, but will begin more abstract and mental development.

Developing Physical Coordination

- Begin gaining physical skills such as activities involving coordination

Inquisitive

- Short attention spans and will want to move around
- Eager to learn and will ask questions constantly
- They enjoy repetition

Gaining Independence

- Beginning to read, but not all will be at the same level in reading skills

- Learn best by actively doing something
- Still dependent on adults, but will desire to be independent in some things
- Desire to be the first and best in group activities and will need help in taking turns

2ND-3RD GRADE

7 & 8 Year Olds will continue to learn abstract ideas and physical coordination as well as improve in their ability to stay on one task for longer periods of time.

Abstract Thinkers

- Interests are starting to broaden
- Will be better at memorization
- Will begin to grasp time and spatial references.
- Will be able to grasp the progression of the Bible chronologically

Critical of Self

- May be critical of themselves and of others and might begin to tease others
- It will be important to them to fit into a peer group

Moral Development

- Begin to question adults as they gain more independence and will benefit from coming to conclusions on their own
- Begin to make decisions based on right and wrong but will have difficulties admitting to a wrong doing

4TH & 5TH GRADE

10 & 11 Year Olds have obtained the majority of their physical and mental skills, and will move into more mature abstract thinking and creative expressions.

Active Learners

- Enjoy doing activities that require physical construction such as building or completing mazes
- Begin to think and express themselves logically
- This group will be sensitive to criticism, and will value the encouragement received from adults; however, they will be increasingly independent and may push away from adult involvement

Team Players

- Better at doing activities together in a group
- Continue to be curious and ask questions to know the why and how of their surroundings
- Ten year olds will be more easy going, but as they turn eleven they may become emotionally unsteady, shifting quickly from one mood to another

Increased Attention Span

- Able to concentrate on one project and stay engaged for longer periods of time
- They will be wiggly, but they will also tire easily
- Will not enjoy repetition of skills or activities as much as they did when they were younger

MIDDLE SCHOOL

11 to 14 Year Olds (Sixth through Eighth Graders) will continue to learn to think abstractly and deal with the complexity of emotions.

Self Awareness

- Begin to be more aware of how they interact with others
- Critical of themselves
- Continue to learn how to articulate themselves through asking questions
- Begin noticing the opposite gender
- In this age range, kids will start to be able to piece together their life story, or their 'narrative.' This is great for mental integration. Help them tell their stories to each other, to you, and to God. Help them see any trends—they will be able to do this, and they will enjoy it

Active Learners

- They will learn best through active methods

Developmental Changes

- This is typically when students will go through puberty
- It is important to note that students will be experiencing similar physical and mental changes, but they will not always be at the same exact stage as other students. We ask that you respect and protect the innocence of students in all ranges of these stages
- Desire to challenge authority because they are trying to differentiate
- Sometimes they will question long-held beliefs that their parents hold, such as the concept of God. They do this because they are finding their voice, not because they are necessarily denying God

- Need their ideas to be taken seriously, even if they are not well-thought-through
- This is a crucial stage. Engaging in their ideas and opinions about the meaning of life, God, ethics, etc. will greatly increase their trust in you, and in turn, God

HIGH SCHOOL

13 to 18 Year Olds (Ninth through Twelfth Graders) are increasing rapidly in their independence, and will push back on what they have learned in order to determine what they personally know and believe.

Challengers

- Students will push back on traditions or beliefs they grew up with
- May start experiencing that their Christian beliefs are very unpopular, which tempts them to conform to what is culturally acceptable rather than submitting to what is Biblically true
- Ask hard questions to figure out what they really believe for themselves

Pathfinders

- Attempting to find their identity and where they fit in
- Many will associate themselves with certain groups or labels even if they don't quite understand them fully
- Want to spend less time with their parents and more time with their friends
- Sexuality becomes an area where they find their identity; this can include experimentation with the same gender and with the opposite gender
- We unpack this more in Human Sexuality 3.4
- May be experiencing intimacy with others outside their families for the first time

Abstract Thinkers

- Continue to think more abstractly and attempt to see how ideas shape themselves and the people around them
- Start to see how their actions impact other people’s lives positively and negatively
- Begin to have a deep sense of agency, and if sharpened, their wills can be solidified towards what God desires

WHAT WE TEACH AND WHY

When it comes to teaching on Sunday mornings, all of our teaching is rooted in Scripture, the inerrant Word of God. Pastors and Ministry Team Leaders prayerfully consider all curriculum and sermon series prior to use.

We do not expect that students will have a full understanding of various concepts after one message or series; however, we want to aim and hope for them to understand what we teach in a way that fits for their age and stage. Every age-focused ministry builds on the next, so if a student enters our church part-way through, it’s great for Small Group Leaders to find creative ways to ensure their students understand the basics that were taught in the prior ministry.

We have broken down our teaching goals into three categories; Know, Experience, and Do. These are goals for the end of their time in that age group. We believe that we should aim to develop well rounded disciples of Christ, which means that this is more than seeing students retain facts.

KNOW: Understand and articulate specific truths

EXPERIENCE: Witness first-hand

DO: Actively participate in

BIRTH-KINDERGARTEN

KNOW

Gospel

- Creation: God made everything including me and everything he made was perfect.
- Fall: People chose to disobey God so they were separated from Him.
- Redemption: God sent His son Jesus to die on the cross so that I can be forgiven.

- New Creation: Because of Jesus we can be together with God now and forever.

Vocabulary

- Terms: Love, Bible, Choice, Prayer
- Relationships: Father and Mother
- Understanding of God: Creator, Heavenly Father, Jesus Son of God

Teaching Series

- Creation: Genesis 1-4
- Incarnation: Luke 2
- Cross & Resurrection: Mark 15-16
- Church: Psalm 100

EXPERIENCE

With Family

- Reading the Bible together
- Family sharing their basic testimony

With Church

- Love from Small Group Leaders
- Friendships with other kids in church
- Rhythm of weekly weekend attendance
- Shared events with parents

DO

- Worship: Sing songs about Jesus
- Bible Study: Suggest Bible reading with family
- Evangelism: Identify key words of gospel basics and repeat definition
- Prayer: Able to pray out loud
- Serve: Regularly assisting the teacher

- Faith Conversation: Tell family what they learned in church

1ST-3RD GRADE

KNOW

Gospel

- Creation: God created the world and it was originally perfect. He is the Lord over all creation who made everyone and knows us personally.
- Fall: Everyone has chosen to disobey God which is called sin. The punishment for sin is death.
- Redemption: God sent His son Jesus to live a perfect life and die on the cross. He took my place so I can be forgiven of my sin.
- New Creation: Jesus beat death, and those who put their trust in Him can be together with God, experiencing relationship today on earth and with Him forever in heaven.

Vocabulary

- Terms: Grace, Faith, God’s Big Story, Obey, Salvation, Prayer
- Relationships: Marriage and Family, Friendships, Leaders
- Understanding of God: Creator, Heavenly Father, Jesus Son of God

Teaching Series

- Creation: Psalm 8
- Incarnation: Matthew 1-2
- Cross & Resurrection: Matthew 26-28
- Church: Matthew 28

EXPERIENCE

With Family

- Talking about what God has been teaching them
- A Worship Service environment (i.e. Family Worship Night)
- Service Event

With Church

- Small Group Leader as a trusted and caring adult
- Friendships at church with a common purpose
- Rhythm of Weekly Midweek Attendance

DO

- Worship: Celebrate Jesus through singing songs.
- Bible Study: Memorize the organization and books of the Bible, and read the Bible alone.
- Evangelism: Understand the Gospel basics and share with friends & family.
- Prayer: Present requests to God in a small group and in their own personal prayer.
- Serve: Personally give to help others in need (i.e. Operation Christmas Child, Local Food Pantry, etc.).
- Faith Conversation: Ask questions about God to family & Small Group Leader, receive pastoral counseling if needed.

4TH & 5TH GRADE

KNOW

Gospel

- Creation: God created the world and it was originally perfect. He is Lord over all creation and made every person and knows us personally.

- Fall: Everyone personally chose to disobey God with their thoughts, words and actions. This earns everyone the punishment for sin, which is death and eternal separation from God.
- Redemption: God loves us and wants to save us, so He sent His son Jesus to live a perfect life and die on the cross for me. Jesus did not stay dead but rose three days later and in Him, I have forgiveness of sin and new life.
- New Creation: Jesus beat death and was resurrected. Those who put their trust in Him can be in relationship with God, experiencing His presence today on earth and be with Him forever in heaven.

Vocabulary

- Terms: God's Plan, God is Sovereign, Trust, Freedom, Baptism, Resurrection
- Relationships: Brothers & Sisters in Christ
- Understanding of God: Holy Spirit, Trinity

Teaching Series

- Creation: Psalm 139
- Incarnation: Philippians 2:6-7
- Cross & Resurrection: Philippians 2:8-11
- Church: Acts 2:42-47

EXPERIENCE

With Family

- Talking with parents about what God has been teaching them

With Church

- Fellowship with friends at church
- Special events with and without parents
- Winter Camp

DO

- **Worship:** Participate in worship that is not dedicated to music.
- **Bible Study:** Habit of personal quiet time and find personal application.
- **Evangelism:** Invite friend to church and engage in a follow-up conversation.
- **Prayer:** Conversational prayer.
- **Serve:** Introduction to student leadership.
- **Faith Conversation:** Initiate conversation about faith with family member.

MIDDLE SCHOOL**KNOW****Gospel**

- **Creation:** God is eternal and created a perfect world for His glory. He is Lord over all creation, made every person, and knows us intimately.
- **Fall:** Everyone is born into sin and personally chose to disobey God with their thoughts, words, actions, and attitudes. On their own, people deserve God's wrath, which is death and eternal separation from God in a real place called Hell.
- **Redemption:** God the Father loves us and wants to save us, so He sent His son Jesus to live a perfect life and die on the cross for me. Jesus did not stay dead but rose three days later and in Him, I have forgiveness of sin and new life.
- **New Creation:** Jesus beat death, was resurrected, and ascended back to Heaven to prepare an eternal place for believers. If I put my trust in Jesus, I can be reconciled to God and experience freedom from sin today and eternity with Him in a real place called Heaven.

Vocabulary

- **Terms:** Holiness, Justification, Sanctification, Reliability of Scripture
- **Relationships:** Husband & Wife, Non-believing Friends
- **Understanding of God:** Roles of the Spirit, Relationships of the Trinity

Teaching Series

- **Creation:** John 1
- **Incarnation:** John 1
- **Cross & Resurrection:** John 18-20
- **Church:** Ephesians
- **Additional Series:** Judges

EXPERIENCE**With Family**

- **Local Mission Together** (i.e. Rescue Mission or Serve LBC Summer Trip)

With Church

- **Missions Trip** in Southern California
- **Communion**
- **Ownership** of their Ministry

DO

- **Worship:** Regular multi-generational worship service monthly
- **Bible Study:** Habit of Bible Study with Basic Hermeneutic through Wednesday small group time
- **Evangelism:** Each student will go through Alpha Youth Outreach Series at least once. Teaching them how to share their testimony & ability to lead a friend through the gospel

- **Prayer:** Learning a habit of regular daily prayer and encouraged to do so through our DailyVerse text and devo system
- **Serve:** Encouraging monthly volunteering in All-church Ministry, as well as an opportunity to join the Student Leadership Team
- **Faith Conversation:** Encouraging ongoing conversations about faith with a parent through equipping families weekly with what is being taught weekly

HIGH SCHOOL

KNOW

Gospel

- **Creation:** God is eternal and created a perfect world for His glory. He is Lord over all creation and worthy of our worship. He sovereignly made every person and knows us intimately.
- **Fall:** We are all sinners by nature and choice. Alone, people are enemies of God and deserving of God's wrath, which is death and eternal separation from God in a real place called Hell.
- **Redemption:** God the Father loves us and wants to save us, so He sent His son Jesus to live a perfect life and die on the cross in my place to satisfy God's wrath. After three days, Jesus resurrected, and in Him I have new life and forgiveness of sin. He is redeeming my flesh and making me more like Christ.
- **New Creation:** Jesus was resurrected, ascended, and will one day return and reign as King in a new heaven and new earth. Those who He has chosen put their trust in Him, and are therefore reconciled to God and experience freedom in Christ. My eternity with Him in a real place called Heaven is sealed, and nothing can separate me from my new identity in Him.

Vocabulary

- **Terms:** Hope in Suffering, Missional Living, Law & The Gospel
- **Relationships:** Employee/Employer, Role as Citizen/Neighbor, Body of Christ
- **Understanding of God:** One God, Reigning King, Prince of Peace

Teaching Series

- **Creation:** Romans 1
- **Incarnation:** Hebrews 10
- **Cross & Resurrection:** 1 Corinthians 15 & Galatians 2
- **Church:** Acts
- **Additional Series:** Hebrews

EXPERIENCE

With Family

- Celebrate entering Christian adulthood

With Church

- Missions experience outside Southern California
- Opportunity to serve missionally outside the US

DO

- **Worship:** Multi-generational worship service 2-3 times per month
- **Bible Study:** Identify false teaching and respond with grace & truth
- **Evangelism:** Missional living and ability to lead a stranger through the gospel
- **Prayer:** Healthy view of prayer and fasting
- **Serve:** Committed to weekly area of service at church

- Faith Conversation: Talking with a parent as disciples discerning the will of God

NOTE: We have not listed a salvation or baptism experience in any of the ages or stages. At Arbor Road Church, every age and stage will hear an invitation to put their trust in Christ for salvation. We believe that the Spirit of God will draw a person to Himself in His timing, and we pray actively that it happens at a young age. We know that without faith, what a student can Know, Experience, and Do is incomplete.

INTERESTS, HURTS, AND NEEDS

This is a method of brainstorming used to identify the unique interests, hurts, and needs that we are called to address when working with our students. We see Jesus addressing at least one of these areas in every interaction with an individual. We even see Jesus meet all three areas of interest, hurt, and need in his interaction with the Woman at the Well in John 4. When ministering to students, we must know their interests, hurts, and needs; only then can we most lovingly walk alongside them. You can use it specifically for even just one person or as broad as an entire age range. Consider doing this exercise with your small group in mind. The hope is that it will help you to identify how to do ministry to and with your students well. The following are definitions of each category:

Interests: These are the things that your students are talking about, excited about, fascinated by, and asking questions about.

Hurts: These are the areas in which students are experiencing pain and discomfort emotionally, physically, or spiritually.

Needs: These are the things that students don't just want, but actually need in order to flourish as a student, child, and disciple of Jesus.

The following are questions to ask when brainstorming each category. The goal is to brainstorm in this phase, not to fix or to determine action steps. That comes later.

INTERESTS

- What are your students attracted to?
- What are they intrigued by?
- What is captivating their attention now?
- What do they find funny? What amuses them?
- What/who are they being entertained by?
- What are they fired up about?
- What are they angry about?
- Where do they want to be?

HURTS

- Where are there places of pain in students' lives?
- Who is hurting them these days?
- In what ways are they lonely?
- What sin are they prone to falling into or tempted by?
- What lies are they believing?
- Where have they missed God?

NEEDS

- What are their physical needs?
- What are their emotional needs?
- What are their spiritual needs?
- What do they lack?
- What/who do they want vs. what do they need?

This method is often done in three columns. After brainstorming, you will now take a step back and look at the *themes* you see among the three columns. Perhaps it is a theme of broken families or social media or even a lack of hope. Once you identify those themes, you can now enter into the response mode. You are now able to do ministry to your group of students more specifically knowing *who* it is exactly that you are working with.

HUMAN SEXUALITY

Our Kids and Students are rapidly facing more and more challenges regarding their identity in this world today. Human Sexuality is a topic that we want our leaders to be equipped to face with our students.

In conversation with a student regarding Human Sexuality and if they identify with the LGBTQ+ community, you may be juggling many different possible responses. The following will help you feel prepared to navigate this situation if it does arise. Further, please follow up with your ministry lead for support and guidance. The following contains questions to ask the student in your conversations with them about sexuality, a reminder of who the student is, a reminder of who you are as a volunteer leader, and three takeaways from our church position on human sexuality.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

(let them talk; take the posture of listening)

- What is your relationship like with your parents? Have you talked to them about this?
- Do you feel loved by your community here at Arbor Road?
- Ask how you can better love them where they are at.
- What do you think God thinks about you? Who is God to you?
- Tell me about your friends.
- Where do you feel like you really belong?
- Describe yourself in three words; who are you at your core?
- What is a challenge you are facing today?
- What are three things you are grateful for today?
- Who do you look up to?

WHO ARE THEY?

- If the student has placed their trust in Jesus, they are first and foremost, at their core, a son or daughter of the King Most High.
- The real root of the issue is identity. We as leaders and mentors want to bring them to a place where their identity is not rooted in their sexuality, but rather in their adoption into the Family of God.
- “First of all, as a church, we believe that all people matter to God...thusly, all people matter to us” (Pastor Brent).
- They matter. They are loved by God and by us. One of the best ways to love someone is to listen. The other way is to speak the truth in love.

WHO ARE YOU?

- You are likely the voice they associate most closely with church and God.
- You are their Small Group leader! You get to walk alongside them in life.
- You are their confidant; they are trusting you with vulnerable information. With this comes responsibility and discernment.
- You are also a child of God and you are not meant to carry this burden alone.
- You cannot “fix” anyone. Your job is to love your students, mess and all.

PASTOR BRENT'S LETTER

Three points to take away as a leader at Arbor Road Church:

1. All people matter: “First of all, as a church, we believe that all people matter to God...thusly, all people matter to us”
-Pastor Brent.

2. ARC is not affirming of homosexuality as aligning with God's intent for creation: "With regard to same-sex marriage specifically: We acknowledge that there are now officially multiple concepts of marriage in America, here at ARC, and throughout our denomination. Yet, along with our denomination, at ARC we adhere to the Biblical position that marriage is between one man and one woman" -Pastor Brent.
3. We must take a stance of speaking truth in love.

The Position on Human Sexuality and Pastor Brent's Letter can be provided by your Department Lead.

CHAPTER 4

PARENTS

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise"

- Deuteronomy 6:4-7

PARENTS AS PRIMARY DISCIPLERS

As a Volunteer Leader, your role is to love and lead students towards Jesus Christ! As His disciples, we believe you are being faithful to His call as you continue to make disciples who watch how you live, worship, and ultimately follow you as they follow Jesus.

While you disciple weekly through small groups and walk with your students, it is important to remember that you are NOT the primary discipler of those students if their parents are followers of Jesus. Parents who are following Jesus are called to play this role in their life.

As a Church, we value the truth that parents play a primary role in the process of their children becoming more like Christ. The home is one of the most transformative environments in a child's life. We as a church get to equip parents to grasp the role they have, see it as a privilege, and walk confidently in their knowledge of Christ, trusting that He is using them to reach their children more than they believe.

SUPPORTING PARENTS THROUGH OUR MINISTRIES

- ***Equipping parents*** with information about what their students are learning in God's Word before they learn it through email updates or take-home papers that prepare and equip parents, and providing resources and training on discipleship as a parent.
- ***Meeting with parents*** and capitalizing on the fact that they are the greatest tool to learning about their students who walk through our doors.
- ***Supporting parents*** by communicating clearly. We can love our parents by giving them all the information they need in a timely manner regarding our ministries, in order to help them in making ministry/church events and activities a priority.

SUPPORTING PARENTS AS A LEADER

As you get to know your students, be sure to ask them about their families. This will give you insight into the homes that they come from, their main place of discipleship.

Kids/45/MSM

This is the primary age for parents to be the main point of contact when it comes to spending time with their kids. As you build trust with them, be sure to update them on how time with their student has been, areas you have seen them growing, or even ways you have been encouraged. If questions arise, ask them! They are their parents, they know them the best.

45/MSM/HSM

At the beginning of the year with your small group, send an email to the parents of your students introducing yourself and making yourself available.

Ask for the phone contact to at least one parent of each of your students. This information can come from the pastor who has access to all of the contacts. You will be more effective and trustworthy in your ministry if you pursue the parents of your students.

PARENT PARTNERSHIP

The reality is, Volunteer Leaders only have a few hours at best every week to spend with students, as opposed to the hundreds of hours that our students spend with their parents at home. In order to have the greatest influence on our students, we must reach their families. When we partner with parents and do ministry to families and not just our students, it creates an environment where every family member can experience the abundant life that results from the pursuit of Jesus. The following are three tips to making Parent Partnership a success:

1. The Volunteer Leader role in partnering with parents is to be a supportive role in the endeavor to inspire, equip, and support parents as spiritual leaders in the home.
2. As Volunteer Leaders, we are responsible for helping parents realize their God-given roles as primary nurturers of their children's faith. Their spiritual growth and life of faith is relevant to their children's life of faith.
3. We must graciously remind parents that spiritual parenting is not perfect parenting, but rather imperfect parenting from a spiritual perspective. This means parenting with eternity in mind.

In order to support our parents best in what our ministries are already offering, it is important to be on the same page with your Ministry Leads. What is in place for parents already?

KIDS MINISTRY

There is a list of take-home questions given to parents at the midweek ministry, an email is sent to the elementary-aged parents about what was taught on Sunday, and there is great parent interaction because they must drop off and pick up their children.

45

A weekly email is sent out to parents about what is being taught in the upcoming month. In addition, there is great parent contact on Sundays because they must drop off and pick up their children.

MSM

A weekly email is sent out to parents about what will be taught that upcoming week, as well as information on any upcoming events, and there is one event per calendar for equipping parents.

HSM

A monthly email is sent out to parents about what is being taught on in the upcoming month, and there is one event per calendar for equipping parents.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

We believe that parents who are following Jesus are the primary disciplers of their children. To that end, we want to focus on what we are imparting at church and how we can support parents' involvement in their child's life.

In Chapter 3.2 *What We Teach and Why*, there are goals and suggestions made in each "Experience" section for families to do with their child of that age range. Keep reading below for ways parents can be active participants in their child's faith.

While many children are brought to church by their parents, we also know that many children have another caring adult inviting them. In those cases, we encourage other family members (i.e. grandparents, aunt/uncle) to step in as a great alternative relationship as we share Christ with the entire family through our ministries. In the event that a child was not invited by their family, it is great to find other families to step in. Here are two alternatives:

1. The family that invited the child/student – often the parent of the child/student's friend.
2. A Trusted Arbor Road Family – another couple who has been through this Youth Training and can invite them to foster these experiences for this child

Throughout a child's time in our Kids and Youth Ministries, there will be times for a parent to commemorate their child's growth. From a family event to a special trip, these experiences celebrate how a young person is growing into Christian adulthood. Our Adult Ministries will work with parents to help them lead these events in their child's life. While this is not the responsibility of a Small Group Leader, it is great for you to affirm a parent's leadership.

What does it look like for a parent to volunteer in their child's ministry?

Every parent is invited to partner with their child's ministry through the 3 P's.

- Prayer | Continually pray for our kids to come to know Jesus and to keep growing in their relationship with Him.
- Presence | Get to know the leaders who are investing in your child's life and seek to be informed of what they are learning.
- Provision | Meeting the great needs, but small tasks within our ministries. Sometimes it looks like donating.

Beyond the 3 P's, any additional form of a parent volunteering in their child's ministry must go through and be approved by the pastor overseeing the ministry.

CHAPTER 5

SHEPHERDING

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea."

- Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

WHY SMALL GROUPS?

WHAT IS A SMALL GROUP?

The vision for Small Groups at Arbor Road is to build relationships, care for one another, and encourage one another as followers of Jesus. Every Arbor Road Small Group has the following essentials that are experienced by age-appropriate and leader-designed distinctives:

1. Scripture + Prayer
2. Community
3. Mission

At Arbor Road Church, our goal is for people of all ages and stages to experience community. A great way we have found to accomplish this is through Small Groups. Here, we've outlined three reasons why we believe Small Groups are effective in our ministries with Kids and Students: Small Groups are Biblical, Effective, and Relevant.

BIBLICAL

God created us for a relationship with Him and with others.

- One of the ways God has designed us to grow in Christ and to know Him is through relationships with other believers (Ephesians 3:18-19).
- Though there are many ways to experience community, Small Groups provide an intentional environment for kids and students to get to know each other in a smaller setting.

Jesus' method of discipleship was investing in a small group of twelve men.

- Though He had a very public ministry preaching to thousands of people, most of His time was spent investing in the 12 disciples.

EFFECTIVE

Small Groups provide a place where everyone can minister.

- Small Groups provide an environment where spiritual gifts can be identified and used
- Small Groups provide a context for evangelism. A community that loves and cares for one another puts God on display (John 13:35).

Small Groups allow us to shepherd our kids and students more effectively.

- With the number of kids and students in our ministries, it is a challenge to know and care for each of them in a large group setting.

RELEVANT

Kids and students desire community.

- Culturally, people have a strong value for authenticity. Small Groups create a platform for safe sharing and asking tough questions.



SIX PHASES OF A WEEKLY SMALL GROUP

The purpose of Small Groups is to help kids and students know God and to be known in community. This is the primary way we connect weekly with students to study Scripture and share life together. Here are our Six Phases to your time leading a weekly Small Group: A, B, C, D, E, F. Each one has powerful potential to build a transformational community.

While we value the impact of these weekly Small Group times, we have found that students are much more receptive to your input and leading when you have invested in their lives outside the weekly meeting; that time builds trust. Consider reading “Connecting With Students Outside of Small Group” for ideas on how to connect outside of a group in a way that is appropriate for the students you work with.

A- ARRIVE

- Welcome students – do not simply be connecting with other staff.
- Be proactive with joy and an appreciation that your small group members came.

B- BE PRESENT

- Don’t be distracted by your phone or thinking about what is next. Really be with them and participate with them.
- Sit next to them; whatever the students are called to do, model it (game, cheering, worship, etc.). If you are at 100%, they will meet you at 80%.

C- CHECK IN

- Hear the highs & lows from your small group members’ weeks.

- If there's a new child or student in your group, make introductions of everyone.
- Ask everyone a random question so the visitor has a chance to hear from everyone and is not the only one sharing new information.

D- DISCOVER

Ask questions to find out where they stand on the topic or issue at hand. Find out what their experience has been on this topic and how it works for them. Give your group time to process.

- Do not be afraid of a little silence.
- Give them anywhere from 5 to 15 seconds of silence before rephrasing the question, giving your own response, or moving on to something else.
- Repeat the question as needed.
- Keep your eyes up and be intentional with your eye contact to let them know you are waiting for them to process and participate in the discussion.

E- ENGAGE TRUTH

Look to Scripture by reading and even rereading the passage with your Small Group.

- Give them opportunities to challenge the topic and ask questions. If a conversation is going well, don't rush to the next question.
- Utilize the Discussion Questions provided. The questions are a resource, not a script. Know that you don't have to get through all the small group discussion questions and that you have the freedom to ask questions of your own.

Here are some examples of broad discussion questions:

- How does this passage relate to you and/or your walk with God?

- Is there anything that especially stood out to you from the passage we read or from what the speaker said? How can those things apply to your life?
- Do you have a hard time believing this point in the passage is true? Why or why not?
- What specifically did you learn about God?
- Is there anything in this passage that is repeated? Why would that be important?
- Will this passage influence you this week and beyond? Why?

Make sure to involve everyone in the discussion.

- Get your group members to talk early.
- The longer they wait in the group time to talk, the less likely they will be to jump into the discussion.
- You will have group members who will dominate the conversation. Lead by redirecting these students: "Thanks for your input Johnny; let's allow someone else the opportunity to speak." This simple step affirms the person dominating and hands the conversation back to the rest of the group.
- You will have students who have not shared. Consider directing a question to a specific child. Ask them what they think of what "Tom" said.

F- FOLLOW UP

Every week there will be an opportunity to extend the group beyond the scheduled time. As you hear individuals struggles and strengths, you will be able to bring more meaningful discussions each week. Whether it is celebrating great things or comforting through hard things, your follow up is essential. Here are a few ideas:

- Immediately following Small Group, ask the student more questions and pray right there.

- Set a reminder on your phone after Small Group to send them a text message or pray for them.
- The following week, during the game time before the meeting starts, ask them how things are going.

HOW TO USE CURRICULUM AND QUESTIONS IN SMALL GROUPS

Our goal for the curriculum and questions is for us to communicate the points of the weekly message so that you are prepared to discuss it with your small group. It is okay if you veer off the curriculum discussion a little, as long as you are able to bring it back to the main point.

Here are some tips for utilizing the information you will receive:

BEFORE

Planning ahead builds confidence

- Understand the big idea. (If you know the main point, you will be able to help your group understand it too!)
- Consider questions that your group will have about the content.
- Plan the adjustments you'll need to make to help the content suit your group better.
- Pray for great conversations to come out of your discussions.

DURING

You are not reading a script, you are facilitating a discussion

- Don't be afraid of questions that are not in the curriculum but on topic. Ask for help from your Department Lead or another small group leader if you cannot find the answer and get back to the student.
- Do not feel the pressure to get through all the questions. As long as good discussions are taking place about the topic, that is totally fine.
- Do not answer the questions for your students. Help them seek truth together.

- Do not be discouraged if you do not see an immediate improvement in your students. Remember it is not you but God who transforms hearts.

AFTER

The impact of group meetings continues after the gathering ends.

- If there was a question that really helped your group engage the big idea or open discussion on the topic, share that with your Department Lead.
- If there was a question that landed flat or led to simple one word answers, share that with your Department Lead.
- Give yourself and the curriculum grace; no curriculum is perfect, and the discussion will not go perfectly every week. Celebrate wins, even if it is just the fact that you read the Bible.

INCORPORATING GOD'S WORD

As you start to spend more time with your students outside of group meetings, you will be able to gauge their spiritual walk and spiritual maturity. A great way to incorporate the Bible into your time with students is to start by sharing your own story and the journey that God has taken you on. Being a leader is not merely passing down facts and advice, but being someone who loves Jesus and desires to reflect that love in all aspects of life.

Your top priority in being a leader is to cultivate your own heart for the Lord and spend time with Him. If you are loving and enjoying Jesus in your own life, it will overflow when you spend time with your students; they will see this in you.

The following is a list of some ways you can invite your students to follow Jesus as you follow Him yourself. As you get to know their spiritual maturity, you will know which types of conversations will match their experiences with God.

- Share what God is doing in your own personal life.
- Share a passage from the Bible that has impacted your walk with the Lord.
- Pray with them.
- Ask for prayer requests, pray for them, and follow up with them.
- Ask them what they think about the topics and Bible passages they have been learning about in church.
- Remind them that you are open to their questions about God or the Bible and create space for them to ask them.
- Ask how they are seeing God in their life amidst victories, trials, etc.
- Ask about what they are reading in the Bible.
- Pursuing relevance and truth is not about avoiding the Bible. The Bible is relevant to all of life.

Pro Tip: Be yourself! If you love Jesus, you will inevitably talk about Him.

WALKING A CHILD OR STUDENT THROUGH THE GOSPEL

The gospel is an announcement of how we have been made right with God! It is not a piece of advice that tells us what to do – it is a declaration of what has been done. We want to celebrate our kids' and students' responses to the gospel, as well as help guide them toward next steps.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN THE GOSPEL?

- Walking a child or student through the message of the gospel is one of the greatest privileges we have as leaders.
- We value the importance of communicating the good news of the gospel clearly and concisely.

Below is an outline that will give you the freedom to stick to the very basics of the gospel or dive a little deeper to help them understand.

OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL

We can summarize the gospel in four main categories: Creation, Fall, Redemption, New Creation

1. Creation: God created everything good and in perfect relationship with Him.
2. Fall: Man sinned against God and broke the relationship.
3. Redemption: God sent Jesus to pay the price for man's sins by dying on the cross. Jesus was then raised from the dead, and He ascended into heaven defeating sin and death once and for all. Jesus' work has brought forgiveness and a restored relationship to all who believe.
4. New Creation: One day God will create a new heaven and a new earth that will be free of sin. On that day, we will enjoy

a perfect life in relationship with Jesus. Until that day, God is in the process of making all things new.

CREATION

- Man & Woman were created in the image of God (Gen. 1:27).
- Adam & Eve were good and they enjoyed a perfect relationship with God (Gen. 1:31).

FALL

- Adam & Eve sinned against God (Gen. 3:1-13).
- All people are sinners by nature and by choice (Rom. 3:23).
- Sin earns death and eternal separation from God (Rom. 6:23).

REDEMPTION

- From the beginning, God promised to send a Messiah to save man from his sins (Gen. 3:15).
- God demonstrated His love for us by Jesus dying on the cross (Rom. 5:8).
- Everyone who surrenders their life to Jesus receives salvation from sin and eternal life with God (Rom. 10:9-13).

NEW CREATION

- We are a new creation (2 Cor 5:17).
- One day God will recreate and restore all things back to perfection (Rom 8:18-25; Rev 21:1-5).

CLARIFY

- Connect with them and help them feel comfortable talking with you. Initially, some children and students may feel self-conscious about talking to a leader after they have made a decision.

- Be sure to really listen to what they have to say. It won't be your job to ensure they believe and become a Christian – that is the work of the Holy Spirit. Be open to what they have to say and respond appropriately.
- Ask questions like “What decision did you make tonight?” and “In your own words, can you explain the gospel to me?” This helps them think for themselves and understand what decision they are really making.
- It's during this time that you may find out they are only talking with you because their friend did it, too, they are making a first-time decision, or they are already a Christian but feel the need to repent of sin.

CELEBRATE

If the child or student has made a decision to surrender to Jesus, then CELEBRATE with them!

- This is the single most important decision of their life!
- Welcome them into the body of Christ with joy.
- Encourage them to get plugged into the body of Christ and not to try to live life alone.

If the child or student is already a Christian but confessing sin, then CELEBRATE!

- The Holy Spirit is working in their lives in this moment.

COMMUNICATE

- Explain to them that being a Christian means being in a relationship with Jesus. The way to begin this relationship is to communicate with Him by praying. Tell them that prayer is essentially that--talking with God.
- Give them a small picture of what a relationship with Jesus looks like by praying for them.
- Prayer may be new to them, and hearing you pray joyfully can be a huge encouragement to them.

CARE

- Continue to pray for them in the weeks that follow.
- Follow up with them the next time you see them.
- Ask them if they are interested in talking more about what it means to be a Christian.
- Be encouraging and truthful to what the Christian life looks like. If you are modeling that life for them, they will feel supported and excited to join.

COUNSELING A STUDENT

There may be times when one of your small group members needs someone to help them process an experience or situation in their life. It is powerful for us to be able to listen to what they are going through and ensure they feel heard. As we learn how to listen well, we can then speak truth into their life as someone who is a consistent presence and encouragement to them.

CLARIFY

- Work with them to get to the heart of the issue.
- Ask clarifying questions to learn more.
- Use language that mirrors what hear them saying.
- This lets them know that you are listening and also gives them the opportunity to clarify in their own words what they are feeling.

Through this process, you may be able to discern whether it's:

1. A sin or temptation
2. A consequence of their sin
3. An area of suffering
 - You may find that a combination of these factors are present, and it may be tempting to address all of the problems you hear them explain.
 - However, it is almost always more powerful to listen than to jump to a solution. We ask in this time that you address the issues you can focus on now.
 - Be sure to give time for this first portion of your conversation.

CELEBRATE

Celebrate who they are in Christ and the truth that no matter the situation, the Lord always loves and values them.

COMMUNICATE

We hope that in clarifying what is on their heart, you will have a better understanding, as you move forward in the conversation.

It may be helpful to ask questions as you transition to this time.

- Where do you see God in this situation?
- How do you see God responding to what you are doing?
- Assure them that God is right there in the room with them in the midst of their temptation, sin, and suffering.

As we help them through questions like this, they will be more and more equipped in the future if they are not able to meet with you or another leader.

Speak truth to what you understand the issue to be, but be slow to offer solutions to their problems

- Sometimes the right truth at the wrong time can be damaging.

Speak the truth in love as you reveal some of the root of their difficulties.

- They may love what you have uncovered or they may feel attacked; and in either case, we trust that God is working in those conversations.
- You may not see the fruit of that realization right away, but be affirmed in the fact that you have the opportunity to continue to pour into that student.

There may be times when you realize that what they are sharing with you is beyond your knowledge, or you may think of someone who may have a better handle on a specific topic.

Get help from your Department Lead or another trusted Small

Group Leader.

Be mindful of issues or complaints about their home situation.

- Do not choose a side or engage in gossip or slander towards a parent's decision.
- If you are concerned about a particular comment made about a home situation, speak first with the ministry department lead and seek guidance from them.

You are not obligated to fix their problem on your own or even at all. Your role in this situation is to listen and speak the truth in love.

Communicate with the Lord in that moment by praying for the student and their struggle.

- These prayers do not need to be life-changing, but you'll find that they come easier the more you have the opportunity to bless your students in this way.
- God hears each and every prayer and he is big enough to change lives.

CARE

- Be sure to guard the information they share with you. If you feel like the content of the conversation might be headed toward something in the category of abuse, be sure that they understand you are not able to promise to keep those kinds of secrets.
- If you feel like what your student has shared is something the other leaders in your small group should be aware of, or if you wish for your department lead to advise in the situation, let them in on what was shared.
- Follow up with that student the next time you see them.

VERSES TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS

When a student doesn't think they're good enough.

2 Corinthians 3:4-5

When a student is worried about an upcoming event.

Romans 8:31

When a student has faced or is frightened about some natural occurrence.

Psalm 46:1-3

When someone a student loves has died.

John 11:25

(What you say depends on the circumstances. If you know that the person was a believer, you can give encouragement that the student will see the person again. If you don't know – and the student asks – emphasize that only the Lord knows the person's heart. We can't judge where they will go.)

When a student lives in a dysfunctional home.

Isaiah 41:10

Encouragement when things go well.

Ephesians 5:20

Encouragement when a student is tempted to do wrong.

Ephesians 6:10-11

CONNECTING WITH STUDENTS OUTSIDE OF SMALL GROUPS

CONNECTIONS FOR ALL AGES

We've found that a great way we can get to know students and build trust is hanging out with them outside of a designated meeting time at church. We want to equip you to be safe in your time with students outside of group meetings, which will also include building trust with parents. It is important to remember that 4th & 5th grade is when spending time with students outside of small groups are introduced (not before) and should be slowly layered in throughout Middle School and High School to build trust with the parents. Our hope is that, by 12th grade, parents are confident that their child is safe with a trusted adult of the same gender off-campus because of their consistency.

All volunteer leaders should be spending time with your small groups at regular group meeting times and during scheduled events.

You can send students and parents letters/postcards on a student's birthday or after a big event, such as a play, or just to encourage a student or their parents at their home address using their information on your Arbor Road Account.

You may be invited into a home by parents into a shared family experience, such as a meal or vacation, or hired as a babysitter. These independent interactions are between you and the parents; Arbor Road Church is not responsible or liable for these times together.

CONNECTIONS FOR 4TH & 5TH GRADE

- On-campus events must have two or more leaders and two or more students present.
- Off-campus events must have two or more leaders, two or more students, and at least one parent present.

- Parents must drop off and pick up their students from on- and off-campus events.

CONNECTIONS FOR MSM AND HSM

“Just Show Up” Activities: These activities are things that you as a leader can “just show up” to. The goal of these are to cheer on your students in the lives they are already leading.

Group Activities: These activities are a perfect way to casually get to know a couple students outside the context of church. The goal of these are to be a part of fostering community among students.

One-on-one Activities: These activities are things you can do with just one student. The goal of these times are to invest in the life of a student by being present, asking questions, and making memories. Here are some examples of ways you can spend time with your students!

Just show Up Activities:

- Sporting Events and Competitions
- Attending their plays, musicals, recitals, etc.

One-on-One Activities:

- grab coffee, lunch, dinner, or dessert
- study a book of the Bible or a Christian book together
- cook, grill, or bake together
- invite them into your weekly rhythms: eating, exercising, grocery shopping, etc.

Group Activities:

- going to the beach (picnic, spikeball)
- hosting a game night at your house
- going on a hike together
- going to a sporting event

- taking an art class / paint pottery
- go to a new restaurant
- go thrift shopping
- go to the movies

**These are just some ideas; however, as you continue to get to know your students you will discern the best and most fun way to spend time with them and invest in their lives according to what they need!*

REMEMBER!

No matter what you are doing, get to know your student(s); find out the things they love, cherish and value. Listen reflectively; a student will feel known and heard when they hear you reflect back to them some of the things they are saying.

Even if your meeting is not focused on talking about deep things, students will feel cared for when you spend time with them. They will start to create a stronger bond of trust as you reveal to them your life outside of church, and this may lead to great ministry opportunities in the future.

CHAPTER 6

SUPPORT

“You can learn more about a man
in one hour of play than in a
lifetime of conversation.”

- Plato

GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

Games are an essential part of ministry to students. We value activities because of the camaraderie that is created within a small group around a shared goal. Recreation also cultivates community not just within your small group, but also within the ministry as a whole. When students and leaders are working towards a goal, individual strengths often emerge and are highlighted. Ultimately, having fun builds energy, creates fun memories, and establishes a good discussion environment later. Here's how you can engage in the most effective way as a leader.

YOUR ROLE IN GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

Tune In

- Understand the elements of the game during the explanation, this will help you as a leader to keep your students within the guidelines.
- Be ready to reiterate the directions to students who missed it.
- Be engaged, focused, and energetic on the game, your group will feed off of the energy you put into the activity.

Divide & Conquer

- Students will differ in levels of participation; with the adults leading alongside you, aim to engage everyone in some way. Know yourself, be willing to be silly and intentional with your choices as a leader during the game. This is not only a time to have fun, but also a great way to connect with your students as a team.
- Pay attention to the students who are less eager to play; if they truly do not want to participate, see if you can get them involved in some other way (i.e. cheering, not jeering).
- Pay attention to the students who are passionate about

playing; if you are able, join them in the fun while modeling fair play.

- This is not only a time of having fun, but a great way to connect with your students as a team to have conversations on the field or on the sidelines.
- Games and activities are not set up for leaders to take a break or hang out with other leaders. Get involved with your Small Group!

Always Affirm

- If you see one student exceeding in the game or in cheering on their team, affirm them and find ways for the rest of your group to support them.
- For activities that are not competitive (such as a craft or a discussion-type activity), affirm them in their participation.
- Never “Boo” another kid, leader, team, or official’s call. Redirect the frustration by either cheering for something or continuing to play.

Think Big Picture

Be aware of students who might abuse the game or activity time or who are overly aggressive in their actions toward other players. Move towards correcting that behavior

Planning a Game or Activity

We want to invite volunteers into how we plan events. Here’s how we do it. If you have ideas, please let us know!

- Think about the purpose of the activity and consider if it is pure fun or if it could relate to what you are learning.
- Ensure the physical & mental challenges of the activity is age-appropriate.
- Keep it simple; too much explanation can make things confusing.
- Protect Fairness; we take the kids’ and students’ trust

seriously, and a game that seems rigged will deplete that trust and frustrate competitive kids.

Four elements into creating and explaining the game:

1. A Goal (How to play and win the game)
2. A Challenge (Some sort of “twist” that creates a barrier to winning the game easily)
3. Rules (Guidelines to keep the game fair and scorable)
4. A Summary (A concise explanation of the game as a whole)

EVENTS

Our Children and Student Ministries at Arbor Road Church excel at putting on all types of events. Every event will embody at least one core value of the ministry. For example, the Fall Festival event put on by our Kid's Ministry embodies All Are Welcome by inviting everyone in the community to join in on the festivities. And the Rad Night event put on by our Middle School Ministry embodies We Like to Party by prioritizing having fun together that evening.

There are some events that are annual, such as the two mentioned above. Other events are semesterly or quarterly, such as the High School Ministry's Jam Night for the Student Worship Leaders to practice and worship together. And other events are monthly such as the Kids Ministry's Sunday Funday. Occasionally, a Ministry Lead will make the decision to suspend an event that has been done in the past or begin a new event.

It is expected that you, as a Volunteer Leader, will attend and help out at the events throughout the year for your specific ministry. If there is a conflict, let your Ministry Lead know as soon as possible. Your role as a Volunteer Leader will be unique depending on the ministry you serve with and your giftings.

The following are three general tips to keep in mind when you are helping at an event to make it a success for all involved:

KNOW YOUR ROLE BEFOREHAND

- Communicate with your ministry lead to be on the same page about expectations
- Know what elements you are being asked to own during the event
- Ask your Ministry Lead before the day of the event if there are questions or confusions.

BE PRESENT

- Arrive at the Volunteer Call Time (or even 5 minutes early!).
- Refrain from being on your phone or getting distracted from your role at the event.
- Engage yourself in the activities, conversations, and excitement of the event.

THINK OF OTHERS

- Have certain people in mind during the event that you could lend a helping hand
- These people may include: a student on the outskirts, a new parent, your Ministry Lead, our custodial staff, or even other volunteer leaders.

CAMP

WHO

Three ministries – 45, MSM, and HSM – go to weekend winter camps in January. MSM and HSM go to Hume Lake Christian Camp for a week in the summer. These times are unique opportunities to leave the distractions of our lives at home by getting away together.

WHY CAMP

Camp is an extremely important annual event in the lives of our students. These weekends or week-long camps are times when students are able to dive deeper into relationship with one another, with leaders, and with the Lord. We have the chance as leaders to walk alongside students in this transformative time and return home with them.

There is something truly special about the memories created together in this space that are carried with the students as they return home. Camp is 72 hours or seven full days uninterrupted with students. It is often said that the relational work done with students in a three-day camp is more than what you could do with a student all year at home.

YOUR ROLE

As a Volunteer Leader, there are a few things to keep in mind as you prepare for time at camp:

Rest beforehand: Camp is exhausting emotionally, physically, and spiritually. You will be giving your all to students, and it is important to come enter the weekend or week having rested and prayed in preparation.

Be present with students: Being present with students is essential as a Volunteer Leader at camp. Even while it will look different when we run our own camp, you must do this well.

- *Attending a programmed camp:* This is great news! Your job as a Volunteer Leader at camp is to do life with students. Go on adventures with them, stay up late laughing and crying and talking, engage in conversation at meals. This is your time to build memories with them that will last. Look for ways you can build those memories to unite them all.
- *Hosting our own camp:* There are seasons where we will rent a facility or space, and program our own camp. This affords us the opportunity to tailor the program and the cost to our students, but is significantly more work. Your role at camp will be multi-faceted, meaning you will have additional responsibilities on top of doing life with students. This type of camp falls heavily on the backs of our faithful Volunteer Leaders.

Be real: Be yourself. Students can smell insincerity from a mile away. Be your nerdy, uncoordinated, awkward, or unstylish self. The only thing you are allowed to fake is positivity. Students will imitate whatever attitude you exhibit. Positivity is never easy, but it makes camp a much more exciting and optimistic place when leaders are striving to model it.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAMS

At every stage of childhood and adolescence, we seek to build our kids and students up in their giftings and strengths, as well as challenge them in areas of weakness. In some cases, there will be opportunities to bring kids and students into leadership roles in various capacities.

KIDS & 45

Though there is not a structured Leadership Team in these ministries, there are ways to be encouraging to these kids and students in their strengths:

- **Affirm:** When you see potential, strengths, and giftings in a child, affirm them in that. Keep an eye out for children who tend to be more humble, quiet leaders as well.
- **Bring them in:** Look for opportunities to share your leadership with your students. Perhaps they can read the passage or be your example in explaining a game. A great way of building up children is to encourage them to welcome new students well and be a good friend.

MSM & HSM

The Student Leadership Teams in MSM & HSM are open to all students within the respective ministries. There are specific roles on our Wednesday night and Sunday morning services: stage, tech/slides/sound, welcome and check-in, games, and worship. We give our students the opportunity to choose areas of serving that they feel the most confident in, but also seek to challenge their leadership by intentionally placing them in roles that they are less naturally gifted in. The following are some tips for you as a Volunteer Leader regarding these Student Leaders:

Here is a four-step model used to teach students a certain skill. It is crucial that you are constantly walking alongside and supporting them as they grow in their leadership role.

1. I do and you watch
2. I do and you help
3. You do and I help
4. You do and I watch

Affirm

When students have a role in MSM and HSM, take the time to affirm them afterwards. When genuinely affirmed, a student is more likely to receive any constructive criticism you may have.

Explain

It may sound silly, but it is important to explain why a Student Leader is being asked to do what they do. Whether it is set-up or leading a game, sometimes it can all feel task-oriented. We do not want to ever use students just as extra hands. Explain to them how their work is important to the work that God is doing through our ministry.

CONNECTING WITH A GRADUATE

Every year, students will graduate out of the ministry you are serving in. Even though you may no longer be directly responsible for those students, there is wisdom in continuing to offer support and care for them. Remember, we are shepherding people, not just fulfilling a responsibility. Therefore, you will continue to play a crucial role in your students' eyes. When done well, we can continue to strengthen a student's web of support beyond our ministry.

In order for us to care for graduates without adding too much more to our leaders, we ask that leaders at least seek to connect with graduates through the month of **October**. This amount of time allows for students to transition well into a new ministry or context while receiving encouragement from familiar people. Ideally, we are able to help graduates establish new connections and support as their new situation begins to normalize.

After Promotion Sunday, it is most helpful to make a point of contact with your graduates **once a month through October**. These points of contact are opportunities to reminisce about old memories, encourage with truth, cast vision for them connecting in this new ministry, and ask intentional questions such as:

- What's been happening in your life?
- Who are some new people you have been connecting with?
- What has God taught you since graduating our ministry?

Kids through MSM leaders connecting with graduates will look different than High School leaders connecting with graduates. Kids through MSM leaders must make their points of contact through the family of the student or through the ministry the student is involved in. Some appropriate examples include:

- Calling a student's parents to talk with them on the phone
- Writing a postcard

- Seeking out the family of the student on the Arbor Road Plaza after church to catch up

High School leaders have some more freedom to connect with students directly after they graduate, but that does not mean that connecting with a student's family is not helpful. Some examples of connecting with High School graduates include:

- Grabbing a meal or coffee together
- Updating one another by texting in a group text with all of your graduates
- Visiting a graduate in their new context (college, workplace, etc.)
- Calling a graduate's parents to ask how you can be praying for them and their child

Connecting beyond October:

While we are asking leaders to connect with graduates through October, we welcome the desire to go beyond that expectation. We understand that leaders play a significant role in the spiritual development and overall lives of our students that may go beyond serving in our church's ministries. This is a beautiful picture of discipleship. In this case, we ask that you understand that, to your graduate's perspective, you will continue to represent Arbor Road Church, even if you no longer attend our church. Please seek to handle this influence with care.

If you have a student seeking mentorship after graduating, make sure you clarify what they are asking for. You are not obligated to take on this role in a graduate's life, but if you're available and interested, it could be an incredible way to see God continue to work in someone's life, as well as it may allow for God to use that graduate to strengthen your own walk with Jesus.

INTERNS

One of the ways we make an investment into Kingdom Leaders is through providing internships. These volunteers have a mentor-type relationship where they spend a year learning about leadership principles and the specific role of the ministry leader they are assigned to. They come from a variety of backgrounds; and while many come from within our own church, we also welcome students from all over who attend Cal State Long Beach, Biola University, or participate in our Residency Program. The goal of the internship position is to help people clarify their call to ministry. While some have a clear call to serve vocationally as a pastor, others desire to volunteer in a church and work in another capacity. Both groups receive the same collaborative team experience and intentional leadership training. Over the years, we have seen a wide impact as we send interns all over the globe to serve; and we hope you're able to see the value in your season of serving at Arbor Road.

Our interns typically spend eight hours a week in the program. The vision is for our interns to graduate into our Ministry Associate program, where they take on more hours and responsibilities within the ministry and church at large.

The intern's relationship with our volunteers is that they are co-laborers. While they may be given responsibility for specific events or run certain weeks, they are not pastoring or overseeing volunteers. During Intern Orientation we discuss that a key part of their role is to value volunteers with the hope that they will be developed as servant leaders. Practically, interns can provide encouragement by highlighting strengths and learning from volunteer leaders who are gifted, called, and experienced. In the same way, volunteers are not overseeing interns. If an intern had to try and learn in an environment where everyone they interacted with was overseeing and mentoring them, it would be overwhelming.

As a volunteer, here are some ways that you can encourage interns in their journey.

- **Give Grace:** Often when someone takes their next step in leadership, they put a lot of expectations on themselves. Therefore, highlighting a mistake is typically not helpful. Trust their leadership to have seen the area and coach them properly.
- **Give Encouragement:** Taking the time to write them a text message or handwritten note that highlights something specific can be a timely gift. Follow the Spirit's lead with honest and specific feedback.
- **Give Support:** Praying is one of the greatest ways to influence the heart and future of a leader. Remembering that this is a young person who is often balancing school, outside work, and is not receiving a paycheck for their time at church can leave our volunteers asking how we can help. Ask the Lord to infuse clarity in their calling, wisdom in applying the truth that they're learning, and passion as they use their gifts.

PROMOTION SUNDAY

Promotion Sunday is a designated day when Kids and Students promote to their next grade in school. For some, this will mean promoting into the next age-specific ministry, which can be very intimidating. Our hope is to make this Sunday **WELCOMING, INTRODUCTORY, and CELEBRATORY**.

WELCOMING

Every week ought to be welcoming in our ministries, but this Sunday should go above and beyond. Leaders should spread out, smile, and ensure that no one is left alone. Ministry teams have the opportunity to creatively ensure that every student is seen as they walk in the room, even if it's as simple as giving every person a high-five as they enter.

INTRODUCE

For many, this will be their first time ever involved in their new age-specific ministry. Promotion Sunday provides the perfect opportunity to explain what the ministry typically looks like, as well as what the ministry's values are. Regular rhythms and expectations for students will be unfamiliar unless we take the time to explain them. As for the students who are not new to the ministry, this time will review and reinforce the ministry's vision and values.

CELEBRATE

We are excited to have new students come into our ministry settings! This time is intended to celebrate a new milestone in a student's life. Therefore, Promotion Sunday should be fun and memorable. It is highly encouraged to create ways to invite other students in the ministry to celebrate new students.

WHEN IS PROMOTION SUNDAY?

Students

5th-12th grade: The 1st Sunday in June

An early Summer promotion allows for new middle school and high school students to adapt to being around older students. Also, it jumpstarts their relationships with leaders during the time of year they are most available.

Kids

Preppies-4th grade: The 1st Sunday in September

An early Fall promotion allows for Preppies and Elementary students to enter their next grade around the time they actually begin that grade in school.

45 will be affected most by these separate dates for Promotion Sunday. They will only have 4th grade kids from June-September of each year.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN PROMOTION SUNDAY?

Before

- **Pray:** Before students even step in the room. We want to go before the Lord and ask Him to work in their hearts and in their lives. We want to actively acknowledge that He is the One who can truly make an impact on our new students.
- **Learn Names:** Because it can be so easy to feel unknown, we seek to know the names of every incoming 6th grader and 12th grader even before we meet them personally.

During

Welcome, Introduce, and Celebrate

After

Follow-up: Creatively discover ways to show the new students that we don't only pay attention to them because it's Promotion Sunday; it's because we care. Send them a postcard or a text after you meet them, or remember the details of what you talked about so you can ask about it next week. Follow-up matters.

BULLYING

Bullying, harassment, or aggressive behavior is **repeated**, intentional, harmful behavior that creates or takes advantage of a **power imbalance**. It is initiated by one or more students and directed toward another student. Bullying is prominent among kids and teens in ways that may surprise you. As you lead and walk with your students (regardless of age), it is important to know the different types of bullying, how we can prevent it, and what to do when you notice someone being a victim to bullying.

Statistics and definitions are provided by the National Center for Abuse and Bullying. (www.ncab.org in Summer 2020)

Bullying Statistics

- 160,000 kids skip school due to fear of bullying.
- Bullying can result in physical injury, social and emotional distress, and even death.
- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in children 10-14 year olds.

TYPES OF BULLYING**Physical Bullying**

Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing, or damaging property. Physical bullying causes both short term and long term damage.

Verbal Bullying

Verbal bullying includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse. While verbal bullying can start off harmless, it can escalate to levels which start affecting the individual target. Keep reading for techniques to deal with verbal bullying.

Social Bullying

Social bullying, sometimes referred to as covert bullying, is often harder to recognize and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Social bullying includes:

- Lying and spreading rumors
- Negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks
- Playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- Mimicking unkindly
- Encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- Damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying can be overt or covert bullying behaviors using digital technologies, including hardware such as computers and smartphones, and software such as social media, instant messaging, texts, websites and other online platforms. Cyber bullying can happen at any time. It can be in public or in private and sometimes only known to the target and the person bullying. Cyber bullying can include:

- Abusive or hurtful texts, emails, posts, images, or videos
- Deliberately excluding others online
- Nasty gossip or rumours
- Imitating others online or using their log-in

WAYS TO PREVENT BULLYING

Establish Your Authority as the Leader

As disciples who walk alongside kids and students as they pursue a relationship with Jesus, it is important to maintain the boundary that you are their leader, not their friend. Establishing a

sense of authority will be helpful when it comes to preventing bullying as all students will know that bullying of any type is not allowed, especially since you are around. For ways on how to maintain that boundary, please seek counsel from your Ministry Lead.

Cultivate a Culture of Love, Respect, and Honesty

As you lead your group, you get to create a culture! Every week your students will start to become more familiar with the "normal" that your small group or big group brings and it is important that the environment is one of love, respect and honesty. We love because Jesus loved us, we respect because Jesus is the creator of each and every person around us, and we are honest because vulnerability allows us to know how to love each other more intentionally. How are you planning to establish a culture of love, respect, and honesty in your group? As this becomes a normal rhythm, we believe bullying can decrease or become increasingly more obvious where it needs to be spoken into.

Spend Time with Your Students Outside of Church

The more you invest in your students outside of small groups, the more you will gradually gain trust that will lead to honesty in future conversations. If in the case that your student is struggling with bullying outside of Small Group, the hope is that they would feel comfortable to share with you what they have felt, and that you would be able to come alongside them and coach them as they learn how to respond to being hurt through bullying.

RESPONDING TO BULLYING

1. Approach the situation and discern what it looks like to "stop" what is going on. If necessary, ask another volunteer to assist you.
2. Have a conversation with the two (or more) students asking the following types of questions:

- Do you know why I am pulling you aside?
 - How could you have handled your (anger, frustration, fear, etc.) differently?
 - Initiate apologies if the time comes.
3. Tell your Ministry Lead.
 4. If the situation was one of many times: The Volunteer leader and Pastor will meet with the student being bullied to document incidents. (The one observed as well as any previous incidents).
 5. Your Ministry Department Lead will take it from here if the situation continues.

For more information on discipling students, see 2.5 Disciplinary Policies and Techniques

SPECIAL NEEDS

Luke 14:15-24 is a parable of the great feast. A man was hosting a banquet when his guests decided not to attend and declined his invitation. So, the man then called for his servants to invite “the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame” to his banquet. They were given a seat at the table and a place to belong. This was a radical story because these groups of people were oppressed and outcasts in 1st-century Jewish society. This parable represents Jesus’s invitation and acceptance for everyone to enter into the Kingdom of God. The Gospel is no longer just for the Jews, but also for the Gentiles! God calls the body of Christ to be inclusive.

Contextualizing this passage to modern day application, families of children with special needs have experienced isolation and have been outcasts in their communities. This passage calls for inclusive environments, that mirror the Kingdom of God. **We invite families with special needs to have a seat at our table and offer a space for their child in our children’s ministry.** We desire to create an environment in which their child can experience and encounter God. They bring invaluable contributions to our community. Children with Special Needs belong in the Kingdom and at our church.

Definition of Disability: Physical, cognitive, or neurological impairment that prevents or limits a person’s ability to complete a daily task or activity.

TYPES OF DISABILITIES

- **Physical:** any physical condition that impairs the functioning or mobility of a person.
- **Visual:** a loss of vision in one or both eyes that results in partial or complete blindness.
- **Hearing:** hearing impairment that results in hard of hearing or deafness.

- **Cognitive/Neurological:** disorders that affect the brain and the nervous system resulting in physical or psychological symptoms.
- **Developmental:** conditions that begin during the developmental period that impair any physical, learning, language, or behavior areas.
- **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD):** a developmental and neurological impairment that affects the social and communication capabilities and displays repetitive patterns of behavior, interests or activities. ASD is a spectrum and the symptoms of it manifest differently in each person. To help identify the severity of the symptoms, there are two broad categories: high functioning and low functioning.
 - High Functioning:** refers to one that has relatively mild symptoms but has an official diagnosis of ASD. Typically, those who are higher functioning can read, write, and talk. They may need more time and extra support in areas such as life skills.
 - Low Functioning:** refers to one that has more severe symptoms that require more support. They may be non-verbal or have limited communication skills. Also, they may engage in more aggressive or self-injurious behaviors.

Many disabilities tend to overlap with one another, affecting both the physical and the cognitive/neurological areas.

WHAT EVERY VOLUNTEER NEEDS TO KNOW

Awareness

- Awareness of the hurts and needs of families of children with Special Needs
- Awareness of the needs of that specific child
- As you build a relationship with the child, you will begin to understand and become aware of their needs.

Acceptance

- We affirm that all children with special needs are made in the image of God (Gen 1:26). Children with Special Needs are created in the “likeness” of him signifying that they are a reflection of God.
- Lead with empathy.

Communication with Parents

- Value the relationship with parents.
- Communication helps us to build strong relationships with families.

Example: Affirm their child’s behavior and abilities! Let them know one positive thing that happened in class!

Understand Behavior

- All behavior is a form of communication.
- Any bad behaviors is a sign that something is not working. What needs are not being met? What are the ways that you can meet their needs?

Volunteers working directly with Special Needs Kids & Students

- Will receive training pertaining to individual kids or students in their ministry.
- Are there to help them access the curriculum and integrate into the community. Help with transitions, prompting, and managing behaviors.

END NOTES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many of our ideas were inspired or compiled from various published resources. We desire to give credit where it is due and are grateful for the authors, educators, and pastors that have inspired our manual and consequently shaped our church. As a leader, if you're interested in learning more, we encourage you to explore the resources in the next section by either purchasing these books personally or borrowing a copy from our library on campus.

The Bible translation used in this manual is taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, English Standard Version® (ESV®) Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. All rights reserved. ESV Text Edition: 2011.

END NOTES

- 1.4:** Web of Support concept called “Constellation of Relationships” by Mark Devires Sustainable Youth Ministry
- 2.7:** Emergency Procedures:
- Lockdown from “Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plan” www.fema.gov
 - Earthquakes from www.ready.gov/earthquakes
- 3.3:** Interests + Hurts + Needs concept – Rick Warren www.Pastors.com
- 4.3:** Inspired by Michelle Anthony + Megan Marshman – 7 Family Ministry Essentials
- 5.1:** Why Small Groups? Inspired by:
- Reggie Joiner + Tom Shefchunas – Lead Small
 - Nelson Searcy + Kerrick Thomas – Activate
 - Larry Osborne – Sticky Church
 - Steve Gladen – Small Groups with a Purpose
 - Brad House – Community
 - Ed Welch – Side by Side
- 5.2:** Questions by Kevin DeYoung – www.thegospelcoalition.org
- 5.4:** Inspired by Kenneth Berding – Bible Revival
- 5.6:** Inspired by Robert Kelleman – Gospel Centered Counseling; Verse list from www.kidzmatter.com
- 5.7:** Inspired by Tim Chester and Steve Timmis Total Church
- 6.8:** Statistics and definitions provided by the National Center for Abuse and Bullying at www.ncab.org

First Edition Contributors: Trent Lewis, Nicole (Lawrence) To, Nick Ranieri, Alan Kim, Michelle Collins, Jeni Johnson, Jeremy Driggs, Amy Atkinson, Aubry Bowditch, Marian Anderson.

Second Edition Contributors: Brent Eldridge, Tony Landini, Haley Downey, Michelle Collins, Zach Rogalski, Nicole To, Emily Deems, Alan Kim, Rich Baker, Jojo Atienza, Brent Shavelle, Trent Lewis, Marian Anderson, Amy Atkinson, Kathy Smalley, Phoebe Morris.

The Arbor Road Leadership Essentials Ministry Manual was created for in-house training at a local church and is not intended for commercial purposes.

NOTES



YOUTH LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS

Welcome to the Arbor Road Church Youth Leadership Essentials Ministry Manual. These pages are the foundation and structure for our unified training.

Whether you are serving for the first time in Student Ministries or are a veteran volunteer, we want you to use this resource as a launch-pad to become the leader God has uniquely created you to be.

We hope that as you read this manual, you will see yourself in it. This is us! We wrote it with you in mind. Your ministry's initial orientation and onboarding process will clarify what you need to know. And as you continue serving, you will return to small sections of this manual for training and equipping.



v. 2