



Youth Code of Conduct

Youth participants will:

- Project an image of Christian consideration, sensitivity, and respect to everyone and to the property around them through language, dress, and behavior
- Refrain from inappropriate touching and verbal harassment/abuse
- Respect other persons and/or property
- Refrain from actions that could result in injury and/or damage to property
- Wear name badges in order to gain and maintain access to Diocesan-sponsored youth events and activities
- Keep their personal belongings with them at all times
- Attend all scheduled activities, arriving promptly, and staying for the entire event
- Be aware of noise levels at inappropriate times
- Maintain the spirit of the event
- Report problems of any kind to a trusted adult

Youth participants will not:

- Possess weapons of any kind
- Purchase, possess, consume, or distribute alcohol
- Purchase, possess, consume, or distribute illegal drugs
- Engage in any form of sexual activity or peer sexual harassment/abuse
- Purchase, download, possess, or distribute pornography
- Visit or gather in other than designated areas

Youth participants will be aware of what are and *are not* appropriate behaviors in terms of relationships between adults and youth, and with their peers.

The following behaviors are generally considered ***appropriate*** at a Diocesan-sponsored youth event:

- Side hugs
- Shoulder to shoulder or “temple” hugs
- Handshakes
- “High-fives” and hand slapping
- Verbal praise for a job well-done (not regarding physical attributes)
- Touching hands, faces (usually in context of a blessing), shoulders, and arms of minors \

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- Arms around shoulders
- Holding hands while walking with younger minors
- Sitting beside younger minors
- Kneeling or bending down for hugs with younger minors
- Holding hands during prayer
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate

The following behaviors are generally considered *inappropriate* at a Diocesan-sponsored youth event, but are not all inclusive:

- Inappropriate or lengthy embraces
- Kisses on the mouth
- Holding anyone on the lap who is capable of sitting on their own
- Touching bottoms, chests, or genital areas
- Showing affection in isolated areas of a facility such as restrooms, closets, staff-only areas, or other private rooms
- Touching knees or legs of minors
- Wrestling with minors
- Tickling minors
- Piggyback rides
- Any form of unwanted affection or peer sexual harassment/abuse
- Compliments or put downs that relate to physique or body development
- Going to an isolated area away from the group, or being taken to an isolated area by an adult or peer

If a problem of any kind occurs during a Diocesan-sponsored youth event, young people will immediately go to a trusted adult to discuss the matter.

Youth and parents understand that failure to agree to and abide by the Youth Code of Conduct will bar youth from participation in any Diocesan-sponsored youth event.

Youth Participant Sanctions for Non-Compliance

For the most part Diocesan-sponsored events never have direct responsibility for chaperoning the conduct of youth participants in its programming and events. The Diocese of Memphis relies on group leaders from participants' home dioceses or other chaperones to ensure that every young person attending a diocesan-sponsored event is aware of the Youth Code of Conduct and the sanctions for non-compliance. Group leaders, chaperones, and/or parents bear the responsibility for sharing this information with youth participants. Their failure to do so does not excuse any inappropriate behavior on the part of youth participants nor does it affect the Diocese's ability to levy sanctions. Youth participants are held to the Youth Code of Conduct regardless.

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If a young person violates the Youth Code of Conduct, any or all of the following sanctions may be implemented:

- Reporting of misconduct to local authorities, if the violation in any way violates local ordinances or laws.
- Dismissal of the youth from the Diocesan-sponsored event or program by requesting that the group leader remove the youth from the event (whereby it would become the responsibility of the group leader/chaperone/parent to ensure timely, accompanied, and safe transportation home).

Youth Signature

date

Parent/Guardian signature

date