

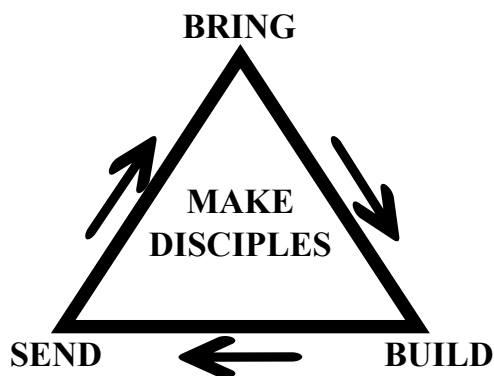


Youth Ministry Leadership Manual 2020

Our Mission

**To make disciples of Jesus Christ,
to the glory of God.**
(Matthew 28:18-20)

Our Strategy



- 1) To BRING youth to Christ**
- 2) To BUILD youth up in Christ**
- 3) To SEND youth out for Christ**

Bible-Based

Our focus is always on sharing God's word knowing that it is effective to transform lives through the power of the Holy Spirit. *(Romans 1:16)*

Youth-Centric

Understanding that the most effective people for bringing other youth to Christ are youth themselves. We do not want an environment which centred around leader personalities but one that encourages the youth to see this ministry as their own. *(1 Timothy 4:12)*

Love-Driven

We have a genuine and joyful love for those we minister to. It is a sacrificial love imitating Christ. This means it will, at times, be difficult and will impinge on our personal lives and social calendars. *(1 Thessalonians 2:8)*

Leadership Qualities

- Has a growing committed relationship with the Lord (i.e. regular personal Bible reading and prayer, regularly attends church and a small group).
- Respects and loves children (is passionate about seeing children won for Christ; views each child as an important member of our church family). *Matthew 19:13-15*
- Is a godly model. *1 Thessalonians 1:4-6, 2:7-8*
 - Language (no offensive language, racist remarks, crude jokes, sarcasm, gossip...)
 - Behaviour (no flirting, inappropriate touching, excessive or under-aged drinking of alcohol, no smoking around children)
 - Modest dress (not low cut, tight or see through clothes, no bottoms, tummies or cleavages showing, no short shorts or skirts, no underwear showing, etc.)
- Submits to authority. *Hebrews 13:17*
- Is faithful (doesn't compromise, change or add to the Word of God)
- Is teachable (learns from mistakes, seeks and receives feedback, makes training a priority)
- Is reliable (turns up on time and is prepared, if unable to come due to illness, family crisis...organizes an appropriate person to replace them)
- Is trustworthy (is open with their actions, will not abuse or manipulate children in their care, never plans to be alone with a child, doesn't encourage secretive relationships)
- Is a team player (aims to build up and support their team, prays with team each week, makes attending team meetings a priority)
- Is servant hearted (willingly does the unpleasant, unseen jobs) *1 Thessalonians 2:7-8*

Leadership Essentials

- **Working With Children Check:** All leaders (over 18 years) must complete a voluntary Working With Children's Check prior to commencing ministry with children. All paid staff must complete a paid Working With Children's Check prior to commencing employment.
- **Safe Ministry Training & Questionnaire:** All leaders must complete the online safe ministry training every 3 years. They must also complete the "Safe Ministry Screening Questionnaire".
- **Code of Conduct:** All leaders must sign off annually on the "Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers".
- **Attendance:** Everyone involved in Youth Ministry must be a regular member of a church gathering and involved in other areas within the life of the church. (Regular church attendance for at least 6 months is preferable but at the discretion of the pastor and ministry team leader.)

Youth Group Leaders

General Description:

- Capture and live out DBC youth's ministry mission.
- Faithfully teach God's word to the youth under their care.
- Have pastoral oversight of every youth in their small group
- Partner with parents in shepherding their youth.

Time Commitment:

- Friday evenings (during school terms) 5:30pm - 8:30pm
- Youth Planning Meetings (usually 4 per year + camp organisation)
- Youth Camps
- Online Safe Ministry Training
- Other Training (online or face-to-face)

Key Pre-Requisites:

- Christian
- Above Reproach in personal life
- Approved by Youth pastor and Ministry Team
- Six months or more at DBC (pastor's discretion)
- WWCC (over 18) and Safe Ministry trained.

Key Responsibilities:

- Committed to praying with their team every week while serving.
- Committed to praying for the youth in their group.
- Set aside time early in the week to read the passage, clarify the big idea, pray about what's
- being taught, prepare material/activities, practice things out loud, memorise where needed.
- Come prepared and liaise with other leaders beforehand regarding equipment and roles.
- Come on time and leave only when everything is packed away and clean
- Careful to discipline the youth in their care.
- Communicate with their Team Leader or Youth pastor when difficulties arise.
- Communicate firstly with Team Leader/Pastor not parents any negative feedback about youth.
- Adhere to all health and safety policies set out in this document and our "Safe Church Policy"
- Expect and welcome observation and support by Team Leader/Pastor.
- Offer suggestions concerning teaching, activities and how best to disciple the youth.
- Offer suggestions for where the Youth Ministry Budget is to be spent.
- Ensure equipment is clean, safe (broken equipment thrown away) and in correct tub/cupboard
- Give unavailabilities as early as possible (preferably the beginning of each term).
Organise replacements when needed - use group chat to do this so everyone knows what is happening.

Group Management

Leadership

- Leaders need to be firm and clear in their expectations, but warm in manner.
- Leaders should not physically discipline any child (no corporal punishment).
- Leaders must not show favouritism.

Group Management

- Never send a youth away unattended. Keep youth in view of leaders at all times.
- Keep your instructions/expectations clear and simple (Don't push in line or you'll miss out).
- Warn once, if behaviour persists act:
 - remove the equipment from the youth (e.g. confiscate equipment...)
 - remove the youth from the activity (e.g. sit out of activity for 5 minutes...)
 - remove the privilege of a future activity from the youth (e.g. sit out of next game, miss out on craft...)
- If behaviour persists, call either Team Leader or Pastor to deal with youth. Typically a leader of the same sex is more appropriate.
- Give appropriate consequence for varying degrees of misbehaviour (i.e. appropriate action must be taken):
 - **Minor behaviour = minor consequence** (Behaviour: whispering to child beside them, Action: leader stops and looks at child, when behaviour stops, continue with lesson)
 - **Medium behaviour = medium consequence** (Behaviour: constantly calling out or disrupting activity, Action: told to sit to one side, if persists, told to sit at back of group, if persists, supervised to different group for five minutes, asked to apologise before coming back into group).
 - **Major behaviour = major consequence** (Behaviour: violently attack another child or adult, Action: removed from group immediately, Team Leader or Pastor sent for, parents called, child sent back to church or excluded from program for one session).

Supervision

Youth To (Adult) Leader Ratio

1:10 ratio for 12-18 year olds.

- If the number of children exceeds the ratio, leaders need to tell the Youth Ministry Team Member or the Youth Pastor. They are then responsible for finding suitable leaders to step in.
- Teenage leaders can only be included in this ratio if there are two or more adult leaders in the room (this ensures that no teenage helper is ever left alone with children).
- Youth are to be supervised at all times when in programs.

Supervision

- Leaders should never be alone in private with any child or young person (other than family members). Youth can talk one-on-one to a leader as long as another leader or children are in sight. Particularly if leader and youth are of the opposite sex then interaction should always be highly visible and in close proximity to others.
- If youth bring their own balls/play equipment from home, leaders need to supervise them while using the equipment. Leaders take no responsibility for equipment that has been brought from home to be used after the program has finished.
- Youth who bring personal items may have their equipment confiscated and returned to them at the end of the program. If the item they brought is dangerous, the leader will hand it back to the parent/guardian and ask the parent/guardian to retain possession of it while on church property.
- Mobile phones are collected when youth check in. They are then placed in the office for safe keeping. Youth, at request, may also store other valuables in the office if needed. It needs to be locked after phones are placed inside.
- All equipment needs to be collected and locked away at the conclusion of every program.

Out Of Bounds

- Youth need to know the out of bounds areas.
- Out of bounds areas include: store rooms/sheds, car park, stage, music equipment, kitchen, sound desk and generally outside of fenced areas. Toilets should also be discouraged as a place of congregation.

Outdoor Precautions

- Outdoor areas need to be inspected for glass, syringes, broken bottles, etc. before moving youth to these areas.

Toileting

- During Youth Group leaders should only use the disabled toilet and refrain from entering the male or female toilets.
- As the toilets are outside supervision needs to happen consistently. A leader must supervise from outside the back entry to the church. If 'encouragement' is needed to

leave the bathroom area than the outer door can be opened to request youth leave the bathrooms (by a leader of the same sex).

Large Group Discussions & Talks

When there is a time of discussion/talk to the whole youth group in the auditorium the following is expected of leaders.

- ALL leaders need to help gather all youth into the auditorium making sure toilets are empty.
- ALL leaders need to be in the auditorium (except for the security person or if someone is preparing supper)
- ALL leaders need to sit in amongst the youth (in order to help manage the group and enter into discussion when needed. Leaders need to refrain from wandering during talks and discussions to avoid distraction.
- While youth are discouraged from using the bathroom during this time, if the bathroom is needed by a youth, a leader of the same sex needs to supervise by standing at the back exit.

Games/Activities

Leaders who are designated with activities/games are responsible for the following.

- Ensuring safety of leaders and youth.
- Completing relevant risk assessments when appropriate.
- Organising and delegating roles to leaders
- To have activities as ready as possible to begin before youth starts.
- Other leaders need to be available as much as possible to help with setup before youth (this varies according to the nature of the activity)
- ALL leaders are encouraged to participate in activities. If they do not wish so they need to remain at the activity to supervise and/or chat with youth who might not be participating. Leaders need to refrain from wandering as it encourages the youth to do the same. The only time leaders should be elsewhere is if they are either preparing or cleaning up in the kitchen, doing security or performing first aid.

Media - Appropriate Ratings

- When showing DVDs or YouTube clips to children the following ratings need to be followed:
 - children under 7 years - G rated films only
 - children 8 and over - G rating is recommended but PG can be considered (approval from the Pastor or Ministry Team Leader needs to be sought before showing a PG film).

Enrolment & Check-in/out

Enrolment

- Parents/Guardians will fill out the online information form for themselves and/or their children which details relevant personal and medical information for their child/ren. Annually, parents will be send an online request to update their information.
- Parents' Guardians will also fill out (on an annual basis) a signed hard copy form confirming they have enrolled their child online and give permission for their attendance to certain children's programs.
- Information collected is stored in lockable filing cabinets, or on password-protected computers/server.
- Information will remain confidential and will only be made available to appropriate leaders (e.g allergies, medical conditions, transport restrictions).

Check in / Check out

- At least one leader needs to be on the front desk to help check youth in and give new youth and their parents informations for enrolling.
- Youth can check themselves in and out on provided tablet but leaders need to make sure they are leaving with an authorised adult. At least three leaders ensuring appropriate pick up is advisable.
- Any new youth will be given a welcome letter/flyer to give their parents. This flyer will include a link to our online enrolment form.

Leader Identification

- All Leaders at church based ministries are to wear a DBC Youth leader nametags.
- All Leaders need to check in every time they are on.

Risk Assessment

- Risk assessments need to be completed by teams on a regular basis (new game, new equipment, new environment).
- Templates and guidelines for assessing risk can be found in the office.
- A risk assessment takes into consideration the type of equipment being used, the location of the activity, its proximity to other activities and who will be using the equipment.
- The aim is to identify any possible risks and to minimise or remove the risk altogether.

For more information please see *Risk Management Policy & Procedure*

Transportation, Off Site Activities

Car Park

- No child is to be left unsupervised in the car park, before, during or after programs.
- No supervised games are to be played in the car park unless the car park is satisfactorily blocked off.

Transportation

- Children, unable to travel with their own parents/guardians during an event, may only be transported by an approved adult. Approved adults have the same requirements as those of a Youth Leader (have a Working With Children Check and up-to date Safe Ministry Training).
- Approved adults must have their “Green P” plates or a full driver's license, a zero alcohol reading and not have any other impairment that would affect their ability to drive safely (e.g. poor eye sight).
- No adult is ever to be alone while driving with a child (who is not their own child or sibling).
- Approved adults must obtain written permission from the child's parent/guardian before driving them.
- Vehicles used for transport must be suitable (i.e. registered, regularly serviced and safe).

Off Site Events

- Any leader organising an off-site event must notify the Youth Pastor or Ministry Team Leader before advertising it and the Youth Pastor or Ministry Team Leader must approve the permission note prior to it being handed out.
- All permission notes need to be handed to the appropriate Youth Pastor post the event.
- The following must be done prior to an outing: permission notes issued/collected, appropriate risk assessments complete (including equipment, activities and location). For overnight activities leaders must also consider and record the following:
 - Transport arrangements
 - Sleeping arrangements
 - Bathroom configuration
- A minimum of two approved adults is required for every event, though more may be required (consideration needs to take into account appropriate adult child ratios).

Social Contact (outside Church programs)

Fruitful Christian ministry with children and young people involves healthy, appropriate relationships. This can at times involve contacting them outside of Church programs and can include meeting in person. However, it is important that relationships between staff/volunteers and children/young people are transparent, and that parents, families and program leaders are appropriately informed and have given permission for this contact.

When meeting with a child or young person, leaders should:

- have parental or guardian consent, where practicable;
- meet with them in a public place (for example, a café) in line of sight of other people;
- not have children or young people alone in your home, or visit children or young people alone in their home when no other adult is present; and
- make a record of the time, location, duration and circumstances of any face to face meetings with any child or young person.

Telephone and online communication outside Church programs

Telephone and online communication are useful tools for building community and pastoral care and support. However, telephone and online communication may be used by those seeking to harm children, young people and vulnerable people. Therefore we need to be mindful of the positional power dynamic that exists between leaders and the children and young people under their care.

Contact with all children and young people

- where possible and practical, parents will be informed of any possible telephone or online communication with children and young people;
- leaders must not engage in any telephone or online communication that:
 - constitutes unlawful discrimination;
 - is harassing, threatening or derogatory;
 - is obscene, sexually explicit or pornographic;
 - is inappropriately personal or intimate;
 - attempts to hide the identity of the sender or represent the sender as someone else; or
 - is defamatory.

Contact with primary-aged children

- *Telephone contact*: leaders should first contact parents and then, if appropriate, speak with the child. If the child answers the phone the staff member or volunteer should ask to speak to the parent first and explain to the parent why they are calling. Leaders should never call a primary-aged child on their mobile phone (unless there is a serious emergency relating to the safety and wellbeing of the child).
- *SMS (or other messaging service) contact*: must be limited to conveying information about Church programs.

- *Online contact:* must be limited to conveying information about Church programs. Staff and volunteers should never communicate directly (privately or one-or-one) with primary-aged children on a social networking site.
- *Email contact:* must be limited to conveying information about Church programs. More significant conversations should be held in person.
- *In-person contact outside of programs:* It is never appropriate to meet primary-aged children socially without written or verbal permission from their parents or carer. It is also important to ensure that a leader is never alone with a child (see the principles above).

Contact with children in Years 7 and 8

- *Phone contact:* leaders should first contact the parents or carer of the child and then, if appropriate, speak with the child. If the child answers the phone the staff member or volunteer should ask to speak to the parent first and explain to the parent why they are calling. Leaders should never call a child in Year 7 to 8 on their mobile phone (unless there is a serious emergency relating to the safety and wellbeing of the child).
- *Email contact:* should be limited to conveying information about Church programs and basic encouragement. More significant conversations should be held in person.
- *In person contact outside of programs:* It is never appropriate to meet children in Years 7 & 8 socially without written or verbal permission from the parents and discussing it with your ministry supervisor first.
- Private video calls (skype/facetime) are not appropriate for children in years 7 & 8.
- *SMS (or other messaging service) contact:* must be limited to conveying information about Church programs.
- *Online contact:* Caution must be used when participating with children on social networking sites. You must maintain transparency and be accountable for what you say. You must also take care with the message you intend to communicate through both the words and images you use as it may be perceived differently by those who view it. Leaders should consider limiting social media contact with children in years 7 & 8, however, if social media contact is made with children in years 7 & 8 the following guidelines are recommended:
 - Limit contact to group discussions that can be read by others.
 - Consider gender dynamics. For example, you should never have a group discussion where the group of students are all of the opposite gender (for example a male leader should not have an online chat with four of the year 8 girls).
 - The history of the chat should be kept. Staff and volunteers should not communicate using social media which cannot be retained.
 - Consider privacy settings which prevent personal contacts from seeing or interacting with child contacts connected to your ministry.
 - Ensure any text is beyond reproach and cannot be misconstrued.
 - Ensure all photos are beyond reproach and cannot be misconstrued.

- Private contact or conversations with children in years 7 & 8 should be limited to conveying information about Church programs and basic encouragement.

Contact with young people in years 9-12

- *Phone contact*: Phone contact is permissible.
- *SMS (or other messaging service) contact*: is permissible and can include conveying information about Church programs and encouragement (e.g. praying for you this week). Messages should be retained for accountability.
- *Email*: can include logistics and private conversations. If possible, more significant conversations should be held in person. Messages should be retained for accountability.
- *In person contact outside of programs*: Leaders may meet with same gender students or in mixed groups in public places (eg/ café). Parents and the relevant ministry leader should be informed of this meeting occurring ahead of time.
- Private video calls (skype/facetime) are not appropriate, however, group video calls may be appropriate in some circumstances (eg small group bible study context).
- *Online contact*: Caution must be used when participating with young people on social networking sites. You must maintain transparency and be accountable for what you say. You must also take care with the message you intend to communicate through both the words and images you use as it may be perceived differently by those who view it.:

If social media contact is made with young people in years 9 – 12 the following guidelines are recommended:

- Ideally, communicate through group discussions that can be read by multiple other people.
- Consider gender dynamics. For example, you should never have a group discussion where the group of students are all of the opposite gender (for example a male leader should not have an online chat with four of the year 8 girls).
- The history of any chat should be kept. Staff and volunteers should not communicate using social media which cannot be retained.
- Consider privacy settings which prevent personal contacts from seeing or interacting with child contacts connected to your ministry.
- Ensure any text is beyond reproach and cannot be misconstrued.
- Ensure all photos are beyond reproach and cannot be misconstrued.

Photography/Filming

Photographing Or Filming Children

- All enrolment forms will have a place where parents can indicate if they are happy for their child's photo to be taken or images of their child taken for use in a film.
- Before any filming of children or recording of children's voices takes place, where the film or recording is being used outside the stipulations stated on the enrolment form, parents/guardians are to be approached individually for written permission. (Please use the *"Photo Release Form"*).
- Leaders are not to take photographs of children on their phones or personal cameras unless permission is given by the Pastor or Ministry Team Leader and only then, for the purpose of the program (e.g. kids retelling a story). Photographs/videos are to be removed from the phones at the conclusion of the activity or use in church etc.
- Generally, photographs are only to be taken by people appointed by the Youth Pastor.

Child Protection Concerns

Please refer to the "Safe Church Policy - Procedure for Responding to Child Protection Concerns".

Emergency Procedures

Please refer to the "Emergency Response Procedure".

Kitchen Safety/Procedures

Please refer to the "Managing Hazards Policy & Procedure".

First Aid

Please refer to the "Accident & Incident Management Policy & Procedure".