Dear Volunteer Leader,

We are honored that you have decided to be a leader for student ministry through the upcoming school year. There is no better time than now to get into the trenches of student ministry. Here at 12Stone® we take the call to go and make disciples of the next generation very seriously and desire to see that call multiply in the hearts of our students and leaders. We need you now more than ever to invest your life into students.

You will be stretched this year as a leader and that is a good thing. You cannot grow spiritually or as a leader if you are never stretched. Be ready for the unexpected and remember the fruit of the Spirit, especially “patience”. This year we are asking you to be the youth pastor to the students that you are leading. Student ministry can only be effective through personal relationships. We want to challenge you to invest in personal relationships with these students. We desire to see each student at 12Stone® come to understand that God loves them and desires to use them to impact the world. You are key for that to happen.

Pray that God would stir our hearts this year. If our hearts are changed by His presence and love, then it will permeate to the students and within our ministry. Thank you for your service and leadership.
At 12Stone®, we exist to inspire life, share life, and give life, because Jesus said, “I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”

John 10:10
WHAT WE DO: OUR MISSION

INSPIRE:
WE INSPIRE STUDENTS TO FOLLOW CHRIST WITH THEIR LIVES

SHARE:
WE SHARE LIFE IN COMMUNITY

GIVE:
WE GIVE OURSELVES AWAY
WHAT WE BELIEVE: CORE VALUES

1. WE ARE CREATED FOR INTIMACY WITH GOD.
We inspire life by accepting love, power, and purpose from God and sharing salvation through Christ with others.


2. WE ARE CREATED TO FOLLOW GOD’S PATTERN FOR LIVING.
We inspire life by embracing integrity modeled by Christ and outlined in the Bible.

1 Kings 9:4; Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 5: 22-23; 2 Timothy 3:16; James 4:1-10

3. WE ARE CREATED FOR HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS.
We share life with others because people grow best and thrive in community.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; Matthew 7:12; John 13:34-35; Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 4:15-32

4. WE ARE CREATED TO GIVE OURSELVES AWAY.
We give life every time we serve, give, and show compassion in Jesus’ name.

Psalm 82:3-4; Matthew 9:36; Matthew 20:25-28; Matthew: 28:18-20; Romans 12:4-8
PARTNERING WITH PARENTS

So here’s the deal. Going to church is a really important factor in a student’s spiritual development. It gives them a place to learn about God, get some tools to grow closer to Him, and experience authentic community with other students and adults who care about them. Church is an important place, but where a kid’s spiritual development is concerned, it’s not the MOST important place.

We want to make sure one thing is super clear. We believe that, in any child or student’s life, and especially where their spiritual development is concerned, this is true…

WHAT HAPPENS AT HOME IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT HAPPENS AT CHURCH.

Here’s the key. No matter what, a student’s parents (not their church) will most always be the biggest influence in their lives. So if the Church wants to impact students spiritually, it makes sense for the Church to try to partner with the most powerful, influential people in those students’ lives in order to make that happen?

We use the term PARTNER for a reason. It’s because we believe parents and their church need each other. The church needs parents to be actively engaged with their kids’ spiritual growth. And parents need the local church because their kids need to learn about and experience God in a community of believers!

A PARENT’S INFLUENCE IS BEST REALIZED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CHURCH.
A CHURCH’S INFLUENCE IS BEST REALIZED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS.

We need each other!
UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS

PHYSICAL UNDERSTANDING

5TH & 6TH GRADE
- Puberty begins
- Need physical activity; love to play
- Growth spurts
- Awkwardness

7TH & 8TH GRADE
- Sexuality is development
- Hormones kicking in
- Physically awkward

9TH & 12TH GRADE
- Sexuality is developing
- Hormones are in full bloom
- Maturing at different rates
- Ego-driven; new abilities equals new arrogance

Mental UNDERSTANDING

5TH & 6TH GRADE
- See the world in black and white
- Not rigid; change their minds quickly
- Dislike the unknown
- Extremely concrete thinking

7TH & 8TH GRADE
- Starting to ask a lot of questions
- Jump to conclusions quickly
- Can start to reflect more deeply
- Able to start thinking in abstract ways

9TH & 12TH GRADE
- Number one felt need is acceptance
- Number one drive is independence
- Unrealized need: interdependence
EMOTIONAL UNDERSTANDING

5TH & 6TH GRADE
- See their feelings as unique only to them
- Over-dramatic
- Self-indulgent
- Extremely lovable

7TH & 8TH GRADE
- Fluctuate between emotional extremes
- Beginning to feel deeply about things
- Very ego-centric
- Don’t think about how behavior will affect others

9TH & 12TH GRADE
- Tend to exhibit stability, but are uncertain beneath the surface
- Friends are the emotional backbone to coping
- New things are filtered through friends and how they view themselves
- Guys tend to shut down emotions or appear flat; Girls tend to exhibit emotions, but are reluctant to reveal too much

SOCIAL UNDERSTANDING

5TH & 6TH GRADE
- Friendships are growing in importance
- Introverted when uncomfortable, extroverted when comfortable
- Sensitive of appearing different than others
- Do not want to be considered as children

7TH & 8TH GRADE
- Becoming more autonomous
- More aware of how they are perceived by others
- Awkward socially
- Friends become increasingly important

9TH & 12TH GRADE
- Friendship clusters determine world view
- Aware of how they are perceived by others
- Socially exclusive
- Do most things in groups
SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING

5TH & 6TH GRADE
- Discovering personal morals, ethics, and values
- Faith becomes personal and applicable in daily life
- Very inquisitive

7TH & 8TH GRADE
- Will start questioning abstract aspects of faith
- Beginning to let go of handed down faith
- Want and need to know how to live for Jesus TODAY
- Aware of guilt and falling short

9TH & 12TH GRADE
- Spiritual truths processed through cluster
- Questioning parental hypocrisy
- Need to make faith their own
- Making their own way spiritually

NEEDS FROM ADULTS

5TH & 6TH GRADE
- Emotional safety
- Help controlling their actions, patience
- Encouraged and frequent affirmation
- Clear guidelines and limitations

7TH & 8TH GRADE
- Help in developing good, positive friendships
- Space to question and push back
- Rules and boundaries
- Permission to be in process, patience

9TH & 12TH GRADE
- Trust, both given and received
- Acceptance for who they are and where they are
- Gentleness in guiding them
- Someone who listens and understands
SHARING JESUS WITH STUDENTS

SHARING GOD’S BIG STORY

We believe that with every new generation, it is essential for the church to examine its effectiveness in delivering truth because, while the truth never changes, the method of delivery must change over time. We believe this is especially true in how we share the message of the Gospel and tell the story of God. Below is a resource that will help you communicate the Gospel in a way that inspires and connects with this generation of students.

The best method of sharing the Gospel is based on the idea of God’s Big Story: the story of creation, the fall of man, and God’s offer and promise of salvation and redemption. Too often, our former methods of sharing Jesus have often been guilty of communicating only a small part of Jesus’ message (like how to get to heaven and avoid hell). But by telling students about God’s Big Story, we hope to better capture their imaginations and hearts, while presenting Jesus’ message more fully and relevantly.

G O D  created us to be with Him.
O U R  sins separate us from God.
S I N S  cannot be removed by good deeds.
P A Y I N G  the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again.
E V E R Y O N E  who trusts in Him alone has eternal life.
L I F E  with Jesus starts now and lasts forever.
WAYS TO SERVE IN STUDENT MINISTRY

GUEST SERVICES

WHAT:
First impressions are a HUGE component of our student ministry. We desire to create a culture of kindness and acceptance that starts with you. Guest Services is exactly what’s found in the name; being a friendly face and a help to everyone who walks in the doors. This area of our ministry could range from check-in to parking to new student care.

QUALIFICATIONS:
- Be a follower of Jesus in a growing relationship with Him
- Lead a lifestyle that is committed to Biblical standards
- Background check and application is required

EXPECTATIONS:
- Attend M12/H12 each week
- 1-2 per week, or bi-weekly
- Every leader is a greeter
- Spend one full school year serving in student ministry
- Attend volunteer leader retreat each year (in August)
- Attend training events & leader meetings

BENEFITS:
- FUN! FUN! FUN!
- Opportunity to connect with students every single week
- Being a consistent adult in the lives of students

win:
- New and attending students & families feeling welcomed each week
- Having accurate information so we are able to follow up with every family
- Students feeling safe at all times
CONNECTIONS GROUP LEADER

The foundation to any ministry, especially with students is relationships. As a result, a Connection Group Leader is a VERY important piece to our ministry as they incorporate an element of FUN and FRIENDSHIP to the student ministry weekly environments. It’s extremely important for students to feel that they belong and are accepted no matter who they are, where they come from, or what they’ve done. Connection Group Leaders help to make that happen!

QUALIFICATIONS:
- Be a follower of Jesus in a growing relationship with Him
- Be passionate about students and about their relationship with Jesus
- Lead a lifestyle that is committed to Biblical standards
- Have a strong desire to share life each week with students
- Background check and application is required

expectations:
- Attend M12/H12 each week
- 2-3 hours per week
- Every leader is a greeter
- Spend one full school year serving in student ministry
- Connect with your students OUTSIDE of church
- Challenge students to join a Life Group…when they’re ready
- Attend events for students and volunteer leaders throughout the year
- Practice safety and healthy boundaries with students at all times.
- Attend volunteer leader retreat each year (in August)
- Attend training events
- Commit to praying for one school campus during this school year

benefits:
- FUN! FUN! FUN!
- Opportunity to connect with students every single week
- Being a consistent adult in the lives of students

win:
- Knowing students by name
- Students knowing they have an adult praying for them
- Students coming to an understanding that their school is a mission field for them every single day
LIFE GROUP LEADER

Life Group Leaders carry out the discipleship component of our student ministry. These small groups serve to instill love, encouragement, wisdom, and support for students through the avenues of Bible study, community, and prayer. These leaders are committed to help students engage in a growing relationship with God and further discover the story He wants to tell in and through their lives.

QUALIFICATIONS:
- A follower of Jesus and growing in a relationship with Him
- Passionate about students and their relationship with Jesus
- Committed to being a consistent voice in the lives of students for God’s glory.
- Lead a lifestyle that is committed to Biblical standards.
- Background check and application required.

expectations:
- Attend M12/H12 each week
- 3-5 hours per week for study and Life Group meeting
- Every leader is a greeter
- Commit to one full school year of Life Group leadership
- Connect with Life Group student regularly outside of church environments
- Be a discussion facilitator (not a classroom teacher)
- Come to Life Group prepared and prayed up each week
- Attend events for students and leaders throughout the year
- Practice safety and healthy boundaries with students at all times
- Attend Leader Retreat each year (August)
- Commit to pray consistently for your Life Group and their school campuses during the school year.

benefits:
- A ridiculous amount of fun!
- A powerful opportunity to make an eternal Kingdom impact in the lives of students and their families.
- Life-long influence in the lives of the student and families within the student ministry.

win:
- Students growing in their knowledge of the Word and in their relationship with God
- Students being mentored and spiritually encouraged on a weekly basis.
POLICIES

SAFETY

1. ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS

WITH OPPOSITE GENDER STUDENT

- Leaders are never to be alone with a student of the opposite sex.
- Students expressing the need to talk should be encouraged to talk to a leader of the same gender. The conversation must be in a ministry setting, maintaining appropriate physical touch (see below) and language at all times.
- When necessary, phone calls, emails, texts, etc. are for informational purposes ONLY!
- If a student of the opposite gender is last to leave an event, ask another leader (of the same gender) to stay with you until they are picked up.

WITH SAME GENDER STUDENT

- A leader must have parental consent to spend one-on-one time with a student. Make an attempt to greet the parents and remind them pick-up and drop off times. *Remember, partnering with parents is necessary!

2. GROUP INTERACTIONS

- Must have parental consent for students to participate in a group activity.
- Inform a student ministry staff member by email or phone within 24 hours of any activities.
- Student must stay with leader at all times.

3. PHYSICAL TOUCH

- Physical touch is important in developing trusting relationships.
- ALWAYS lean toward cautious, strict boundaries when interacting with students, especially of the opposite gender.
- Stick to “the basics” – high fives, handshakes, fist pumps, and side hugs.
- Physical touch should take place in public settings, never in private.
- Use careful judgment to determine a student’s motives for your lunch.

4. STUDENT PRIVACY

- Any personal information about students or parents/guardians should not be shared with anyone outside of the student ministry staff.

5. ATTENDANCE

- Students must remain in the designated areas until the student event is completed.
EMERGENCY

1. INCLEMENT WEATHER
   - Any type of cancellation will be reported via our Facebook page or email. The church office is a helpful resource during normal business hours (678-990-8100).

2. INJURIES
   - In the case of an injury, notify a student ministry staff member ASAP
   - First Aid kits are available on church property when needed.
   - Call 911 immediately if an injury is life threatening.

3. FIRE
   - In the case of a fire or fire alarm, all volunteer leaders are to immediately help evacuate students from the building as instructed.

CRISIS

1. A CRISIS IS WHEN ...
   - A student informs you of any physical harm or plans of physical harm. (Ex. Suicide, drug abuse, self-injury).
   - A student informs you of physical, emotional or sexual abuse (See Sandusky Rule below).
   - You suspect a student is being abused physically, emotionally, or sexually.
   - You suspect a student may be in danger.

*In any of the above situations try to get clear information (i.e. name(s) of people involved, plans, place, and date)

2. HANDLING A CRISIS SITUATION:
   - Notify a student ministry staff member immediately should any crisis (past, present, or future) arises. Situations must be documented and reported within 24 hours.
   - Always take students seriously. Assume they are telling the truth and respond accordingly.
   - NEVER make promises of confidentiality to students. Do not agree to keep secrets from parents, pastors, and/or authorities.
   - If anyone is or suspected to be in immediate danger, call 911 immediately.

*SANDUSKY RULE:
We are now required by law to report immediately (within 24-48 hours) any type of physical or sexual abuse of a student. In ANY case of this you must take this seriously and report it immediately. Failure to report this can result in going to jail for up to one year.
DISCIPLINING AND CONFRONTATION

IF A STUDENT’S BEHAVIOR IS DISRUPTIVE, TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

1. Discuss the student’s behavior one-on-one and encourage better choices. If the behavior persists, follow step 2.
2. Discuss the student’s behavior with another leader present, preferably a staff member when applicable. Out of love, explain if the behavior persists, disciplinary actions will follow. If behavior still persists, inform the student ministry staff.
3. Disciplinary actions will be taken at the discretion of the student ministry staff.

**QUICK METHOD:**

1. Request – simply request the student to no longer do what he/she is doing.
2. Reseat – simply ask them to move closer to you where you can keep a closer eye on them.
3. Remove – simply ask the student to leave your group for the remainder of the time allotted.

CONFRONTING STUDENTS

You CANNOT do ministry without CONFRONTATION
– Jude 23 & James 5:19-20

BIBLICAL STEPS TO CONFRONTING STUDENTS:

1. Pray - Philippians 4:6
2. Do it privately - Matthew 18:15
3. Speak the truth in love - Ephesians 4:15
4. Restore them gently - Philippians 4:5

tips:

- Don’t manipulate.
- Use Scripture. Don’t tell them what you think, tell them what God thinks.
  - God’s love: Romans 8:30-31; 1 John 3:1-3; Psalm 103:11
  - Repentance & Confession: Psalm 51; 1 John 1:9; Acts 3:19
  - God’s forgiveness: Psalm 139:12-15
  - Struggling with sin: Romans 7:4-8:1
  - God’s desire for our lives: Jeremiah 29:11
  - Stop loving the world: 1 John 2:15-17
- Develop action steps (Acts 26:20)
- Follow up
CODE OF CONDUCT

WORK HARD

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men...” - Colossians 3:23

Everything you do, do it to the best of your ability. Show up on time. Give it your all. Be faithful with the responsibilities entrusted to you. Remember, you are directly impacting the Body of Christ and the Kingdom of God, so glorify God in your work!

BE KIND

“Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.”
- 1 Thessalonians 5:13-15

Ministry is all about people – so to be effective in ministry, you’ll need to reflect God’s heart for people. With students, parents, other volunteer leaders, and the staff, always treat others with gentleness, forgiveness, patience, kindness, and love.

BE LIKE JESUS

“watch what God does, and then do it, like children who learn proper behavior from their parents.” - Ephesians 5:1

Leaders, students are watching you. Because of your role here in our student ministry, your words, choices, and relationship with God will be carefully observed and replicated by the students that you influence. While we don’t expect you to be perfect by any means, we do expect you to strive to make wise decisions and to glorify God with your life and your choices – in other words, our desire which we ask you to practice the utmost degree of wisdom, discretion, and holiness...

activity, pornography, and any kind of sexual impurity (1 Corinthians 6:18-20)

we do expect for you to exercise wisdom and restraint, understanding that our personal freedom (Romans 14, 1 Timothy 5:3). No student ministry volunteer leader may consume alcohol on the 12Stone® campus, at any student ministry event, or in the presence of any students at any time. Drug and underage alcohol is never acceptable.

presence that is above reproach. Here is a tip; if the parent of a 5th grader wouldn’t want their child to see something that you’ve posted, this it’s inappropriate.

ministry volunteer leaders are expected to strive to look like Jesus by exhibiting humble, teachable spirits, particularly in the midst of conflict or correction, at all times. Remember – this is not a place for gossip
PROPER BEHAVIOR

MOVIES:
- Do not show or see “R” rated movies with a student unless approved. (PG is the way to go!)
- Check out www.screnmit.com and www.imdb.com to see what is in the movie.
- If you are unsure about the content – do not watch it. It’s that simple.
- Use smart judgment (if you don’t have it, ask someone who does)

PRANKS:
- If you don’t have ALL the parents’ permission, then don’t do the prank!
- If it is done to be mean, or could be perceived as such- DON’T!
- No damage (don’t ruin paint, kill grass, destroy property or clothing, etc.)
- No one is allowed out of a host home or event location after 12am.
- Don’t steal things (i.e. yard signs, bird baths, garden gnomes, etc.).
- Be original! - Put toilet paper to death, its lame! 😊

COMMUNICATION:
- Texting and email conversations need to be brief, informational, and able to be documented.
- There should be absolutely NO pictures or “selfies” sent between a student and a leader. As mentioned before, always act with caution and extreme boundaries.

HOUSES:
- No guy/girl mix overnighters!
- Don’t go back out once you are in for the night

CARS:
- Seat belts for everyone-double check!
- Must have parents’ permission for a student to ride with another student (we want adults driving)
- Don’t be an idiot (i.e. racing, swerving, yelling at others, Chinese fire drills, etc.)

CAMPS AND RETREATS:
- Curfews and “lights out” times are to be adhered to without exception
- Students caught sneaking out must be reported to the student ministry pastors or camp directors immediately
- Avoid being alone with a student of the opposite gender (if counseling is needed, find another leader of the same gender and a visible place to dialogue)

THE EVERYDAY STUFF:
- Over communicate with parents!! (Partnership to parents is key)
- Understand that your decisions not only affect your credibility, but also our ministry.
extras

CONNECTING POINTS

CONNECTION EXAMPLES: PHONE CALLS

EXAMPLE CALL TO A PARENT:
Hi, I’m a student ministry leader for the middle/high school ministry at 12Stone® Church. My name is… I am calling to introduce myself and to let you know that I will have your son/daughter in my Life Group. Each week, we will be sharing life together by reading and studying Scripture, talking about how Scripture relates to their lives, and of course having fun while doing those things. I am honored to have the opportunity to serve your family this school year and I look forward to seeing how God will work in and through your son/daughter.

EXAMPLE TO STUDENTS:
Hi, my name is… I am calling to invite you to M12/H12 this coming week. It will be a fun time and you do not want to miss it! I want to encourage you to bring a friend and hope to see you this Wednesday/Thursday at 12Stone®. I am excited to meet you in person and I think you will love it once you come! Thanks for letting me talk with you! See you soon!

OTHER COMMUNICATION
connect through email & phone
GET CONNECTED WITH THEM THROUGH social media (facebook, twitter, etc.)
write them a letter or postcard
visit them at school
  • Be sure to get permission from the school leadership
  • Be familiar with school’s visiting policy
WEB RESOURCES

MINISTRY SPECIFIC:

- Connect with the Social Media outlets from your 12Stone® Campus.
- 12stone.com/news

TO HELP ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM STUDENTS:

- Carm.org – Christian Apologetics Research Ministry
- Equip.org – The Bible Answer Man

STUDY TOOLS:

- Blueletterbible.com
- Biblegateway.com
- Youversion.com

OTHERS TO TAKE A LOOK AT:

- Focusonthefamily.com
- Dontclimbalone.com
- Dare2share.org
- Youthministry.com
- Everyschool.com
- Youthspecialties.com
- Navpress.com
YOUR COMMITMENT

My name is ____________________________________ and I want to serve in student ministry at 12Stone® Church. I promise to be faithful to my role in the student ministry for the 2013-2014 school year, or longer if God leads me. If I need to step down from my leadership position, I promise to keep the student ministry staff informed and give them as much notice as I possibly can.

I promise that I’ve read through this volunteer leader guide, understand everything that I’ve learned about the purpose and mission of student ministry at 12Stone®, and will support the vision and leadership of the student ministry staff.

I’ve read to code of conduct and I promise to live by it. If I mess up, I promise to be honest with the student ministry staff about my actions for the well-being of the students that I am influencing. I will accept whatever consequences the student ministry deems reasonable and necessary.

I also understand that, if I do need to be corrected for my actions, the student ministry staff is committed to treating me with love and grace throughout the entire process, but must ultimately act in the best interest of the students and their spiritual growth.

I understand the expectations and requirements for my role as a volunteer leader, and I promise to work hard to fulfill all of them.

I promise to work hard, be kind, be like Jesus, and have LOTS OF FUN this year!!

SIGN & DATE: _____________________________________________________