



CFG YOUTH PARENT HANDBOOK

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CFG YOUTH HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

What is CFG YOUTH?

CFG Youth is the Youth Ministry Department of Calgary Full Gospel Church. CFG Church believes in our young people. Our goal is to empower these young disciples to do more, go further, and go faster than we ever could ourselves as they pursue the Kingdom of God. We are committed to creating a place of community, growth, and discipleship on our Friday night and Sunday morning gatherings. We believe in the next generation and know that they are worth pouring into in an intentional way.

There are three words that we believe in at CFG YOUTH:
Community. Consistency. Commitment.

These are three words we have taught our students time and time again, in fact we spent a full month teaching on these words. We try to create an environment where students can experience: community with peers and leaders, consistency from leaders who intentionally walk with them in life, and commitment to the teachings of Jesus and His work in Calgary and around the world today. Our goal is to build relationship with students through fun, games, and activities, so we can support them in a meaningful way when we dive into worship, the word, and walking out our faith in the real world.

What does that look like?

We offer a variety of programs throughout the year:

Friday Night Youth – 7:00pm-10pm at CFG Church

We meet every Friday (excluding July-August & major holidays). We welcome Junior High and High School to our Friday night gatherings (Grade 7-12). The first three Fridays of the month we meet at the church, spend some time hanging out together, have time of worship and preaching, and we end the night with an activity or game. The fourth Friday of the month we do a big activity for the whole gathering time either at CFG or at a special location (i.e. Bowling Alley).

Sunday Morning – During the Adult Service

We run youth classes every other Sunday after worship. Youth are released during announcements and sent to the youth room or Grace Hall. Youth classes are designed to be interactive and seek to dive into the Bible as much as possible.

The first Sunday of the month we run a "Breakfast Sunday" where the leaders cook breakfast for students, and we all eat together in Grace Hall. The third Sunday of the month is our youth class in the youth room. On the second and fourth Sundays we encourage students to get involved by serving somewhere in the church.

Events and Trips

CFG Youth also participates in a number of different events and outings throughout the year. We do monthly outings/big events on the last Friday of the month. We also participate in a number of conferences and city wide rallies throughout the year, youth conferences in Alberta and Saskatchewan, and other events. Finally, we often participate in youth missions programs and camps in the summer. Information on summer programs will be made available by the spring of that year or earlier if an international mission is in the works.

ACADEMICS AND STRUCTURE

CFG Youth follows the teachings/doctrine of CFG Church and the ACOP Canada (the fellowship we are associated with) in our programs. However, we do write our own curriculum and use our youth leaders and junior leaders as our primary teachers.

During our normal Friday Programming and Sunday Youth class, you can expect a combination of worship, word, and small groups. We believe that all three of these elements are essential pieces of our mission and vision for how we equip and empower youth. We believe it is important to pair teaching with discussion, action, and experience. Throughout the year we will also give students outreach and ministry opportunities where they can put what they have learned into practice.

A typical Friday night (non-outing) will follow this structure:

7:00-7:30pm hang out, play games, & eat snacks

7:30-8:30pm worship, word, & small groups

8:30-10:00pm activity for the night (i.e. MasterChef, action games night, etc.)

There are three words that make up the academic/teaching strategy at CFG Youth:

BE (Relationship - God) What does God/Jesus/the Bible say about this?

BECOME (Identity - Self) What does this mean for us?

DO (Action/Service - World) How do we respond?

Each year we choose an overarching topic that the youth leaders pray into and discuss with each other and CFG pastoral staff. We then choose topics for each month that fit into the overarching theme, or topics we feel are important for the discipleship of the students that year. Examples of topics include: prayer, worship, relationships, Bible studies, holiness, etc.

On Fridays, we go over the monthly topic. We cover it based on the three words that define our teachings. For example, if we cover prayer it may look something like this:

Friday Nights

Week 1: What is prayer? What does Jesus say about prayer? (be)

Week 2: What ways does the Bible teaches us to pray and how can we use these? (become)

Week 3: How do we pray for others? How do we pray intentionally as a youth group? (do)

Week 4: Outing

If there is a fifth Friday in a month, we use these to do worship nights, outreaches, or equipping nights where students can put their faith into action (i.e. prophecy, prayer, etc.)

Sunday mornings follow the monthly topics; however, we have more frequent guest speakers and one-off teachings for Sunday mornings. We often run Sundays as Bible studies using the Disciple Making Movement and Discovery Bible Study method (see the Discovery Bible Study app for more information).

We work hard to make sure that everything we talk about and every topic we cover circles back to the person and life of Jesus. Although there is flexibility in this model, this is the general structure we use to build CFG Youth academics, teachings, and events.

YOUTH LEADERS & SAFETY POLICIES

We take our job working with teenagers seriously, and we realize that although our students are on their way to adulthood, they are still minors. We also take our relationship with parents seriously – we know you are trusting us with your children, and we want to honour the trust you are giving us. As a result, we have a number of safety procedures in place for students and in vetting our leaders.

Youth Leaders

Our youth leaders must be over the age of 18 and must attend CFG for at least six months (unless another organization working with minors can speak to their experience prior to CFG). Additionally, youth leaders must show a commitment to their faith, show a high level of responsibility, and demonstrate good character.

All youth leaders are required to go through the following process before they are accepted as trusted volunteers:

1. Submit an application
2. Provide an interview
3. Provide a Criminal Record Check with a Vulnerable Sector Check
4. Provide two references
5. Take CFG Youth Protection Plan training
6. Participate in general youth leader training
7. Sign the waiver/the CFG Youth Code of Conduct.

Our leaders are vetted and trained to ensure we do our due diligence to protect any youth that attend CFG Youth programming. We always have a minimum of two fully vetted youth leaders at all of our events; however, we aim for at least 4-5 leaders minimum at bigger events such as Friday Night youth group. Any guests over the age of 18 are not put in a position of trust or allowed to interact with youth alone and are identified with visitors' tags (for example if we have someone come guest speak).

Safety Procedures/Policies

We have a number of safety procedures and policies at CFG Youth. Firstly, we ensure that **attendance** is taken at any Friday night program, overnight event, or outing. We keep both youth leader and student attendance on file in our church filing system.

Youth must fill out an **intake form**. This ensures we have emergency contact information and medical (allergy) information in case of an emergency. We then send students home with a registration sheet to take to their parents. If parents bring youth into their first youth event, we have the parents sign the youth registration sheet instead of sending it home.

We have a **youth registration sheet** with guardian contact information and pertinent information about the student on the sheet that parents/guardians fill out and return to us. We also have a **CFG Youth liability form** attached to the registration package. These are sent home with students from the program.

Finally, youth must remain with the CFG Youth Leadership team for the duration of the event. If students leave without informing a parent, we will inform the parent before they are allowed to return to the event.

Building Security

We are aware that we are a downtown church and that comes with its own set of security and safety challenges. As a result, we have the following procedures in place for security.

Although the church is unlocked during Sunday morning services and youth classes, there are welcome team members and security personnel located at the doors to ensure the safety of those inside. Additionally, we encourage students to stay within the sight of their parents unless participating in youth class where there are at least two vetted leaders present at all times, or their parents have given them permission to move around the church. We do not offer any programs/supervision for youth outside of youth class and youth breakfasts on Sunday mornings due to parents being close by as well as multiple CFG volunteer personnel, ushers, security personnel, and staff roaming the building.

The church remains fully locked for the entirety of Friday Night Youth events. No one can enter the building without one of the youth leaders letting them in via the doorbell phone system or physically opening the doors. Our two main entrances have glass doors that allow us to ensure we know the person coming in before letting them in the building. Additionally, the doorbell system connects to the church phones and leaders ask who they are letting in before letting anyone in the building. The Youth Director's phone number is also posted on the two main doors in case someone is not able to get in via the doorbell. Finally, we have a youth leader in the lobby watching to let people in from 6:45-7:30 pm. Unknown adults are not allowed into the building during Friday Night Youth and there is no way to gain entry to the building without being let in by a youth leader. We have leaders periodically do a head count of students to make sure everyone is accounted for based on the sign in sheet/attendance sheet that everyone is required to sign upon arrival. Additionally, any new youth are asked to fill out an intake form (or registration form if their parents accompany them inside) so that we can keep them safe and we are informed of any needs they may have during youth. We also ask students not to let anyone into the building without leaders present to make sure the person is known to the youth group. Finally, if we leave the church to go into the community there are leaders present with every student as well as multiple students in each group to ensure their safety and supervision.

Transportation & Overnight Forms

For any events where students travel in a vehicle with youth leaders, we require a transportation form signed by a parent for each student or written permission. If students are coming to an overnight retreat, conference, or event, there is an added overnight information/liability section added to the transportation form. Transportation and overnight forms serve a dual purpose: first, they ensure that parents are informed of event details and supervision information. Secondly, they act as an additional liability shield. Please ask the Youth Director to see a copy of our transportation or overnight forms.

Medication Information Sheet

Although allergies and medical concerns are disclosed on the youth registration form, in our weekly programming we do not help students with medication. Instead we work to prevent any potential dangers to students (i.e. food allergies) and inform any EMS staff of medical concerns if they are called. However, during overnight events and trips, leaders play a more active role in safeguarding the health of students. As a result, we ask that any students on medication have their parents fill out a medication information sheet letting leaders know if the student can self-administer medication or if the student will need leader assistance.

Additionally, the medication sheet helps leaders communicate the needs of students to any health care professionals in the event of an emergency.

Incident and Accident Reports

We have two different types of report forms at CFG Youth to ensure we are doing our part to safeguard students and communicate effectively to parents and the leadership of CFG Church. If you would like to see a template of the forms, please contact the Youth Director.

Accident Report Forms: Accident Reports are filled out whenever there is an accident during the night such as an injury, property damage, unexpected illness, etc. This form is often presented to and signed by parents and/or CFG Staff members so that there is transparency on what happened and how the situation was handled.

Incident Report Forms: These forms are filled out in the instance that an issue of abuse is disclosed, there is concern about self-harm, or other issues that need to be addressed but in a more private setting. Incident Report forms help us ensure that we are following Canadian law in our conduct with minors and that we are taking the safety and well-being of students in our care seriously.

Code of Conduct

We have a code of conduct that our leaders must sign as part of the leadership application process. Please ask the Youth Director for a copy of the leader Code of Conduct if you would like to read it over.

For students we ask that the following rules are followed:

1. Students cannot leave a program alone without explanation or permission and come back again unless parents are called and informed about the student's absence
2. Bullying will not be tolerated at CFG Youth in any form and any student or leader bullying another attendee will be asked to stop. If bullying persists, that student will be sent home and a meeting with the Youth Director must occur in order for the student to return to youth.
3. Youth attendees are expected to respect the leaders in place and the instructions they give. Failure to do so may result in the student being sent home from the event.
4. Any student that comes to youth extremely sick, intoxicated, or under the influence of substances will not be admitted into the program and the parents will be contacted.

Protection Plan

CFG Church has a Protection Plan for Minors that dictates all the policies and procedures for CFG Youth and CFG Kids. The Protection Plan covers abuse prevention, detection, and reporting; leadership training requirements; ministry procedures (program admittance, overnight, proper displays of affection, discipline/management, and communication); and more. All of our leaders are trained using the Protection Plan and receive refresher training throughout their time in leadership. CFG Staff review the Protection Plan on a regular basis in case any updates or changes need to be made. The CFG Protection Plan follows Canadian law regarding minors and complies with church insurance standards. For a copy of the CFG Church Protection Plan, please reach out to the Youth Director.

COMMUNICATION AND CONTACT

We understand that communication with parents and students is an important part of what we do. Therefore, we have a number of ways we communicate information about youth:

1. **A weekly text** is sent out using a group messaging service – please reach out to the Youth Director to enroll in this service and receive weekly youth updates
2. **An email** is sent out weekly using MailChimp – please reach out to the Youth Director to enroll in this service and receive weekly youth updates
3. CFG Youth has an **Instagram** page (@cfgyouth) where we post about youth events
4. The **CFG Church weekly email** details youth events under the youth section

We also announce events for the following week during announcements on Friday and Sunday youth events. An overview of youth information, including these communication forms can be found in a youth handout kept at the CFG Church Information desk. General information about CFG Youth can also be found at www.cfg.church/youth.

For one-on-one contact, leaders are given the freedom to give out their number or keep it private unless there are the main contact for parents at an event. However, the phone number and email of the Youth Director is available to all parents and students for general communication and information. Please email office@cfg.church to get the most recent email and phone number for the Youth Director.

Leaders who choose to participate in mentorship may contact specific students that they are directly discipling. However, all communication with these students must follow the CFG Protection Plan Communication Guidelines and must not violate the guidelines/request of parents.

MISSION AND VISION

Mission

Our mission at CFG Youth is to empower youth to become disciples of Christ who seek out the scriptures, the gifts of the spirit, and their unique calling in the Kingdom of God. We do this through creating community, running youth services, providing worship, teaching, and small group opportunities for students, teaching Biblical based classes, and partnering with other youth ministry organizations.

Vision

Our vision is to create a youth ministry that provides the following:

1. A safe space for students to explore their faith
2. Leaders who will walk with students and disciple them intentionally
3. Leadership opportunities for students that allow them to put their gifts into practice
4. Biblical based teaching that sets students up to know their truth of what they believe
5. Practical outreach and ministry opportunities so that students can make their faith their own
6. Community that students can stand on and depend on through their teenage years

Finally, as stated in the *What is CFG Youth* section, we follow the three Cs: Community, Consistency, and Commitment. These are the goals of our youth leaders and values that we aim to teach our students.

For more information on the year to year vision and mission of CFG Youth please reach out to the Youth Director. We will also follow the general mission and vision statements of CFG Church as we are part of a body of believers, not just one ministry operating alone.

FAQ

What is the cost of CFG Youth?

Our weekly programs are free for any student that wants to attend!! However, certain events and conferences will cost money. There is not a set cost for events. It varies based on the location, details, and length of the event. The Youth Pastor/Director will send out the cost and details of the event with significant lead time so that families, parents, and students can make informed decisions. There may also be financial assistance for students who need help in order to attend a certain event/conference.

How do you choose leaders?

Please see the section on youth leaders and safety policies in this booklet for more information.

What denomination are you?

Although we are technically a non-denominational church, we are part of the Apostolic Church of Pentecost fellowship and stand behind the fellowship's statement of faith, practices, and beliefs. You can find out more about ACOP at www.acop.ca.

What do you believe in?

You can see what we believe and what we stand for by reading the ACOP statement of faith at www.acop.ca.