

West Stephentown
Baptist Church

Policy Manual

Prohibited Conduct for those
Children under 13 years of age in
Sunday School, AWANA, VBS, or
any other Youth Activity

Initial Issue – December 2021

West Stephentown Baptist Church – FOR TEENAGERS

Prohibited Conduct for Sunday School, AWANA, VBS, or any Youth Activity

A. Prohibited Conduct. Prohibited conduct includes what is specifically listed as prohibited as well as any others that the administration (Pastor & the specific youth ministry leader) considers disruptive in nature. Disruptive behaviors, attitudes, and actions may include those that while not clearly prohibited in this policy sheet are nevertheless harmful to the ministry, individuals affiliated with the ministry, or others, or are out of sync with the spirit of the church's mission or statement of faith, as determined by the administration.

Attitudes, actions, and behaviors deemed by the administration to be disruptive in nature to the learning and/or spiritual environment of the youth ministry program at West Stephentown Baptist Church will not be tolerated and will be disciplined, up to and including termination of participation, at the discretion of the administration.

The following conduct is unacceptable:

- a. Deception, cheating, and stealing are unacceptable
- b. Property vandalism or littering—parents will be responsible to pay for damages students cause to buildings, furniture, grounds, or fixtures
- c. Inappropriate communication with staff members/teachers such as initiating or responding to social media messages or invitations, text messages, chat rooms, discussion sites, instant messages, or other digital or electronic communications other than through church-authorized communication methods
- d. Language—not only is cursing and using the Lord's name in vain prohibited but so are vulgar and slang expressions, which are also offensive
- e. Substance abuse—use of alcohol, illegal drugs, misuse of legal drugs including; consuming marijuana and any other by-products containing delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and/or cannabinoids on the church campus, cigarettes and vaping

- f. Sexual activity and expression (see next section for more on this issue)
- g. Ungodly attitudes, including disrespect toward authority, sarcasm, arguing, complaining, gossiping, jealousy, etc.
- h. Intimidation/harassment/bullying/cyberbullying —This includes but is not limited to verbally (name calling, spreading rumors, sending inappropriate—violent, sexual, malicious—notes, pictures, texts, etc.); physically (shoving, hitting, spitting, damaging or stealing property, etc.); and psychologically (acts intended to create a sense of fear or anxiety)

Cyberbullying is the use of electronic information and communication devices, whether personal or church-owned, to willfully and repeatedly harm a person(s) through electronic mediums, create a hostile environment for the victim, or materially or substantially disrupt the educational process or orderly operation of any ministry to youth, as determined by the administration.

Examples of the kind of conduct that is unacceptable and will not be tolerated include but are not limited to:

1. sending false, cruel, vicious messages, including name-calling messages, or spreading rumors electronically
2. sending inappropriate (violent or suggested violence, sexually explicit, harassing, etc.) messages, pictures, or texts
3. creating websites that have stories, cartoons, pictures, and jokes ridiculing others
4. breaking into an email account and sending vicious or embarrassing materials to others
5. engaging someone in electronic communication, tricking that person into revealing sensitive personal information, and providing that information to others
6. Posting student pictures without their permission.

The online activities and technologies governed by this policy include but are not limited to social networking sites, chat rooms and discussion groups, instant

messages, text messages, computers, tablets, cell phones and other personal digital devices, digital cameras, cell phone cameras, and web cams. As new technologies emerge, they too may be included with the above forms of electronic communication. Violations of these standards are determined solely at the discretion of the administration.

B. Physical Contact. Youth ministry participants must remain above reproach in their physical contact with each other and should seek to bring honor to God in their relationships. Demonstration of romantic involvement by inappropriate displays of affection between youth ministry participants on church property is not permitted.

C. Sexual Activity/Expression. Given the rapid escalation in our culture of “acceptable” sexual activity and expression, it is imperative that Christian youth ministries address the issue of sexual activity and expression in their code of conduct.

In keeping with the ministry’s statement of faith, immoral conduct, either on or off campus, will not be tolerated. The Bible strictly forbids such conduct, which includes immoral actions as well as advocating for such behavior. Any immoral acts or statements of immoral acts will not be tolerated in any form and will constitute grounds for dismissal. (Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8–9; Lev. 18:1–30; Rom. 1:26–29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1–8; Heb. 13:4).

The term “immoral act” is defined as bodily contact, actively undertaken or passively permitted, between members of the opposite sex or members of the same sex for the purpose of satisfying sexual desires and any bodily contact that a reasonable person would understand to demonstrate a propensity or intent to engage in a sexually immoral act. This includes viewing pornographic material on or away from the church campus.

The term “statements of immoral acts” is one in which a student, volunteer or employee does any of the following: engages in speech regarding sexual immorality; claims he or she is homosexual, bisexual, transgender, or otherwise identifies as being sexually immoral under biblical Christian standards; or uses words, language, or behavior, including by dress or other appearance or online activity, that, in the discretion of the church, would indicate an intention to convey

the impression that the person engages in, advocates for, or approves of behavior or identity that is immoral under biblical Christian standards.

Homosexual or transgender conduct, defined as acts or identifying statements, is incompatible with enrollment or attendance at any Christian youth ministry at West Stephentown Baptist Church and is a basis for dismissal. All students, however, must be treated with dignity and respect, free of threats or harassment.

Compliance Agreement

I have read and understood all of items A through C in their entirety and will agree to have my child comply with these policies.

A.		
	Student Name/ Parent Signature	Date

B.		
	Student Name/ Parent Signature	Date

C.		
	Student Name/ Parent Signature	Date

“I understand that West Stephentown Baptist Church desires a strong relationship with parents of its youth. I also understand my child’s enrollment and/or attendance at West Stephentown Baptist Church youth ministry activities is contingent upon his/her compliance with the behavioral expectations set forth in this policy. Any deviations may result in my child being asked not to attend certain activities or services, either temporarily or permanently.”

Parent Signature	Date

Reviewed with	
	Date