

# Fuse Box Youth Ministries | Youth Volunteer Guidelines

## Introduction



Thank you for being a part of changing lives of the youth here at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront. We have a very unique ministry. The Fuse Box has touched people’s lives of all ages, races, social backgrounds, income levels, and life experiences.

Our Youth Volunteers need to follow the expectations outlined in the **Volunteer Handbook** of The Beach Church, as well as thoroughly read these guidelines in detail. **Youth Mémoires** are provided throughout to convince you of the real life need for specific structures—all of them are true stories from The Fuse Box’s original founder. Hopefully you will find the antidotes as interesting as they are frightening.

### Volunteer Eligibility:

**Volunteer Staff Eligibility Chart**

	Elem Student	MS Student	HS Student	Adult
Kid’s Events	X	X	Yes	Yes
Middle School Events	X	X	X	Yes*
High School Events	X	X	X	Yes*

\*Adult Volunteers must be at least one year removed from High School in these positions. All adult volunteers are strongly encouraged to be seeking active membership with The Beach Church.

**How to Start:** Volunteer Applications are available from the Youth Director’s office or online at [www.thefusebox.org](http://www.thefusebox.org) for download. If there is a need and you are accepted, we will have a trial run allowing you to see what youth night is like. You will need to provide information for a legal background check. Once you’ve been approved, your name will appear on the monthly Youth Volunteer Schedule. This is usually posted on the board downstairs in the hallway and also sent electronically.

**The Benefits:** Before we get into the long list of rules, regulations, and training about being a youth volunteer (and yes volunteer means you work for *free*), we want to encourage you with the benefits that await you:

1. You will be fulfilling Christ’s command to go and make disciples; a major key to your Christian walk.
2. You’ll develop mentor skills and have kid’s looking up to you for advice; eventually these students will grow up to be great personal friends.
3. It’s extremely satisfying to feel that you’re leaving lasting impressions on people’s lives. The future positive feedback (usually coming from grown up adult versions of the kids you once knew) is more than enough repayment.
4. It’s just plain fun! There are honestly too many benefits to count—but just remember: seeds can take a while to grow. You might not see the difference immediately.



## Safety is Priority

Safety is defined here as emotional, physical, and spiritual safety. It can also keep you and the church from being sued. We write this with the assumption that you don't look good in stripes.

### Student's Safety

**Emotional Safety:** We're dealing with students who are in mid-discovery about their faith and values. It's an age where students are extremely moldable—for the good *and* for the bad. We must present ourselves blameless and as Christ-like as possible so that we don't lead them astray. Mixed messages (as well as loose lips) sink ships. Their view of Christianity will, most often, be solely based on their interaction with their parents and their church volunteer staff. A bad experience with volunteer staff can wreck them for life.



**Youth Mémoire #1:** *“One time 15 year old Bobby went to Sunday School. He was a very shy boy who didn't have many friends. When the volunteer Sunday School teacher asked Bobby a question, and he didn't immediately answer. The teacher threw a crayon at Bobby to ‘get his attention’ and hit him in the head. All the students laughed at him. The volunteer didn't later talk to Bobby or apologize. That was the last day Bobby went to church. Thirty years later and he's still not returned.”*



**Physical Safety:** Not only do we need to be concerned about emotional safety, we need to be concerned about physical safety. When students arrive in our youth facility, we are in charge of their physical safety as well. If they are doing something which could be potentially dangerous, we need to put a stop to it. We're also in charge of regulating their interactions with each other (hitting, kicking, 'play' fighting). What to do if a student gets upset and walks out? It's still our responsibility to see that they make it home safely.



**Youth Mémoire #2:** *“Suzie got totally upset and thought that everyone hated her. The game was dodge ball and she was always the first out. A few of the students started getting tired of Suzie's complaining, so they beamed her with the ball. Suzie got extremely upset and disappeared. We later learned that she was on her way home, walking. Since we have a responsibility for Suzie's safety until she reaches that front door—a volunteer chased her down in a car. Suzie refused to get in the car, so the volunteer called the parents, threw on the hazard lights, and followed her clear back home; going about 3mph down Virginia Beach Boulevard. That's the extreme we have to take it to.”*

**Spiritual Safety:** We need to make sure that any advice we give lines up with biblical standards. If you can't reference any bible reasoning behind your teaching, it may be wrong. Presenting a false gospel is the most damage a youth volunteer can do. Please see **Lesson Planning** on page 14.

## Parent's Safety

We're not responsible for parent's safety in the classical sense of the idea; we are responsible for keeping safe their children's respect and love for them. Many peers will tell each other to blow off their parents, but we are in the business of healing relationships. As a youth volunteer, it can be sometimes difficult to gauge the proper actions or precautions to take with different family's ideals and expectations of the church. We at The Fuse Box must be aware of this and always remember that the ministry is not here to replace the family, but to support biblical ideas at home in a partnership with parents.



The key to remember is this: "In the end, what the parents say and do goes" and to stoke a fire in children against their families will only cause parents to never allow you to see their kid again.



**Youth Mémoire #3:** *"Once I tried helping Bobby to stop doing illegal drugs. Bobby would sometimes stop when he felt convicted over it at church, but when Bobby went home his father was waiting to smoke it up with him. There was absolutely nothing I could do to change that fact, and telling a student that their parent is in the wrong is never an option. The better way was for the church to create a relationship with Bobby's father. I spent many evenings sitting around talking faith and beliefs with Bobby's father—billows of smoke and all—and it was honestly Bobby's only hope. Perhaps if we would have realized that this was the best approach sooner, we could have helped Bobby's father from enabling Bobby to become one of the top drug dealers in Virginia Beach."*

**Verbiage On Parents:** Yes, all humans fall short and have major character flaws, but parents should never ever be painted in the light of being the enemy. When a parent seems to have made a mistake, all we can say is "well, all fall short and mess up" or "your parents love you and want the best for you" or maybe even "they just might have trouble figuring out the way to show you that they love you". Be careful however, because 90% of the time the kids are giving you an altered version of the story. It's best to know both sides of any tale, but don't throw yourself in as the referee unless asked to do so by a parent.



**The Supporter:** One of the main tools we can be for parents is to be that "outside person" who backs them up. Sometimes youth just need to hear the same thing coming from someone else to realize that their parents aren't crazy. It's a partnership. Discuss these parental issues with the Youth Director. You might not be the best suited to deal with the situation, but perhaps the Family Pastor, Lead Pastor, another church member, or the Youth Director would be the best fit.

If something is truly gone awry at home that the parents aren't knowledgeable of, please see **Serious Issues** on page 15.

## Volunteer's Safety

Your own personal safety is to be the *most important* goal as a volunteer. Don't ever stick your neck out over the chopping block to try and help a student. The end of your life's ministry is not worth it. It's unbelievable the number of youth workers, volunteers, teachers, and coaches that get caught in rather compromising circumstances.

The key note is this: "It doesn't have to be true for it to ruin your life."



**Youth Mémoire #4:** *"Once I went to visit Miss Gail on her front porch in the trailer park. I got to be around the time that the Elementary Students would be getting off of the bus. I thought it would be a good opportunity to say hello and surprise them at the bus stop. I walked down the street to the front of the park, but the bus didn't get there at the time I thought it would. I paced around a little until it finally came. I waved 'hello' to the kids and then made my way back to Miss Gail's.*

*The next night, on Teen Night, one of the teenagers informed me that multiple people watching out the windows for their kids to get home noticed a strange man wandering around in the street whom they had never seen out there before. 'He must be a child molester!' claimed one uninformed parent, to which the teenager replied, 'That's Pastor Cris!...'"*



**Outward Appearance:** Appearance is important. It doesn't matter how close you are to a student or their family; you *must* take the proper precautions to protect yourself as outlined in these guidelines. We don't promote excessive legalism, but please be keenly aware that crossing certain boundaries may end up putting you and the entire church ministry in danger, "... for the LORD does not see as mortals see; *they* look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7. We need to be concerned with "they" because "they" are who we are reaching out to.

**Inward Appearance:** As stated above, only the Lord can see your heart. You're the only person in the entire world who knows where you are at spiritually, what your prayer life is like, and how often you spend meditating on the Lord's words.

Keep your heart clean. If there is ever a week, a month, or even a year that you feel wouldn't be best for you to be a mentor, please just let us know. We don't even need to know what's wrong if you don't want to tell us. It's perfectly acceptable and we all need breaks.



## The Youth Staffer Divide

As it's been stated many times, a parent can't be "a parent and a best friend" at the same time—and nothing can be more similar about being a youth worker. Youth volunteers are sometimes younger, can interact, and challenge students to live their lives more deeply for Christ than anyone else could, but creating a close-friend relationship with a youth can be the last nail in a coffin.

**A Forever Mentor:** You must, at all times, be the leader and mentor. If you have met a student at The Fuse Box or in a church service setting—you are FOREVER known as a representative of our church to them and their parents, no matter how close you get to them. Everything you say and do can and will be used against you and the church if something bad goes down.



**A Future Friend:** Close relationships happen between youth and their mentors (if you're doing it right). But this relationship must stay properly balanced as such for their entire time as a student. Once they're out of school (and/or are of the age of 18) it's possible—and preferable—that you start blending them into the adult church world and be an equal level friend... albeit slowly. This is a very difficult transition. Remember, no matter what you do, you will always be that mentor—tucked away, hidden inside their heart. Don't attempt to throw that away. Friends are a dime a dozen, a Christian mentor is a rare gem.



**Youth Mémoire #5:** *"Bobby was a youth kid who eventually morphed into being one of my best friends. The problem was, however, that the timing and transition were off. Bobby graduated and wanted to start rebelling against different things he was taught. I, as a youth staffer, attempted to drop the 'mentor status' and pick up a 'friend status' out of fear of losing him. That was probably the last thing he needed. I opened that curtain into my life and tried to talk on his level somewhat. In the end, Bobby found better friends that would actually do the wicked stuff he enjoyed experimenting with. I simply became the lame and boring friend. Most likely, there were times that Bobby would have loved to come back to his old mentor, but by that time, the mentor curtain was tattered and shredded."*

## Dress Code

**The Code Inside:** We at The Fuse Box are not extremely judgmental towards students about dress code (within reason). We trust the Lord to change their hearts on the matter as they grow closer to Him. We live in a very difficult location to get nit-picky, but that doesn't mean standards for Youth Volunteers don't exist. We want to *encourage* students to wear non-revealing tops (no spaghetti straps or low cut shirts) and shorts that actually have length to them (please attempt to be around fingertip length). Also, be aware of how tight and form fitting certain clothing styles are. For official youth night water games or co-ed swimming situations: shorts and dark t-shirts are a must. The best way to teach is not to preach, but lead by example.



**The Code Outside:** Sorry to tell you this, but your appearance matters even outside of church to these kids. We're not Nazis (we promise)—we wish to leave you alone during your normal life—but here are some bare minimum recommendations:

Ladies, please avoid wearing bikinis in public when there's a possibility of youth boys appearing out of nowhere while swimming. Gentlemen, please avoid throwing your shirt off pointlessly for attention during sports/water recreation if there's a possibility of girls showing up. Use your best judgment.



We have these rules set in place to protect not only our own purity, but the purity of those eyes that are gawking at us while we're doing something simple like swimming. The Lord literally says we're better off drowning in that pool or ocean than to 'cause a little one to stumble' in Mark 9:42.

## Public Appearances



Like it or not, being a Youth Volunteer makes you famous in the Oceanfront area. Like it or not, a kid might even take a picture if you do something somewhere. Like the other celebrities, having paparazzi is part of the territory. We need to be very aware of how we appear to the public (see **Youth Mémoire #4** on page 4).

We have to be highly paranoid when it comes to how we may come across to students and parents while inside and outside of the youth group setting.

**At Church:** If students are going to be told they need to go to church, you better believe that they will be seeing the youth volunteers *regularly* present at Sunday church and not just youth nights.

**Around Town:** Be very aware of how it may look coming and going out of certain stores you need to shop at or bars/clubs you happen to walk into (your intentions may be innocent, i.e. going in to use the bathroom, but an onlooker may think otherwise). Sometimes, if you know it could look bad and the situation is unavoidable (i.e. you simply *must* go to the ABC liquor store to pick up 1tsp of rum for your evening dessert), at least try and go to an establishment far away from the neighborhood so kids and parents don't think you're picking up booze for a drunken party later that night.



**Personal Time:** We also need to be careful about being seen hanging out with certain students outside of youth nights (whether in groups or one-on-one with a student of the same-sex). Proper care should be taken to avoid misconceptions. People can and will say anything. See **Personal Time** on page 13 for more details about avoiding these types of issues.

**Dating:** Our dating lives are a part of our appearance. It's highly recommended to not engage in a dating relationship until your Junior Year of High School (at least). We want our kids and teens to observe proper, responsible dating habits. If your 'significant other' is present on a youth night, please devote your time here to the students and not ogling over each other. When in public, the students should not see you around being excessively touchy or kissy.



**Youth Mémoire #6:** *"I remember when Bobby came up to me and asked to be a youth volunteer. He claimed to have wisdom and advice to share with Middle Schoolers. I also remember when those same Middle Schoolers came up to me and asked for me to give advice to Bobby... because they all watched him kissing Suzie behind a tree in the neighborhood for a long time... Yikes."*

No dating relationships between students and youth volunteers are allowed unless it's assessed and approved by both the Youth Director and the student's family (i.e. a High School Senior dating a first year College Student who recently transitioned over into being a Youth Volunteer).



# Youth Interactions

## Touch



**Same-Sex:** As far as contact with same sex students, this is allowable—but not to a creepy excess. There will be times you’ll want to tackle them, wrestle them to the ground, beat them with a pillow, or let them climb all over you like a jungle gym, but please be aware of where hands should never go with children (even accidentally).



**Opposite-Sex:** This is where things get tricky. Basically, physical contact with an opposite sex student needs to be avoided. We would rather you not go out of your way to even hug them unless they are the first ones to initiate it—and even then there are rules to try and follow. We may know your kind intentions, but others might not.



The Beach Church maintains Sexual Abuse/Harassment Insurance for official staff members, but we’d rather not put its efficiency to the test.

 **Youth Mémoire #7:** *“It’s important to never seem too eager in having physical contact with youth. There was a little boy named Bobby who loved to hang all over me, grab my hands, hug me, pull me places, jump on my back, and etc. His real father is an unknown and he looked to me as someone to take that place. I loved him to death, but there is a time and a place and a limit as to how this interaction can go on. I’d walk into the main sanctuary on Sunday and there he would be, arms around me with feet dragging. I was always very careful to make sure it was obvious to the crowd that he was the one initiating the contact at all times. All it would take is one person in the church crowd to say ‘he seems a little too friendly with that kid’ to render my life completely finished.”*

Below is a limited chart on physical contact. Please ask questions to the Youth Director for details.

### Physical Contact Chart

	Front Hug	Side Hug	Hand Hold	Hand on Shoulder	Lap Sitting	Wrestling
Same-Sex Kid	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK In moderation	OK In moderation
Opp-Sex Kid	Avoid (OK if They Initiate)	OK (Not excessive)	OK (When Necessary)	OK	Never	Never
Same-Sex Teen	OK	OK	OK	OK	Avoid	OK In Moderation
Opp-Sex Teen	Avoid Adamantly (Go for Side Hug)	Avoid (OK if They Initiate)	Avoid (Unless Prayer, etc)	Avoid (Unless Prayer, etc)	Never	Never
Same-Sex Adult	OK	OK	OK	OK	OK ( i.e. being Goofy)	OK
Opp-Sex Adult	OK (But try a Side Hug)	OK	OK (When Necessary)	OK	Never (Unless Married)	Never (Unless Married)

## Talk



**“Advisor”, Not Counselor:** Giving youth someone to talk to is a key aspect to ministry. However, we must be very careful to make it always known that no one on our staff is an official “counselor” with a degree in psychology. Always make it known to students and parents that you are a “Youth Advisor” and not a “Youth Counselor”. Legal issues may arise if you claim to be “counseling” them; mainly if they take your counsel and somehow hurt themselves or find themselves in a compromising situation. You are only legally allowed to give “spiritual advice.”

**Private Conversations:** Biblical advice conversations are the norm and are encouraged at The Fuse Box; however, rules must be followed. Conversations with opposite-sex students must be made in a public space where people are around with doors open. If the conversations head anywhere in an inappropriate direction (i.e. sexual in nature), the conversation must be immediately dropped and passed on to a youth advisor of the same sex. Conversations with same-sex students have more leniencies, but please be wise about topics covered and avoid secluded locations. It’s never bad to have two or more mentors.



**Prayer Time:** Everyone is allowed to pray with anyone they choose, quietly—and perhaps with a hand on their shoulder or holding their hand. If you don’t know what a student is praying about and have to ask them at the altar what you can pray with them about, don’t be of the opposite-sex; you never know what they might say, and you could find yourself in an awkward, inappropriate situation. Send another same-sex volunteer in their direction.



**Youth Mémoire #8:** *“When I was a teen I used to sit and observe those boys who would wait for a pretty girl to go up to pray. They wanted to be the first ones to have their hands on their back, rubbing away, pretending to be praying. Please make sure students who love to ‘be there’ for their friends are actually praying and helping their friends; not being a hindrance or taking advantage of the situation.”*

**Proper Verbiage:** Please be very careful how you say certain things. Many sentences can be taken multiple ways. You must also be very aware of how other students talk about you. If you hear or read anything that might not sound right about you or another youth staff member, correct it as soon as possible. Check out this next Mémoire to see what we’re talking about.





**Youth Mémoire #9:** *“One time a Youth Volunteer overheard Suzie on the bus telling all the students, ‘I hung out with Pastor Cris all day. We went shopping and got something to eat.’ The Youth Volunteer wisely spoke up and said ‘Sister Charlene was with you as well, wasn’t she?’ to which she replied ‘Oh, yeah. Of course.’ It was an innocent mistake.”*

*“But, back in the day, I heard that there was a Bobby who liked to run around telling people that he spent the night with a Youth Pastor’s wife at the house. He completely left out the fact that the Youth Pastor was also there—sometimes they feel he left out those facts on purpose... Sometimes crushes develop and mistakes aren’t so innocent. Keep your ears to the ground.”*

**Profanity:** It’s very true that different people and cultures have different standards of what is acceptable and what is profane. Here it is, cut and dry, what words you can’t say according to Virginia Beach church-going standards: Fu\*\*, Bi\*\*, Bas\*\*, Sh\*\*, A\*\*, Do\*\*, Cu\*\*, and even Pi\*\*. ‘Damn’ and ‘Hell’ are allowable only in biblical connotations, but please be mindful to explain every single time you use them why they aren’t bad in the context you are using them (so kid’s don’t run home saying the church is cussing).

All slang terms for sexual private parts (and even the proper names) need to be avoided entirely unless absolutely necessary (i.e. medical or bathroom situations). Sexual joking with students is forbidden. Detailed discussions on your personal love life are also forbidden—no matter your status: looking, dating, browsing, or married. Commenting that certain youth or people associated with them (i.e. family members) are “hot” or “cute” or (heaven forbid) “sexy” can be taken as offensive. If your intent is to compliment someone, kindly say someone is “pretty” or “handsome” and leave it at that. Compliments can be misconstrued—especially by youth desperate for attention.

The Lord’s name should never be used in vain. If you are an avid accidental ‘OMG’er, you need to curb that bad habit before even considering jumping on as a youth volunteer.



**Attacks:** Don’t ever call anyone “stupid” or use any other personal attack language. For our Mexican kids, it’s extremely unacceptable to say things like “shut up” or “shut your mouth” in their culture (they will jeer and instantly let you know your mistake). Please try to say “it’s time to be quiet” or something similar.

**Racism:** We need to be aware of what we say at all times. We may have friends of a different race and joke in a friendly manner with them about it, but you never know who is listening or how other people might interpret stereotype jokes and the like.



**Youth Mémoire #10:** *“Our youth staff, at one point, was very diverse; a Puerto Rican, an Indo-Trinidadian, and some black and white folks. We had a period where we all liked to joke each other on funny, silly stereotypical things. A guy named Bobby started coming to the youth group and hung out with us all the time. Eventually he stopped coming. I later asked him why, and one of his reasons was that he thought we all seemed racist and it made him feel uncomfortable. Ouch.”*

## Texting, Facebook, and General Media

Nothing has more capability of starting a mindless drama fire as texting and Facebook can. No other format of communication can you be misconstrued easier in, either. Also remember that anything you ever type or text will exist for all of eternity on the internet.

**Texting:** Texting to any student is fine, but please avoid pointless conversations with opposite-sex students. Nothing looks fishier to a parent than a seemingly innocent text of ‘Good morning sunshine’ from an older person of the opposite-sex to their child; no matter how innocent you think it is. Keep it strictly business; i.e. “Youth Group Tonight!” or “Bring your bible” or etc. Conversation through text with the same-sex is fine, with normal discretion. Please don’t text/write students too late at night, for too long of a time, and especially not during school.



**Phone Calls:** Phone calls to the same-sex are perfectly acceptable. Please be sure to be courteous to parents if they answer and let them know who you are before asking for their child, like this: “Hello, this is Joey from the Church, is it okay if I talk to Bobby?”



Calls to opposite-sex students are forbidden unless you need to make informative calls about events, program changes, or business. If this is the case, make absolutely sure you announce yourself to the parents and give the parent the information if they answer: “Can you let Suzie know that she needs permission if she’d like to get ice cream with everyone after youth?” Always make parents aware that you’re calling on *behalf* of the group, otherwise it sounds like you’re asking Suzie out on an ice cream date after church.

Overthink everything. If you must talk to their opposite-sex student for details over the phone, ask permission. Nothing sounds worse than a man asking to talk to a little girl on the phone. Please be mindful that parents are created to be cautious.

**Facebook, MySpace, Etc:** You, as youth staff, are invited to use The Fuse Box Family group page to post information, prayer requests, photos, discussions, etc fun things to bring us together as a family. This should be your main hub of activity for making grand sweeping announcements and avoiding multiple personal conversations. Please don’t write students too late at night, for too long of a time space, and especially not during school. Be very aware of all wording you use at all times.





**Youth Mémoire #11:** *"I once wrote this on a youth girl's Facebook wall: 'Hey Suzie! It was great seeing you last night. If you want to ever come over and hang out with me and Charlene, just let us know.' Next thing I know, the Lead Pastor gets a phone call from an inflamed parent, claiming that I, the Youth Director, was having an affair with her 14 year old daughter...! Eventually we cleared everything up. She didn't realize 'last night' meant youth group, and she also didn't realize that 'Charlene' was not just another youth girl victim, but my wife. It ends up that previous drama with Suzie caused her mom to be on extra guard. I unknowingly fell victim to it. Her mom probably still doesn't trust me. I personally avoided that girl at all costs after that. My life could have easily been over with the changing of just a few little words on Facebook. I was lucky, but many people aren't."*

Social media interaction with youth is in no way required. Honestly, you'll probably like the students better if you *didn't* see what trash they're posting up every day. Avoid "friending" and having conversations with Elementary School students online; they've lied about their age to have an account and we don't want to encourage them in seeing the trash that mankind calls Facebook.

**Your Online Social Life:** Please make sure that your Facebook is clean of trashy things at all times. Even if you didn't post that trashy comment, delete it off your board. Make sure you check through your old "Likes" to see if you still have *Jay-Z* or *Lady Gaga* or *Family Guy* still on there from when you weren't living for the Lord. This is all just basic, good, Christian standards for online presence. We highly recommend that if you're an avid Facebook user who posts their daily habits for the entire world to see, please add our students into a "Restricted" list so they can only see posts which you chose for them to see. Keep the rest private; don't give them or parents any misread ammo.

**Private Messaging:** Talking to same-sex students is allowable on Facebook. Talking with opposite-sex students on Facebook is also allowable, but you're safer to just avoid it. If it happens, please be careful and use the same standards as listed above in this section. It's preferred that opposite-sex students initiate conversations. It's highly recommended that you keep a log of conversations with all youth group members; it could save your life in a court battle. Never delete your message history.

**Student Social Drama:** We've tried all stances on online drama dealings in the past. The best option of dealing with a student who has flown off the handle, posted something profane, or has some scandalous pictures is to.... ignore it. Playing Facebook cop with students who have no true relationship with you (or the Lord) is pointless. If something is bad enough to deserve correction, please do so in a private message; making sure to save copies of everything with screen shots (even public board conversations; they may get deleted and everything after that will be hearsay). Many times we simply write "I'll be writing you in a private message about this" on their public wall so the other youth members know we're aware and quiet themselves down. Then we say our piece to them privately. If it's an intense situation, please look to the Youth Director for guidance before making it worse.

**Screen Shots:** Make a folder on your computer for youth antics. Any time you find yourself somehow involved in curbing social media abuse and bullying among the teens, open up the window and hit the "PrtScrn/SysRq" button above your Home key on the keyboard. Open up your 'Paint' software (that program you doodle around in pointlessly) and click 'Paste'. It will paste an image of the screen into Paint, and you can then save the image into your folder. We honestly have a running folder on every youth blow up for the past five years to refer back to incase we need it. If you're going to go to war on Facebook, you need to have the knowledge and maturity to do it correctly, lovingly, and safely.

## Personal Time



Same-sex hangouts are allowable, but opposite-sex is forbidden—unless you are married and your spouse is present at all times *or* if there are *three* or more co-ed youth going on the trip. This goes for all car rides on all occasions. Many parents may even feel uncomfortable with this idea, so please be understanding. An awesome youth volunteer will realize the great opportunity personal time has for one-on-one relationships.



**Youth Mémoire #12:** *“I can hardly tell you what one sermon was from my Youth Pastor as a kid. However I can tell you about long conversations I had personally with him on the way to Sam’s Club to pick up youth materials. We’d grab something to eat and he’d show me new restaurants I had never even heard of before. We talked about God, friends, relationships, family, and my future. I cherish those memories more than anything to this day.”*

Here’s the deal: one-on-one interaction is a great thing for a student. Many of them don’t have older siblings or even parents in some cases, but one-on-one time can be risky business if there is no trust established with their guardians. Extreme caution needs to be taken or you could find yourself in jail faster than Elvis Presley.

**Involved Parents:** Always be sure to have an established relationship with the parents. Always go up to the door when picking up a student. Talk to the parents. If they don’t speak English, wave and say something anyway. Let the parents know where you are going and what time you will be back. Make sure they have your phone number. If you don’t have a regular established relationship with the parents, consider taking two or three students out together at a time *or* with another staff member until that deep relationship with the parent is created. Going in a small group is *always* the best.

**Activities:** Don’t take any students outside of the city limits unless it’s approved by the parents and they have a travel form filled out. Avoid dangerous activities. Remember: you are responsible. Don’t keep a student out later than originally planned. It’s annoying, as a parent, to keep getting phone calls asking to be out later and later—they try it every time. Don’t encourage this. Get them home early, if possible.

**Spending the Night:** Overnight hang-outs must be handled appropriately. A student is forbidden from spending the night at your house if you are home alone. When picking up students, it’s necessary to drop the hint to the parents that family members, other volunteers, or other students will be there as well (for their own peace of mind). Keep regular standards at all times. Please make sure that when it’s time to sleep that each student has their own bed, couch, or section of floor to themselves (or, preferably, their own room). Overnight stays are for same-sex only unless you’re married and your spouse will be involved in hanging out with the student at all times.



## Youth Services



**Lesson Planning:** Youth Volunteers (especially adults) will be asked, from time to time, to teach a lesson to the kids. If you're not of the caliber to speak to children, then it's definitely something we would like to help you work towards.

A sermon outline check is required for new youth volunteers for their first year. If you are not following any given curriculum and are writing your own, please send or give a copy to the Youth Director the service prior (i.e. turn it in Sunday before Tuesday or Tuesday before Sunday). We hope you understand that this is to make sure you're teaching biblically sound ideas to the children while it allows us to see any areas that we might be able to help you in. We want your speaking engagement to be a complete success.

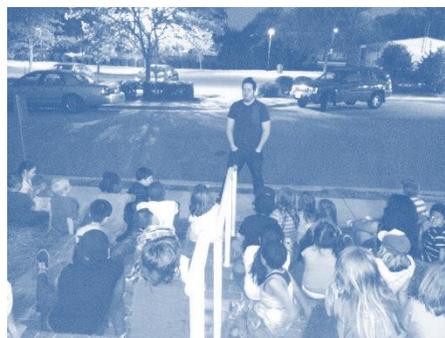
**Arrival:** It's suggested that you arrive to a youth night or event a half hour before it starts. Sunday morning requires no early arrival unless asked. Make sure all lights, sound systems, concessions, and other youth room displays and games are turned on. Check on bathrooms and straighten up anything possible. We want The Fuse Box to feel as alive as possible—at all moments—while the students are there. Background music goes a long way to filling a room, especially if numbers are down for the night.

**Departure:** We need help making sure everything is put away back in the storage room (feel free to walk down there and organize shelves at any time), lights and sound are turned off, tables are wiped, trash is emptied, and concessions closed down after every event. Be sure that all doors and gates are closed and locked.

**Jobs:** Specific job profiles will change as The Fuse Box grows and moves through time. Most likely we will always need a greeter to sign students in, concessions workers, and game room referees (to make sure kids don't destroy investments we've made). You wouldn't believe how many Air Hockey and Ping Pong tables we've gone through because no one ever protected them or laid down rules. The cost of damage done by students amount to thousands of dollars over the past decade. We need to put an end to it.

**Pay Attention:** Make sure that we are fully paying attention to students at all times. It's okay to talk randomly to other staff members, but we need to encourage non-staff members to stay downstairs during service. Only official, cleared Fuse Box staff need to be around students for safety reasons. Please keep phones in your pocket and on silent. Volunteers who can't handle their obsessive phone usage will be asked to quit.

You need to learn the names of the students.



**Unavailability:** If you are unable to attend your scheduled youth volunteer night, arrangements need to be made a day in advance so you may be replaced. We understand family, school, and work issues, but if it becomes a regular difficulty to make it, you will be asked to quit. Youth thrive on consistency and look forward to seeing their mentors every week. If you're gone—they ask about you.

## Serious Issues

Serious issues include those things pertaining to at home abuse, substance abuse, self-harm, pregnancy, extreme bullying, and other similar situations. We have a strict legal requirement mandating that any issue putting children and teens at risk need to be reported to the proper authorities. Knowledge of abuse and doing nothing about it can be a serious offense.



It's required that issues of this caliber be brought immediately to the attention of the Youth Director who will then report to the Lead Pastor and possibly the Church Board for advice. Never attempt to handle a serious case solo.

**Grace Period:** Students with non-immediate life threatening issues such as pregnancy or minor substance abuse are allowed to be given two days to gather up the courage to tell their parents on their own (as the Youth Director sees fit). After two days, we will let it be known that our hand has been forced to make any issues known. We want to encourage students to be honest and open with their parents at all times, but the window can't be open for too long, for legality sake.

## Conclusion



Working as a youth volunteer requires a team effort. We want to establish our volunteers as a positively charged family for children and teens that may not even have a family to go home to every night.

Remember: Your safety, the youth's safety, and the parent's safety are of utmost importance. We must, at all times, know that there needs to be a divide between volunteers and youth when it comes to how we talk, interact, and present ourselves in and out of the youth group setting.

If you ever have any questions, please feel free to contact the Youth Director, the Lead Pastor, or the Family Pastor. We love and appreciate your willing heart to challenge, change, and charge the hearts of The Fuse Box youth at the Oceanfront!

## Signature and Agreement | Personal Copy

I \_\_\_\_\_ attest that I have thoroughly read **The Fuse Box Youth Ministries Volunteer Guidelines** on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ and asked all necessary questions. I pledge to follow it accordingly. If I break any of its standards or rules, I hold myself (not The Beach Church or The Fuse Box) fully responsible for any repercussions.

By signing this, I also open myself to being held accountable to it. At any time that I feel that I cannot upkeep these standards, I will discuss the issue with the Youth Director or step out of leadership.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



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## Signature and Agreement | Office Copy

I \_\_\_\_\_ attest that I have thoroughly read **The Fuse Box Youth Ministries Volunteer Guidelines** on \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ and asked all necessary questions. I pledge to follow it accordingly. If I break any of its standards or rules, I hold myself (not The Beach Church or The Fuse Box) fully responsible for any repercussions.

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



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