

Youth Group and Event Best Practices – 9/23/25

Whether you are new to your youth leadership position or you have been at it for years, we want to share some best practices for your church's youth group. Here are a few things to consider as you plan your youth program and events.

1. Philosophy and Goal

- Our goal should be to disciple, mentor and retain our young people as a vital part of our church.
- Involve them in all areas of church, not just scripture reading or sound booth; if possible, give them real input and real responsibility.
- Form a youth council with youth and adults to plan the youth events and outings.
- We need all kinds of events from Bible study to just plain goofy social events, but always remember the mission.

2. Supervision and Volunteers

- Always have at least two qualified supervisors.
- Never have one on one situations (adult/youth or youth/youth).
- With mixed groups have at least one supervisor of each gender.
- Recommended staff to youth ratio - 1:12 for low risk activity, 1:8 medium risk activity, 1:4 for high risk activity.
- Supervisor should be engaged and aware (not on phones or distracted).
- All volunteers should be screened by Sterling Volunteers, our online child protection training and screening <https://www.ncsrisk.org/adventist/>. Information regarding the local board's role can be found at <https://www.gccsda.com/human-resources/30828>.
- If your event has swimming, there must be a certified lifeguard present and on duty.
- If possible, have a medical person present and/or have someone on hand that has training in CPR/First Aid.

3. Transportation

- Before using any passenger vans, please see the GCC policy - <https://www.gccsda.com/resources/35031>.
- Drivers must complete and turn in a Volunteer Driver Questionnaire - link to document <https://www.gccsda.com/resources/34905>.
- 2 adults per vehicle highly recommended.
- Driver must be 21 years old if transporting any youth.

4. Administrative

- Have a Parent/Guardian Permission/Medical Treatment Authorization form for your events. They can cover a time period or be for a specific event. Sample of one can be found at <https://www.gccsda.com/resources/35032>.
- Train volunteers if at all possible.
- Have a good way to mass communicate with parents and youth.
- If an accident occurs or if there is an accusation of any sort, fill out an Accident Incident Report Give and give a copy to your Pastor/Board and a copy to the Georgia Cumberland Conference. Copy and be found at <https://adventistrisk.org/getmedia/5f77be09-6a2c-475c-adf9-8a05494c8137/SO-FRM 1001-AccidentIncidentReport-NADEN.pdf?ext=.pdf>.

5. Events

- Run overall plans by the Pastor and Board. Board approval can keep you out of all kinds of messes.
- Planning is key.
- Make sure that all events keep your mission in mind.
- Some events are not allowed per the Conference guidelines and others require supplemental insurance to participate in. Document of such events can be found at <https://www.gccsda.com/resources/34268>.
- As a rule of thumb, keep any type of entertainment PG. I would recommend staying away from movie nights due to the wide variety of opinions on them. If you do have them, consider using a service such as VidAngel.

6. Useful Contacts

- Your Pastor/First Elder, numbers and email vary.
- Pastor Jonathan Montes, GCC Youth Director, 706-629-7951, jmontes@gccsda.com
- Rick Claus, GCC Insurance/Transportation, 706-629-7951, rclaus@gccsda.com
- Connie Starkey, GCC Human Resources, 706-629-7951, cstarkey@gccsda.com
- Kari Sheldon, GCC Sterling Volunteers, 706-629-7951, ksheldon@gccsda.com

Resource Links and Documents

GCC Youth Ministries Page

<https://www.gccsda.com/youth-ministries>

Supervision

- https://adventistrisk.org/Adventist_Risk/media/ARMSiteContent/Safety%20Resources/English/IFS_YouthSupervision_AFRICAENG.pdf?ext=.pdf[https://adventistrisk.org/en-US/Safety-Resources/Solutions-NewsLetter/2017/April/Appropriate Supervision-for-Youth-Counselors](https://adventistrisk.org/en-US/Safety-Resources/Solutions-NewsLetter/2017/April/Appropriate_Supervision-for-Youth-Counselors)
- <https://adventistrisk.org/en-US/Safety-Resources/Solutions-NewsLetter/2017/April/How-to-Recognize-and-Prevent-Child-Abuse>
- [https://adventistrisk.org/en-US/Safety-Resources/Solutions-NewsLetter/2021/February/NADENG Preparation-and-Planning-The-Secret-to-Safe](https://adventistrisk.org/en-US/Safety-Resources/Solutions-NewsLetter/2021/February/NADENG_Preparation-and-Planning-The-Secret-to-Safe)
- [https://adventistrisk.org/getmedia/a0e5d8cf-d51f-4228-9116-df939902d162/LI-IFS-0509- WaterSafetyGuidelines-NADEN.pdf?ext=.pdf](https://adventistrisk.org/getmedia/a0e5d8cf-d51f-4228-9116-df939902d162/LI-IFS-0509-WaterSafetyGuidelines-NADEN.pdf?ext=.pdf)

Transportation

- <https://adventistrisk.org/en-US/Safety-Resources/Solutions-NewsLetter/2017/September/15-Passenger-Vans-The-Risks-and-the-Alternatives>
- <https://www.gccsda.com/resources/34905>

Administrative

- <https://www.nadadventist.org/asv>
- [https://adventistrisk.org/en-US/Safety-Resources/Solutions-NewsLetter/2020/July/NADENG-A-Crash Course-in-Crisis-Communication](https://adventistrisk.org/en-US/Safety-Resources/Solutions-NewsLetter/2020/July/NADENG-A-Crash_Course-in-Crisis-Communication)
- <https://adventistrisk.org/getmedia/5f77be09-6a2c-475c-adf9-8a05494c8137/SO-FRM-1001-AccidentIncidentReport-NADEN.pdf?ext=.pdf>