



Christ Bridge

FELLOWSHIP



Student Ministry Handbook

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Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges

Our vision at *ChristBridge* can be found in our process: make followers of Christ by bridging people to God, each other, and ministry. Our vision and process are based on three statements that Jesus made about disciples (or those who follow him). We want to be:

Bridging people to God

... through worship. Jesus said in John 8:31: "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples." Our weekend worship services are designed to bridge you to God on an intimate level. We place a high priority on biblical teaching, engaging worship, and a friendly and welcoming atmosphere.

Bridging people to each other

... through small groups. Jesus said in John 13:35: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." We also believe that people need to build bridges with others, so that no one should stand alone. We offer small groups designed to foster friendships with other people in a safe and caring environment.

Bridging people to ministry

... through a lifestyle of service. Jesus said in John 15:8: "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." We have a strong conviction that every follower of Christ should enjoy doing ministry. Bridging to ministry is part of the life of a growing disciple. It also gives you a deep sense of purpose as you see God using you to impact others. We offer ministry teams so you can serve alongside others. But ministry is mostly about serving people wherever you are everyday: at home, in your neighborhood, at work and in your community.

Definitions

CBF	ChristBridge Fellowship
Minor(s)	Individuals younger than 18 years of age
Children	Individuals grade 5 and below
Youth	Individuals in grade 6 through grade 12
Volunteer	Adult who serves in a CBF ministry without compensation
Staff	Employees of Christbridge Fellowship
Worker	Adult volunteer or CBF staff

Sunday Mornings

Sunday mornings is a student weekend event that begins@ 9:10 a.m. and is packed with engaging worship and a relevant teaching for middle and high school students. This is our “Big-group” event.

Sunday Mornings have three intentions:

1. To lovingly engage students who may not be excited about “church,” and to introduce them to spiritual things.
2. To give curious and converted students an environment where they encounter God and hear from His Word
3. To provide student leaders an opportunity to be ministry partners by engaging other students and inviting friends.

Six-thirty

Six-thirty is a core element of the CB Student Ministries. Each Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m. our high school students gather in homes for a meal and encounter a study from God’s word and prepare with each other to face the spiritual challenges they will face that week. These small groups are great place to get “plugged-in” to ChristBridge Fellowship. It is an avenue for students and their friends to be mentored, take a deeper look at the life-change that is offered through a relationship with Jesus Christ, and experience genuine acceptance from a community of faith.

Our Six-thirty groups also are extended to our Middle School students but meet at ChristBridge Fellowship in the Student Ministries room at 7:00 p.m. in order to help make transportation for parents easier.

SNL

SNL is a chance for our students to experience community and fellowship on a deeper level. SNL is specifically designed to be a not-so “churchy” environment where they develop genuine friendship, play games and get to interact with those they go to church with on social level in a safe environment that is spiritually encouraging. This provides a time for our ministry to plan special events and interactive times that help facilitate a greater depth of friendship and fellowship. SNL will be on a rotating basis for Middle and High School Students.

Volunteer Expectations

A Student Ministries volunteer is expected to:

- ❖ Pray for students to whom you are ministering.
- ❖ Attend Student Ministry training days.
- ❖ Contact a student at least once a week outside of regularly scheduled events
- ❖ Attend at least one student's extracurricular event each month.
- ❖ Commit to serving at least nine months (during the school year) or one quarter on Sunday mornings or evenings
- ❖ Model for students the life of Jesus Christ and your personal relationship with Him

Our Commitment to You:

- ❖ Support you in prayer
 - ❖ Offer training to equip you to be an effective minister to students
 - ❖ Provide resources such as curriculum, fliers, handouts, etc...
 - ❖ Communicate –to keep you informed of upcoming activities, opportunities for your involvement with students, and special events
 - ❖ Listen to your suggestions and encourage you in your ministry
 - ❖ Evaluate together, at the end of your service, your future involvement with ChristBridge Fellowship
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Application Process for all Primary Volunteers

A Student Ministries Volunteer is someone who will be involved in working directly with students for an extended period of time. This includes all teachers, coordinators, summer volunteers, and support ministry workers.

- ❖ The applicant will be invited to become involved in Student Ministries (SM) by a coordinator or staff member
- ❖ An application will be completed by the prospective volunteer and the applicant will receive a copy of the ministry handbook
- ❖ The applicant will sign the volunteer covenant and acknowledgement of the SM Handbook indicating that he/she has read and understands the policies and guidelines in the handbook
- ❖ The ministry staff will conduct a criminal background check and /or MVR using the information provided on the criminal background release form. With no criminal record the ministry staff will provide a signed "Volunteer Approval Form". If there is a criminal record, the elder overseeing Student Ministries will contact the volunteer and discuss the situation. In the event there is a problem, the elder reserves the right to contact the Student Ministries Pastor
- ❖ The Staff will make a confidential file on each applicant
- ❖ The applicant is responsible for completing all forms in a timely manner
- ❖ A coordinator or staff member will conduct a personal interview with the applicant either by phone or in person
- ❖ Once the volunteer is approved, the volunteer will be placed in a ministry or teaching position for a term of nine months or one quarter on Sunday Mornings, Evenings or Wednesday Nights.
- ❖ Evaluations take place between the volunteer and a ChristBridge Staff member on an ongoing basis to review the volunteers position.

ChristBridge Fellowship Protection Policies and Procedures

Statement of Policy

Christbridge Fellowship (CBF) is committed to providing an environment, which is as safe as possible for students and adults who attend church or any other CBF sponsored program or activity. Additionally, we will take precautions to protect church volunteers from false accusations or suspicions. The purpose of these policies and procedures is to protect the following:

- ❖ The students from abuse
- ❖ The volunteer from the risk of false accusations of abuse; and
- ❖ The integrity of ChristBridge Fellowship

To reach these goals, CBF herein establishes policies and procedures that dictate the requirements for students and volunteers and their conduct. CBF will not tolerate any occurrence of abuse, and upon learning of such, will report violators to legal authorities.

These policies and procedures shall apply to all CBF sponsored and/or supervised activities involving student ministries. All volunteers assigned to such activities by CBF shall comply and conduct themselves in accordance with these policies and procedures. Failure to comply shall subject the volunteer to disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from work with students.

Volunteer Requirements

- ❖ A volunteer must be a member of CBF unless a waiver has been granted for the member requirement
- ❖ Volunteers must be over the age of 18
- ❖ All volunteers must complete applicable screening requirements prior to working with minors/students
- ❖ All volunteers are required to sign a statement acknowledging that they have read, understand and will abide by the CBF Student Ministries Handbook and Protection Policies and Procedures
- ❖ A person who has been convicted of a child abuse felony will not be permitted to work with children/students

Supervisory Requirements and Rules of Behavior

- ❖ Team Approach. A minimum of two workers shall be present during any activity involving minors/students.
- ❖ No volunteer will be permitted to be alone with a minor/student behind a closed door

- ❖ All overnight or off property activities sponsored or approved by CBF require the prior approval of the appropriate Staff
- ❖ The following behaviors are prohibited for all paid employees and volunteers:
 - Threatening or inflicting physical, verbal and/or emotional injury upon a minor/student adult, other than accidental means;
 - Committing any sexual offense against a minor/student or engaging in any sexual contact with a minor/student
 - Making any kind of sexual advance, making a request for sexual favors, or engaging in other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature with a minor/student
 - Physical discipline
- ❖ Using physical restraint to prevent a student from doing something disruptive or dangerous may, in some instances, be necessary. Affirmation and encouragement are always appropriate. The Staff shall advise volunteers on the best age appropriate behavior management methods
- ❖ Disciplinary problems should be reported to the Staff, who in turn, will notify the parent/legal guardian/custodian/authorities as deemed necessary
- ❖ Physical affection should be used appropriately. Touching to comfort or affirm a student in an age appropriate manner is permitted
- ❖ Any person who refuses to comply with these policies and procedures or continues to violate them will be barred from further work with Student Ministries

Student Expectations and Rules of Behavior

Our expectations for students at CBF sponsored events are as follows:

- ❖ Respect is expected at all times – respect for adult leaders, respect for each other, respect for property (yours and other peoples)
- ❖ All students are expected to help maintain the churches property by cleaning up after themselves and others when necessary
- ❖ No alcohol, drugs, knives (of any kind or size), weapons, or fireworks are allowed
- ❖ No sexually inappropriate behavior is allowed
- ❖ No profanity or putting down of other people is allowed
- ❖ All dress will be modest – no spaghetti strap tops, mid-rifs or tank-tops, “short” shorts; clothing with questionable sayings, slogans, etc.
- ❖ Everyone is expected to attend all meetings and programmed activities
- ❖ All students must be either with the scheduled youth and/or CBF activity or with their parent/guardian. Students should at no time be wandering the hallways or in an unsupervised area of the building at anytime. Parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for the conduct of their student.
- ❖ No one leaves the event/camp without permission from a staff member & prior arrangements from a parent or legal guardian
- ❖ There will never be guys in girls rooms or girls in guys rooms- not at any time
- ❖ When it is time for lights out – it means we will have the lights out and be respectful of the time to sleep

- ❖ When it's time to be in our rooms for the night, we will be not be going out again for any reason other than a real emergency
- ❖ Food and Drinks are not allowed in rooms unless otherwise specified
- ❖ No running or rough behavior while on CBF property
- ❖ Be aware that you are personally responsible for any and all damages to all facilities, including property and vehicles
- ❖ Use of television will be limited to PG-13 and below rated programs. Ordering of movies and games in hotel rooms is not allowed
- ❖ Movies shown in the student ministry will be PG-13 or below. All movies will be screened in advance by staff or designated adult leader
- ❖ When traveling in buses or vans, guys sit with guys and girls will sit with girls after dark or when traveling overnight

Repercussions

- ❖ Youth leaders, Staff and Parents/Legal Guardians can and should expect all students to obey all rules
- ❖ If a student refuses then youth leader should get the youth minister and/or elder to restate the expectation to the student
- ❖ Should a student refuse to follow the guidelines of ministry leaders, parents/legal guardian will be contacted
 - Parents / Legal Guardian may be required to come and pick up the student at the discretion of the ministry leader
- ❖ Parents/Legal Guardians will be called in if the student continues to display a pattern of disrespect for the expectations of CBF Student Ministries
- ❖ As a last resort the police/proper authorities will be called

Transportation Policy for ChristBridge Fellowship

Vehicle Requirements

These requirements pertain to all vehicles used for church sponsored transportation including but not limited to church owned vehicles, vehicles provided by CBF staff, parents of participants, volunteers, and/or members, and any leased or commercial vehicles.

- ✦ All vehicles will be in good running order and possess a current license plate, a current safety inspection sticker, and passenger restraints as required by Texas law.
- ✦ All vehicles will have insurance coverage as required by Texas law.
- ✦ All vehicles will be multi-passenger. No motorcycles, scooter, or mopeds will be allowed. No vehicle will be allowed to carry more than the passenger capacity as specified by the vehicle manufacturer.

Qualification of Drivers

- ✦ All drivers will be pre-approved volunteers (as qualified by the Child and Youth Protection Policies) or CBF staff. CBF risk management staff will pre-approve all drivers.
- ✦ All drivers will have a current valid Texas driver's license with the classification for the vehicle driven, and be at least 25 years of age (21 years of age for CBF employees).
- ✦ All drivers will be subject to periodic checks of their motor vehicle driving record.

Disqualified drivers: Persons who have been convicted of, placed on regular or deferred adjudicated probation for, received pre-trial diversion for, or pled guilty or nolo contendere to the following offenses: manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide, consumption or possession of alcoholic beverage in a motor vehicle, driving while intoxicated, intoxication assault, intoxication manslaughter or any other intoxicated offense, drug possession or use charge, reckless/dangerous driving, or excessive moving violations defined as nor more than 1 moving violation in any consecutive 12 month period or 3 moving violations in the previous consecutive 36 months will be disqualified to serve as drivers for church sponsored transportation.

General Rules

All transportation provided or sponsored by CBF is subject to the procedures herein described. The appropriate CBF staff must approve any deviation, and the concerned parents/legal guardians or custodians will be informed prior to departure.

- ✦ Two adults must be present in each vehicle when minors are transported by CBF provided or sponsored transportation except in the case of a serious emergency situation.

- ✦ Anyone who drives a vehicle, rented or privately owned, for church sponsored transportation must maintain a valid Texas driver's license, provide proof of insurance, and comply with all CBF transportation policies.

- ✦ All drivers will obey all traffic laws and require all passengers to wear seatbelts. Failure to do so may disqualify them from further driving privileges.

- ✦ Parent/legal guardian consent must be obtained for every minor transported in a church-sponsored vehicle.

- ✦ In an emergency situation that threatens health or safety, a driver may transport one minor in a vehicle without a waiver.

Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Policy

Obligation to Report and Immunity

- ✦ In all cases where any worker (volunteer or CBF staff) has reasonable cause to believe that a minor may be abused or neglected, the worker is obligated by Texas law to make a report to a law enforcement agency or to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (TDPRS) Child Abuse Hotline (800-252-5400). If the worker is in doubt regarding whether a report should be made, he or she will telephone the agency (anonymously, if desired) and discuss the situation with a counselor to determine whether a report should be made. The worker will make a written record of the name and title of the counselor with whom he or she spoke and the recommendation made by the counselor.
- ✦ The worker will contact TDPRS within 48 hours of first learning of possible abuse.
- ✦ Persons who act in good faith to report, assist in investigation, testify or otherwise participate in reporting alleged abuse or neglect are protected in such activity as provided in Texas Family Code, Section 261.106 Immunities.
- ✦ Persons filing false reports regarding abuse may be punished as provided in Texas Family Code, Section 261.107. False report; Penalty.
- ✦ Persons making frivolous claims against a person reporting a suspected act to abuse may be punished as provided in Texas Family Code, Section 261.108. Frivolous Claims Against Person Reporting.
- ✦ Persons who fail to report an act that they have cause to believe could adversely affect a minor's or adult's physical or mental health or welfare may be punished as provided in Texas Family Code, Section 261.109. Failure to Report; Penalty.

Reporting of Suspected Abuse at ChristBridge Fellowship

A volunteer who becomes aware of any abuse or molestation occurring at CBF or within any CBF ministry will immediately report the incident or suspicions (in writing, if possible) to a CBF ministry staff member. Any inappropriate behavior with a minor, even though it may not be considered true abuse, should be reported to ministry staff. Workers are to immediately notify a CBF ministry staff member if pornography or other inappropriate materials are discovered in a minor's or other worker's possession.

If an abuse allegation is reported, the volunteer(s) and CBF staff will:

- ✦ Regard each allegation to be a serious matter;
- ✦ Treat each allegation with confidentiality and respect for the privacy of all involved persons;
- ✦ Cooperate fully with civil authorities; and
- ✦ Extend genuine care to all victims of abuse.

The person reporting the suspected abuse and ministry staff, in a joint effort, will complete the Incident Report Form and submit it to CBF Risk Management.

Upon receipt of the Incident Report, ministry staff and CBF Risk Management will:

- ✦ Make certain that all investigative efforts are documented in writing, including dates, times, places and names, etc.
- ✦ Report the incident immediately to TDPRS and/or local law enforcement, the church's legal counsel, and the church's insurance company. CBF will not try to handle this without professional outside assistance.
- ✦ Contact the proper civil authorities following the guidance of official investigators.
- ✦ Do not prejudge the situation, but take the allegations seriously. If appropriate, reach out to the victim and the victim's family, and extend whatever pastoral resources are needed.
- ✦ Treat the accused with dignity and support. The accused will be removed from his or her position as a volunteer with minors until the allegations are fully investigated and resolved.
- ✦ CBF Executive Minister of Administration will serve as or delegate a spokesperson. This spokesperson will be the only person to convey information concerning the situation, and to avoid compromising any ongoing investigation, will convey only such information as is necessary under the circumstances.

- ✦ The Executive Minister of Administration will use the text of a prepared public statement to respond to media inquiries and to convey news to the congregation when necessary, being careful to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.

Texas Family Code

SUBCHAPTER B. REPORT OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT; IMMUNITIES

261.101. Persons Required to Report; Time to Report

(a) A person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately make a report as provided by this subchapter.

(b) If a professional has cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected or may be abused or neglected, or that a child is a victim of an offense under Section 21.11, Penal Code, and the professional has cause to believe that the child has been abused as defined by Section 261.001 or 261.401, the professional shall make a report not later than the 48th hour after the hour the professional first suspects that the child has been or may be abused or neglected. A professional may not delegate to or rely on another person to make the report. In this subsection, "professional" means an individual who is licensed or certified by the state or who is an employee of a facility licensed, certified, or operated by the state and who, in the normal course of official duties or duties for which a license or certification is required, has direct contact with children. The term includes teachers, nurses, doctors, day-care employees, employees of a clinic or health care facility that provides reproductive services, juvenile probation officers, and juvenile detention or correctional officers.

(c) The requirement to report under this section applies without exception to an individual whose personal communications may otherwise be privileged, including an attorney, a member of the clergy, a medical practitioner, a social worker, a mental health professional, and an employee of a clinic or health care facility that provides reproductive services.

(d) Unless waived in writing by the person making the report, the identity of an individual making a report under this chapter is confidential and may be disclosed only (1) as provided by Section 261.201; or (2) to a law enforcement officer for the purposes of conducting a criminal investigation of the report.

261.102. Matters to be Reported

A report should reflect the reporter's belief that a child has been or may be abused or neglected or has died of abuse or neglect.

261.104. Contents or Report

The person making a report shall identify, if known:

1. The name and address of the child;
2. The name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child and;
3. Any other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect.

261.109. Failure to Report; Penalty

(a) A person commits an offense if the person has cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect and knowingly fails to report as provided in this chapter.

(b) An offense under this section is a Class B misdemeanor.