

**PARENT**

# **HAND BOOK**







# **BELONG**

TO SOMETHING BIGGER  
THAN YOURSELF

# **EXPLORE**

HOW LIFE AND FAITH  
COLLIDE

# **BECOME**

WHO GOD CREATED  
YOU TO BE

# **GO**

TELL YOUR STORY



## ***HEY THERE!***

So you're the parent of a teenager, huh?  
Congratulations! You have one of the most important  
(and sometimes the most difficult) jobs on the planet.

We know your job isn't always easy, but here's what we  
want you to know: we're here to help, in any way we can.  
Sure, we're a "youth" ministry, but teenagers aren't the  
only people we care about. We care about you too.

No matter how connected (or not connected) you are  
with our church, this Parent Handbook will show you  
some of the ways we're trying to care for your kid and  
serve you at the same time.

Thanks for letting us be another voice in the life of your  
teenager. Your trust and partnership means a lot to us.

We can't wait to see what this year has in store!



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# THE BASICS

## OUR STAFF



**Rebecca Moreland**  
CWStudents Ministry Director  
[Students@mycrosswind.com](mailto:Students@mycrosswind.com)

Becca is the bee's knees of coordination. She works hard to keep everything, and everyone organized and equipped for a fun and fantastic youth experience. We'd be a bunch of headless chickens running around without her!



**Adam Moreland**

Adam's heart is full of wisdom and love for teens and does an amazing job sharing Gods word and wisdom with them. He will be teaming up with Becca to bring awesome weekly messages and whoop them in games. He's our fearless bearded wonder of a leader!

While Becca and Adam are the head honchos here at CWStudents, they are not the only ones serving in the youth ministry. We have a great volunteer team that come every week to serve whether it be feeding us snacks (because we can't live without our snacks), leading a small group, being a games wrangler, or helping with worship. If you would like more information about our volunteers or volunteer opportunities, please let Becca or Adam know so we can get you connected.



## OUR MINISTRY

### OUR WEEKLY PROGRAMS

#### **HIGHTIDE (4-6 graders) | SUNDAYS @ 10 AM**

Our Pre-Teens (grades 4-6) meets every Sunday during Service for games, worship, teaching, and small groups.

#### **CWSTUDENTS| WEDNESDAYS @ 7PM**

Our Student Ministry (grades 6-12) meets every Wednesday for fun, worship, teaching, and small group discussions.

### OUR ENVIRONMENTS

There are three environments for teenagers in our ministry. Each one is designed to invite teenagers on a journey into deeper relationships with their peers, leaders, and Jesus. Each environment is designed with every teenager in mind - the kid who's grown up in church and the first-time visitor too.

**EVENTS:** Throughout the year, we'll host events designed to help teenagers connect with their peers and small group leaders. Events are often the environment where teenagers will walk into our ministry for the very first time.

**WEEKLY PROGRAMS:** Our weekly programs happen every single week on Wednesday nights. Doors open at 6:30p, program begins at 7 and ends by 8:30. We close the doors at 9pm. Each week consists of worship, games, teaching and small group time. Every aspect of our time is designed to help teenagers grow in four key areas. (We'll get to those in a minute.)

**SMALL GROUP:** Small groups are the most important part of what we do. They happen every week in our programs. The relationships built in small groups extend outside the walls of our church. They're designed to connect every teenager with a consistent trustworthy adult and community of peers within their age range.



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## OUR BIG WIN

It's hard sometimes to know when you're winning in youth ministry, you know? Like, is anything we're teaching actually sinking in? Are teenagers really growing in their faith? That's why we decided to go ahead and define the big win for our ministry. It's the one thing that we, as a ministry team, want to achieve. It's the goal we want to keep in mind at all times. And it's what motivates and guides everything we do. It goes like this...

### **WE WIN WHEN A TEENAGER TAKES A STEP TOWARD OWNING THEIR FAITH.**

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#### **TAKING A STEP**

Now, we say "takes a step" for a reason. It's because there's no finish line or certificate of completion when it comes to spiritual growth. Instead, spiritual growth is a life-long journey and no two journeys are identical. That's why our big win doesn't have anything to do with a specific skill or achievement. Instead, we win anytime we see a teenager take a single step closer to owning their faith.

#### **OWNING THEIR FAITH**

What, exactly, does it look like for a teenager to own their faith? Well, we believe there are four things that both lead to, and are a result of, spiritual growth. We call these four things our four spiritual habits.





## FOUR SPIRITUAL HABITS

### 1. **BELONG TO SOMETHING BIGGER THAN YOURSELF**

Engaging in healthy community can, and should, be a spiritual habit we help our students develop. But “healthy community” doesn’t just mean hanging out with Christians. This spiritual habit is about belonging to something bigger than you and growing in Christ-like relationships with everyone.

### 2. **EXPLORE HOW LIFE AND FAITH COLLIDE**

This is an obvious one, right? Sometimes spending time with God is the only spiritual habit we can name. After all, isn’t “growing spiritually” synonymous with “spending time with God”? Well, not exactly, but it’s still pretty important. After all, if teenagers are ever going to make their faith their own, they’ve got to explore how life and faith collide. They do this when they start spending time with God on their own. It means opening the Bible on their own, having conversations with God on their own, and discovering how they best connect with God through worship on their own.

### 3. **BECOME WHO GOD CREATED YOU TO BE**

Teenagers need to know that God made them unique, and special, and with really specific gifts, talents, passions, and resources. Then they need to use those gifts to love God, love others, and influence the world around them. When teenagers become who God made them to be, they begin to use their unique identity to love both God and others, and they grow.

### 4. **GO! TELL YOUR STORY**

Teenagers need to learn how to talk about God. Sharing your story is the spiritual habit of making faith a regular, every day, go-to topic of conversation in our lives. Because when we talk about God and His place in our story (or, more accurately, our place in His story), it helps us believe, helps us understand, and helps us take ownership of our own faith.

We count it as a win whenever a student takes a step toward owning their faith by practicing one, or maybe even all four, of these spiritual habits.



## *DISCIPLING TEENAGERS*

Do you know the last thing that Jesus said to His followers while he was on earth? Some people call it The Great Commission: "Go and make disciples." Duplicate yourselves. Go and make more of you. Take your faith and pass it on to someone else. When we talk about helping teenagers begin to own their faith, we're really just talking about discipleship. So what is discipleship? Here are three thoughts . . .

### **DISCIPLESHIP IS ABOUT LIVING, NOT LEARNING**

Rather than asking, "What can we teach a teenager about God?" we ask, "How can we help a teenager live out their faith?" It's not just about teaching them about Jesus - it's about modeling what faith in Jesus looks like. That's why our small groups spend time together outside of church. Because discipleship isn't taught in a classroom - it's modeled in everyday life.

### **DISCIPLESHIP HAPPENS IN COMMUNITY**

In the Gospels, you don't really see Jesus doing one-on-one discipleship. That's because discipleship happens best in a community of people. That's why we focus so much energy on getting teenagers plugged into consistent small groups, why we emphasize the role of parents and families, and why we surround teenagers with tons of Jesus followers. Because discipleship takes all of us!

### **DISCIPLESHIP IS A PROCESS**

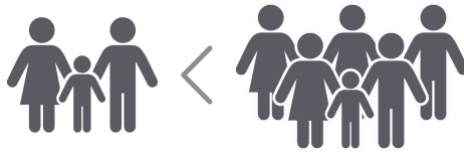
Discipleship is never really complete because learning to live out our faith is a life-long process. And because we know discipleship takes time, we want to put people in the lives of teenagers who are in it for the long-haul. That's why our small group leaders don't bail on their teenagers after a few months but stick with them for several years - because it's a process.



## ENGAGING WITH SMALL GROUP LEADERS

As a parent, you are making a huge impact in your teenager's life. The impact you're making is far more significant than any impact we, their church, could ever hope to make. You are the most important voice in your kid's life, both now and for a lifetime.

But in all of our time caring for teenagers, we've learned something really important. (We drew a picture to help you remember it.) We believe that, in every teenager's life, this is true: your best chance at influencing your teenager's faith and future is to recruit other adults to influence them with you.



Dr. Kara E. Powell and Dr. Chap Clark, authors of *Sticky Faith*, encourage parents to “develop a sticky web of relationships” for their kids. We love that idea!

Especially during the teenage years, when your kid is beginning to pull away from you in their search for independence, we want to come alongside you by creating a pool of trustworthy adults who can help you influence your teenager.

That's why our ministry is so committed to small groups. Small groups are about more than just good discussions. Small groups exist to connect your kid with an adult you can trust so you can better influence their faith and future.

So, this year, engage with your kid's small group leader. They can be a powerful ally for you and your family!



# ***THE FINE PRINT***

## *SAFETY GUIDELINES*

The safety of your teenager is a priority for our ministry, so we wanted to get you in the loop on how we plan to care for and protect them.

### ***WE TRAIN VOLUNTEERS***

Before any volunteer is permitted to serve with us, we take the time to get to know them, train them in our policies, and procedures and ensure they are a good and safe fit for the ministry team.

### ***WE SET BOUNDARIES***

We have set a number of guidelines for our youth ministry staff and volunteers. As a parent, you can help us make sure your child is well-cared for by helping us maintain these boundaries.

- No staff member or volunteer should initiate a one-on-one meeting with a teenager without the knowledge and consent of you, their parents.
- No staff member or volunteer should transport a teenager in a vehicle alone. If a teenager needs a ride, we must arrange to have another adult or teenager ride accompany them.
- All staff members and volunteers must maintain appropriate physical boundaries with teenagers at all times.



## ***WE REQUIRE PERMISSION SLIPS***

We will ask for your consent in order for your teenager to attend any event, retreat, or gathering outside of our regular weekly program. This comes with signing our annual medical release form. You will only need to sign *one* for the year, however we still require your permission for events

## ***WE REPORT DANGEROUS SITUATIONS***

Every staff member and volunteer in our ministry is a mandated reporter, which means we are legally required to report any dangerous or potentially dangerous situations immediately, including...

- If a student is being harmed, neglected, or abused.
- If a student is harming or abusing someone else.
- If a student is harming or at risk of harming themselves.

## ***WE ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE***

If you ever have a concern about your teenager's care or safety, please reach out to us. We're just a phone call or email away!



# CONTACT US

## LET'S STAY IN TOUCH

This year, we'd love to stay in conversation with you. Here are a few ways we're hoping we can keep the lines of communication open . . .

### EMAIL

We send an email just for parents every month. It's packed with information on our ministry. You can always reach us at [students@mycrosswind.com](mailto:students@mycrosswind.com)

### SOCIAL MEDIA

We post photos, videos, and updates from our ministry each week. Follow along at . . .

**FACEBOOK:** [www.facebook.com/cwstudents](http://www.facebook.com/cwstudents)

**INSTAGRAM:** [www.instagram.com/cwstudents](http://www.instagram.com/cwstudents)

### DISCUSSION GROUPS

Throughout the year, we'll host a Discussion Group or two for parents. This will take place on a Wednesday night before we start our regular program. If you'd like an invitation, let us know!