

Code of Ethics for Youth in Leadership

Below is the Code of Ethics for Youth in Leadership used by the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries for their youth leaders. It is printed below as a sample for you to develop your own code for your congregation, leadership team, or committee.

When drafting a code of ethics, it is important to have youth and adults in the congregation involved. What does the youth group expect of its leaders? What does the congregation expect of its leaders? Do these expectations extend beyond the congregation and into one's day-to-day actions? These conversations are a tremendous opportunity to discuss what it means to be visible as a leader, even while you are not actively at an event or at the congregation.

Consider how your group functions and what unique circumstances might warrant particular expectations being set. Your code may be general, with an understanding that being in right relationship would prohibit certain actions. Or, it may be specific, asking that leaders refrain from specific actions. For example, the sample code below does not make mention of any social media, but conversations are had with youth leaders about how the power they hold as leaders means that their statuses, photos, and other postings carry a different weight.



Sample

Youth in leadership positions are uniquely visible and influential in any conference community. They are expected to recognize that power imbalances exist in their interactions with other participants. Sexual behavior with participants during the event is never acceptable; additionally, youth leaders should remain aware of the impact of their actions and behave accordingly. Youth who abuse their roles as leaders, consciously or not, can damage individuals and the community. Youth leaders are expected to use their influence in a positive manner.

This sample is signed by youth leaders in addition to any behavioral codes or covenants that other participants are asked to adhere to. We use this Code of Ethics when youth leaders and youth attendees are present together.