

# WELCOME

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So you think you're ready to be a real-life small group leader?

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We want to see kids develop a BIG, authentic kind of faith. It's a BIG challenge, but we believe it can happen through something SMALL... You! The small group leader! But the only way you can help kids cultivate authentic faith is through leading small.

When we lead small we realize that what we do for a few will always have more potential than what we do for many. When we lead small we simply make a choice to invest strategically in the lives of a few over time so we can help them build an authentic faith. That's what being a small group leader is all about!

So thank you for thinking SMALL enough to take on a BIG challenge.

## THE WIN

As a small group leader, we need you to invest in the lives of a few to encourage authentic faith. You win when kids have meaningful interactions, both inside and outside of small group, that influence their faith in Jesus and deepen their relationships with others.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

What exactly IS a small group leader? A friend? A parent? A coach? A teacher? Here's what we define as a small group leader:

A small group leader is anyone who chooses to invest in the lives of a few to encourage authentic faith. Every SGL should do five things:

- **Be Present:** Connect their faith to a community by showing up predictably, mentally, and randomly.
- **Create a Safe Place:** Clarify their faith as they grow by leading the group, respecting the process, and guarding the heart.
- **Partner with Parents:** Nurture an everyday faith by cueing the parent, honoring the parent, and reinforcing the family.
- **Make it Personal:** Inspire their faith by your example by living in community, setting priorities, and being real.
- **Move Them Out:** Engage their faith in a bigger story by moving them to someone else, moving them to be the church, and moving them to what's next.

## QUALIFICATIONS

To be a small group leader, you don't have to be a Bible scholar, pass a theological aptitude test, or display a particular set of special spiritual gifts. You don't even need to be that cool. Here's all you need to do:

- Love God.
- Care about kids.
- Be committed to consistently investing in and caring for your few over a period of time.
- Complete and pass the application, background check, and interview process.

## EXPECTATIONS

- Serve weekly.
- Show up on time.
- Come prepared with the question and materials you need for group.
- Connect with your coach monthly and meet with them every six months.
- Attend the appropriate training events and meetings whenever possible.

# SGL

## APPLICATION

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Name: ..... Date of Birth: .....

Address: .....

City, State, Zip: .....

Phone Number: .....

Have you volunteered at our church before?      Yes      No

If so, where and how long? .....

Are you a high school student?      Yes      No

If so, where do you go to school? .....

What grade are you in? .....

How long have you been attending our church? .....

At which service time are you interested in volunteering? .....

Which age group would you prefer to work with? .....

List your hobbies/interests: .....

What skills could you offer to this role? .....

Briefly tell us your salvation story: .....

Why do you want to be a small group leader? .....

How did you find out about being a small group leader? .....

Is there anything that would prevent you from meeting with your group every week? .....

Are you willing to have a background check on you?      Yes      No

# REFERENCES

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Each small group leader should have several references before they can serve. You could have them give the following form to three people, and have those people mail or scan it to your address. Or you could ask these questions in a phone call to their references and write them down as they answer you. Make sure you keep these in your SGL's file, along with their background check, application, and interview.

Name: .....

Years Known: .....

Relationship: .....

Address: .....

How long have you known the potential volunteer? .....

Have you seen them work with kids or students before? If so, whom? .....

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Would you recommend them serving in an environment with kids or students? .....

# POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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Each church has a different set of policies and procedures, and you probably already have some in place. Here are a few recommendations for what you could place in your own, then use this template to make each policy and procedure look fancy!

## **CHECK-IN & DISMISSAL**

Make sure each child in your group has gone through the official check-in process through the church before sitting down in group. Also be sure each child is dismissed according to the official dismissal process.

## **RESTROOMS**

Never go into the bathroom alone with a child. If they need help, bring another adult with you. If they are old enough to go by themselves, wait outside for them.

## **ALLERGIES**

Be aware of the allergies of your few—especially peanut allergies. During group times when you are giving out food, double check with each student to make sure they aren't allergic to anything you're giving.

## **DISCIPLINE**

If you have a child that is not following the guidelines that have been put in place, try first directing the child's behavior. If that doesn't work have a plan in place to contact the coach or director so that they can handle the situation apart from small group.

## **SICKNESS POLICY**

If a child has had a fever within the last 24 hours, they should not be allowed in the environments.

## **CHILD ABUSE POLICY**

Each state has its own child abuse reporting policies. Be sure you are familiar with those policies. You can contact your state Department of Child and Family Services for specific guidelines.

## **FIRE EVACUATION PLAN**

Be aware of the fire evacuation map at the door of each classroom. Make sure to go over the plan with volunteers so they know their role in the process.

## **LOST CHILD PROCEDURE**

Should a child get lost after they have been dropped off, be sure you have a plan in place. You may need to shut down the environment and not let anyone in or out until the child has been found. Make sure you know what the child is wearing to let staff and leading volunteers know what to look for.

## **DIAPER CHANGING POLICIES**

Be sure to wear gloves and sanitize the changing area. Make sure other adults are around during the process and let the parent know that they've been changed.

## **TOY CLEANING**

After all children have left, spray each toy with antibacterial spray and let them air dry.

# BACKGROUND CHECK OPTIONS

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Every small group leader, and anyone working with kids or students at your church, should have a background check run before they are apprenticing a small group. A background check company will give you the forms you need to make sure you get the correct information. Here are a few companies we recommend:

**Protect My Ministry**

**Fellowship One**

**Background Investigation Bureau**

# FAMILY MINISTRY COVENANT

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While we can't tell you exactly what to say in your family ministry covenants, we can give you a few guidelines. Think about your specific standards and values and how you'd like to communicate them to your potential volunteers. Then customize this page and attach it to your volunteer applications!

## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest to serve in our family ministry environments! There are a few things we wanted you to know about our volunteer positions in these environments. First, know that as a volunteer in this ministry, you're in a leadership position, and the children and students here will watch what you say and do closely. We think that's great! You should be a role model for the next generation. And as a role model, your lifestyle is important to us. We want to make sure who you are on Sunday is who you are the rest of the week.

There are several issues that are most important to us, so we'll go into more detail about them in order to ensure that we're all on the same page.

## REGARDING SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

We believe that sex was created by God as an expression of intimacy within the content of marriage. Volunteers who embrace a lifestyle that contradicts this teaching will find themselves having to pretend to be something they're not and believe something they don't. To prevent you from a potentially awkward situation, we may ask you not to serve for the following reasons:

- If you are involved in a sexual relationship and not married.
- If you are currently living with someone of the opposite sex and not married.
- If you are married and are currently involved in a sexual relationship outside of your marriage.

## REGARDING SUBSTANCE BEHAVIOR

If you have a history of alcohol or drug abuse, this might be something God uses in a positive way to impact the future of the next generation. We'd love to talk with you further about your story and how it can impact the children and students in our ministry. We have a few guidelines that will determine your volunteer placement, and a few reasons we may ask you not to serve at this time:

- If you have been arrested for or convicted of an alcohol or drug-related offense in the past twelve months.
- If you are currently being treated for alcohol or drug abuse.
- If you have used any illegal substance in the past twelve months.
- If consuming alcohol to the point of being unable to drive legally is a regular part of your lifestyle.

## REGARDING SOCIAL BEHAVIOR

The kids (and/or the parents of the kids) in your group will definitely visit your Facebook page. If you blog, tweet, Periscope, Vine, Instagram or Snapchat, your few will probably follow you through those platforms. We think social media can be a great way to connect with your few outside of Sunday! However, they'll also be able to see everything you post publically. Please leverage your social media with your group in a positive way. Please be mindful of these guidelines, and we may ask you not to serve for the following reasons:

- If you use inappropriate language on a regular basis.
- If you post pictures of yourself in revealing clothes.

**I agree to the terms above as long as I am a volunteer of family ministry.** If I am unable to uphold this covenant I understand that I will need to resign from my volunteer position or that I may be asked by the leadership to resign.

**Volunteer Signature** ..... **Date** .....

**Parent/Guardian Signature** ..... **Date** .....  
(if under 18 years of age)