Boundaries

(ISM Youth Group)

We live in the age of “AI” (Artificial Intelligence). Here is the AI summary when it comes to the concept of “Boundaries”:

A boundary is a limit or line that defines what is acceptable or unacceptable in a relationship, or in a situation. It helps to protect your time, energy, feelings, and personal space. Boundaries are important for maintaining healthy relationships and personal well-being.

Sounds like boundaries are important all across life! It is often said, “Clarity is kind.” Rather than making you guess about what the expectations are at youth events, we want to aim to be as “kind” as possible by clearly communicating these to you in advance.

RELATIONSHIPS
As you all grow as young adults it is normal to start seeking out romantic relationships with the opposite gender. At ISM we aren't going to make a habit of being overly involved in your dating life. We do, however, greatly value your purity and best interest as you grow into an adult! We also value *the overall reputation* of Impact Student Ministries as a place guardians can promote to their children/youth/hyphen.

Here are some principles to live by, and they will also be our guide for Youth and Hyphen events going forward.
(Remember: Now that you have seen this, it is fair game to call these out if you are not abiding by them).

TOUCHING

- No holding hands during youth events or outings
- Refrain from putting your arm around the opposite gender during photos
- No hugging the opposite gender
- No sitting on the laps of the same gender or opposite gender
- No slapping or hitting
- Refrain from touching each other unnecessarily, even in sport or fun.
- When praying for the opposite gender, “laying on of hands” should be a placement of your hand on the arm, shoulder or forehead of the person being prayed for only (no draping arm over another shoulder in a hugging fashion).

COMMUNICATION

- The Bible commands us to “be ye kind one to another.” Your “joke” in public could result in another’s tears in private.
- Your words are powerful so use them wisely to build up and not tear down.
- Follow the guidelines of your guardians. Do NOT use ISM as a place to “bend the rules” placed by your guardians.
- No vulgar language may be used at any time for any reason. If it happens, you may be sent home from events, or dismissed from youth services or activities.

SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

- During youth service, sit in the same row as your gender (whoever gets to the row first sets the row).
- Sit far enough away from the opposite gender where no part of your body is touching.

BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDE

- Be willing to look at others in the group and make the powerful biblical statement of: “Follow me like I follow Christ.”
- Our youth workers and leaders take this ministry very seriously. We love you and want to do our best to hear from God for your life. We will respect you and we expect you to respect us.
- The Bible says to do unto others as you would have them do to you. If you want to be respected, respect others.
- The following points are signs of respect that are expectations in services, meetings, outings, and more:
    - When someone speaks to you, look them in the eye and respond.
    - No headphones or Air pods are allowed in youth services, events, prayer meetings, breakout sessions, or any services at camps, conferences, congress, or conventions.
    - Cell phone usage of any kind is also not welcome in youth services, events, prayer meetings, breakout sessions, or any services at camps, conferences, congress, or conventions. This includes calls, games, texting, social media, etc.
    - If your parent allows you to have a cell phone, that’s great. That phone just will not be taken out during worship, preaching, etc. If so, we may ask you once to put it away. After that, we will simply walk you to your parent or guardian.
    - We are not trying to be unrealistic, but we have prayed, fasted, and prepared too long to have the group sit on phones and not place any value in the things we are trying to accomplish at a given service or event.
    - If at any time inappropriate pictures, images, websites, songs, or anything else deemed ungodly or inappropriate by a youth worker and/or leader are shared with other students, expulsion from the youth group may take place. Just because you may pollute your mind with trash, does not mean you have the right to do the same to someone else’s mind.

TRANSPORTATION

- Van, bus, or vehicle transport is not a time to “bend” the rules. Sit in a row with a member of your gender.
- We will only transport members, or approved guests, of our youth group.

EVENTS

- When traveling to overnight trips: Boys and Girls will NEVER be in the same sleeping area. This includes hotel rooms, tents, and cabins.
- Even with like gender, interactions will be appropriate. For instance, girls can get ready for an event in a bathroom at the same time, but the door is to remain open where chaperones can see and hear what is taking place.
- When sitting in a larger conference area service, we will follow the same seating arrangements mentioned above.
- All transportation will be through ISM provided vehicles with an ISM youth team leader or approved chaperone.
- At no time will 2 members of the opposite gender be allowed to “pair off” outside the group. This includes transportation, conference common areas or restaurants.
- No one who travels with the youth group (youth or hyphen) are exempt from these rules.
- All music played on church trips, whether through the vehicle speakers or in Airpods, should be Christian in nature.
- If at any point, someone is viewing or listening to something inappropriate, we have the right to send student home immediately at parent’s expense.
- All youth services and on-campus events are an outlet for “outreach” to our friends and community. However, off campus youth group trips (camps, conventions, congress, conference, etc.) are only open to regularly attending members of the ISM group who are actively pursuing a relationship with God. Youth group trips are a “privilege” and not a “right.”

EVENTS ON YOUR OWN

We recognize that teenagers will want to get together outside the Impact Student Ministries schedule. This is a free country, and your parent/guardian has the final say over interactions that take place outside of scheduled ISM events.

We recommend that spontaneous gatherings should be done in groups and ALWAYS involve the oversight of parents or guardians. If you are unsure if an event is sponsored and supervised by the youth team, please contact us directly, and do not just assume.

Conclusion

We are proud of the culture and young people we have in Impact Student & Hyphen Ministries! These boundaries are here to protect each other as we grow with God and IMPACT our world! Remember, “it takes years to build a reputation and seconds to destroy one.” Let’s pursue Jesus Christ together and make wise choices!