Youth Convention 2026 – Parent & Student FAQ

Travel & Schedule

When do we leave?
We will depart from the church on Wednesday at **11:30 AM.**
Please arrive 30 minutes early for check-in.

When will we return?
Hotel checkout is at **11:00 AM.** Because the late-night activity will end late, students will likely be able to sleep in until checkout time. We anticipate returning around **4:00 PM** on Saturday (possibly earlier). We plan to stop for lunch/brunch on the way home. We will send an update to parents Saturday morning with a more specific arrival time, and we will also send a group message when we are about one hour away to help you plan for pickup. *If you have not received ISM text updates, please let us know and we will get you added.*

Where are we staying?
We'll be staying at the Hampton Inn & Suites in St. Charles (1410 South 5th St.), just 5 miles from the convention. **We'll be walking there to save on gas!** Just kidding… but seriously, thanks for reading this far

Transportation?
Students will be rolling to the convention in style on our church shuttle, driven by our approved drivers. If there's extra room for Hyphen (our awesome young adults), it'll be first-come, first-served but **priority goes to students** since most Hyphen can drive themselves. Hyphen are welcome to caravan with the church shuttle if they want to keep up with shuttle vibes but it's totally optional. If they decide to go early or show up late, check-in at the hotel might take a little longer since Pastor Gavin and Tasha might not be there to greet you with our usual fanfare (coolness).

Free time?
Yes! **There will be supervised free time sprinkled throughout the convention days (in between services),** and we'll share the full itinerary soon hopefully to everyone's delight. Hyphen (our amazing young adults) are encouraged to hang with the students but remember this is also *your* convention time to recharge, grow, and connect with others. So, you're not required to stick with the group, but do check in with Event Leaders (Tasha and me) from time to time. (PULSE leaders, on the other hand… you are sticking with students like Gorilla Glue throughout the entire event. No exceptions!

Dress code?
We ask students to dress modestly and appropriately for church services and public

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spaces. Because modesty and apparel can be a little subjective to different people and different circles, we encourage everyone to check out the full policy at refuge.faith/impactstudents. For all the details on ISM and trip expectations, the ISM webpage has you covered!

Rooms & Supervision

When are room assignments released?
Room assignments will be shared to parents two weeks ahead and finalized one week before convention.

How are rooms decided?
The Youth Leaders prayerfully consider maturity, compatibility, parent preferences, and group dynamics. Part of this trip is all about hanging with friends *and* making new ones! We're working on a spreadsheet that looks like it was designed by NASA, Sudoku experts, and a caffeine-fueled octopus all at once trying to ***make everyone happy*** is no small feat! Students, parents, friend groups, special requests… it's a heroic juggling act, but we're tackling it with care and love. Thank you in advance for your patience.

Night supervision?
At least one PULSE leader will be stationed in each room, and students are expected to stay put after curfew (11 PM sharp). PULSE leaders, you're on the same page—unless Pastor Tasha or I call you into action. Hyphen, you're not held to this strict curfew, but for safety (and because we *love* you), we ask that you check in by midnight if you plan to be out and about. Not because we don't trust you… but because let's be real, you're here for spiritual growth sessions, and getting some sleep will make them way more epic!

Quick note: under *no circumstances* are students allowed in Hyphen rooms—or vice versa! Even in the case of a "hair emergency," don't panic—we're confident the PULSE leaders have the skills (and superhero-level patience) to handle it.

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Separate floors?
We don't know yet if the rooms will be on different floors. Male and female students will be separated and supervised by same-gender leaders in their assigned rooms. Usually, hotels try to keep groups together, but if we end up with separate floors, ***our first priority will be separating Hyphen from students***, and then making sure students are sorted safely.

Communication

How do parents contact leaders?
Got questions, concerns, or just a random thought during the trip? Reach out to Tasha or me, and we'll make sure the info gets to the team if needed. We'll contact you personally on our cell phones when it's important, but for the big updates, we'll be firing off mass texts through the church system

Gavin: 314-377-4768
Tasha: 816-288-3254

Leader communication?
Leaders will use a group text thread to coordinate schedules and student safety.

Phones allowed?
Phones are allowed, but they shouldn't distract from services or group activities—yes, even your student's 37th TikTok scroll. Check out the ISM expectations and trip guidelines for all the smartphone deets on the ISM webpage.

Special note: sometimes students might "send you a carrier pigeon" via text with a negative experience we didn't know about (thanks, technology). If that happens**, PLEASE** reach out to Tasha or me so we can step in, provide clarity, and help find a solution because no one likes mystery drama on a youth trip!

Emergency?
In the unlikely event of an emergency, we will contact you immediately. If hospitalization is needed, we'll stay in constant communication and follow your guidance as your child's legal guardian. The last thing we would ever want is to make medical decisions without your input we're here to care for your student with love and to honor your wishes every step of the way.

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Church Services & Group Seating

Can students sit with other groups?
Students are expected to sit with our youth group to maintain accountability and unity. Period.

Required to attend services?
Yes! All scheduled services are mandatory—unless your student is sick . If they're thinking about skipping a service or two, this might not be the best event for them, because the "magic" of this trip happens when everyone shows up ready to experience God together!

Behavior expectations?
Students should come ready to be respectful, engaged, and responsive during worship and preaching because this is *why we're really here!* Sure, there will be tons of fun, connections, and activities outside of services, but the heart of Youth Convention is your student being surrounded by like-minded teens, Spirit-led moments, and speakers speaking directly into their lives. This experience is meant to inspire, redirect, grow, and encourage them spiritually. It's not a "fix-all" conference, but it's a place that supports their faith journey—and trust us, it can be just as encouraging for you as a parent!

Health & Safety

Medication process?
All medications need to be shared with Tasha and me **before departure**. Most of the meds are already listed on the registration form, so we've got a head start. We expect your student(s) to be able to take their medications on their own—because we're awesome youth leaders, not medical professionals. If your student(s) can't manage it independently, we'll leave it up to you to decide whether they're ready for the trip. Safety first, always!

Allergies?
We'll be extra careful about allergies and steer clear of anything that might trigger a reaction. You've already shared your student's allergies on the registration form, so we're on top of it but we also encourage your student to be proactive. If they notice any allergic reactions, let us know right away so we can jump in and handle it safely.

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If sick?
If a student starts feeling sick during any of our busy activities outside the hotel, a leader will stick with them to make sure they're safe and cared for. We'll also reach out to you personally to keep you updated

Discipline Process

Main expectations?
Respect the leaders, stick with the group, attend services, honor curfew, and represent Christ well. And if, for some reason, you're acting a little… silly, maybe keep it on the down-low and *don't rock the Refuge swag*! Just kidding (kind of), seriously, check out the full ISM expectations on the ISM webpage so everyone knows how act on the event.

After first warning?

1. Verbal warning
2. Leader conference with student (with Tasha or Gavin)
3. Parent phone call/text (keeps everyone accountable)
4. Possible removal from present activity (from whatever we are doing at the time)
5. If behavior continues, parent may be required to pick up the student at their expense. To be clear, there is no second warning.

Sent home?
Yes! If there's a serious situation involving safety, rebellion, inappropriate behavior, or repeated defiance, this falls under the *second protocol warning*. If a second warning is needed and a parent can't come get the student, I (Pastor Gavin) will personally escort them home, of course, only if the gender match is appropriate.

Property damage?
Parents are financially responsible for damages caused by their student(s) (i.e., shuttle, hotel, conference center; restaurants; the possibilities are endless).

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Spiritual Focus

Formatted: Centered

What is the goal?
Youth Convention is a time for spiritual renewal, discipleship, Holy Spirit encounters, and strengthening godly friendships. This is what we are investing in personally, financially, spiritually, etc.

Altar time?
Students are encouraged but never pressured to seek God's presence. We'll guide with sensitivity, wisdom, and a little love. Would I be upset if students or Hyphen were first at the altar and the last to leave? Absolutely not…have at it! In fact, it would make us *godly proud* as you already do week after week. Just know Pastor Gavin's stomach for after-service dinner might have a slightly different opinion… but don't worry, just keep praying hard and praying long!

How can parents support?
Pray before, during, and after the convention! Ask open-ended questions like:

- "What did God speak to you?"
- "What challenged you most?"
- "What are you bringing home with you?"

Start these conversations throughout the week and be open to checking in with your student listen, celebrate, and encourage them.

These policies and guidelines are here to protect and steward the experience so everyone can have a safe, meaningful, and fun time. We can't wait to see the memories, growth, and laughs that are coming!

If you want to stay updated on pictures, videos, and stories from the trip, follow our ISM Instagram page (check the QR code on the back of a sanctuary seat)