



**EBBCTEENS YOUTH STAFF**

# HANDBOOK

# PHILOSOPHY

*East Brandywine Baptist Church Teen Ministry (ebbcTEENS) exists to glorify God by partnering with parents in making disciples of Jesus Christ.*

1. We will preach the gospel regularly to our teens.
2. We will create a culture of loving God and others.
3. We will teach our teens the Scriptures thoroughly.
4. We will partner with parents.
5. We will be present.
6. We will help our teens determine their spiritual gifts.
7. We will point our teens towards ministry opportunities in our local church, community, and global missions.
8. We will lead our teenagers towards baptism and church membership at EBBC.

# Our Leaders

## We need you!

In the Gospels, Jesus shows us a picture of discipleship. He leads, cares for, and equips twelve to then go and make disciples in his name. We make it our goal to replicate his model at ebbcTEENS. That means we need help, and lots of it. By joining us, you are passing on the faith to the next generation through the discipleship of your small group. This is your first and foremost role. Yes, we will need your help with tasks like selling snacks, leading games, and applying band aids, but your number one goal is to care for the souls of the teens you are assigned. So how exactly do we do soul care?

## Soul Care

How exactly to we disciple?

1. First, we spend **time with teens**. Jesus spent a lot of time with his disciples. We don't expect you to spend as much time as he did, but we do ask that you come faithfully to our weekly gathering, reach out to your teens at least once per week, every week, and hey, if you have time, take them out for chik-fil-a. Ultimately, if you aren't in the trenches with them, you can't help them fight the good fight of faith.
2. We **ask questions**, and we ask a lot of them. The best teachers know how to ask the best questions. Use questions to get a sense of their desires, their beliefs, and their commitments. What do they want most in life? What do their actions show they are committed to? How do they think about things? Until you start to dig in and ask questions that lead to these deeper heart conditions, you will have a hard time meaningfully connecting God's word to their lives.

3. We **come prepared** to discuss the Scriptures. No one is asking you to get a Bible degree or have all the answers. However, each week you will know what we are teaching ahead of time and have access to some insights about that teaching. Think about your teens in your group and how they need that lesson applied to them (based on those questions you've been asking them...hint, hint #2). Then guide your group discussion to help them think through those application and what next steps they should be taking.
4. We **connect with parents**. Mom and dad are the number one stewards over our teens. If we skip over them in our work with teens, we can work against God's design for the spiritual development of our teens. This means, checking in with parents, going to them for help/information, and maybe even having their family over for dinner.
5. We **commit to growing** as Christians. Jesus made it clear that we will not produce fruit if we are not connected to the vine (John 15). How do we do this? We abide in Jesus. We draw near to him in prayer and the word. We commit to being around his people and gathering with them in worship. We listen to the counsel of other Christians steeped in his word. If you want to produce fruit worthy of emulation (1 Cor 11:1) then we must be following hard after Christ.

# Creating our Culture

## What is Culture?

Culture describes the norms, behaviors, and customs of a group of people. We want to create a culture of love at ebbcTEENS. John teaches us what love is in his first epistle...

In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (1 John 4:9-11)

Christ's life for us and death in our place is the ultimate picture of love. In this way, love means you before me. Love is sacrificial, and Jesus calls us to live out that kind of love with one another.

## Creating a Culture of Love

When Jesus teaches us to love God and our neighbor (Matt 22:36-40), he means to put others first. Here's how we do this at ebbcTEENS:

1. We show up
2. We set the example
3. We play games
4. We get silly
5. We celebrate positivity
6. We talk to teens
7. We cover offenses
8. We handle conflict biblically
9. We offer grace



# How to Lead a Small Group

We build 30 minutes into our weekly program for you to meet with your small group. That's right, we think small groups are that important that we give you 25% of our time with the teens. We ask that you come each week with a plan for how you will intentionally lead that time. At a minimum, that plan should include an icebreaker, prayer, and a lesson discussion most nights.

## Small Group Schedule

Here is a sample outline of how your small group time could be used.

- Welcome/icebreaker (10 min)
- Life updates/prayer (5 min)
- Lesson discussion leading to application (15 min)

## Tips for Leading a Discussion

The primary focus of your small group time each week will be your discussion time. This is when you will help the teens process the lesson and apply it to their lives specifically. Here are some tips to help you do that well.

- 1) Come with a discussion outline prepared
- 2) Set ground rules and enforce them
  - a. Listen while others speak
  - b. Show respect when someone shares from the heart
- 3) Ask open-ended questions
- 4) Engage everyone intentionally
- 5) Give positive feedback for joining the discussion
- 6) Keep your mouth shut as much as possible
- 7) Be a guide on the side not a sage on the stage

## **Confidentiality**

Lastly, confidentiality is essential for vulnerability in a small group. Teens will not open unless a culture of confidentiality is established. However, there may be times when you as the leader need to breach that confidentiality to protect one of your teens. Here are the 3 situations which typically justify breaking confidentiality:

1. A teen is hurting themselves.
2. A teen is being hurt by someone else.
3. A teen is hurting someone else.

# Boundaries

## Why Policies?

Boundaries are important for healthy relationships. There are some things that we want you to do (see pages 4-7), but there are also somethings we do not want you to do. For a clear and thorough explanation of the church's official boundaries, please see the *Child Safeguarding Policy*. This page should clear up what boundaries we'd like you to respect specifically with our teens.

## Nevers

- Never be alone with a teen of the opposite gender.
- Never promise confidentiality to a teen. Youth staff are required to share with parents, pastors, and law enforcement when asked.
- Never inappropriately touch – see the *Child Safeguarding Policy* for specifics on safe touch.
- Never meet with teens outside of our program in a way that is not interruptible or observable.
- Never text or private message a teen without parent permission.
- Never show favoritism.
- Never condone sinful or illegal behaviors.



# SCHEDULE

	<b>MS</b>	<b>HS</b>
<b>6:00 – 6:20</b>	Open Gym	
<b>6:20 – 7:00</b>	Praise/Lesson	
<b>7:00 – 7:30</b>	Small Group	Game
<b>7:30 – 8:00</b>	Game	Small Group
<b>8:00</b>	All Dismiss from Gym	

# ASSIGNMENTS

## **Snack Shack**

- Setup the Snack Shack by 5:55
- Run the snack shack from 6:00-6:25
- Replenish the snack shack when it runs out

## **Praise**

- Organize and lead team praise team

## **AV oversight**

- Oversee teen AV team

## **Tear Down**

- Look for and report any issues or damage in facility to Ann Weurtz
- Oversee the SLT Tear Down Crew
  - Close windows
  - Turn heaters off
  - Pick up trash and run to dumpster if full
  - Put away chairs
  - Put away any borrowed bibles or pens

## **Games**

- Work with the SLT games team to plan a game for the night
- Train SLT in leading games

## Other Policies

### **Attendance**

- Small group leaders are expected to take attendance in the Check-in app each Wednesday
- Small group leaders are expected to have visitors in their groups complete a guest card
- Let the pastor of students know if you will be absent by the Monday before our weekly gathering.