

# **ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI YOUTH GROUP MEMBERS POLICY OF USE OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND OTHER DRUGS**

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Bonafide (High School) Youth Group and the Middle School Youth Group at St. Francis of Assisi seeks to lead and direct students to a healthy and holy life according to the mind of Christ. The use and abuse of alcohol, tobacco and other substances pose obstacles to healthy and appropriate development of human persons, made in God's image and likeness, and as Christians who have become temples of the Holy Spirit. These obstacles impede the proper development of the personality, the motivation and success of the members, maintaining a safe environment, and the development of a close relationship with God. Since all these areas are part of the concern of St. Francis of Assisi for all Youth Group members, this policy is adopted.

It is a privilege to attend Bonafide Youth Group or Middle School Youth Group at St. Francis of Assisi, and it is also a privilege to have the activities available for participation and the learning and development that comes to members through them. In addition, those who represent Bonafide or St. Francis Middle School Youth Group in any way need to be good representatives of St. Francis of Assisi and, ultimately, good examples of Christian men and women who practice their Faith in Jesus.

This policy applies to ALL Bonafide and Middle School Youth Group members and shall be in effect for the entire school year. This shall also apply to all St. Francis of Assisi Youth Group activities that occur prior to or after the school year, including all breaks during the 2018-2019 school year.

## **PROHIBITED ACTS:**

A Youth Group member shall not use, possess, buy, sell, or give away any illegal or non-prescribed controlled substance.

- A controlled substance shall include any tobacco or vaping product (whether product claims to contain nicotine or not), any liquid or vaping product containing alcohol, illegal drugs, any substance illegal for minors to possess, and non-prescribed drugs.
- This prohibition shall apply to all controlled substances, regardless of quantity.
- This prohibition shall apply to all students in 7-12<sup>th</sup> grades, regardless of age.
- It is not a violation for a student to possess or use a controlled substance specifically prescribed to the member by his/her doctor

All bags or items brought onto St. Francis of Assisi property or to a Bonafide or St. Francis of Assisi Middle School Youth Group activity may be inspected by the sponsor, Youth Group Leader, Director of Youth Ministry, Religious Education Director, CCD teacher, chaperoning parents, Priest or any other adult assigned to do the inspection. Refusal to submit to a bag or item inspection upon request will result in the member being removed from the activity, and parents will be contacted.

Each organization and activity that the Bonafide Youth Group and St. Francis Middle School Youth Group members attend may have further expectations and consequences that apply in addition to those described here.

### **DETERMINING WHEN A VIOLATION HAS OCCURRED**

A member of any Youth Group may admit to violating this policy and accept the consequences of his/her choices.

Reasonable cause may be established when knowledge of the violation is given to the Director of Youth Ministry, Priest, or another Parish authority. Knowledge of violation may be given by reliable means, in addition to reporting by the violating student but not limited to;

- A Youth Group leader or other adult in a supervisory role for the Parish
- The Director of Youth Ministry
- The Parish Priest
- A parent of a Bonafide or St. Francis Middle School Youth Group member
- Parishioner

If any Bonafide or St. Francis of Assisi Middle School Youth Group member is suspected of being presently under the influence of nicotine or vaping products, drugs or alcohol at any Youth Group event, at St. Francis of Assisi Parish or elsewhere, he/she will be detained by a Youth Group leader or another Parish authority.

- Parish authorities must have reasonable cause to believe or suspect that a Youth Group member is under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, or other drugs/substances at the St. Francis Youth Group sponsored event. Reasonable cause shall be based on the member's conduct, demeanor, appearance, speech or smell.
- The member cannot remain at Youth Group or at a Youth Group event while under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, drugs or other substances.

The St. Francis of Assisi Parish authorities shall have discretion to call law enforcement if a violation of this policy has occurred in Parish property.

### **CONTESTING A VIOLATION OF THIS POLICY**

A member, parent, or guardian may contest the Director of Youth Ministry's application of this policy to their situation using the following process:

- Within one day after being notified of the decision, the member, parent/guardian must submit to the Director or Youth Ministry (at the Parish office), in writing, the reasons for asserting the policy has been incorrectly applied.
- The Director of Youth Ministry shall then schedule a meeting with the Priest, parent(s)/guardian and member, to be held within 5 days of the receipt of written notification by parent/guardian or member.
- The Director of Youth Ministry and Priest shall consider the evidence presented and provide a written decision within 5 days.

**CONSEQUENCES**

This is a zero-tolerance policy. Violation of this policy shall result in the removal of the member from Youth Group and expulsion of the member until the next school year begins, which will include exclusion from activities during summer break and other breaks.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POLICY AND AGREEMENT**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (print name) hereby acknowledge that I have read this policy in its entirety, and promise to abide by this policy at all Bonafide and/or St. Francis Middle School Youth Group meetings, activities, and events.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Youth Group Member Signature

I \_\_\_\_\_ (print name) the parent/guardian for the Youth Group Member listed above, hereby acknowledge that I have read this policy in its entirety, and promise to abide by this policy when my child/ward is attending Bonafide and/or St. Francis Middle School Youth Group meetings, activities, and events.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature