PILLAR
CHURCH

Youth Protection Summary

Purpose - Keep Youth in Our Care Safe and Secure
Pillar Church of Okinawa seeks to provide a safe, healthy and secure environment for the children and youth who participate in our programs and activities.

Definitions - *Youth* *falls under the general term "child," as youth are children under the age of 18 who attend Pillar Okinawa-sponsored activities or events. More specifically, youth are children ages 10-18 or children in grades 5-12. Middle School includes youth in grades 5-7, and High School includes youth in grades 8-12.*

General Policies

- At Pillar Okinawa, most youth group meetings are held in private residences of church members or those actively attending Pillar Okinawa. The elders of Pillar Okinawa must approve the host home as well as any youth ministry leaders or volunteers. All necessary precautions will be taken to ensure the safety of our youth including requiring that youth meetings be hosted in the general gathering areas of the residence and prohibiting youth ministry volunteers from being alone with a youth in any room of the residence.
- A youth may not be alone with a youth ministry volunteer(s) en route to or from a meeting/activity location without the express written or verbal permission of the youth's parent(s).
- The youth ministry leaders may coordinate, with the parent's permission, a mentoring/discipleship relationship between a youth and a mentor. Mentors will go through the screening process common to all other youth ministry volunteers, and parents must give verbal consent for this mentoring relationship to begin. Mentors must be of the same sex at the youth, and mentors should always spend time with the youth in a public, not private setting.
- At least two qualified youth ministry leaders and/or volunteers must be present at youth group meetings at all times. In the case of a mixed sex gathering, one of the youth volunteers must be a man and the other must be a woman. Whenever possible, a third volunteer will be present who is unrelated to the other two volunteers, especially if the leaders are a married couple.

General Policies, cont.

- If a youth ministry volunteer desires to initiate a texting or messaging relationship with a Youth, the volunteer must receive verbal or written permission from the Youth's parent(s) and be for the purpose of sharing prayer requests and encouragement as is appropriate for the age of the Youth. Additionally, the texting relationship must only occur between a Youth Ministry Volunteer and Youth of the same sex, unless the Youth is in a group message with male and female students as well as Youth volunteers. The third volunteer may be a man or woman.

Questions and Joining the Team

If you have any questions or are interested in serving as a youth ministry volunteer, please contact Nicole Alesse at nicole@pillarokinawa.com for grades 5-7, or Lauren Dalton at lauren@pillarokinawa.com for grades 8-12.

Reporting

If you think that you may know something that should be reported regarding youth safety, please tell the Executive Pastor or a Pillar Okinawa elder as soon as possible.