

SYR 2023

SUMMER YOUTH RETREAT 2023: VIBE CHECK JULY 17-21

Dear Leaders,

I'm excited to prepare for Summer Youth Retreat (SYR) 2023! This year, our theme is 'Vibe Check.' Vibe Check is geared to reflect on how their walk with the Lord is developing. At SYR 2023, we will seek the lord for his direction in being to other's what he was to us. Our desire is for students to learn what it looks like to share god's goodness and will in their everyday lives (Romans 12:14-16). I can't wait to see what God has in store for us!

Our keynote speaker is Josh Hull. Josh has been a Ministry Director at Riverside Community Church, outside of Pittsburgh, PA, for over 8 years. He serves on the youth and junior-high teams along with his wife Hannah, who is the Youth Worship Director. As a graduate of Biblical Studies from Grove City College, Josh has always had a passion to teach people to find and follow Jesus.

Here's what's included in this registration packet:

- Price Breakdown
- Staff/Leader Training
- SYR Rules
- **Background Check Affidavit**
- **Rooming List & T-Shirt Order Form**

[Items in red must be submitted to Jenn Morris by July 10]

All the information found in this packet can be accessed at any time online at openbibleeast.org under the "Events" page or through our Youth Leaders Facebook group. If you are not currently a part of this group and would like to be, please let me know and I will add you!

If you have any event questions, contact me via phone at (937) 267-6014 or email me at studentministries@openbibleeast.org. For any registration/rooming questions, contact Jenn Morris via phone at (210) 260-7252 or at jm0rris44@aol.com.

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Finally, I want to say thank you for your service in student ministry. Student ministry is often overlooked and tends to be a thankless job. The Student Ministries Team and I understand that dynamic and want you to know how much we care about you! Our prayer is for SYR 2023 to be a time of encouragement and growth for both students and leaders. We support you. We honor you. We love you!

We look forward to partnering and serving with you to see God's glory cover the earth!

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sean Stanley', with a stylized, cursive script.

Sean Stanley

Student Ministries Director

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PRICE BREAKDOWN

All rates include access to all sessions, activities, materials, SYR 2023 shirt, and meals from dinner on Monday to dinner on Thursday.

Student Rate: \$245

Sibling Rate: \$230

- The Sibling Regular Rate is available to families sending more than one child to SYR 2023. The first sibling pays the Regular Rate of \$245 and each additional sibling pays \$230.
- This option is designed to help alleviate the cost of families sending more than one child to SYR 2023.

Lodge Rate: \$285-\$410

- Single occupancy - \$410
- Double occupancy - \$295
- **Lodge availability is limited**

Kids Rate:

- 0 – 2 years old - Free
- 2 – 5 years old - \$90
- 6 – 11 years old - \$155

We need a minimum of your rooming list received no later than July 10th to provide sleeping accommodations. Shirt sizes cannot be guaranteed past July 1st. Please mail all payments by July 11th.

Checks should be made payable to Open Bible East and mailed to:

Open Bible East
c/o SYR 2023
645 Helke Road
Vandalia, OH 45377

For all registration and payment questions contact Jenn Morris.

- Phone: (210) 260-7252
- Email: jm0rris44@aol.com

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SEXUAL OFFENSE BACKGROUND CHECKS

As you probably realize, churches assume a major liability risk today if they do not conduct sexual offense background checks on all paid and volunteer youth workers. It is a reality of our time and in the interest of protecting our youth.

Likewise, we must provide watchful care over adults who will be in contact with all of our youth at Summer Youth Retreat (SYR). Enclosed is a sexual offense background check affidavit we are now required to use with churches sending adult workers to SYR (any adult from the church attending SYR is included). It is necessary for the form to include the names of all adults from the church at SYR, verifying that sexual offense background checks have been performed on all. Please notice the form requires notarization. We would all be deeply grieved if one event occurred at SYR of an adult worker taking advantage of a student. Additionally, if a sexual offense background check had not been performed on that adult, the church and region would also be legally liable. We cannot risk any of that; too much would be at stake. Nor can we selectively apply the sexual offense background checks and grant exceptions. All of us must come under the cover of that protection. If this is new to you, please know that churches across the nation are now performing these sexual offense background checks. It is standard operating procedure for wise leaders.

Thankfully, we are aware of a web site where you can conduct sexual offense background checks free of charge from the Department of Justice database. You can go to this site and enter the names of individuals to verify there is no criminal background of sexual offense:

www.nsopw.gov/en/search/

Anyone with any such offense in his or her background cannot participate at SYR. While grace can cover sin, legal liability remains.

Thank you for understanding how important it is to put the health and safety of our youth first. All adults coming to SYR must be listed on the signed and notarized affidavit (most banks have notaries) as having been cleared by a sexual offense background check, and submitted with your registrations. This is a simple precaution we can take that is easy to do and completely free. If you have any questions, please give me a call.



Sean Stanley
Student Ministries Director

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STUDENT MINISTRIES STAFF TRAINING MANUAL AND INFORMATION

WHY YOU ARE SO IMPORTANT

Someone once said that everything rises and falls on leadership. That is true at Summer Youth Retreat (SYR) as much or more than anywhere else. Between weather, injuries, and students who are homesick or have bad attitudes, there are a lot of variables that can have a negative effect on camp. Your leadership, enthusiasm, attitude, and maturity can make all the difference in the world.

Here are some key areas where we need you to shine at camp this summer:

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP: You will be the pastor or shepherd for your students. You will provide the pastoral care and ministry they need most. During small group times, at the altars during service, and all throughout the day you will help students to deepen and develop their personal relationships with Christ. Please be spiritually prepared to minister to others.

TEAM LEADERSHIP: You will set the tone for your students and your team throughout the week. Your attitude will be contagious. If you complain about everything, your students will complain about everything. If you are pumped, they will be pumped. At some time during the week, your group will feel like they got ripped off in a team competition, didn't get enough points for their team spirit, or be mad at the next room for being too noisy. That's your chance to really lead them in a positive way. You can do it!

BE A TEAM PLAYER: Showing up on time for morning leader meetings, following the schedule and rules of the camp, etc. are all really important. It keeps harmony on the team, keeps things flowing smoothly, and allows us to maximize SYR for all the students. If you have concerns with how something is going, please talk to the Student Ministries Director, Sean Stanley, or any of the Student Ministries Team. We want to work with you - let's be a team.

SYR LEADER / CHAPERONE EXPECTATIONS

BASIC TRUTHS

1. **You will get tired:** After running all day, staying up late and still getting up early for the morning leader meeting, you will feel it by the middle and end of the week. A lot of us get cranky when we're tired. You have to be ready to 'go the extra mile' and serve.

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Remember, the Psalms promise us that, "The Lord gives strength and power to His people."

2. **You will have a student or two who will push you:** Somehow God always blesses each of us with a student or two who likes to challenge us, do their own thing, constantly complain, etc. You can't get them all transferred to someone else's team, and you can't leave - so you will have to do your best to develop a relationship with them and minister to them. One of the joys of camp is watching students like this change over the course of the week as God works in their lives.
3. **Not everything will go your way:** Your team will do the greatest team spirit in the history of SYR and you won't get that many points for it. A game or contest will come down to the wire and the other team will get the win. Please know that we do everything we can to involve everyone and make sure that all have a good time. When things don't go your way, please have a good attitude, for your sake and for the sake of your students. If there is a problem, see someone in leadership and we'll see what we can do to work things out for you.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Hang out:** Once you have put your things away, the best thing you can do is hang out with students during registration time, which lasts from 1-6pm. Challenge them to a game of basketball, play Frisbee golf, or wander around with them. We want to get out on the grounds and hang with students ASAP. The most important thing to remember: WE ARE HERE FOR THE STUDENTS. The more time you spend with them the better.
2. **Be on time:** We will have a leader meeting each morning after breakfast and before the first session of the day. Please be on time for it and the rest of each day's activities.
3. **Respect those in leadership:** You will be shown respect by those in leadership and we expect that same sense of respect and cooperation. If you have an issue that needs to be addressed, please speak to the Student Ministries Director, Sean Stanley, or a member of the Student Ministries Team and they will help you get it resolved.
4. **Be happy:** You will help to set the tone for the week.

HOW TO MINISTER TO STUDENTS

There are some key times/ways that you can disciple and minister to your students:

1. **Small Group Times:** At the conclusion of our evening service, you will meet with your small group to talk about the message and "seal" what God is doing in their hearts and minds.
2. **Service/Altar Time:** The altar/prayer time at the end of each service is a prime time for ministry to students. As you pray with and for them, believe that God will bring a spiritual breakthrough for them. Many students make first time commitments to Christ, fresh commitments to Christ, and receive the Baptism in the Holy Spirit at our SYR. Be ready to impart something powerful into their lives.

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3. **Hanging Out Time:** One speaker once said it was always his goal to lead at least one student to Christ at SYR OUTSIDE of the chapel services. In other words, he tried to take advantage of opportunities throughout the day to interact with students and minister to them whenever the opportunity was there. During meals, playing Frisbee golf, or hanging by the lake you can minister to students.

LEADING YOUR SMALL GROUP

1. **Allow students to share what God is doing in their lives:** It is vital that students have the opportunity to process what is happening in their lives spiritually during service and other ministry times. Many young people will come to SYR struggling with issues and problems and as God works in those areas, they need to 'debrief' about those things. Also, these times of sharing will help bring your students closer to one another and help them understand that they are not alone in their walk with Christ.
2. **Share a challenge that fits the focus of the day:** Talk about subjects pertinent to the message from the previous night. Ask questions about that topic or about what they shared the night before.
3. **Spend time in prayer together:** You might want to ask several different students to pray or you might want to allow them to lead out in prayer as you pray together. You might want to ask for prayer requests and then pray for each one. However, you do it, make sure you lead students in prayer as part of your small group times.

ALTAR MINISTRY 101

Ministering to students at the altars following the evening services is a highlight at SYR. There are a few basic guidelines we require you to follow:

1. **Guys w/ guys, Girls w/ girls:** When praying with students at the altars (or at other times), we ask that men pray with the boys and women pray with the girls. We will encourage this with the students as well as they pray with each other. **Youth pastors and leaders may want to pray with students of the opposite sex from their groups, we require all leaders to take a member of the same sex as the student with you to pray for them.**
2. **Ask students how you can pray with them:** When you go to pray with a student, the best way to start is simply by asking them what their first name is and how you can pray for them. Students will respond to the altar call for a number of reasons and it is good to know how we can pray for them.
3. **Share the Word with them:** We encourage you to have your Bible with you as you minister around the altars. If students need Christ, you can show them key salvation scriptures. If you are praying with them about other needs, you can share God's Word with them and show them how it applies to their lives. We need to connect students to the Word of God.
4. **Be sensitive to what God is doing:** Allow God to lead you as you pray with students. He may give you a word of knowledge or insight. Go for it! We want students to see the

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power of God demonstrated. Encourage that student to share that word with their youth pastor/leader to help confirm or clarify.

Dealing with Discipline

The Do's and Don'ts of discipline at SYR:

Do:

1. **Address problem behavior right away.** Don't wait until a bunch of issues pile up and then explode. Deal with things quickly.
2. **Handle problems with students one-on-one when possible.** Most young people (or adults) don't handle correction really well when it's done in front of a group. If something happens in front of the rest of the group, you may have to deal with it publicly, but if possible, do it privately.
3. **Focus on the problem not the person.** You don't want to attack them personally, make sure you make the behavioral issue the focus.
4. **Get help.** If you need help, talk with the Student Ministries Director (Sean Stanley). We will help you to deal with the issue.

Don't:

1. **Lose your cool.** Don't say things that you will want to take back later. Never use physical intimidation or aggression to deal with a student.
2. **Ignore it and hope that someone else will deal with it.** We have to work together in dealing with problems.
3. **Blow it out of proportion.** Things like pranks, staying up way too late, etc. have been a part of camps for years. While we don't condone it, and will deal with it, we don't need to make it seem like the world is coming to an end.

Sensitive Issues

Sometimes in ministering to students, issues of abuse or other major issues can arise. If a student shares with you that he/she is being abused physically or sexually you must:

1. **Maintain confidentiality.** This is not something that should be shared with the rest of the students in your dorm or with other staff at SYR. The well-being of the student and the reputation of someone else is at stake and we don't want to have to try and take something back later.
2. **Act Immediately.** Bring the student to the Student Ministries Director (Sean Stanley). We will meet together to handle the issue and inform the proper authorities if necessary.
3. **Please be cautious.** When a student prefaces something they want to tell you about with, "You have to promise not to tell anyone." You need to explain to them that it depends

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on what they share with you and that there are some things that you cannot make that promise about.

4. **Err on the side of caution.** If you are not sure, get the Student Ministries Director (Sean Stanley) involved. Don't spend a lot of time thinking about what you should do and don't look to other leaders for advice. Please involve Sean at the earliest possible moment.

CAMP RULES & GUIDELINES

Stuff you should NOT bring to SYR

The following items are not allowed at SYR: tobacco, narcotics, alcohol, weapons of any kind, pornography, fireworks, or other combustible materials. Possession of any of these items will be cause for immediate dismissal from SYR. Also, students should not bring valuables such as laptops, iPads or other electronics.

Dress code

Everyone must wear shoes when walking on the grounds.

Guys – Shirts must be worn at all times, except on the waterslide or at the lake and if you are a 'skin' for basketball. Your shorts need to stay up around your waist. For swimming, guys must wear swim trunks that stay up, no speedos.

Ladies – Your shirt and pants should touch. Your shorts or skirts should be at least mid-thigh. For swimming, ladies must wear modest one-piece suits. If you have a two-piece, you must wear a t-shirt over it.

Staying in dorms at night

Most of the cabins will have bathrooms and showers inside the same facility with them. If you do not, you will need to leave your cabin and walk to the shower room. After curfew, students may not leave their cabins under any circumstances. **Any student found, for any reason, outside of these confines may be subject to forfeiture of the remainder of his or her camp experience. No warnings. No exceptions. No refunds.**

Social skill

Fighting, intimidation, racist conduct, foul language, or verbal abuse, from student or staff, is not permitted and may result in the student or staff losing their privilege of finishing SYR. **Public displays of affection are not allowed during camp.**

Mobile phone policy

Phones and other electronic devices will not be allowed to be used during sessions. If they come with the student, the device will be taken from them if used during a session, placed in a

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protected area, and returned prior to departure from SYR. The primary reason for this is attention. Our hope and goal are to encourage our students to take their focus off the electronic world and pay attention to God and the friends around them. If a parent is concerned about connectivity with their student, give them the number to Michindoh, as well as Sean's cell phone number.

Use the brain God gave you

When you make decisions during the week, use common sense and treat other people the way you would want to be treated. Also, show respect for the campgrounds.

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AFFIDAVIT

State of _____, County of _____

Comes now the undersigned affiant, _____, senior pastor of _____ church in _____, and for the sole purpose of affirming all adult workers sent to Summer Youth Retreat, sponsored by Open Bible East, have passed sexual offense background checks performed by said church states:

The following workers, sent as volunteers or paid staff to the above-named event, have had sexual offense background checks run to determine if the worker has in his or her background any past convictions for any felony or misdemeanor regarding any abuse of any sort against any minor or adult. Each worker named herein has passed such a sexual offense background check showing no convictions for any felony or misdemeanor relating to any abuse of any sort against any minor or adult. I further state the above listed church has the sexual offense background checks on each of the following workers on file in the church office.

The names of the workers are:

1.	2.	3.
4.	5.	6.
7.	8.	9.
10.	11.	12.

Senior Pastor Signature

State of _____, County of _____

On the _____ day of _____, 20____, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said County, in said State, personally appeared _____, to me known to be the identical person named in and who executed the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged that they executed the same as their voluntary act and deed.

NOTARY PUBLIC – STATE OF _____

EVENT RULES

Youth Leaders **must** go over these rules with participating students, parents and chaperones before Summer Youth Retreat 2023 to ensure everyone attending can have the best experience possible!

Sessions

- No one is permitted to leave sessions until closing dismissal
- Students who need to use the restroom during sessions must be accompanied by a chaperone and return immediately
- No private counseling during sessions
- No one should remain in their cabin during sessions
- During ministry time, guys should only pray with guys and girls with girls

Cabins

- We highly encourage students to try to “unplug” during the retreat
- No guys in girls’ cabins and no girls in guys’ cabins
- All students must return to their assigned cabins immediately upon curfew.
- **Please keep quiet after night sessions** as not to bother other groups attending Michindoh

General

- Christian conduct is expected of all students (speech, attitude, actions, etc)
- No public displays of affection are permitted
- Modesty in dress is required at all times
 - Girls: Shirts that are low-cut or do not cover the stomach are not permitted. One-piece swimsuits are permitted when swimming or two-piece suits with dark shirt over top.
 - Guys: Shirts must be worn at all times outside waterfront. No speedos.
- Possession or the use of tobacco, vaping/e-cigarette devices, narcotics, alcohol, and pornography will be grounds for immediate dismissal
- Any damage to your group’s cabin(s) or any area of Michindoh Conference Center will be paid for by the church/person responsible
- Students must always let youth leaders know where they are at all times and never be left without proper supervision
- **No cell phones may be used during sessions** – if used, they will be confiscated by the student’s youth leader and held until the end of the session
- All attendees must follow the direction of their youth leaders, chaperones, the Student Ministries Team and Michindoh staff at all times

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ROOMING LIST & T-SHIRT ORDER FORM

Church _____ City _____

Amount Paid \$ _____ Check # _____

ROOMING LIST

BOYS					
NAME	SIZE	NAME	SIZE	NAME	SIZE
1) <i>chaperone</i>		1) <i>chaperone</i>		1) <i>chaperone</i>	
2)		2)		2)	
3)		3)		3)	
4)		4)		4)	
5)		5)		5)	
6)		6)		6)	
7)		7)		7)	
8)		8)		8)	

GIRLS					
NAME	SIZE	NAME	SIZE	NAME	SIZE
1) <i>chaperone</i>		1) <i>chaperone</i>		1) <i>chaperone</i>	
2)		2)		2)	
3)		3)		3)	
4)		4)		4)	
5)		5)		5)	
6)		6)		6)	
7)		7)		7)	
8)		8)		8)	

GROUP T-SHIRT ORDER TOTALS

Small		Large		2X-Large	
Medium		X-Large		3X-Large	
Total Shirts					