

# CORE MEMBER EXPECTATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Why would high school students and adults across the world give their time and energy to hang out with middle school youth every week? Because as they watch this remarkable age group build a relationship with Christ and journey along with them through their trials and joys, they realize the reward is greater than their effort.

Edge Core Members are the heart and soul of the middle school youth ministry experience. One of the main tasks of Core Members is to lead small groups. In teams of two or three, Edge Core members facilitate small group discussions and activities during Edge Nights. Session plans should be distributed to Core Members in advance so that they can review and prepare each session for their small group. Edge Core Members typically remain with the same group of middle school youth throughout the entire year. This allows Core Members and middle school youth the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships. Other tasks for Core Members may include helping out with opening and closing prayers, performing skits, or giving witness/catechetical talks to the large group.

As much as you want people to join the Core Team, it is essential to be clear and honest up front with potential and new Core Members. Glossing over certain responsibilities just so people will say yes can lead to scrambling later in the year when they walk away from a commitment they never intended to make. Your parish will need to create the specific ministry description and set of expectations and requirements for the Core Members. Here are some examples of what may be included.

## Basic Edge Ministry Requirements:

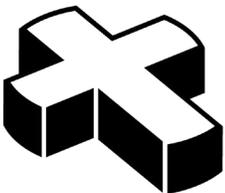
- A love for Christ and middle school youth.
- A desire to minister to middle school youth on a weekly basis.
- A willingness to serve as a Christian role model.
- A weekly commitment to Sunday liturgy.

## Edge Core Member Commitments:

- Commit to Edge ministry and middle school youth for one year.
- Attend annual Core Team retreat day and necessary Core Team meetings during the year.
- Participate in the Core Team Training/Team Building session on (insert information).
- Attend Edge Nights consistently. Relationships are built by spending time together. Your consistent attendance models a commitment to your faith.
- Commit to your parish's weekly Edge night agenda. Here is what that time may look like:
  - 6:40-6:50 - Quick Core meeting to review night's plan.
  - 6:50-7:00 - Welcome, greet, and talk to youth.
  - 7:00-8:30 - Focus on roles for the night and ministering to the youth.
  - 8:30-8:40 - Say goodbye, get to know youth waiting for their parents, and greet parents picking up their son or daughter.
  - 8:40-8:50 - Review the night. Distribute and discuss next week's Edge Night.
- Work with a partner to run small groups, which may include small group discussions, simple projects, and other small group activities. To lead a successful small group, you should:

- Know the names of the youth in your small group.
  - Establish a relationship with the youth in your group. Adults are very influential at this age and can have a profound impact in a middle school youth's spiritual and emotional development.
  - Listen to the stories of your small group members, and be willing to share your own.
  - Challenge the middle school youth to develop a deeper relationship and commitment to Jesus and the Catholic Church.
  - Get to know the parents of the youth in your small group.
  - Find Christ in the youth, and share that awareness with others.
  - Be willing to discipline, remain positive, and find the youth minister for help if needed.
  - Follow your diocesan rules for Safe Environment at all times.
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- Come to Edge prepared by reading through the Edge Night in advance so you can successfully lead your group through the night's activities.
  - Attend the annual Edge retreat.
  - Follow the parish's discipline policy, and work with youth ministers if discipline issues arise.
  - Be open to new experiences, and try things you have never tried before. Be willing to lead prayer, present to the large group, and perform in skits.
  - Be risky, silly, and goofy for the Gospel, but at the same time, remain the adult in the group.

These are only a few of the suggested requirements and commitments you can make for your Core Team. Be sure to adapt it to your specific parish needs and vision for your Edge program. For further help with Core Training, check out the Edge Core Handbook available online in the Life Teen store at [store.lifeteen.com](http://store.lifeteen.com).



# EDGE CORE MEMBER APPLICATION

## WHAT THE TEENS NEED FROM YOUTH MINISTRY

Changing the youth world happens one teen at a time. Teens do not connect to programs; they connect to people. The most effective way to influence teens is through relationships. Our goal is to develop leaders who will walk the journey to Christ with teens.

## TEENS NEED ADULTS WHO WILL:

- Love God
- Remember their names
- Be interested in their lives
- Pray for them
- Be authentic
- Encourage and challenge them
- Believe in them
- Laugh
- Share God's love through personal experience
- Be reliable through the ministry
- Be patient
- Enjoy life
- Strive to live the seven Core values (Love, Evangelization, Joy, Vocation, Affirmation, Authenticity, Eucharistic Spirituality)

## THE THREE COMMITMENTS OF CORE MEMBERS:

**CHRIST.** Your first and foremost "Yes!" is to Jesus Christ, and living out your faith in Him through the teachings of our Catholic Church. This yes is what has drawn you to the parish, to the community of the Core Team, to youth ministry, and ultimately, to the teens you are committing to drawing closer to Him.

**YOUTH.** Not just the youth that walk in for Edge nights, but all youth - no matter where you encounter them. In your yes to being on Core, you are saying yes to advocating for youth in any circumstance, to believing in the good in them, and believing in what Christ has in store for them. You are also committed in a special way to the youth that are participating in the Edge ministry, to being reliably present through Edge and beyond.

**THE YOUTH MINISTRY.** Notice that doesn't say "Youth Minister?" You are committed to all the other Core Members, to the Pastor, to the parents, and to the youth. When you give your yes as a Core Member, you are committing to more than a program, more than a person (the youth minister), and more than a handful of youth that you might have in small group weekly. It is all of that and so much more.

## **SEVEN CORE VALUES OF LIFE TEEN**

### **LOVE**

“We love because He first loved us” – 1 John 4:19. We must strive in all moments and circumstances to love others as Christ loved. This foundation, simple in premise and command, serves as the basis for our ministry.

### **EVANGELIZATION**

We speak truth to God’s people, inviting them to know Him more deeply. Driven by a desire for all to know the mercy and love of God the Father.

### **JOY**

We live by an unrelenting belief in the goodness of God, and in His desire not for our momentary happiness, but our everlasting life. The spirit of our Youth and Worship ministries is one of pure joy, keeping life in perspective and allowing the peace of God to reign in our hearts, regardless of what the world might bring at any given moment.

### **VOCATION**

We maintain openness to the call of God in our lives and a willingness to discern, respond and prioritize our lives according to that call. Whether designed for the religious, married, or single life, we not only embrace the vocation we were designed for, but insure that it remains primary, not allowing God’s work in ministry to overtake God’s call to holiness.

### **AFFIRMATION**

We refuse to be overwhelmed by the negativity pervading our culture. Words and actions are designed by the Creator to bring life to creation, not death. We make every effort and take every opportunity to build up the Kingdom on Earth, rather than tear it down.

### **AUTHENTICITY**

We live authentically, not denying our human weakness or shying away from the need for personal improvement, but working toward holiness, with resolve. The world needs quality examples of Catholic men and women who live out their faith. As leaders in ministry, we live our faith authentically, providing the living example of a Christian and giving hope that others, too, can follow Christ.

### **A EUCHARISTIC SPIRITUALITY**

We seek to become one with Christ in all ways. Through a strong devotion to the Blessed Mother, we develop a more profound understanding of Jesus Christ. Through the Holy Scriptures, we grow in sanctity through the Incarnate Word. Through openness to the Charisms of the Holy Spirit, we allow God’s love to permeate this world. Through adherence to the Church that our Lord established, we act in obedience and humility. Through our frequenting of the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist in Most Holy Communion, we become one with the living God. These intimate experiences with Christ are unmistakable signs of His love.

## CORE MEMBER APPLICATION

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Cellphone \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

## EDUCATION

Presently, I am in college. \_\_\_\_\_ (College & year)

I graduated from college. \_\_\_\_\_ (College)

I graduated from high school in \_\_\_\_\_ (year).

## INVOLVEMENT

I have been a member of \_\_\_\_\_ parish for \_\_\_\_\_ years/months.

I have worked or volunteered at \_\_\_\_\_ parish.

I have...

taught or assisted in a religious education program in \_\_\_\_\_ parish.

assisted in a youth ministry/ Life Teen program in my post high school years.

served as a lector, Eucharistic minister, alter server, and/or choir member at a parish.

served in a parish or diocese in other capacities (i.e. coordinated or assisted with the parish festival, assisted in the parish or diocesan office, etc.)

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What are some areas you can see yourself in?

Environment

Resource Coordinator

Development

Food Ministry

Web Development

AV/Tech

Retreat Staff

Prayer Ministry

Publicity

Small Group Leadership

Large Group Presentation

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please answer the following on a separate sheet and attach. This will work as a starting point for when we get together sometime soon to discuss where you may fit with serving as a part of youth ministry at the parish.)*

- Write a little bit about how you have come into a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- How would you describe your spiritual journey right now?
- What do you do when you have a conflict with someone? How do you handle confrontation?
- Are there any special issues or concerns happening in your life right now that would have an impact on your commitment and involvement in the youth ministry? (e.g., relationships, other commitments, etc.)
- Why do you want to be involved in the Youth Ministry?
- What are some of your expectations of the Youth Ministry, the Life Teen staff, and the parish staff?

This form is for the use of the parish youth ministry staff. It will also be necessary for you to complete the diocesan volunteer application, along with all forms and protocols necessary for background checks and participate in the required diocesan safe environment training. All forms and class times will be provided for you.

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I, the undersigned, give my authorization to release any and all records or information relating to working with minors. Life Teen Ministries may contact my references and appropriate government agencies as deemed necessary in order to verify my suitability as a minister to the youth. I understand that the personal information in this application will be held confidential by the professional parish staff.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## CODE OF CONDUCT

*Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. As a volunteer, I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Volunteer's Code of Conduct.*

As a volunteer I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth at parish activities.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth or their parents without prior written approval from the pastor.
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the pastor.
- Report suspected abuse to the pastor, or appropriate supervisor and the local Child Protection Services agency or other civil authorities.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

As a volunteer, I will not:

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.
- Pose any health risk to children and/or youth (i.e., no fevers or other contagious situations)
- Strike, spank, shake, or slap children and/or youth.
- Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or youth.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.

*I understand that as a volunteer working with children and/or youth, I am subject to a thorough background check including criminal history. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take any action as outlined in this Code of Conduct may result in my being asked to no longer volunteer in my parish.*

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# “COFFEE TALK” WITH A POTENTIAL CORE MEMBER

I advocate for having a one on one discussion with all potential Core Members, even if you know them outside of the ministry. Having a focused discussion about the ministry is an important in the discernment process – both for you as Youth Minister and the potential Core Member.

The Core Team is a community on it's own. It is a community with the mission of leading teens closer to Christ at the heart of it, but fostering and creating this community aspect is an important component of that. How a potential Core member fits into that team is something to keep in mind.

After someone has expressed interest in being part of the Core Team, and has filled out the Core Member Application, invite them for coffee or lunch.

The following are a few discussion points and questions. Approach this as more of a directed conversation, and less of an interview. Remember, you are not interrogating someone; you are having a conversation with them about helping to lead youth closer to Christ!

Here are some discussion points to potentially hit upon in your conversation:

- Open your time together with prayer.
- Begin by thanking them for their desire and willingness to be a part of this exciting ministry!
- Share with them a glory story or two from over the past year – this will give a glimpse into what they might be walking into.
- Share with them what youth ministry looks like right now in the parish.
- If you are in a building phase, let them know what you hope the ministry will look like in a year.
- Make it clear what the expectations are for Core members – and do not sugarcoat this to make it seem like less. Be authentic about what the whole commitment is.
- Hearing all of that, I want to just hear your reactions and thoughts to what we have going on, and what the big picture looks like...
- Why do you want to serve on the Edge Core Team?
- What are some of the biggest strengths you'd be bringing to Edge?
- There is bound to be conflict arising with youth, other Core, or myself. Can you give me an example of conflict you've been in and how you've handled it?
- Tell me about your family – growing up, and how it looks today.
- If a young person asked you, “Why should I care about Jesus or the Catholic Church?” how would you respond?
- Describe your prayer life as it is now.
- Thank them again for their time, their desire to answer the call Christ has placed on their heart, and their willingness to join the Edge ministry!

I wouldn't conclude asking them for an answer on whether or not they would join the Core Team. I'd ask them to pray about it, and talk with some important people in their life about it, (giving me time to pray about it also) and that I would reach out to them in about a week to talk more about it and see where their heart is. After that week, give them a call, ask how their discernment has gone, and where they believe Christ is calling them.

If they are saying yes – praise God first! – and then be sure to clarify when they can fill out the diocesan volunteer application, get their background check taken care of, and get them set-up for safe environment training. Also, be sure to communicate upcoming Core meetings, planning times, etc.