

STAFF INFORMATION PACK

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to "MORPH!" Thank you for deciding to give of your time and talents to reach young people in Dungannon with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are excited to have you on board and pray that you will see God's hand at work in and through you as you take on this challenging, yet rewarding responsibility. This information pack will help to ease you in to your involvement here. Please read through this guide carefully as you will find information on what your responsibilities are and how to carry out those responsibilities appropriately.

Mission Statement

As 'STAFF' you should be made aware of the main aim of the project:

"MORPH is a shared vision to see transformation in the local community. It aims to transform the emerging cultures through a movement of Christ centred and mission minded prayer."

Depending on what aspect of the ministry you will be involved in there are different specifics to the vision/mission statements. That said we all share the following core values.

CORE VALUES:

- **Faith, hope and love:** The Christian faith is central. We want to be ambassadors of these qualities and model them to the community believing that through our character Christ can be seen.
- **Relationships:** Commitment to the personal, social and spiritual development of the local community. Recognising programmes have limitations we instead value pilgrimage (journeying together), community and story-sharing as a way of reaching others.
- **Discipleship:** Having established relationships of trust we aim to disciple i.e. model a life worth following. We believe that by demonstrating active citizenship people will naturally wish to find out what makes us tick. Our faith is intrinsic to this as is a life-style of learning.
- **Partnership/Networking:** Partnership with other organisations, bodies and people groups is important. The networking allows for a sharing of resources and opportunity to share experiences. We are rooted in the local church.
- **Reconciliation:** To embrace and help in healing the lives of individuals, communities and society.
- **Justice:** We believe in standing up for those who are oppressed, overlooked and excluded.
- **Developing Leaders:** To help, support and develop leaders.

- **Integrity and Accountability:** Honesty, integrity, openness and accountability are crucial principles to all aspects of our work.
- **Relevant.** "We must reflect the needs of the culture". EU law states that a youth is anyone aged 11 to 30.
"Our focus is youth aged 11 to 30... the emerging culture"
- **Transformational.** We seek to positively impact the local community using a variety of methods.

"We are driven by purpose. Throughout all our work we apply the principle of vision, change and evaluation. Without living on the edge we fail to create community transformation, without making changes we become dry and ineffective and we only know what needs to change if we are prepared to evaluate how effective we are in achieving our vision."

"We desire to be visionary, leading the way in youth work and making changes necessary. This can only be done if we are purpose driven and effective evaluators."

"We desire to remain a movement by always looking at ways to move forward."

CONTEXT

Dungannon has made huge progress in recent years at changing its community ethos. There are over 10,000 people in the town itself from different nationalities. The number is increasing rapidly and the town is expanding.

That said there are a number of issues that epitomise the current ethos of the community. Sectarianism is still an issue many agencies in Dungannon are trying to confront but perhaps even greater a problem in the town is an emotion of bitterness. The bitterness can mean there is a lack of trust in relationships between Catholics and Protestants.

The non-national community have also faced many difficulties upon arrival in Dungannon. Northern Ireland is the race hate capital in Europe! There is feeling of fear on both sides and relationships between nationals and non-nationals is at an all time low.

Divorce is now at the highest ever level at 1 in 3 marriages ending in divorce. Teenagers are increasingly having sexual intercourse earlier and the rise of abortions have been noted. Dungannon has experienced a number of suicides among the youth and there are rising difficulties amongst binge drinkers in the town centre.

In the midst of this, MORPH desires to be a transforming agent that positively impacts the local community.

Isaiah 43: "See I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland."

488 yung people were asked what the needs of the town were. The response focused on five main things:

**A safe place,
Music space,
Advice,
Sports and
Trips.**

We endeavour to provide all these. We believe that the recent media attention given to anti-social behaviour and racism means people have neglected to provide for the young people in town the very things that prevent them from turning to crime.

DETACHED WORK

"Morphing community in the community"

Perhaps one of the most revolutionary aspects of the work MORPH is attempting is in the area of establishing "community spirit" to a generation longing to find a place where they belong. We intend to do this by purposely living in impoverished areas in the borough; communities widely associated with high crime, poor health, low educational achievement, dilapidated environment, broken families and few opportunities for young people.

We encourage those coming to work with MORPH from outside the locality to live and encourage community spirit in housing estates by living an incarnational lifestyle (integrating with the community) making themselves available 24-7 for the benefit of their community.

We want young people to see their full potential unlocked. Young people of high school age are seen to be a key part of the transformation of the whole neighbourhood. Our goal is to help them achieve all their God-given potential.

"Have you ever met anyone who didn't want to tell his or her story – that person's woes, pains, and one-upmanship experiences? Go to a nursing home or a retirement centre, you will get the picture... How can someone who is growing with God, experiencing answers to prayer, seeing spiritual conversations started with new questioners, and feeling a deepening sense of community in his or her relationships not leak the healthy stuff?" Ron Martoia

Life in such communities can be isolating for those who work there. Once the honeymoon period wears off, there may be little thanks, praise or encouragement. A genuine bond of trust with the young people and extended families can take years to build up. It is up to those at Morph to equip and empower staff by bringing them together. This will incorporate worship and perhaps some teaching before a curry or social event. Once a year we plan a weekend to go away and share stories and experiences, build one another up and worship together.

All Staff adhere to a strict Child Protection Policy. We will host training events for workers, some compulsory such as child protection training and some optional such as mentoring or 'Drug and Alcohol abuse'.

What about housing?

Most housing is council property or privately rented; some staff may choose to buy houses. People live with at least one other worker. Whilst we try to help find a house it may be you live in a spare room with people who share our vision. This is worked through at an interview stage.

What about a job?

For those not working with MORPH directly, responsibility for finance and bills falls directly on them. We encourage people to work where possible for a few hours a week so they have

some form of sustainable income. For those working with MORPH some financial help is provided but fundraising is essential.

What does this actually achieve?

Incarnation: Basically it is about being there, serving the community and living as salt and light. It just so happens that we're doing it in some of the toughest neighbourhoods in the area.

Youth Work: We believe the key to transforming communities are the youth that live there. If the youth catch a hope and God-given vision to see their area transformed, there will be no stopping them. It starts with detached work – getting to know people and it moves on at some point to mentoring and discipling. Football, internet access, trips and cell groups/ youth clubs are all ways of doing this. We do anything that may engage the young people, strengthen relationships and build them up in confidence and self-esteem.

More Questions: Read the general policy at the end of this document to give you a better flavour of what the detached work/community living entails.

CHURCH WORK

"Morphing church in the community"

Many of the churches already support the organisations involved in 'MORPH'. They do this financially, prayerfully and by volunteering. In supporting the work 'MORPH' does people in the community can easily connect what is going on in the community with the local church. This networking will be encouraged in the following ways:

Newsletters	Morph committee
Visiting	Morph representatives
Networking	Morph workers

Morph is about establishing community and realistically we realise that few young people easily transition into an established traditional church atmosphere. For them our community will be their church. **Staff who belong to a church should remain there with the blessing of their pastors and thus under their leaders' authority etc.** Young people who come to faith however are free from having to attend church unless they already did so prior to coming to faith.

We love the church! We believe it is ordained and called by God. Church structures regularly change as the Holy Spirit establishes church in new ways (or old ways – re-establishing it as it was in the beginning). When this happens we do not think of the old being wrong but as a fresh expression occurring. Rather than create tension, mixing old wineskins with new, we believe our role as people from the 'old' is to submit those traditions and structures but as we do so bless and encourage that which is new.

The Greek word for church is "*ecclesia*" translated '*community*'. We are not trying to make a new church that looks similar to a traditional formula but we are trying to create community. We are not competing with other churches. We believe we are called by God to release something entirely new modelling it around the idea of a pub or a monastery in the sense of a Celtic way of doing 'community/church'. As a Staff member at Morph you will be expected to attend 'FIRESIDE' and community prayer times on top of your commitment to your own church.

PRAYER

Each aspect of the work will be continuously covered and preceded with prayer. This must be the cornerstone upon which all of our work is built.

"Focusing on the foundation that prayer provides - underlining the priority that prayer presents."

In order that our work be regularly covered with prayer we aim to provide the following materials and opportunities

1. Prayer Room has been opened for all ages to drop-in and pray.
2. Use of an intercessory prayer chain.
3. Centre Updates to be sent out periodically.

We would encourage everyone who shares an interest in seeing Christ's kingdom extended within the greater area of Dungannon to join us in prayer both privately and publicly.

If your not already on our mailing list or you know people who would like to be, send us the details and we'll only be to glad to send you the information.

Your Role

There are many ways in which you can get involved. Here are a few opportunities.

1. Prayer for the work and community of Dungannon
2. The drop in centre: commit to a few hours a week
3. Project work
4. Detached youth work
5. Schools work
6. Sports ministry (Ambassadors in Sport)
7. Music room
8. Advice centre
9. Administration
10. Gap Year's: Interns are welcome to come for leadership training.
11. Purposely choosing to live in some of the worst estates.

Basically rather than suggest what you will be doing we prefer you tell us what you feel your gifts are leading you to and how you best serve the aim of Morph.

The Role of Staff

The main role of staff is to build relationships with the young people you come into contact with. We want to model a life that epitomises that of Christ and provide opportunities for the people we meet to imitate us. This is less about a few hours a week and much more about a lifestyle. The Christian ethos of the project is very strong and it influences how we work – we want to see young people brought into the Kingdom of God.

Sometimes the danger with all this is that people feel a pressure on themselves to be something they are not or a super Christian. The best thing to be is **you**. God is doing the work. All we have to do is be faithful and honest to God and others.

Each member of Staff will be given a personal job description. Most of the main requirements will be similar but some aspects may differ. A review will be given every three months of the first year and every 6 months for every year after. As we are Morphing a 'church' into being we will also have a pastoral oversight and thus exercise church discipline where necessary. This means we will have a high expectation upon those 'staff' members of FIRESIDE. The same discipline is not exercised over volunteers but unless we are seen to be different the young people will not want to follow. Below is a general overview of what we look for with regards to attitude.

ATTITUDES

- Be patient

It takes time to build up relationships with young people and to gain their trust before you have a real opportunity to speak to them about Jesus Christ. It may take a number of months of consistent work before this bridge of trust is built.

- **Listen**

Focus on listening to the young people rather than trying to be the one with all the answers. In doing so the young people will realise that you are genuinely interested in them and care about them. Moreover, before we can share our faith we need to understand the level that the young people are at in their understanding of God.

- **Be accepting**

It's important that the young people know that they are accepted for who they are and not judged by the things they do. This is an important way of modelling God's unconditional love for us.

- **Be an example**

You will be closely observed to see how you react to various circumstances. The young people will try to test you, stress you, embarrass you and anger you to see how real your Christian faith is. Live the life before them and you will gain their friendship and trust. If you make a mistake or react badly, don't be afraid to say so and apologise – this will gain respect rather than lose it. Your life is now being watched.

- **Be bold yet wise**

When God opens a door to talk about Him, be bold and speak of your personal relationship with God. But be wise also. Don't try to get the Gospel message over in one conversation. The person may not be ready to receive it all. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and allow Him to guide in the approach that you should take.

RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

A programme doesn't change a life, a relationship does

What's it all about?

- **Long-term work** – the first thing to notice about working on MORPH is that the work is very much long-term and results do not necessarily come overnight. Though, with prayer we believe that we will see answers.
- **Youth Work = Informal Education** – Formal education is what happens in a school classroom context whereas with informal education every conversation & experience can become a learning opportunity. We need to aim for a blend.
- **Steps to Christ** – Below is a copy of the "Engle Scale" which shows that there are many different steps involved before someone makes a commitment to follow Christ. It is vital that this is recognised when seeking to be witnesses to the young people. Moreover the timescale for going through the steps is different for everyone, some jump 10 steps in one go, whilst for others it can take a number of months to move from one step to the next.

- 8 Awareness of supreme being, no knowledge of gospel
- 7 Initial awareness of gospel
- 6 Awareness of fundamentals of gospel
- 5 Grasp implications of gospel
- 4 Positive attitude towards gospel
- 3 Personal problem recognition
- 2 DECISION TO ACT
- 1 Repentance and faith in Christ
- New Creature through relationship with Jesus
- +1 Post-decision evaluation
- +2 Incorporation into Body
- +3 Conceptual and behavioural growth
- +4 Communion with God
- +5 Stewardship Reproduction Internally (gifts, etc) Externally (witness, social action, etc)

"...evangelism is a process, over a period of time, of taking people from where they are and changing their picture of God and the church. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, they will then hopefully want to give their lives to Christ."

(*"Sowing, reaping, keeping"* by Laurence Singlehurst)

- **Sowing & reaping** – these are 2 essential aspects of the process of evangelism which work hand in hand together. We cannot hope to "reap" new believers if we have not spent time "sowing" i.e. building relationships and demonstrating Jesus' love in practical and attractive ways.

That said we believe in taking Jesus' words literally when he says "the fields are ripe unto harvest, even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together..." We believe there is a ripe harvest now. We recognise that if people are not making commitments to

Christ that it may be something we are missing. We don't want to hide between mis-quoted pieces of Scripture. It is not just our responsibility to preach the gospel. We must go to where the fields are ready for harvest. If something is not working we are not being faithful by continuing with it. We need to try something else instead to see if it is more effective.

- **Making disciples** - Jesus did not call us to make converts but to make disciples – i.e. people who make a lifelong commitment to Jesus and live that commitment out in their daily lives. MORPH therefore seeks to be actively involved in discipleship as well as evangelism so that young people who make commitments are supported in their walk with God. For many young people, you will be the most influential aspect of their journey's. (Please see the Evangelistic Ethos & Pastoral Care Policy, Appendix VIII.)
- **Building community** – Relational youth work often has a focus on one-to-one relationships with young people, we are keen to build a sense of community amongst the young people who get involved in MORPH so that they experience a sense of belonging. Community can be thought of as the 3 S's: Security (feeling at ease and safe in the group), Significance (feeling valued and listened to), Solidarity (feeling a sense of belonging and identity with the group).
- **Voluntary participation** – This is the distinctive feature of youth work, that the young people make the choice about getting involved or about walking away. The young people also have every right to reject the gospel we present to them. At MORPH we want them "to explore issues of faith in a safe environment free from indoctrination, manipulation of religious abuse" (Danny Brierley in Youthwork magazine Aug '02)

How do I build meaningful relationships with the young people?

A. PRACTICAL ACTION

1. Rapport-building

It's an old salesman's trick to ask questions that generate "yes" responses when making cold calls as it's supposed to increase the likelihood of making a sale! There is actually something in this so when you're trying to get to know a young person, try to ask them questions or make comments that they can agree to e.g. "It's freezing outside isn't it?" or "Homework really gets in the way of your social life doesn't it?" or "Debs is crazy for wearing that top isn't she?" Try to make it natural, basically you want to let the young person know that you're on their side, that there are things you might have in common. Research has also shown that rapport can be built by mirroring the body language of the person you're talking to...the key is to do it subtly!

2. Know the Names

It is very important to get to know the names of the young people as soon as possible. This lets them know that you have a real interest in them as individuals. It will help you to gain their trust and friendship all the more.

3. Interaction

Make the most of every opportunity to develop good rapport with the young people who attend. This can take the form of initiating a game of table tennis or pool with them, just sitting and chatting with them, or sharing in a more formal setting. Try to focus on asking

open-ended questions which will encourage a more-than-one-word answer e.g. “What was school like today?” When you’re at a drop-in session, give yourself a target of learning at least 3 facts about 3 of the young people you talk to, this is good motivation for seeking to interact with the young people. The interest you show in the young people will demonstrate to them that you care about them.

4. Be personal and real

You don’t have to be cool to be a good youth worker! The young people will respond to you more when they see you being open and real, so focus on being yourself.

5. Remember

Try to remember things that the young people tell you about themselves, so that the next time you see them, you can follow-up on your previous conversation. For example if a young person tells you one week about a weekend away, ask them how it went the following week. This shows the young person that you are genuinely interested in them, it is essential for building trust and is particularly important if they share things that are worrying them.

6. The importance of prayer

At MORPH we believe that prayer is the cornerstone to all that we do. We meet regularly and encourage volunteers to also get involved in these times of prayer and worship.

- Please also remember to pray at all times without ceasing in all that you do. In fact we think it is so important that we suggest you ask some of the staff about their prayer lives and about different ways of praying.
- Pray for God’s protection over yourself, your family and your fellow volunteers. Ask the Lord to give you opportunities to show His love to the young people and to have meaningful conversations with them about Him.
- Please also ensure that your church & Christian friends know that you volunteer so that they can support you in prayer. We regard you as a missionary and missionaries need supported...don’t do this on your own – apart from anything its unbiblical!

7. The importance of teamwork

- Recognise that the work is not all down to the full-time staff. Everyone who volunteers has a part to play in this transformation process...
- Different members of the team will have different roles depending on the gifts and personalities that God has given them. You don’t have to be like someone else. Just be yourself. God has given you a unique personality which He wants to use to reveal Himself to young people.
- Be prepared to do the dirty work, we are here to be servants to the community and to each other.

SHARING YOUR FAITH

It's a good idea to write out your personal testimony. You may have the opportunity at some point to formally share your testimony with the young people, but having your testimony already prepared will also help you share in one on one conversations with young people. In this personal testimony it is important to include the following:

- ❑ What were you like before you became a Christian?
- ❑ What made you put your faith in Christ? How did the Holy Spirit convict you?
- ❑ What difference has Jesus made to your life now that you are a Christian? i.e. what are the benefits & blessings? Be real about the costs and sacrifices of being a Christian too.

Some other useful pointers:

- be personal, honest & real
- glorify God only – don't glamorise how terrible your life was before you came to Christ.
- Avoid spiritual jargon but try to explain things such as sin, eternal life, salvation etc in real terms

Further reading:

"Sowing, reaping, keeping" by Laurence Singlehurst, Crossway Books, (£3.99)

"*Contagious Christianity*", by Bill Hybels, Zondervan Publishing, (£6.39)

Please do not hesitate to ask the full-time staff for more information on further reading material, youth work or discipleship resources. There are a number of different resources that can be used with young people who are thinking seriously about making a Christian commitment. Any suggestions for materials to be used would also be welcome. However please always let the full-time staff check any material before using it with a young person.

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

In the appendices we include a small orange card which outlines A Code of Good Practice for people working with us. Please study these very carefully as they detail appropriate and inappropriate behaviour for all staff and volunteers when working with young people. They also outline the procedure to be followed should a young person make a disclosure to you. It can be handy to keep the card in your pocket so that you can refer to it quickly when necessary.

Each year YFCNI runs a training session which covers the Child protection guidelines in greater depth. All new volunteers **must** attend this and it is recommended that even if you have covered this kind of training before elsewhere or if you have been a volunteer for a while, you should refresh your mind with this training every 2-3 years.

The essentials of Child Protection:

- Child Protection is about integrity & remaining above reproach – that's why, for example, it is never appropriate to be in a room alone with a young person.
- Child protection ensures that there are clear lines of reporting/accountability – information/concerns should always be passed to the project Co-ordinator's. Any incidents also need to be written up and recorded in the Incident Report File (kept in the office).
- Confidentiality/Secrecy – Confidentiality is not about keeping secrets but passing information only on a "need-to-know" basis.
- The recommended leader-child ratio is 2:20 (with children aged 7+) – for good relationship building it is ideal to have more. At the very least there should be one leader per room. And as already stated there needs to be a good balance of female and male leaders.
- Any person planning on doing detached work or living in the estates to plant community need additional info regarding Child Protection and your home. Please consult us for details.

Child protection Guidelines for all Staff and Volunteers

Child Protection Policy

We at MORPH want to make sure that children and young people are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff and volunteers in this organisation.

We do this by:

1. Complying with the key principles of the Children (NI) Order 1996

These are:

Paramount - The welfare of the child is always the paramount consideration in decisions taken about him or her

Parental Responsibility - Parents have a responsibility to their children rather than rights over them even if they are taken into care

Prevention - The state is expected to provide services to prevent separation of children from their families and to promote their health and welfare

Partnership - Provision of services to children must take account of parents' views and decisions made about children must be made with parents.

Protection - Children should be safe and should be protected by intervention if they are in danger

Even though our organisation does not fall within registration requirements under this legislation, these guidelines set essential standards which we try to follow by way of good practice.

MORPH seeks to.....

- a) Promote the general welfare, health and full development of children and protect them from harm of all kinds
- b) Recognise that children have rights as individuals and treat them with respect
- c) Raise awareness about what children are entitled to be protected from
- d) Adopt and consistently apply thorough and clearly defined method of recruiting , and selecting staff and volunteers

These guidelines are to protect people from false allegations being made about their behaviour. Staff and volunteers cannot depend on their reputation to protect them if an allegation was to be made. It is always possible that someone else may misinterpret their actions, however well intended.

General Conduct: Staff or volunteers should not normally be working in situations which require them to be alone in private with a young person, of either sex. One to one work i.e. Mentoring should take place in a public context eg. School premises or a local café.

Staff and volunteers should not normally arrange to meet young people outside of the official framework established in their job description....

Practical guidelines for all staff and volunteers

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General Conduct

Staff or volunteers should not normally be working in situations which require them to be alone in private with a young person, of either sex. One to one work i.e. Mentoring should take place in a public context e.g. School premises or local café.

Staff and volunteers should not normally arrange to meet young people outside of the official framework established in their job description.

- a) If an occasion should arise that a young person needs to be seen outside of that official framework it should be where other people are around and know the meeting is taking place.
- b) If, in exceptional circumstances, it is necessary to meet with someone of the opposite sex think carefully about the venue, insist that any doors are left open and request that a team mate comes in from time to time.

Touching is an area of key importance so the following need to be followed:

- a) Keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- b) Touch should be related to the young person’s needs, not the worker’s.
- c) Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child – not the worker.
- d) Avoid any physical activity that is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating to adult or child.
- e) Children have the right to decide how much physical contact they have with others, except in exceptional circumstances.
- f) Team members should monitor one another in the area of physical contact. They should be free to help each other by pointing out anything that could be misconstrued. Concerns about abuse must always be reported.

Medical Care

Staff or volunteers should never administer any kind of medical treatment to a young person without the prior written consent of their parent/guardian, including simple medical treatment such as giving them a painkiller or a plaster. Therefore community based projects are encouraged to obtain a medical consent form for the young people attending their activities. Having completed medical consent forms on file will help the team to be prepared in the event of an accident or incident. Staff or volunteers will find that it is not at all unusual for young people to suffer from allergies of various kinds, or to be dependent on a form of medication.

If a medical consent form for the child has been provided by the parent/guardian has been provided then it should be consulted in the event of an accident or medical incident (e.g. having a fit, drug overdose.)

In any event the following simple assessment process should be observed:

Initial assessment of the problem, is it minor or serious. If possible the assessment should be corroborated by another worker.

If it is serious, an ambulance should be called by dialling 999.

If it is minor it may be treatable, if medical consent has been received. Alternatively or the young person may be taken home if consent has not been given.

In either case the team will need to establish what is known about the medical history of the young person – consult the file containing medical consent forms for information. If no medical consent form exists for the young person then ask questions.

Detailed accident and incident forms will need to be completed following such events and if necessary further investigations will be carried out by senior management of Morph.

Residential: Ensure that during a residential, adults do not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms unless there are exceptional reasons for doing so.

It is recognised that a number of the volunteers assisting in the work of the Youth for Christ Northern Ireland may be very close in age to the young people with whom they are working. It is still important that they maintain a professional distance and care must be given to ensuring that no inappropriate relationships are formed.

Transportation:

Certain activities necessitate transporting young people from one location to another and many types of vehicles are used for this purpose. For instance, a large group may be transported on a coach hired from a private firm complete with a suitably qualified and insured driver. A smaller group may travel in a minibus driven by a suitably trained member of staff or volunteer. There may also be occasions when staff or volunteers may transport young people in their own car, e.g. to attend a job interview. As this is an area of some legal complexity.

General:

- a) Parental consent should be obtained for all journeys.
- b) All those driving young people are to drive with care and full attention giving due consideration to the safety and well-being of all those in the vehicle.
- c) Make sure that insurance cover is adequate and up to date and that MOT is current.
- d) Only carry as many young people as the car is designed for – seatbelts are essential!
- e) It is reasonable to expect that the driver may be alone with a child for short periods. E.g. dropping off the last child. Consideration could be given to dropping off the least vulnerable child last and plan routes accordingly. Two workers in a car does not in itself guarantee protection for a child – there have been incidents where workers have acted abusively together and in this situation a child could be less protected.
- f) Drivers should not spend unnecessary time alone in a care with a child. If a child wants to talk to a driver about something and has waited until other children have been dropped off, the driver should explain that it isn't convenient to talk there and then, but arrange to meet the child/young person at a location where there are other adults around. (Remember a child/young person may want to talk to the driver about an abusive situation)
- g) When travelling in groups with more than one vehicle it is good practice to insist children stay in the same groups on the out-going and return journey. This will avoid the confusion over whether a child has been transported home or at worst left behind.

- h) At collection or dropping off points do not leave a child on their own. Make sure that children are collected by an appropriate adult.
- i) It is advisable to be aware of instances where it may be unwise for a particular driver to transport a particular child e.g. where there has been a disagreement or where a child/young person has a 'crush' on a driver.
- j) If parents transport children around e.g. to and from activities, ensure that all are made aware that such an arrangement are the responsibility of the parents involved and not MORPH.

Minibuses

- a) Training. Morph asks that all staff and volunteers who drive minibuses (a bus that carries 8 – 16 passengers) undertake and pass a relevant test.
- b) The minimum age for driving a vehicle carrying more than 8 passengers is 21.
- c) If driving a mini-bus for Youth for Christ northern Ireland, e.g. drop-in centre, the driver/s must be named on the insurance policy of that centre, or if a minibus is used for the Youth for Christ Northern Ireland, National Office, then the driver/s of that vehicle must be named on the insurance policy of the organisation.

Law states that it is the driver's responsibility to make sure that the vehicle is in a road-worthy condition before use. Failure to do so may result in the driver being legally liable in the event of any accident. Therefore, each driver must carry out a range of checks to ensure the road-worthiness of the vehicle.

Routine checks should be made on tyres, lights, indicators, seatbelts etc., in order to assess that these are in FULL WORKING ORDER.

Hiring a minibus or larger bus:

When hiring a minibus or larger bus, it is the responsibility of the USER GROUP to verify the legality and insurance cover of the operator prior to the use of the transport. If in any doubt, ask to see a copy of the operator's insurance cover and operator's licence.

Legislation effective from Sept. 1997 requires forward facing seats in the minibuses and coaches to have a seatbelt for each child carried, when a group of three or more children are on an organised trip.

A single seat belt must not be used by more than one child, nor should a belt be placed around a child who is on a adult's lap.

NOTE: IT IS THE DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT THIS LEGISLATION IS COMPILED WITH.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS who accompany children in minibuses should, where possible, sit amongst the young people. Preferably, the member of staff/volunteer should sit near the exit points of the vehicle.

Please try to ensure that there is an acceptable gender mix of staff and volunteers travelling with a mixed gender group.

WHEN USE IS BEING MADE OF A BUS OR MINI-BUS, AT LEAST ONE ADULT SHOULD TRAVEL IN THE BACK OF THE VEHICLE AT ALL TIMES.

- An accident report book/breakdown logbook, should be carried in any Youth for Christ Northern Ireland mini-bus. This report book should be kept up-to-date.
- Youth for Christ Northern Ireland Vehicles should carry
 - 1) a first aid kit
 - 2) a fire extinguisher

DRIVERS, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS SHOULD FAMILIARISE THEMSELVES WITH THEIR USE.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

If youth work is about social education, then discipline is about behavioural education. It includes nurturing, training, instruction, chastisement, verbal rebuke, teaching and encouragement. It brings security, produces character, prepares for life and is an expression of God's love for an individual. As a result we have put in place the following set of rules and guidelines to handle discipline issues when they arise.

RULES

- **Listen to the leaders and do what they ask you.** They are here to listen to you, to help you, to have fun and make sure everybody is kept safe.
- **Respect the other young people who use the centre.** Please treat others the way you want to be treated.
- **No smoking in the building.** Please only smoke outside the centre because it's a hazard to people's health including your own.
- **No swearing/cursing.** Please do not swear or curse because it's disrespectful and offensive.
- **Do not wear sectarian clothes, sing sectarian songs or display sectarian slogans.** Please remember there are more points of view than yours.
- **MORPH activities are drug-free zones.** If you are in possession of any illegal drugs you will be asked to leave and the police will be contacted.
- **No fighting or horse-play.** Usually someone always gets hurt, even if just pretending to fight, so just don't do it.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

Warning System

Where appropriate MORPH operates a yellow/red card warning system whereby:

- If a young person is persistent in breaking rules or commits an offence as detailed under the list of inappropriate behaviours (see below) they should be given a warning – a verbal '**yellow card**'. The details of the incident should be recorded in the Incident Report File. All Volunteers can give yellow card warnings but staff should record the details in the report book.
- If this offence is repeated, the young person should be given a verbal '**red card**' and their parents should be contacted if necessary. Red cards can only be given to young people in conjunction with the Project Co-ordinator/Staff/Team Leader. Details of these incidents also need to be recorded in the Incident Report File.
- **Barring** – Depending on the seriousness of the incident a young person can be barred for one evening by Staff. This should always be the last resort as sometimes it can be counter-productive. It must also be reported in the incident book. The Centre Co-ordinator can decide the next day if the barring should be longer (usually no more than a week) staff should arrange to meet up with the young person and ideally their parents (if serious) in the following week to:

- discuss the incident, clarifying what went wrong
- arrange for restoration and
- agree compliance to the centre's rules for return.

Inappropriate behaviour

There are certain behaviours that we view as being inappropriate and we are not prepared to accept:

Yellow card warnings:

- Disrespecting leaders
- Carelessness with property
- Carelessness with other's property
- Horseplay – carelessly endangering self or others
- Loitering outside of the building
- Inappropriate/vulgar communication
- Deliberate verbal damage to a person
- Insubordination/refusal to obey reasonable request of a leader

Red card warnings:

- Deliberate physical damage to a person
- Vandalism – wilful damage/destruction to other's property
- Serious endangerment of life

Delivery of Discipline

All of the leaders are responsible for creating an environment of safety, respect and enjoyment and this means being involved in delivering discipline, volunteers are expected to uphold and maintain the rules of the centre for both leaders and young people alike but responsibility for barring is solely the responsibility of staff.

Points to remember:

- Discipline is about creating a positive environment and culture where the young people feel a sense of ownership and realise that enforcement of the rules makes anywhere a good place to be.
- It is important that young people are given a clear explanation about why what they have done wrong is wrong and why they are being penalised. Rules are clearly displayed throughout the centre and it can help to point these out to the young person to make things clear.
- Recording – When yellow card warnings are given, it is ideal to record the incident in the Incident Report File in front of the young person so that they realise how seriously we regard the matter. We need to avoid empty threats but take action and deal with an issue immediately.
- If a person has been banned, a volunteer only has the right to ban a young person for one night. It is up to the centre manager to decide if further action needs taken.
- Restorative Justice – As far as possible it is good to create opportunities for the young people to make amends for what they have done e.g. help fix/replace whatever has been broken, write apologies etc.
- Always support the decisions of the full-time staff and back up other members of the team. If you don't, the authority of the team will be diminished. If however you feel that something has been genuinely overlooked in the making of a decision, raise the matter privately with the Project Co-ordinator. If you are not happy with their decision approach

another project Co-ordinator of MORPH. If this is still not satisfactory we advise that you raise it with the committee that runs each individual aspect of the ministry.

Other points to note:

Ask God for wisdom, discernment and understanding for the young people in your care.

- We are not running a police state so there is no need to go overboard with law enforcement, the key is to aim for an environment of safety, fun and respect.
- Remember that in difficult situations, the young people will be watching you to see how you react, so try to stay as calm and objective as possible, acting with integrity so that you maintain respect from others.
- Noise is not a real problem, don't react to noise alone.
- Bad language is not to be ignored. Explain to the young people that it is offensive to you. However exercise discretion. Sometimes turning a deaf ear is the best policy, unless serious provocation is intended.
- If a dispute takes place between two young people, don't touch them unless they are physically fighting. If this happens it is legitimate to use physical restraint, but don't dive in without getting support – there should always be 2 other leaders present as witnesses.
- Any formal contact with young people outside the centre needs to be discussed with the full-time staff first. Don't give out your address or telephone number unless you are involved in disciplining a young person and it has been cleared with a project Co-ordinator.
- Please also take note of the location of the First Aid Box (office), Fire Exits (main door & back room) & Fire Extinguishers (office, kitchen & beside tuck shop counter).
- First Aid should only be administered by those with the appropriate qualifications. The SELB Youth Office runs First Aid training each year, so please take the opportunity to do the training (see pp. 19).
- Work on each individual young person's positives, do not compare one young person with another, but encourage and affirm them, giving them responsibility for simple tasks.
- Build healthy relationships with young people and be a good role model by setting an example. You can't expect young people to observe the ground rules if you break them yourself.
- Take care to give quieter and well behaved young people attention and resist allowing demanding young people to take all your time and energy.
- Be consistent in what you say and ensure that other team members know what you have said. This avoids manipulation.
- **Never** smack or hit a young person and try not to shout. Change your voice tone if necessary.
- Discipline out of love, NEVER in anger. Call on support of others if you are getting angry.
- Every young person is unique and will respond in different ways to different forms of discipline. It follows that each young person should be dealt with on an individual basis.
- Be proactive and encourage helpers to be pro-active rather than waiting to be told to deal with a situation.
- Take a disruptive person to one side and engage with them, challenging them to change, whilst encouraging their strengths.

Incident Report File

There are books in the office: Accident, Discipline and Child Protection. Each book includes a template form to make writing up a report on the incident easier. If a young person is hurt or injured in any way during the course of a session in the centre, an accident report form should always be filled out. It is next to the first aid box. For Discipline the box is kept next to our young people's files. The Child protection book remains locked in a drawer. A note should be made and given to the **Project Supervisor** to fill in the appropriate information.

Training & Development

Staff/Volunteer Recruitment & Development Policy

Statement of General Policy:

We recognise that the human resource is its most precious resource and are therefore committed to facilitating the professional, vocational and personal development of staff and volunteers. Staff development is regarded as an investment which will be beneficial to the organisation as a whole and the young people it seeks to reach.

- Our policy is to support staff and volunteers to enhance their capabilities and competencies through further training and performance reviews
- Our policy is to actively recruit volunteers to work in our centres who believe in Christ, can say that they stand in full support of our statement of faith and who are interested in working with the young people.

Procedures:

TRAINING

- MORPH acknowledges and supports the variety of means by which staff development may be achieved, e.g.
 - Attendance at external courses
 - Participation in the Centres training programme
 - Attendance at conferences
 - Use of online packages
- It is the responsibility of the full-time staff member or the volunteer co-ordinator to locate training opportunities including relevant training for volunteers.
- Full-time staff will be expected to keep abreast of developments in youth work by reading relevant magazines and books.
- MORPH accepts that to facilitate staff development there will be resource implications both financially and in terms of staff time.

Financial support

- MORPH will attempt to find 60% of the finance required for the training on the condition that the course is completed by the staff member/volunteer. If the course is not completed after payment of the training costs, the staff member/volunteer will face a penalty.
- The staff member/volunteer will be expected to finance the other 40% of the training costs. However if this presents financial concern for the staff member/volunteer, we may consider paying the full amount and accept the 40% contribution from the staff member/volunteer in instalments.

Staff Time

- The Centre Committee and the staff member/volunteer will need to come to an agreement on the amount of time that the staff member/volunteer can devote to the training programme.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

To become a volunteer a member of the public must go through the following procedure:

- Attend on at least two occasions to get a feel for the work, ensuring that they're interested and will be committed to the centre.
- Fill in a volunteer application form providing two references of character along with completing a PECS form.
- Sign a Statement of Faith.
- Once the references and PECS form have been received and are of a positive nature the person is free to join the volunteer team.

MORPH is committed to supporting its staff & volunteer team through further training and development because we believe that such investment is beneficial not only for individual development but also for the project as a whole and the young people we seek to reach.

Reviews

Performance reviews should be carried out between line managers and full-time staff members every 3 months during the first year of employment, every six months during the second year and yearly thereafter. Reviews will be taken by the volunteer co-ordinator within a similar time frame for volunteers. These should:

- provide ongoing support for the staff member,
- review the staff member's past development and achievements in the review period
- identify plans for development in the future

Training events

Throughout the year training events are run by MORPH, the SELB Youth Office and other organisations. These are valuable opportunities to meet and learn from other volunteer youth workers who will have similar experiences and be able to identify with the issues you are facing. We will seek to keep you up-to-date with these opportunities as they arise.

Anyone connected with the advice centre will have differing training criteria. For some that will be highly skilled counselling qualifications, for others - coaching or spiritual direction training. For some people it may simply be a look at mentoring or discipling. Due to the nature of this work boundary lines are required and we would ask you not to step outside of the nature of the work established when you start. If you haven't been asked or trained in counselling it is vital that you are comfortable in referring people.

Qualifications in Youth Work

We would encourage you to consider taking training courses in youth work to further your skills and increase your confidence in working with the young people. There are a number of different options available: OCN is a nationally recognised qualification and facilitated by providers such as the SELB or YouthLink. There is also an OCR Young Trainee Leader course for those aged 16-18. More details are available from staff.

Statement of Faith and Doctrinal Basis

All Members of the National Board and of local Management Committees, the President and other Officers and all staff/volunteers, shall by personal and corporate conduct and conviction and by declaration subscribe and adhere to the following

Youth For Christ International:

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit;

We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible and authoritative Word of God;

We believe in the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory:

We believe that the salvation of lost and sinful people is by the grace of God through faith and the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and that regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential:

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a Godly life;

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and lost: they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation;

We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in Christ.

Our Vision

We are fuelled by a passion for spiritual transformation in young people, wanting them to find fullness of life in Christ.

We seek to be a dynamic and relevant voice to the church, providing resources, training and people to help shape and influence a new generation of lifelong disciples of Jesus Christ.

We want to mobilize volunteers, providing practical opportunities for them to serve God, grow spiritually, and discover and develop their gifts.

We want to impact thousands of young people currently beyond the churches' reach, bringing the Gospel relevantly to this generation and modelling truth in a world of relative values.

We want to be a praying people, in tune with God's spirit and doing His work in His strength.

In short, we want to see God move in the life of every young person in Northern Ireland and we want to do all we can to be part of making that happen.

Health and Safety Policy Statement

Health and safety at work etc Act 1974

Our statement of general policy is:

- to provide adequate control of health and safety risks arising from our work activities;
- to consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- to provide and maintain safe plant and equipment;
- to ensure safe handling and use of substances;
- to provide information, instruction and supervision for employees;
- to ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training;
- to prevent accidents and cases of work related ill health;
- to maintain safe and healthy working conditions; and
- to review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

Our procedures to support the policy are as follows:

Responsibilities

- Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of the **Board Chairperson**.
- Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to the Centre Co-ordinator.

All employees have to:

- co-operate with the Centre Co-ordinator on health and safety matters;
- not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety;
- take reasonable care of their own health and safety; and
- report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person (As detailed in this policy statement).

Health and safety risks arising from our work activities

- Risk assessments will be undertaken by **the Centre Co-ordinator**.
- The findings of the risk assessment will be reported to the **Board of Dungannon YFC**.
- Action required to remove/control risks will be approved by the **Board of Dungannon YFC**.
- The **Board Chairperson** will be responsible for ensuring the action required and approved is implemented.
- The **Board Chairperson** will check that the implemented actions have removed/reduced the risks.
- Assessments will be reviewed every 12 – 18 months or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

Safe plant and equipment

- **The Centre Co-ordinator** will be responsible for identifying all equipment/plant needing maintenance.
- The **Board Chairperson** will be responsible for ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up.
- The **Board Chairperson** will be responsible for ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented.
- Any problems found with plant/equipment should be reported to **Centre Co-ordinator**.

- **Centre Co-Ordinator** will check that new plant and equipment meets health and safety standards before it is purchased.

Information, instruction and supervision

- The health and safety law poster is displayed in the office.
- Health and safety advice is available from **Centre Co-ordinator**
- Supervision of young workers/trainees will be arranged/undertaken/monitored by the **Centre Co-ordinator**.

Competency for tasks and training

- Induction training will be provided for all employees by **Centre Co-ordinator**
- Job specific training will be provided by **the Centre Co-Ordinator**.
- Training records are kept by **the Centre Co-Ordinator** in the office
- Training will be identified, arranged and monitored by **Center Co-Ordinator**

Accidents, first aid and work-related ill health

- The first aid box is kept in the office.
- All accidents and cases of work related ill health are to be recorded in the accident book. The book is kept next to the first aid box.
- **The centre Co-ordinator**. is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority.

Monitoring

- The **Board of Dungannon YFC** is responsible for investigating accidents
- The **Board of Dungannon YFC** is responsible for investigating work related causes of sickness absences.
- The **Board of Dungannon YFC** is responsible for acting on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence.

Emergency procedures – fire and evacuation

- **The Centre Co-ordinator** is responsible for ensuring the fire risk assessment is undertaken and implemented.
- Escape routes are checked by the **Centre Co-ordinator** every week.
- Fire extinguishers are maintained and checked by **Fire Security Services** every year.
- Alarms are tested by **South Antrim Alarms** every year.
- Emergency evacuation will be tested every year.

- The **Board of Dungannon YFC** will ensure that all equipment is tested for faults by a qualified electrician every 12-18 months.

Detached Youth Work Guidelines for Community Houses.

Houses:

- Every house is given a diary for the recording of visitors, especially young people. Whenever young people have visited the house (actually entered the building) it should be noted in the diary with a reasonable level of detail. E.g. Names, time entered, time exited. Any useful information may also be entered, e.g. were any of the young people distressed?
- The diary should be kept in a safe place.
- The latest time that you should have young people at your house is 10.00pm
- Do not let a young person into your house during school time. If they are distressed get as quickly as you can to the bottom of the problem and take appropriate action as deemed necessary. Young people are required by law to attend school during normal school hours. If the young person claims to have been officially excluded from school you should try to find a neutral location in which to meet them.
- You are responsible for the behaviour of young people why they are in your house. Be considerate to neighbours and others sharing /using your house.
- As a house have a set of rules of behaviour which each person in the house will agree to and uphold. Don't be afraid of asking young people to leave for breaking these rules.
- No young person should ever go into your bedroom for any reason.
- No young person should ever stay the night in your home unless due to exceptional circumstances by permission of the Morph Team Leader or the Local church leader. If they turn up homeless speak to one of the above.
- Never give out house keys to an unauthorised person.
- Never allow a female only group into a male house, or a male only group into a female house. Avoid being left with an opposite gender group when a members of a mixed group leave your house. In the case of married couples, the husband should not allow female only group into the house if his wife or another female team member is not present and vice versa.
- Use the utmost discretion if asked to lend money to as guest.

Conversations – best practice

- Even if you are extremely confident of your friendship with a young person, always seek to avoid having a one on one conversation with them in isolation, but try to meet in a public place or in a room with the door open where another adult can hear if called.
- Never deliberately enter into a conversation which addresses a young person's personal life or problems if the young person is of the opposite sex.

- Be extremely careful in offering physical contact to a young person in the course of a conversation.
- Never promise confidentiality to any young person. Let them know that you operate as part of a team and for their benefit you may need to pass on any sensitive information told to you. (Reassure them that this will only ever be on a need to know basis).
- Remember, you may need to pass on information of a sensitive nature to your Team Leader when such information is given to you by a young person.
- If a young person tells you a piece of information of a sensitive nature then you should write down basic details of the information and give it to the MORPH Team Leader or the local church leader, who will decide on the course of action to follow. He/she will also keep you informed during this process of what is taking place.
- If a young person wishes to discuss a specific problem you may find it useful to limit its length to one hour. Then, if the going is heavy, you may be able to arrange a further appointment, or simply take a helpful break before resuming.
- If you feel out of your depth or want support in this process ask one of your team mates or team leader for advice.

BECOMING STAFF

Volunteer Staff Recruitment

To become staff a member of the public must go through the following procedure:

- Attend on at least two occasions to get a feel for the work, ensuring that they're interested and will be committed to the centre.
- Fill in a volunteer application form providing two references of character along with completing a POC's NI (police check) form.
- Sign the Statement of Faith.
- Once the references and POC's form have been received and are of a positive nature the person is free to join the volunteer team.

N.B. Any information resulting from the POC's check is kept totally confidential and is only handled by full-time staff on a need-to-know basis.

A copy of the Statement of Faith is in the Appendices, which you will be asked to sign along with a copy of the Volunteer Contract as below.

The Volunteer Contract

I, _____, hereby agree to do the following as a volunteer of MORPH.

- Be present and punctual for all team-times. We meet as a community on Sunday nights at 6.30pm and as staff at the end of every evening I am working at 9pm.
- Be a team player
- Support the Project Team Leader's in all decisions
- Stick to the scheduled rota
- Respect the full-time staff
- Pray for the young people in my own time
- Willingly help with the dirty work

Signature: _____

Project Co-ordinator: _____

Date: _____

