

## **Cell Phone Policy Confirm not Conform Retreat**

### Turning in phones

Once we arrive at the Retreat Center, your child should check in with you so that you know they have arrived safely. After this, all youth will be asked to turn in their cell phones. Adults may keep phones, but are asked not to use them in front of anyone else. We will ask each person to put their phone in an envelope, with their name clearly labeled, and seal the envelope. We then know who the phone belongs to and that if the envelope is sealed, that no one used the phone for any reason (including those keeping the phones locked up). The phones will be locked up during the retreat and returned to the youth on the way home from the overnight.

### Adults on the weekend

Adults on the weekend who have their phones because of work related reasons, must keep their phones on vibrate, and only answer the phone or check texts or email **out of the room**. It is not fair if adults have access to their phones and the young people do not. Please limit phone usage to what is absolutely necessary.

### Reasons someone might be able to keep a phone and Emergency Situations

- a family member is ill in the hospital
- If the participant is leaving an event early, or leaving in the middle and returning, they may use the phone to check in about pick up times, and may take the phone with them when they leave.
- If the participant needs to check in with the parent about pick up times, they will be able to use a phone.

### What should you tell friends and family at home?

Please inform those who communicate regularly with you that you will not have access to your phone for the duration of the event.

Please feel free to give out contact numbers for the Rectors for the weekend. If you share cell phone numbers for rectors, please ask those you share the information with to be respectful of content they may send or language they use in contacting those people and in using those numbers. Please also note that these are our personal numbers. Please do not call any of us at odd hours outside of youth events (unless, of course, it is an emergency).

### Reasons for this policy

Building community is a large part of what our retreat is about. We hope that everyone at the retreat is there to be a part of the community. Communicating constantly via text or phone with people outside of the retreat community takes away from the community experience. We hope that free time will be used to get to know others at the retreat!

We have found that some people have not kept phones put away as asked in the past. Sometimes this has become disruptive to others on the weekend, especially late at night.

We are not able to monitor content that people might send via text or photos on the weekend. We hope that inappropriate content or rude comments and jokes are not being exchanged. This further insures that nothing inappropriate is being exchanged.

We want to discourage side comments and conversation from going on via text during programming. Commentary of that kind is not appropriate for events.

Most other dioceses in the Episcopal Church have similar cell phone policies for Youth Events.

*"Our church events offer a respite from the anxieties that pull us in many different directions in our everyday lives. Checking our phones at the door is one more way to be in a space and time that is intentionally separate and sacred. Being disconnected from the electronic world gives us an opportunity to see the more subtle connections of grace -- in the relationships to one another and in our profoundly soft-spoken relationship to God. It is like getting out of the city and being able to see the stars at night without the distracting glow of our streetlights." – Ben Varnum*

### Who to call during an event:

So, how do you reach us during the event?

Debra Bullock      847-732-9564

Charlie de Kay      630-862-5701

Sometimes we are in the middle of something, worship, conversation, etc and cannot answer the phone. Please leave a message.

If it is an actual emergency, please feel free to call at any hour! If it is something that can wait until morning, please wait until that time to call!