

Student Lead Parent Guide

Following Jesus. Serving Others. Becoming the Leader God Created You to Be.

Welcome

Thank you for considering Student Lead for your child.

We are excited about what God is doing in the lives of young people, and we believe the Grade 5–6 years are one of the most important seasons for helping students begin taking ownership of their faith.

Student Lead was created because we believe students are capable of far more than simply attending church. They are ready to begin serving, growing, asking meaningful questions, and discovering that God has uniquely gifted them to make a difference.

Our desire is to walk alongside your family as we intentionally disciple and develop students during this important stage of life.

What Is Student Lead?

Student Lead is a year-long leadership formation experience for Grade 5 and 6 students.

Rather than focusing primarily on leadership skills, Student Lead focuses on forming young disciples whose lives are increasingly shaped by Jesus.

Through monthly teaching gatherings, serving opportunities, and mentoring relationships, students begin discovering what it means to follow Jesus, serve others, and faithfully use the gifts God has given them.

Everything we do is built around one simple conviction:

Leadership begins by following Jesus.

Our Vision

Our vision is to develop young people who:

- Know Jesus personally.
- Understand their identity in Christ.
- Serve faithfully within the local church.
- Grow in Christlike character.

- Learn alongside trusted adult mentors.
- Influence others through humble, servant-hearted leadership.

We believe the greatest measure of success is not whether students become impressive leaders, but whether they become faithful followers of Jesus.

Why Grade 5–6?

The transition into middle school is one of the most significant seasons in a young person's life.

Students begin asking important questions:

Who am I?

Where do I belong?

What do I believe?

Does my faith actually matter?

Rather than waiting until high school to begin intentional leadership development, Student Lead helps students begin building strong spiritual foundations now.

Our hope is that students leave Grade 6 with a growing confidence that they belong in God's family, have gifts to contribute, and are capable of making a meaningful difference.

How Student Lead Works

Student Lead is built around three important experiences.

Monthly Leadership Gatherings

On the first Sunday of each month (with occasional schedule adjustments), students gather during the morning services for interactive teaching, discussion, activities, and reflection.

These sessions are designed to help students explore Scripture, grow in their faith, and connect what they are learning to everyday life.

Serving Opportunities

Students serve regularly throughout the church in ministry areas that match their gifts and interests.

Serving allows students to move beyond simply attending church and begin participating in the life of our church family.

Students learn responsibility, teamwork, humility, initiative, and faithfulness through real ministry experiences.

Mentoring Relationships

Each Student Lead participant serves alongside a trusted adult mentor.

Mentors encourage students, answer questions, celebrate growth, and model what it looks like to faithfully follow Jesus.

Leadership is best learned in relationship, and we are incredibly grateful for the adults who invest their time and care into our students.

What Will My Child Learn?

Throughout the year, students will explore themes such as:

- Identity in Christ
- Biblical leadership
- Serving like Jesus
- Character and integrity
- Courage and conviction
- Discovering spiritual gifts
- Faithfulness and responsibility
- Living out their faith at home, school, and church

Each lesson combines biblical teaching with discussion, hands-on activities, and practical application.

Our goal is not simply to give students more information, but to help them increasingly live out their faith.

The Role of Parents

Parents are the primary spiritual influence in a child's life.

Student Lead is designed to support—not replace—the discipleship already happening at home.

Throughout the year you will receive regular communication that includes:

- Upcoming meeting reminders
- Monthly lesson summaries
- Serving schedules
- Conversation starters for home
- Program updates

Simple conversations around the dinner table often become some of the most significant moments of spiritual growth.

Thank you for partnering with us.

Our Commitment to Your Child

As leaders, mentors, and pastors, we commit to:

- Teach God's Word faithfully.
- Create a welcoming and encouraging environment.
- Know students by name.
- Encourage growth rather than perfection.
- Provide meaningful serving opportunities.
- Build relationships that point students toward Jesus.
- Celebrate faithfulness over performance.

What We Ask of Students

We ask students to come with:

- A willing heart.
- A teachable attitude.
- A commitment to serve faithfully.
- A desire to grow.
- Respect for others.
- A willingness to try new things.

Student Lead is not about being perfect.

It is about faithfully taking the next step.

What We Ask of Parents

You play an essential role in your child's experience.

You can support Student Lead by:

- Encouraging consistent attendance.
- Helping your child prepare for serving commitments.
- Asking about what they are learning.
- Celebrating faithfulness and growth.
- Praying regularly for your child and their mentor.

When church and home move in the same direction, spiritual formation becomes significantly stronger.

Looking Beyond Grade 6

Student Lead is not the finish line.

It is the beginning of a lifelong journey of following Jesus and serving His Church.

Our hope is that students continue growing through future opportunities to serve, apprentice, lead, and eventually mentor others as they move into junior high, senior high, and adulthood.

We want every Student Lead graduate to leave believing:

God has uniquely created me.

God has gifted me to serve others.

God can use my life today to help others follow Jesus.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does my child need previous serving experience?

No. Student Lead is designed for students at every stage of their faith journey. A willingness to learn and participate is far more important than previous experience.

What if my child is nervous?

Many students feel that way at first. Serving alongside caring mentors and other students helps build confidence over time. We don't expect students to have everything figured out on day one.

How much time does Student Lead require?

Students gather once each month for training and serve according to the ministry schedule they are assigned. We work to communicate schedules well in advance so families can plan accordingly.

How are mentors selected?

Mentors are trusted adult volunteers who have demonstrated faithful service, Christlike character, and a desire to invest in the next generation. They are carefully chosen to encourage and support students throughout the year.

Who can I contact if I have questions?

We would love to connect with you.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to Pastor Jason at jasond@cochranealliance.com with any questions about Student Lead, serving opportunities, or how we can best support your family.