



YOUTH GROUP MOBILE PHONE GUIDELINES

These guidelines explain how mobile phones can be used during SWAY Groups. They are here to help keep groups **safe, welcoming and distraction-free spaces** for everyone. They apply to all young people attending SWAY sessions and activities. The guidelines will be reviewed each year in September.

Why We Have This

SWAY Groups are places to **hang out, build friendships and have fun**. Phones can get in the way of that, and can also create problems like distraction, unkind messages or photos being shared without permission. These guidelines help everyone enjoy SWAY Groups while keeping each other **safe and respected**.

Bringing a Phone

You **don't have to bring a phone** to SWAY Groups.

We know some people bring phones for practical reasons, such as:

- arranging a lift home
- staying in contact with parents
- medical monitoring

If you do bring a phone, please remember:

- Keep it **safe and with your belongings**
- SWAY team and volunteers **can't be responsible** if phones are lost, stolen, or damaged

If someone needs to contact a parent in an emergency, leaders can help.

Using Phones During Group Sessions

During sessions we ask that:

- Phones stay **on silent**
- Phones stay **out of sight** (in your pocket or bag)

If you need to use your phone:

- **Ask a leader first**

Leaders might say yes if there is a good reason; eg: if use supports the activity, but phone use is never essential for joining in.

Just because someone else is using their phone, you should not assume that you can too - permission is granted individually so leaders can supervise usage.

Phones should **not be used for:**

- social media
- scrolling or gaming
- messaging friends during the session

Youth Groups are about spending time **with each other**, not on screens.

Phones and Safety

Sometimes phones can be a distraction when people need to focus.

Because of this, phones should **not be used during certain activities**, for example:

- cooking
- outdoor or adventure activities
- campfires
- any activity where a leader asks phones to be put away

Always follow leaders' instructions during activities.

Photos and Videos During Sessions

To protect everyone's privacy: **Young people should not take photos or videos in Youth Group sessions.**

Sometimes leaders may take photos for things like:

- SWAY updates
- newsletters
- social media

This will **only happen if your parent or carer has given permission.**

Photos are stored securely and handled carefully.

Offsite Activities and Trips

Sometimes activities take place **outside of SWAY premises**, such as trips, events or residential weekends.

Leaders will try to keep these guidelines in place, although public places can make things harder to control.

If anything is different for a specific trip or event, we will **let you and your parents know in advance.**

Phone Use on Residential Trips

On residential:

- Phones should usually stay **in pockets or bags during the day**
- Leaders may allow phone use at **certain times**
- Phones should be used in **shared areas**, not private spaces

Leaders may ask you to put phones away so everyone can enjoy the activities together.

Taking Photos on Residential

Photos can be part of the fun on trips, but there are some important rules:

- **Always ask a leader first**
- Make sure **everyone in the photo is happy to be in it**
- Photos should be taken **only in appropriate places**

Photos must **not** be taken in bedrooms, bathrooms or changing areas

Photos taken by young people should be **for personal memories only.**

Please **don't post photos online without permission from the people in them and their parents.**

Misusing Phones

Phones must **never** be used to:

- share harmful, rude, or offensive content
- bully or exclude others
- share age inappropriate or explicit material
- secretly record or photograph someone

If this happens, leaders will take it seriously. This could mean:

- speaking with you about what happened
- contacting your parents or carers
- involving SWAY's safeguarding team if needed

Working Together

These guidelines help make youth group a place where everyone can:

- feel safe
- enjoy spending time together
- be fully part of what's happening

Thanks for helping make SWAY Groups **fun, respectful and welcoming places for everyone.**



YOUTH GROUP PHONE RULES (QUICK GUIDE)

To help SWAY Groups stay fun, safe and distraction-free, we ask everyone to follow these simple rules:

1. You Don't Need Your Phone

You don't need a phone at Youth Groups.

If you bring one, please keep it safe. SWAY can't take responsibility for lost or damaged phones.

2. Keep Phones Away During Sessions

During youth group:

- Put your phone on **silent**
- Keep it **in your bag or pocket**

If you need to use it, **ask a leader first**.

3. No Social Media or Scrolling

Youth group is about **spending time together**, not being on screens.

Please don't use phones for:

- social media
- gaming
- messaging friends during the session
- Watching videos or listening to music

4. No Photos or Videos at Sessions

To respect everyone's privacy:

- **Young people should not take photos or videos during youth group sessions.**

Leaders may occasionally take photos for church updates **if parents have given permission**.

5. Follow Safety Instructions

Phones should not be used during activities where they could be distracting or unsafe (for example cooking, outdoor activities, or campfires). Always follow leaders' instructions.

6. Be Kind and Respectful

Phones must **never** be used to:

- bully or exclude someone
- share harmful or inappropriate content
- secretly record or photograph someone

If phones are misused, leaders may speak to you and contact your parents if needed.

The Main Idea

Youth group is a place to **have fun, make friends, and be fully part of what's happening**.

Thanks for helping make it a **safe and welcoming space for everyone**.