
Connect at Bridge of Hope exists to *empower* students to be deeply rooted in Christ, *encourage* fruitful and meaningful relationships with one another, and *embolden* students to love and serve their community.

General Policies:

Check out our Policies HandBook (pg 10-11) for full details. We ask that all families fill out the Participation + Release Form for the 2023-2024 calendar year and, which will be provided at the kickoff.

Main Building Blocks:

- ***Connect Groups:*** We will gather together 2 Sunday nights each month (typically the 2nd and 4th) for our large group/small group times from 7:00-8:30 pm at the Bridge of Hope Ministry Center. Each of these nights will be structured very similarly, starting with some down time to connect with everyone, flowing into our 15-20 minutes of large group time, ending with roughly 30 minutes of small group time (which we call our Small Groups). These groups are broken up by age and gender with at least one Small Group leader walking alongside each group.
 - ***CONNECT Events:*** At least once each month we will get together with our UNITE group to be young, wild, and free out in the world. Kidding (well only kinda kidding). Each month we hope to have a fun event that will help us to build community within our group. These events will vary from “going out” to places like Sioux City or Sioux Falls, to “staying in” at the Ministry Center.
 - ***Small Group Night:*** This will be an informal time that is scheduled by each groups’ Small Group leader to do fun things with just their group, happening roughly once each semester. We also encourage Small Group Leaders to meet with students on the random- attending events, chatting over coffee, and pouring out into intentionally building relationships with their students.
 - ***Service Component:*** Each semester there will be a service project that our CONNECT group will participate in. Our goal is to reflect what proper Christ-like service and humility looks like when it comes to serving both people in our own community and when reaching outside the margins of Sioux Center. We strive to be a group that emboldens students to love and serve their community!
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Connect Small Group Leaders:

- ***6th-7th girls***
 - Kira Ouwinga (712-441-0841; kira@bridgecrc.org)
 - ***8th girls***
 - Amy Vanden Hull (712-441-6872; amy.vandenhull@gmail.com)
 - ***6th/7th guys***
 - Daniel Dickerson (573-579-9461; dndckrsn20@dordt.edu)
 - ***8th guys***
 - Colton Burney (417-848-2342; cltnbrny20@dordt.edu)
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How to Invest:

This ministry does not simply rely on having leaders who care and invest in the lives of your student(s). It also heavily relies on each of you as parents, the adults who each student interacts with the most, to invest in your student(s) through this ministry. What we mean by that is:

- **Ask Questions:** Stay up to date on what your student(s) is talking about during Connect Group. Ask about the latest series topic, what they're learning/hearing, or what they might yet have questions about. Keep the conversation going after they return home!
- **Stay Connected to Your Students' Small Group Leaders:** The idea and hope is that your student(s) will develop a trusted relationship with their small group leader. You, too, should get to know them! When your student is struggling, talk to their leaders. When your student is asking tough questions, talk to their leaders. When your student is approaching a huge milestone, let their Small Group Leaders know! We desire to do life together. Our goal is to intentionally invest in your students' lives. Let leaders know when your students' birthday is, let them know when your students' concert/game/tournament is- your students' leaders care and want to be involved!
- **Model What We Teach:** Along with asking questions and staying up to speed with what we at Connect are talking about, model that in your home life! For example, last year we talked a lot about how we are like lamps. Without being plugged into our source- God- we cannot shine and reach others. As one student wonderfully put it: it comes from God, starts with us, and then can overflow into others. *Up (from God), down (to us), and out (to the world)*. This analogy is something that can be reflected in ALL areas of life, not just as CONNECT. Again, we believe that one of the best ways to walk through this discipleship process with each student is by modeling in our own lives what we talk about. Doing is a powerful action.
- **Volunteer to help:** Our leaders do a lot of work and invest a lot of time into the students, but there are always ways we could use help! Whether that is signing up to bring snacks for the next meeting, volunteering your vehicle if ever needed for certain events, or being willing to lend a helping hand when needed. Bridge of Hope is lucky to have a body so willing to serve, and volunteering for the needs of CONNECT is a great way to start!