



Adopt-a-Student

Adopt-a-Student is part of our college ministry mission to help college students grow from convenient Christianity to a thriving faith in Jesus. We pair students with local individuals or families for encouragement and connection while rooting them in the hope of Jesus. Through intentional, intergenerational relationships, our goal is that hosts and students grow together, share life, and find authentic connection. Whether it's through a shared meal, a prayer, or a quick text, these relationships help students find their place in the larger church family.

For Hosts: What Does it Look Like to “Adopt” a Student?

You don't need to be a Bible scholar or a super host. Be willing to be present with the student(s)—pray, encourage and share life with them. This is what we ask:

- **Commit to the School Year.** Stay connected from August through May. Longer-term connections are a bonus, as many students remain local for four years or more.
- **Pray Intentionally.** Pray for your student(s) weekly by name.
- **Initiate Connection.** Reach out every couple weeks with a text, card, or coffee invite. Many students aren't sure how to take the first step and are waiting for your lead.
- **Spend Intentional Time.** Plan a monthly touchpoint like a meal, outing, or just conversation. Invite them to be a part of your family when they are able.
- **Celebrate Them.** Acknowledge the big and small moments—birthdays, achievements, or just surviving that big exam.
- **Disciple through Involvement.** Encourage them to plug into church life through worship gatherings, Connect Groups, and serving. Consider inviting them to serve alongside you in a ministry or project.

For Students: What Does it Mean to be “Adopted”?

You are being invited into a relationship that can help you navigate college life and provide encouragement in the midst of busy college life.

- **Practice Responsiveness.** Your host is excited to get to know you; please make it a priority to reply when they reach out.
- **Commit to Connection** Say yes to invitations when you can. Be clear about your schedule and boundaries. Your host family is here for you—make the most of it.
- **Grow with Community.** This is your church family, too. Stay involved through worship and serving so you can thrive during your time in Bloomington.
- **Be Real.** Don't feel like you have to have it all together. You aren't a project—you're a person, so let your host family walk alongside you.

FAQs

What if things feel awkward at first?

It probably will feel awkward! Relationships take time, but just show up and be yourself. Most of the best connections grow out of small, consistent moments.

Can I host more than one student?

Absolutely! Welcoming a small group of 2-4 students helps break the ice and allows students to encourage one another as they grow. **Hosts**—you can let us know how many students you want to “adopt” on your sign-up form. **Students**—you can indicate if you want to be paired with another student (and even name who you’d like pair with) on your sign-up form.

What if my student (or host) stops responding?

Let our College Ministry Team know. Sometimes people get overwhelmed, disconnected, or life just gets busy. We are here to reassess and help re-engage if needed.

What if I want to step away from the program?

We understand that life changes. We just ask that you communicate clearly with your host/student and the College Ministry Team so we can make adjustments.

Go to socc.org/college to sign up or email college@socc.org for more information.