

**FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO
CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION PROTOCOL**

Table of Contents

Overview
Purpose
Prevention
Reporting
Enforcement

Addendum 1: Definition of Terms

Addendum 2: Texas State Law

Forms and Documents:

- A. Code of Ethics Statement for Volunteer Teachers and Youth Advisors
- B. Alcohol Protocol
- C. Nursery Care Guidelines
- D. Media permission Form
- E. Field Trip Permission Form
- F. Permission Slip – Rally Retreat
- G. YRUU Travel permission
- H. Parental Consent for Communication with Child or Youth
- I. Request for Criminal History Record Clearance for FUUCSA Employees and Volunteers
- J. Background check results form
- K. Accident-Incident Form
- L. Interim Agreement Regarding Restrictions with Children and Youth
- M. Agreement for Those Needing Restrictions with Children and Youth
- N. Children’s Covenant and Rules
- O. Emergency Information
- P. Youth Protocols
- Q. YRUU rules of Conduct

OVERVIEW

First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio (First UU) affirms and promotes both the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and justice, equity, and compassion in human relations. In that spirit, we are called to encourage the spiritual growth and to ensure the safety of all children, youth, and adults who are a part of our religious community whether for a moment or for life. The following protocols and procedures are guidelines for maintaining a safe facility and environment for users of all ages; keeping children and youth safe; educating adults, youth, and children in the congregation about abuse and prevention; and responding to anyone who has been convicted or accused of sexual offenses. These protocols and procedures shall be made readily accessible to any person who may wish to see them.

PURPOSE

- 1) To provide guidelines for maintaining a religious education program and facility that provides physical, emotional, and spiritual safety.
- 2) To provide guidelines regarding appropriate behavior for adults who interact with the children and youth of our church and
- 3) Through prevention steps, reduce the likelihood that inappropriate behavior toward children will occur and
- 4) Provide guidance on how to effectively respond to incidents that may occur, whether during a church activity or at other times.

PREVENTION

Preventing Abuse

It is ultimately the responsibility of the entire congregation, in partnership with parents, to create and maintain a safe environment that supports the growth and welfare of children and youth in our church programs. However, these protocols is devoted primarily to situations in which children and youth are in a supervised relationship with church members other than their parents. The child's welfare shall be considered to be the parent's responsibility if the child is on church grounds but not actually in a church supervised activity.

In an effort to protect our young people as well as our leaders, teachers, contracted child care workers and all other adults who work or volunteer with children and youth in the church will be required to sign the **Code of Ethics (form A)** and pass a criminal background check before they assume child supervision roles.

At least two adults, including child care workers, should be present in each classroom on Sunday mornings, and on every outing, overnight and other church-related activity with groups of children. In events where there is free-flow between rooms, two adults in the building will be sufficient, as long as doors remain open. Windows must remain uncovered at all times.

Except for brief periods when unforeseen circumstances make it necessary, at no time shall one adult and one child/youth be alone together out of sight of other adults unless the adult is a parent or legal guardian of the child/youth.

Guidelines for people working with children and youth

1. No one shall engage in behavior with children or youth that constitutes verbal, emotional, or physical abuse. This includes behavior and language that is personally threatening or demeaning. Limited physical expressions of affections such as hugs are acceptable, but the adult must allow the child or youth to initiate the contact. Any form of touch or physical expression shall be based on the needs of the individual being touched, not on the needs of the volunteer or paid staff.
2. Teachers and Youth Advisors shall note the location of all fire safety equipment (extinguishers, etc.) and first aid kits in the space in which they are working. They are encouraged to attend training in basic first aid and CPR.
3. Teachers and Youth Advisors shall neither indulge in sexually harassing behavior nor engage in sexual, seductive or erotic behavior with children and youth.
4. Teachers and Youth Advisors shall not use illegal drugs or alcohol or engage in any illegal activities while supervising youth. Teachers and Youth Advisors shall not permit the use of tobacco, drugs or alcohol or any illegal activities among children or youth. They will be familiar with and follow the rules for handling alcohol at church events as set forth in **Document B, Alcohol Protocol**.
5. Youth advisors will be familiar with and act in accordance with the Child and Youth Protection polices of the UUA Southern Region when taking part in regional youth events.
6. Nursery care workers will be provided with a printout of and will sign to indicate familiarity with **Document C, Nursery Care Guidelines for First Unitarian Universalist Church San Antonio**.
7. The number of children per adult care provider should not exceed the recommended guidelines suggested by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

Safe child-staff ratio and group size

Newborn–24 months 1:3 (6)

25–30 months 1:4 (8)

31–35 months 1:5 (10)

3 years 1:7 (14)

4–5 years 1:8 (16)

6–8 years 1:10 (20)

9–12 years 1:12 (24)

When infants or toddlers are included in mixed age groups, the staff-to-child ratios and group size guidelines for the youngest child should be followed. Mixed age groups that do not include infants or toddlers should follow guidelines that reflect the most common age.

Internet/Media safety

In order for children to have their likenesses portrayed in any church media, web site, newsletter, or any publication, parents must sign a **Media Permission Form (Form D)**. When images are used, names will not be included with photographs.

Forbidden items

The following prohibited on church grounds: weapons of any kind, fireworks including cherry and smoke bombs, illegal drugs, inappropriate materials for age, including cigarettes and sexually explicit materials not used as part of a curriculum. Use of alcohol will conform to the church's alcohol protocol.

Field Trips

1. Parents or guardians must be notified before children leave the church premises, and parents or guardians must sign a **field trip permission form (form E)**. For youth events, use **Form F, Rally Retreat** or **Form G, YRUU Travel Permission**, as appropriate.
2. There must be a minimum of two adults with the group. There must be a ratio of one adult to five children. Drivers should have two or more children or youth in the car when transporting children or youth to and from activities. The only exceptions are when the driver is transporting a child or youth with prior written parent approval and notification of the DLRE, or when the child is from the adult's own family.
3. Children must be secured safely in vehicles according to current state regulations for seatbelts and car seat restraint.
4. An appropriately filled first aid kit is to be taken on all field trips, overnights, and retreats.

On-site Sleep-overs and Lock-ins

1. An **Emergency Information form (form O)** will be required for each youth at the sleepover.
2. All youth shall sign the current **YRUU code of conduct (Form Q)**.
3. There should be two adults awake on campus at all times.

Electronic Communications

Religious Education Volunteers shall follow the following guidelines concerning the use of social networking sites and other electronic communications with minors:

They may "friend" minors with the permission of the minor's parent/legal guardian.

Church-owned lists or social networking involving youth must include the Director of

Lifespan Religious Education and either the Minister or a designated church leader agreed upon by the DLRE or the Minister, who has passed a criminal background check within the previous three years.

Parents of participating youth must be offered the opportunity to be added to e-mail lists, social networking, or other forms of electronic communication. All communication must be in an open and transparent manner and include at least one other adult, preferably a parent or guardian of that child. No private chats or emails may be initiated by the adult. All correspondence must be appropriate in language and content i.e., no harassing or vulgar language, sexual innuendo or bullying.

Advisors may initiate phone calls, texts, or other one-on-one communications in order to discuss time-sensitive group business, providing the parent or guardian has completed and signed **Form H, PARENTAL CONSENT FOR COMMUNICATION WITH CHILD OR YOUTH.**

Prevention through Training and Education

Greater understanding of the complexities of sexuality and inappropriate behavior will help us to avoid situations that could lead to abuse or to false accusations. For our children and youth, the YRE Committee and DLRE will provide age-appropriate information about development and sexuality. First UU will implement the *Our Whole Lives* sexuality education curriculum for various age levels, to give children and youth life skills and language to avoid, confront and/or report inappropriate behavior. Our children must be empowered to protect themselves and report abuse. For YRE teachers and other volunteers working with children and youth, the YRE Committee will provide annual training and written information regarding these protocols and child abuse prevention. New members of the church will receive information about these protocols, including information about how to obtain a complete copy, which will be available on request. These protocols will be available on the church's web site.

Screening and Supervision of Adults Working with Children and Youth

All YRE teachers and other adults working with children and youth:

- Will have been attending First UU regularly for at least six months or have references from other Unitarian Universalist churches that include the minister or RE director.
- Will have completed a **Request for Criminal History Record Clearance (Form I)** and passed a confidential criminal background check
- Will have attended at least one training session related to these protocols organized by the YRE Committee within 6 months of starting date
- Will have read, understood and signed the **Code of Ethics (form A)**

- Will have a valid driver's license, liability insurance, and current automobile registration and license plates on their vehicle if they are to transport children/youth to church-sponsored activities.

Nursery care workers must be at least 18 years of age; volunteers working with children ages 13 and below will be at least 21 years of age; volunteers working with youth ages 14 and up will be at least 25 years of age.

Confidential criminal background checks will be conducted for all paid staff and for all volunteers working with children or youth. The results of the background check will be reviewed by the DLRE who will consult with the volunteer if there is a question as to suitability. The Minister and DLRE may, at their discretion, interview the applicant. In any case, children's potential safety will be the highest priority, and the Minister's and DLRE's decision will be final. A record of the decision (**document J**) will be retained on file.

REPORTING

In the case of any accident, injury, illegal activity or other incident, the staff member or volunteer in charge of the activity in which it occurred will complete **Form K, Accident-Incident Report Form**, which is to be signed by the injured party or his/her parent or guardian, reviewed by the DLRE and Minister, and kept on file in the church office. When in doubt as to whether a situation warrants reporting, the volunteer or staff member should make the report. Blank forms are kept in all first aid kits on campus and also may be obtained from the church secretary.

Reporting Of Suspected Child Abuse

Situations of suspected child abuse are seldom simple and straight forward. First UU leaders shall be guided by a commitment to the overriding priority of protecting the children. They shall also be sensitive to the harm that can be done by false or mistaken accusations. (See **Addendum 1** for a definition of child abuse) IF A CHURCH MEMBER OR FRIEND OR STAFF PERSON HAS A SUSPICION THAT A CHILD HAS BEEN ABUSED, EITHER WHILE IN THE CHURCH PROGRAM OR AT OTHER TIMES, THE PERSON WITH THE SUSPICION MUST REPORT THE INCIDENT TO STATE AUTHORITIES BY STATE LAW. In addition, if the person with the concern believes the abuse occurred during a church program, because the child or youth could be a continued risk, the individual should report his or her concerns to the minister, or DLRE. When an allegation of child abuse occurring during a church program is reported to the minister or DLRE, he or she must take the necessary steps to:

- 1) Abide by Texas law on reporting child abuse;
- 2) Take appropriate action to assure protection of the children in the church.

Reporting Of Inappropriate Behavior towards Children

If any congregant witnesses behavior toward any child that could be viewed as inappropriate, that congregant should report that behavior to the appropriate person as noted below. If the perceived inappropriate behavior is by a YRE teacher or a volunteer working with children or youth, the DLRE should be informed. The DLRE will discuss the report with the minister to determine a course of action. If the teacher or volunteer does not understand and correct the behavior or if the DLRE believes that the behavior puts children or youth at risk, the DLRE must report the behavior to the minister. The DLRE, in consultation with the YRE Committee, shall be empowered to remove the teacher or volunteer from the YRE program and recommend that the teacher involved not work with children or youth in any capacity at the church.

If an accusation of abuse of a child by a member of the community has been reported, the minister will ask the accused to sign **Form L: an Interim Agreement Regarding Restrictions with Children**, which would restrict contact with children while the accusation is being investigated. It is designed to protect children from any possible risk, to protect the accused from further suspicion, and to facilitate confidentiality while the complaint is being resolved. This document is kept in a locked file and is reviewed only by the Committee and the President of the Board of Trustees. If the accused is cleared of the accusations or if the complaint is withdrawn, the document is returned to him/her and the formal interim restrictions are terminated. If the accusations are found supported by the relevant authorities, the Committee will ask the offender to sign **Form M: an Agreement for Those Needing Restrictions with Children**. Similarly, should the minister or DLRE become aware that a member of the congregation has, in the past, sexually abused children or if any other reason exists to limit the person's contact with our children and youth, the minister will require the individual to sign the **Agreement for Those Needing Restrictions with Children (Form M)**. This document is kept in a locked file and reviewed only by the minister and the President of the Board of Trustees. Such information may be revealed to others on a need-to-know basis.

If the Minister is the person whose behavior was perceived to be inappropriate, the president of the board should be notified. He or she shall meet with the minister to discuss the allegations. The minister may, at his/her discretion, invite another person (not necessarily a congregant), to attend the meeting. Following the meeting, the board president may choose to meet with the full Board to determine a course of action. Before proceeding, the Board President should notify the UUA's Department of Ministries and Faith Development or its successor, of the allegations and the proposed action.

Confidentiality

Since these matters are sensitive, it is important that all persons involved, including the reporting person and the staff member involved, maintain the level of confidentiality recommended by the minister or DLRE.

False or Mistaken Accusations

Protection from false or mistaken is an important goal of these protocols. A key way to prevent false or mistaken allegations is to abide by the prevention guidelines outlined in the Prevention portion of these protocols. We must be sensitive to the disruption and damage a false accusation may cause to both the adults and the children involved. This is true even when the accusation is one due to a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of what seems a child's straightforward report of an event. If it is determined that an accusation has not been made in good faith or has been made with malice, the confidentiality of the reporting person will not be protected, except as may be determined by the Board in the case of a minor. The Minister may determine that a false accusation by a child or youth requires further consideration.

Response to Media Inquiries

Only the First UU Minister or the President of the First UU Board of Trustees (or her/his specific designee) may speak for the First UU in response to media inquiries concerning an alleged incident of injury, abuse, or objectionable conduct.

ENFORCEMENT

The YRE Committee

The YRE Committee shall be charged with understanding these protocols and being certain that all its actions and rules governing the YRE program are in agreement with the Policy. The YRE chair will meet with the DLRE when requested by the DLRE to remove a teacher or volunteer from working with youth or children, and advise the DLRE in such matters.

Staff Obligations

All staff must read and be in compliance with First UU's Child and Youth Protection Protocols, including the child and the **Alcohol Protocol (Document B)**.

Minister

We as a community expect the minister to abide by the *UU Ministers Association's Code of Professional Practice* which is available at uua.org.

The Director of Lifespan Religious Education (DLRE)

We as a community expect the Director of Religious Education and other professional religious education staff, to abide by the Liberal Religious Educator's Code of Professional Practice, which acknowledges that religious educators are also the recipients of special trust. In subscribing to this code, professional religious educators agree not to exploit the powers inherent in their

roles. The complete text of the Code is published in the LREDA Guidelines and Code of Professional Practices which is available at LREDA.org. The DLRE shall make every effort to ensure compliance with these protocols. For all teachers and volunteers working with youth and children the DLRE will obtain a signed **Code of Ethics (Form A)** yearly and keep them on file, provide training on the Safety Protocols, and conduct criminal background checks. The DLRE is to seek the advice of the minister on all matters related to these protocols.

The Role of the Congregation

Maintaining the safety of our youth and children is part of the covenant we all have with the church and with each other. Any member of the congregation or staff should feel free to contact the minister or DLRE with any concerns or ideas that would make First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio a better place for children or youth.

The Role of Parents

Parents should be familiar with, and make sure their children are familiar with, First UU's **Children's Covenant and Rules (Document N)** and the church's policy for enforcement outlined in **Document N, Children's Covenant and Rules**. All parents will be asked to agree to these protocols when they register their child(ren.) for our YRE program. **Parents are responsible for their own children and youth when that young person is not in a scheduled church activity.** Parents are also responsible for their own children and youth before and after scheduled church activities. The church is **NOT** responsible for the safety of children and youth on church grounds at times other than during the time of scheduled church events.

If parents plan to leave church grounds while their children are in a supervised activity, they must fill out **Form O (Emergency Information)**. No children or youth should be on the church grounds at times when no church events are scheduled unless a parent or adult authorized by a parent is present with the child or youth. During congregational meetings, children in grades five and below must be in supervised child care, which the church will provide. Committees/boards with youth membership shall see that youth are not left alone on campus but are attended by at least two adults while awaiting pick-up by parents after meetings.

The Role of Children: See **Document N: Children's Covenant and Rules**

The Role of Youth: See **Document P: Youth Protocols**

The minister will make the final determination of any additional consequences for violations of these protocols, including, but not limited to, termination of a staff person, and any additional action in the case of volunteers or members. Violation of these protocols by the minister or DLRE or other staff person shall constitute cause for discipline under the terms of that staff member's employment and First UU San Antonio's personnel policy.

ADDENDUM 1

Definition of Terms

DLRE: Director of Lifespan Religious Education

First UU: First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio

LREDA: Liberal religious Educators' Association

RE: Religious Education

UUA: Unitarian Universalist Association

UUMA: Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association

YRE: Youth Religious Education

What is Child Abuse?

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) defines child abuse as "an act committed by a parent, care giver, or person in a position of trust that harms or threatens to harm a child's well-being or physical or mental health." Child abuse is against the law. It is legally mandatory to report suspicions of abuse. There are four categories of child abuse according to the UUA:

Physical Abuse: Deliberately inflicting bodily harm to a child. Instances of child abuse include violent assault with hands, feet, a knife, or other instrument, or burns, fractures, and bruises resulting from being beaten, shaken, or thrown.

Sexual Abuse: Engaging in sexualized behavior, verbal or physical, with a child, using a child for the sexual gratification of an adult or older child. Any time a child is used for the sexual stimulation of an adult or a significantly older child, abuse has occurred. The child is powerless either to consent to or resist such sexual acts. Sexual abuse can include the fondling, sexual intercourse, forced participation in sexual acts, incest, and exploitation for the purpose of pornography or prostitution. Child sexual abuse is illegal regardless of whether the child "consents" or not. Consent is not an issue. The offender bears the entire responsibility for the abuse, whatever form it takes. Child sexual abuse may be violent or non-violent. All child sexual abuse is an exploitation of a child's vulnerability and powerlessness in which the abuser is fully responsible for the actions. Child sexual abuse includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects. Types of abuse that involve touching include: sexual fondling; oral, genital, and anal penetration; intercourse, forcible rape. Types of abuse that do not involve touching include: verbal comments such as statements intended to seduce children, pornographic videos, obscene phone calls, exhibitionism.

Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse may be very difficult to identify and document. Emotional abuse deeply affects a child's self-esteem by subjecting a child to verbal assault or emotional cruelty. It can include close confinement, inadequate nurturing, extreme discipline, or deliberately permitting destructive behaviors such as drug or alcohol abuse.

Neglect: Children have basic physical, nutritional, and environmental needs that must be supplied. Chronic withholding of food, clothing, medication, and proper living quarters, as well as abandonment are all acts of neglect. Neglect can include physical, emotional, or educational neglect through such actions as inadequate supervision, health hazards in the home, refusing to seek treatment for illnesses, providing inadequate nurturing, and deliberately permitting chronic truancy.

Sexual Misconduct: Any instance of:

- Undesired or inappropriate sexually oriented humor, language, questions, or comments, or
- Undesired or inappropriate physical contact, or
- Inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance, or
- Intimidation or hostile sexually orientated comments.

A one-time occurrence may be sufficiently serious to constitute sexual misconduct.

Sexual Harassment: Repeated, ongoing, and unwanted incidents of sexual misconduct.

ADDENDUM 2

Texas State Law

Clergy as Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect

To better understand this issue and to view it across States, see the *Clergy as Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect: Full-Text Excerpts of State Laws* ([PDF - 262 KB](#)) publication. *Citation:* Tex. Fam. Code Ann. § 261.101 (West, WESTLAW through End of 1999 Reg. Sess.)

Statute Text

A person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately make a report as provided by this subchapter. The requirement to report under this section applies without exception to an individual whose personal communications may otherwise be privileged, including an attorney, a member of the clergy, a medical practitioner, a social worker, a mental health professional, and an employee of a clinic or health care facility that provides reproductive services.

What's the Law (From Prevent Child Abuse Texas—www.preventchildabusetexas.org)

Anyone “having cause to believe that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare has or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect” must report the case to any state or local law enforcement agency and to the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. Failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect is punishable by imprisonment of up to 180 days and/or a fine of up to \$1,000. (Texas Family Code, chapter 34).

Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-800-252-5400.

FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

A. Code of Ethics Statement for Volunteer Teachers and Youth Advisors

First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio Code of Ethics Statement

For Volunteer Teachers and Youth Advisors Adults and older youth in leadership roles in this congregation are in a position of stewardship and play a key role in fostering the spiritual development of both individuals and the community. It is, therefore, especially important that those in leadership positions be well qualified to provide the special nurture, care and support that will enable children and youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility. The relationship between young people and their leaders must be one of mutual respect if the positive potential of their relationship is to be realized. Respect on the leader's part must include recognition of the absolute right of children and youth to the privacy of their bodies and minds. Sometimes a genuine mentoring relationship will develop between a youth and an adult. These can be not only healthy, but also transformative for both parties. However, it is our concern that a "predator," who does not have the best interest of the youth at heart, will try to disguise an unhealthy relationship with a youth as a mentoring relationship. Therefore, it is imperative that your behavior both be and appear to be above reproach. Any relationship you develop with a youth outside of church-sponsored events must be with the knowledge and consent of the parents. This is for the protection of the youth from potential predators, but also for your own protection. Specific rules governing behavior of adults working with children and youth are stated in First UU's child and youth protection policy. Questions and concerns regarding what might be appropriate or inappropriate behavior should be directed to the Director of Lifespan Religious Education or the Minister.

I have read and understand the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio's Code of Ethics and agree to abide by it, as well as by all rules for behavior with children and youth as set forth in the church's Child and Youth Protection Policy.

Print Name Date

Signature

B. Alcohol Protocol

Within the premises and community of First Unitarian Universalist church, the responsible consumption of alcohol by adults at church events is desired by some adult members and is acceptable in the eyes of the Church. However, it is recognized that alcohol is a sensitive issue for many people. For many different reasons, some adults choose not to drink alcohol. Families have different values and standards regarding the exposure of their children to alcohol in intergenerational activities. It is also recognized the church's liability insurance does not include coverage for alcohol-related incidents, including the consequences of intoxication.

The following procedures are intended to respect the needs of our diverse intergenerational community and to protect the church's interests in terms of liability. These procedures apply to all church events, including those occurring at public venues off-site and officially sponsored church events held in members' homes. They do not apply to private dinners or gatherings of church members being held in locations other than the church premises.

1. In the interests of nurturing a community which values all its participants equally, alcoholic beverages may not be served at events which are intentionally and primarily designed for children and/or youth.
2. Alcohol may not be sold at church events either directly or indirectly (ie through donations at an event where alcohol is being served) unless a liquor license has been obtained.
3. If alcohol is to be served at church events, non-alcoholic beverages must also be served and attractively and prominently displayed in a location separate from the alcohol.
4. For every church event at which alcohol will be served, one individual must be designated the Alcohol Custodian (AC). The AC will wear a "badge" designating this responsibility.
5. Self service of alcoholic beverages is not permitted. Alcoholic beverages must be served by persons who work under the direction of the AC. Thus containers of alcohol must be monitored by the AC or his/her designee at all times.
6. The AC is responsible for monitoring the whereabouts of all alcohol containers, including bringing them into the building and removing them at the end of the event. No container of alcohol may be left unattended at any time unless under lock and key (e.g. in the trunk of a car to which only adults have access).
7. No alcoholic beverages may be left on church premises without prior permission of the church staff. All such alcohol will be kept under lock and key and may be disposed of at the discretion of the staff. Any containers in violation of this provision will be disposed of by the church staff using the method of their choice.
8. Alcoholic beverages may only be served to and served by persons who are 21 years of age or over. If the person's age is in question, ID must be presented before alcohol may be served.
9. Persons under 21 may not handle any glass, bottle, or container that contains or has contained alcohol, including removing glasses and bottles that have been left on tables.
10. Personal containers of alcohol which are brought for specific events must be maintained according to this protocol.

11. Following the safety practice of many public events, alcohol service must be terminated ½ hour before the announced end of a church event.
12. Any church member or employee who becomes aware of any violation of these protocols shall bring it to the attention of the AC who shall take appropriate action, including requiring the violator to leave the premises.
13. If, in the opinion of the AC or a member of the church staff, an attendee at a church event appears to be intoxicated, he or she will be asked to leave, but under no circumstances will he or she be allowed to drive. **If an appropriate designated driver cannot be found, the AC or staff member will call a taxi. The taxi will, if necessary, be paid for by the church; please refer the matter to the minister for reimbursement.** Should this become necessary, the AC or responsible staff member shall treat this as an “incident” and complete an incident report form.
14. All groups using the church shall be informed of and given a copy of these protocols.

C. Nursery Care Guidelines

Parents leaving their children in the care of our nursery staff can be assured that the safety and welfare of their children is our highest priority. To that end, nursery staff and church administration will observe the guidelines.

Procedures

Parents will sign their child(ren) in on the sign-in sheet when entering. If any person other than the person dropping off will pick up the child, the caregivers must be explicitly notified. The sign-in sheet will have a space for parents to write their cell phone number so caregivers may contact them if needed. (Parents should be sure to put their cell phones on vibrate!) Nursery staff are responsible for ensuring the cleanliness and safety of the premises and users at all times. There must always be at least two caregivers in the nursery during nursery hours. Children are supervised at all times. Nursery staff will have completed a request for background screening and passed a confidential criminal background check

Reporting suspected abuse

Most injuries to children are accidental and can be simply explained. Bruises, scrapes and cuts are part of the normal rough and tumble of a young child's life. There are, however, some children who suffer injuries which are not accidental. The nursery staff has a duty to report any serious concerns they may have about a child to the Texas Department of Family and Protective services at **1-800-252-5400**. Caregivers are aware of the sensitivity of this issue and of the confidentiality involved. The nursery staff's duty must be to support the family but above all, to ensure the protection of the child at all times.

Sanitation

Caregivers will wipe down all surfaces with disinfectant after the last child has left the nursery each Sunday. Diaper-changing surfaces must be changed after every use. Caregivers are encouraged to wear sanitary gloves when changing diapers or coming into contact with any bodily fluids. If this is not practicable, the caregiver will wash hands with disinfecting soap or use an instant hand sanitizer after each exposure. Hazardous materials like cleaning fluids must be kept where children cannot reach them. Children who manifest a fever or other signs of possible infectious disease should not be cared for in the nursery. If a caregiver sees signs of illness, the parent will be called.

Fire safety

Fire exits are clearly marked and are free from obstructions. Firefighting equipment is serviced regularly.

Environment and equipment

Plug protectors will be placed in all unused electrical outlets.

Donated equipment will be examined for adherence to safety standards before being used.

All toys should be age appropriate. Small toys will be tested to make sure they are not small enough to present a choking hazard.

All toys in a nursery should be washable. Smooth, plastic-covered toys are best because they can be easily cleaned.

Walkers are not recommended for church use.

Accidents and injuries

All accidents are recorded on an accident/incident report form which is to provide details of dates, times, nature of incident and injury, any treatment given, and is to be signed by the member of staff who administers First Aid. A First Aid box is available in all buildings and is replenished regularly. In case of serious injury 911 will be called and parents will be called in from the sanctuary.

Parent Concerns

Parents may feel confident that concerns expressed to our nursery caregiver staff will be taken seriously. Concerns may also be addressed to the Director of Lifespan Religious Education (344-2431; cell: 361-947-0863) or the Director of Worship and Education.

I have read and agree to abide by the above guidelines

Printed Name of Nursery care-giver _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____

D. Media Permission Form

MEDIA PERMISSION

Yes _____ No _____ I grant permission for photos of my child(ren) in RE activities to be published on the church website and social media, church-only e-mails, or in the church building. I understand no names will be attached.

Names of Children: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Printed Name _____

Date _____

Dr. Sheri Phillabaum
Director of Lifespan Religious Education
First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio
dlre@uusat.org

E. Field Trip Permission Form

FIELD TRIP PERMISSION FORM

Your child's Religious Education class will be going on a field trip to

On _____ from _____ to _____ o'clock.

The purpose of the trip is _____

Transportation will be provided by _____

Adults responsible for this trip are _____

Please feel free to contact them for further information.

If your child has a medical condition or other concern that we need to be aware of for this trip, let us know.

Your signature gives us permission to take your child on the above mentioned field trip. Feel free to accompany your child on this trip.

Child's name _____

Phone number where you can be reached at the time of the field trip: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____

Date _____

F. Permission Slip – Rally Retreat

PERMISSION SLIP

My child/ward _____ has permission to participate with the YRUU activity _____ on _____ (date). I understand that this event will be held at _____ and will include _____ (activities). He/she is in good physical condition and has not had any recent or relevant serious illness or operation.

I wish to inform you that my child has the following medical or physical condition(s) which may affect his/her participation (if none, so state) including prescription and over-the-counter medication:

SHOULD ANY ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS OCCUR TO HIM/HER ON THIS ACTIVITY, I SHALL NOT HOLD THE ADULT CHAPERONE(S), HIS OR HER AGENTS, OR THE FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO, COMMUNITY UNITARIAN CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO OR FIRST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF AUSTIN RESPONSIBLE, INCLUDING THOSE INJURIES RESULTING FROM THEIR OWN NEGLIGENCE. I authorize the adult chaperone(s), if necessary in their opinion, to obtain medical services of a doctor or healthcare practitioner. During the activity, I may be reached at (phone no.): _____
If I cannot be reached, please call _____ (name) at _____ (phone number).

HEALTH INSURANCE PROVIDER: _____

HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY & GROUP NUMBER: _____

DATE: _____ PARENT'S SIGNATURE: _____

G. YRUU Travel Permission

General Permission for Travel to Sponsored Events

I hereby give my permission for my child/ward [name] to travel from First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio and or Community Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio to rallies and/or other YRUU-sponsored events during the course of the _____ church year, from this date until _____. This permission slip is to be used for the travel to and from those events. I understand that specific attendance permission slips will be issued for each rally and for other sponsored events. I understand that the churches do not accept responsibility for any bodily injury incurred during the event and during travel to and from any event. I give my consent and authority for the Religious Education Staff (paid or volunteer) of these churches and for the adult chaperones to take any reasonable action to help ensure the safety, health and welfare of my child/ward, and absolve the staff of liability. I give permission for any emergency medical, surgical, diagnostic and hospital care, treatment, or procedures deemed immediately necessary or advisable by emergency medical technicians, a physician or hospital to safeguard my child/ward's health when I cannot be contacted. I agree to be responsible for any medical expenses not covered by my insurance. My child has the following allergies, dietary restrictions, or medical conditions **(if none, so state)**:

Medications:

In case of emergency, I can be reached at (_____) _____ - _____ or (_____) _____ - _____

If unable to reach me, please contact:

Name _____ Relationship _____

Phone (_____) _____ - _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date ____/____/____

H. Parental Consent for Communication with child or youth

In general, electronic and in-person communications between youth and adult advisers will be restricted to open forums with a minimum of two youth and two adults present. However, there may be times when, in order to complete group business in a timely manner, an advisor may need to initiate a brief phone call or other one-on-one electronic communication in order to conduct time-sensitive group business. By signing below, you are giving your permission for an advisor to contact your youth for time-sensitive business if other, more open forums fail. If you should have any questions or concerns, please contact Director for Lifespan Religious Education at 344-2431 or dlre@uusat.org

I _____ (parent or guardian's name printed) am comfortable with a youth group advisor of First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio contacting _____ (child's name printed) for reasonable communications as described above.

Signature _____ date _____

I. Request for Criminal History Record Clearance for First UU Church Employees and Volunteers

First UU Church screens prospective employees and volunteers to evaluate whether an applicant poses a risk of harm to the children and youth it serves. Information obtained is not an automatic bar to employment or service, but is considered in view of all relevant circumstances. All applicants are required to complete this disclosure in order to be considered for employment or service. Any falsification, misrepresentation, or incompleteness in this disclosure alone is grounds for disqualification or termination. **Personal information such as social security information and driver's license number will remain confidential.**

Applicant's Full Name:

Last First Middle

Any Alias(es)/Former Name(s), including Maiden Name:

Address: _____ phone number _____

Social Date of Place of

Security No.: _____ Birth: _____ Birth: _____

Please check the appropriate statement:

I have ____ I have NOT ____ been convicted of a crime for which incarceration was a sentencing option.

Date & Place of Conviction Offense Sentence/Fines

I declare under penalty of perjury that the above statements are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Youth advisors only:

Driver's license number: _____ State issuing license: _____

License expiration date: _____

States of residence other than Texas during the past five years: _____

I, the undersigned, hereby apply for, authorize, and consent to have an investigation made as to my record of prior convictions for any crime except for: (1) offenses for which incarceration was not a sentencing option, (2) juvenile offenses, and (3) arrests or convictions that have been expunged or sealed, or are otherwise not permitted to be released pursuant to the law of the releasing state. I understand that the contents of the reports are confidential, and will be reported to and shared between FUUCSA and the applicant only. I hereby release, discharge and exonerate FUUCSA, its employees and agents, and any person furnishing information from any and all liability of every nature and kind arising out of the furnishing or inspection of such documents, records, and other information or the investigation made by FUUCSA.

Applicant's Signature:

_____ Date: _____

J. Background check results form

On _____ (mm/dd//yy) the DLRE and church secretary at First UU San Antonio performed a background check on _____ (name) using _____. The results contained one or more reports.

On _____ (mm/dd//yy), the undersigned participated in careful review of the charges, the disposition of the charges, and the number of years which have passed since such charges were filed. It has been deemed that the individual named above

_____ may

_____ may not

Work with children or youth in our church.

Minister

DLRE

K. Accident-Incident Form

Date of Report: _____

Person reporting the accident/incident: _____

Person(s) involved in accident/ incident: _____

Location of accident/incident (please be specific): _____

Date of accident/incident: _____ Time of accident/incident: _____

Description of what happened: _____

(If you need more space, you can use the back of this form or add additional pages)

Action Taken or Treatment Given: _____

(If you need more space, you can use the back of this form or add additional pages)

Witness (name, address, phone) _____

Witness (name, address, phone) _____

Person(s) notified of accident/incident _____
(if accident/incident involved a minor, the parent/guardian must be notified)

X _____
Person Completing Form Date

X _____
Guardian (if minor involved) Date

X _____
Minister Date

X _____
DLRE (if minor involved) Date

Please turn completed form into the church office.

L. Interim Agreement Regarding Restrictions with Children

CONFIDENTIAL

A complaint has been made to the DLRE or minister which is now under investigation. While this complaint is being investigated, in order to protect the children in our programs from potential risk, to protect you from further suspicion, and to maintain confidentiality, we ask you to abide by this interim agreement. Signing this document in no way constitutes an agreement with or acceptance of the accusations made. Instead, this interim restriction is a routine safety precaution, activated without prejudice toward particular individuals. This document will be reviewed only by the minister and the President of the Board of Trustees. If the accusations are unfounded or withdrawn, this document will be returned to you.

Within these guidelines, the church welcomes your participation in worship services, coffee hour, committee meetings, adult discussion groups, adult social events, and well-supervised intergenerational events. The guidelines are as follows:

1. Avoid all contact with children on church property or at church-sponsored events. This restriction includes the following:

- Refrain from contact with children.
- No volunteering or chaperoning for children's events (including children's religious education classes, talks with the children during worship services, specific children's activities at intergenerational events, and driving children to church activities).
- Remain in the presence of another adult when children are present in the building or at church sponsored events.
- Avoid conversations with children on church property or at church-sponsored events.

2. The church will attempt to keep this matter as confidential as possible, while ensuring that the church remains a safe place for our children. Consider the Minister and the President of the Board of Trustees as your contact persons should further questions arise. Failure to abide by this agreement may result in termination of your membership and/or refusal of access to church events.

Agreement

I have reviewed this **Interim Agreement Regarding Restrictions with Children** and agree to abide by it.

Signature Date

M. Agreement for Those Needing Restrictions with Children

CONFIDENTIAL

As we have discussed, _____ has reasons for concern that your contact with children and youth at First UU San Antonio potentially places both you and them at risk of incident or accusation. For this type of situation we have developed the following guidelines. Within these guidelines, the church welcomes your participation in worship services, coffee hour, committee meetings, adult discussion groups, adult social events, and well-supervised intergenerational events.

The guidelines are as follows:

1. Avoid all contact with children on church property or at church-sponsored events. This restriction includes the following:
 - Refrain from contact with children.
 - No volunteering or chaperoning for children's events (including children's religious education classes, talks with the children during worship services, specific children's activities at intergenerational events, and driving children to church activities).
 - Remain in the presence of an adult designated by the Board and within hearing distance at all times when children are in the building or at church sponsored events.
 - Avoid conversations with children on church property or at church-sponsored events.
2. The church will attempt to keep this matter as confidential as possible, while ensuring the church remains a safe place for our children. Consider the Minister and the DLRE as your contact persons should further questions arise.
3. Inform the minister of any further developments which may influence our concerns about your possible impact on the well-being of the children in this church. Failure to abide by this agreement may result in termination of your membership and/or refusal of access to church events.

Special Note: If, due to the seriousness of the circumstances, these guidelines are determined insufficient, the individual may lose his or her right to be a member of this congregation and may be refused access to church events.

Agreement

I have reviewed this **Agreement for Those Needing Restrictions with Children** and agree to abide by it.

Signature

Date

N. Children's Covenant and Rules

Youth Religious Education Behavior Guidelines for First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio, adapted from a policy by JoAnne Weber-Baligad, DRE, Orange Coast Unitarian Universalist Church, Costa Mesa, CA

The Youth Religious Education Committee encourages talking together to learn from each other in search of our own beliefs. We respect others and each person's right to speak. At the beginning of each church school session the teachers and students will discuss the Behavior Guidelines each family is required to sign as well as the following guidelines.

- Respect yourself and each other.
- One person talks at a time. Raise your hand to be recognized.
- Listen quietly when another person is talking.
- Make only positive comments about another person.
- Use indoor voices.
- Each person has personal space. Control your own body.
- Follow teacher's first request.
- You are "allowed to pass" during discussion.
- You are to remain in the group during all activities.

Each class will then adapt them appropriately to their class and post in a conspicuous place in the classroom. All participants must agree to follow these guidelines. Teachers will remind students periodically of their agreement.

Safety Policy

The Children's Religious Education Program at First UU San Antonio provides a safe place for your child to grow and thrive physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The policy below helps us insure the physical safety of everyone.

To insure the safety of all participants the following are considered intolerable: possessing any of the following- weapons of any kind, materials for producing fire, fireworks including cherry and smoke bombs, illegal drugs, inappropriate materials for age, including cigarettes and sexually explicit materials not used as part of a curriculum. These are all strictly forbidden.

Intolerable behavior includes the following- violent behavior towards oneself or others, inappropriate sexual behavior, threats or threatening behavior, leaving supervised areas (classrooms, playground, church buildings, and patios) without approval from teacher or parent, and destruction of personal or church property.

Behavior Guidelines based on our seven UU principles:

1. We believe that each and every person is important.

Safety is our first concern! Children must remain in classrooms or supervised areas until picked up by parents. Only gentle play is appropriate on church grounds. Treat everyone with respect. Use caring language and behavior.

2. We believe that all people should be treated fairly and kindly.

Listen and follow directions. Be polite. Take turns. Care about one another.

3. We believe that we should accept one another and keep on learning together.

Make a commitment to regular attendance. Your friends and teachers depend upon you. Include everyone in activities and planning. Friends are welcome. Let them know our rules. Participate with enthusiasm.

4. We believe that each person is free to search for what is true and right in life.

Share your ideas and respect the ideas of others.

5. We believe that all persons should have the right to speak out and have a vote about what concerns them.

Express your opinions constructively. Respect the decision of the group.

6. We believe in working for a peaceful, fair and free world.

Ask for help when you need it. Do your best to get along with others and to be helpful. Be willing to listen to reminders about your behavior.

7. We believe in caring for our planet earth, the home we share with all living things.

Take good care of our church. Help clean up. Be careful with our space, furniture and materials. Use only what you need. Be gentle with the plants and animals.

If behavior guidelines are not followed there is a three-part discipline procedure.

Part One- if a problem arises, teachers will refer to the class guidelines and specify which one(s) is/are not being followed. If the problem continues, give one verbal warning. If the problem still continues, remove the child from class to the care of the DLRE or designated person. DLRE will discuss behavior with child and either the child will be returned to classroom or continue time with DLRE. DLRE will bring the behavior problem to the attention of the parent after the service.

Part Two- if a child is sent to the DLRE a second time; the DLRE will discuss the behavior problem with the parent and child.

Part Three- if problem continues a meeting will be scheduled with all parties to develop partnership and plan for improvement.

Acknowledgment

Our family has reviewed the Children’s Covenant and Rules for youth religious education at First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio, including the protocols regarding violations, and we agree to support them. We understand that the complete text of our church’s safety policy may be found on the church’s web site uusat.org and will be supplied in hard copy upon request.

Parent/Guardian

Parent/Guardian

Child

Child

Child

Child

O. Emergency Information

First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio
Youth Religious Education Program

(One Per Child)

Date _____

Child's Name _____ Date of Birth __/__/____

Grade _____

Street _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____ Home Phone(____) _____

Parent/Guardian's

Name _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Other Phone(____) _____ (cell or work)

Email _____

Parent/Guardian's

Name _____

Home Phone(____) _____ Other Phone(____) _____ (cell or work)

Email _____

Emergency Contact

Name _____ Phone(____) _____

Relationship _____

Medical Information

Allergies/Medical

Conditions _____

Current Medications _____

Doctor _____ Phone(____) _____

Dentist _____ Phone(____) _____

Insurance Carrier _____ Number _____

Group Number _____

Name of primary insured person _____

Insurance Company's Phone(____) _____

Parent/Guardian Authorization

I am the parent or legal guardian of _____ (child's name). I hereby give my consent and authority for the Director of Religious Education or a member of the Youth Religious Education Council of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio to take any reasonable action to help ensure the safety, health, and welfare of my child/ward. I hereby do absolve the staff and First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio of liability. I give my consent for any necessary medical treatment, including emergency surgical care, if needed.

Printed Name _____

Signature _____

P. Youth Protocols

- At overnight events, youth may not come and go. Once they arrive at the event they may leave only with parental permission or as part of the normal activities of the event (e.g., social action or going out to eat).
- At overnight events, there must be two adults awake on campus at all times.
- All youth events shall be non-smoking
- There shall be a minimum of 2 adults with youth at all times. If an adult needs to meet one-on-one with a youth that meeting should take place in a public space where they are visible to others. If for some reason it is not possible to meet in a public place (e.g., one adult and one youth are attending a conference and the adult is providing transportation), the adult advisor shall notify the DLRE and shall obtain permission from the parent.
- All youth who attend overnight high school events shall sign the current **YRUU code of conduct (Form R)**.
- When advisors or chaperones take a group of children or youth off-campus they shall leave a copy of the travel permission slips and a complete list of all persons in the vehicles with the DLRE.
- Weapons of all kinds are prohibited at youth events.
- All transportation at youth events shall be provided by adults who are at least 25 years old. Drivers should have two or more youth in the car when transporting youth to and from activities. The only exceptions are when the driver is transporting a child or youth with prior written parent approval and notification of the DLRE, or when the youth is from the adult's own family. In the event that a youth must drive (e.g., they need to come home before the rest of the group), there shall be explicit and written permission from the parent or adult guardian. In addition, a youth may not provide a ride for another youth unless there is explicit and written permission granted from the parent or guardian of both youth (the driver and the passenger).
- An appropriately filled first aid kit is to be taken on all field trips, overnights, and retreats.

R. YRUU Rules of Conduct

A. Alcohol, illegal drugs, weapons, violence or sexual activity will not be allowed under any circumstances. No use of drugs or medications (this applies even to over-the-counter medication) without prior notification to and permission of youth's advisor(s). Abuse of even legal drugs will be considered illegal drug use.

B. ANY inappropriate, demeaning, derogatory or offensive behavior will be unacceptable.

C. Any one member of our community is empowered and encouraged to voice their opinions, objections or concerns at any time. The Local YRUU officers will then be responsible to take swift and appropriate action.

D. In accordance with SWUUC YAC and the First UU Church of San Antonio Board, this will be a tobacco-free activity. Due to the unhealthy and addictive nature of smoking, the San Antonio YRUU and the Church have adopted a tobacco-free policy for all youth events. Violation of these protocols will result in the following actions (per event):

1st offense: Confiscation of cigarettes, lighters, tobacco products, etc.

2nd offense: A serious meeting with your advisor will be held. Parents will be notified of this violation. Also, you will make an apology to the community at large

3rd offense: Suspension from local YRUU events for a period of up to six months.

In extreme cases, these steps may be skipped and suspension may be immediate.

I have read and understand the rules of the YRUU event, and I understand that the consequences of failing to follow them could include my removal from the event. I agree to help promote a positive community and do all I can to protect the physical property of the church.

DATE: _____ YOUTH'S SIGNATURE: _____