

Hosting an Event at First UU San Antonio

A Guide for Committee Leaders

June 25, 2026

New to planning an event with kids in mind?

The Director of Lifespan Religious Education (dre@uusat.org) is your go-to resource for anything in this guide. If something feels unclear or you're not sure which path applies to your event, just ask.

Part 1: Hosting an Event WITH Child Care

Child care means the church takes responsibility for children during the event. Parents sign children in and out of a designated space.

1. **Decide the age range for care.** Will it cover all ages, or just younger children (e.g., under 3)? Note that children under 3 must be cared for in the nursery specifically.
2. **Reserve space for kids.** You probably reserved space for your event, but make sure to reserve space for the kids too. Reach out to the office with a email titled clearly childcare needed. They will help you pick a space based on your needs.
3. **Figure out staffing.**
 - Minimum of 2 caregivers, always. (Volunteers or staff)
 - If you expect 8+ children, plan for 4 caregivers.
 - Follow HHS ratios (roughly 1 adult per 3 infants up to 1 adult per 12 kids ages 9–12). If infants/toddlers are mixed with older kids, follow the youngest child's ratio.
 - The two caregivers should not be a couple or married to each other.
4. **Arrange caregivers.**
 - For Sunday mornings and congregational meetings, the DLRE handles this.
 - For other events, you can use your own volunteers or ask the DLRE to arrange paid care.
 - Paid care costs \$16.50/hr per caregiver, make sure you budget for this when requesting committee funds.
 - All caregivers who are counted towards the two-adult rule must have a background check. If a volunteer needs a background check, just let the DLRE know at least a week in advance. It's an easy process.
5. **Set up the space.**
 - Show caregivers where the fire extinguishers and first aid kit are.
 - Windows must stay uncovered. If there's free-flow between rooms, doors must stay open.
 - No adult should ever be alone 1:1 with a child out of sight of others (unless that adult is the child's parent/guardian).

6. **Plan activities, not screens.** This is event planners job, not the staff or DLRE. Avoid TV/movies unless parents have explicitly approved. For example Parent's nights out are usually advertised as having a movie planned. The DLRE can help find age-appropriate activities if needed.
7. **Advertise clearly.** Tell people: what ages care is available for, where to sign children in/out, and what time care starts and ends.
8. **Print a sign-in sheet.** Include space for the child's name, parent's name, a cell phone number, who is authorized to pick the child up (if different from the person dropping off), and any allergies or medical notes which is especially important if food or snacks will be served.
9. **Know the pay rules for no-shows.**
 - If nobody shows up for an after-church event, caregivers are paid for an extra ½ hour.
 - If nobody shows up at any other time, caregivers get a minimum of 1 hour's pay.

Part 2: Hosting a Child-Friendly Event (No Formal Child Care)

Child-friendly means parents/guardians remain responsible for supervising their own children but you're making sure the event is welcoming and appropriate for kids who'll be present.

10. **Decide who the event is for.** Adults only? Consider child care. All ages welcome but not specifically planned for kids? Make this clear in your advertising so parents know what to expect.
11. **If the event runs longer than 2 hours,** plan some age-appropriate activities for kids over 3, even informal ones (coloring, books, a designated play area).
12. **If you're not sure an activity is appropriate,** check with the DLRE.
13. **Alcohol rules still apply.** If children might be present and alcohol will be served, you still need an Alcohol Custodian. See Part 3.
14. **Consider RSVPs** if you have no idea how many families/kids to expect, it helps you gauge whether you actually need child care instead.

Part 3: Alcohol at Events

If your event will serve alcohol AND children might be present:

- Alcohol cannot be the focus; the event can't be designed primarily for kids/youth. If you can't have the event without kids such as the easter egg hunt, alcohol is not allowed. But if you could have it without kids, kids are just present such as Thanksgiving Dinner, alcohol is allowed. If Alcohol is the focus like a wine tasting, nobody under 21 can attend.

- You need a designated **Alcohol Custodian (AC)** who wears a badge, monitors all alcohol containers. Any known responsible adult over the age of 21 can be the AC.
- Non-alcoholic drinks must be displayed separately and prominently.
- No self-service. Under-21s cannot serve, be served, or handle alcohol containers/glasses.
- Alcohol service stops 30 minutes before the event ends.
- No alcohol may be sold (including via “donations”) without a liquor licence.

Why We Do This

Yes, this is extra work. Yes, it’s more steps than just planning an adults-only gathering.

But when we make the effort to welcome families to church events it tells parents and kids they belong here, not just on Sunday mornings, but at the events that make up the life of this congregation. Kids that feel like this is *their* church too and that they belong here and are not just tolerated. That’s what gives this community a future. Kids who grow up feeling at home here are the ones who come back, who bring their own families someday, and who keep this place alive.

The extra steps are how we build that. Thank you for taking them on.

Questions? Contact the Director of Lifespan Religious Education (DLRE), Sheri: dlre@usat.org