

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson Child Protection Policy

Approved 08-26-2018

Updated 08-04-24

General Purpose Statement

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the below practices, our goal is to protect the children of Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers (workers) from false accusations.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the terms “child” or “children” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years. The term “worker” includes both paid staff and volunteer persons who work with children.

Selection of Workers

All persons who desire to work with the children participating in our programs and activities will be screened. This screening includes the following:

a) **Six Month Rule**

No volunteer will be considered for any position involving contact with minors until she/he has been involved with the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson for a minimum of six (6) months. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with children.

b) **Age Requirements**

Volunteers working with middle and high school age youth on a regular basis must be at least 21 years of age. All other elementary or continuing education teachers, nursery/childcare supervisors, or other designated monitors must be at least 18 years of age.

c) **Written Application (*immunizations see below*)**

All persons seeking to work with children must complete and sign a written application in a form to be supplied by us. The application will request basic information from the applicant and will inquire into previous experience with children, previous Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson affiliation, reference and employment information, as well as disclosure of any previous criminal convictions. The application form will be maintained in confidence on file at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson.

d) **Personal Interview**

Upon completion of the application, a face-to-face or virtual interview may be scheduled with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position.

e) **Reference Checks**

Before an applicant is permitted to work with children, at least two of the applicants' references will be checked. These references should be of an institutional nature as opposed to personal or family references (if possible), preferably from organizations where the applicant has worked with children in the past. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence on file at Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson.

f) **Criminal Background Check**

A national criminal background check is required every three years for all employees (regardless of position) and for the following categories of volunteers:

- Those who will be involved in our school/preschool/daycare center;
- Those who will be involved in overnight activities with children;
- Those counseling children;
- Those involved in one-on-one mentorship of children; and
- Those having occasional one-on-one contact with children (such as, church sponsored team coaches and vehicle drivers).

Before a background check is run, prospective workers will be asked to sign an authorization form allowing the church to run the check. If an individual declines to sign the authorization form, s/he will be unable to work with children.

The Minister and Director of Lifespan Religious Exploration will determine what constitutes a disqualifying offense that will keep an individual from working with children on a case-by-case basis in light of all the surrounding circumstances. Generally, convictions for an offense involving children and/or for offenses involving violence, dishonesty, illegal substances, indecency and any conduct contrary to our mission will preclude someone from being permitted to work with children. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction on the application form will also be a disqualifying event. Applicants shall have the right to review the results and to dispute and/or appeal any negative information.

The background check authorization form and results will be maintained in confidence on file at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson. Access to these files shall be limited to the Minister, the Director of Lifespan Faith Formation and the Congregational Secretary.

If any worker is convicted of a felony or subjected to charges of sexual misconduct in the period between regular background checks, that individual should voluntarily disclose that information to the Minister or the Director of Lifespan Faith Formation within 72 hours.

Failure to disclose may result in the worker being prohibited from working with children.

Two Adult Rule

It is our goal that a minimum of two unrelated adult workers will be in attendance at all times when children are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open and there should be no fewer than three students with the adult teacher. We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity unless in a counseling situation. Under certain circumstances, classes or activities may be held via an online platform. In such instances, the two adult rule will apply. However, online classes or activities with two adults and only one child or youth in attendance will not be permitted.

Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

For purposes of this policy, “child abuse” is any action (or lack of action) that endangers or harms a child’s physical, psychological or emotional health and development. Child abuse occurs in different ways and includes the following:

- **Physical abuse** – any physical injury to a child that is not accidental, such as beating, shaking, burns, and biting.
- **Emotional abuse** – emotional injury when the child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, such as an environment of constant criticism, belittling and persistent teasing.
- **Sexual abuse** – any sexual activity between a child and an adult or between a child and another child at least four years older than the victim, including activities such as fondling, exhibitionism, intercourse, incest, and pornography.
- **Neglect** – depriving a child of his or her essential needs, such as adequate food, water, shelter, and medical care.

Childcare workers may have the opportunity to become aware of abuse or neglect of the children under our care. In the event that an individual involved in the care of children at this Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson becomes aware of suspected abuse or neglect of a child under his/her care, this should be reported immediately to the **Sexual Misconduct and Abuse Response Team** for further action including reporting to authorities as may be mandated by state law.

In the event that an incident of abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred at this Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson or during our sponsored programs or activities, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
2. The worker alleged to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with children pending an investigation and instructed to remain away from the premises during the investigation.
3. Civil authorities will be notified, and the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson will comply with the state’s requirements regarding mandatory reporting of abuse as the law then exists. The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson will fully cooperate with the investigation of the incident by civil authorities.
4. Our insurance company will be notified, and we will complete an incident report. Any documents received relating to the incident and/or allegations will immediately be forwarded to the insurance company.
5. The Board of Trustees President will be our spokesperson to the media concerning incidents of abuse or neglect, unless he or she is alleged to be involved. We will seek the advice of legal counsel before responding to media inquiries or releasing information to the congregation. All other representatives of the church should refrain from speaking to the media.
6. A pastoral visit will be arranged for those who desire it.
7. Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position working with children or youth.

Open Door Policy

Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or a side window beside it. If a door has a viewing window, it must remain unobstructed. Doors should never be locked while persons are inside the room. The only exception shall be for an emergency shelter in place situation.

Teenage Workers

We recognize that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for babysitters (paid or volunteer) who are themselves under age 18 to assist in caring for children during programs or activities. Decisions about using volunteers under the age of 18 will be at the discretion of the DLFF. The following guidelines apply to teenage workers:

- Must be at least age 14
- Must be screened as specified above.
- Must be under the supervision of an adult and must never be left alone with children for more than a five (50 minute period, during which the door shall remain open.

Check-in/Check-out Procedure

For children below the age of 13, a security check-in/check-out procedure will be followed. When a child arrives at the nursery between the hours of 10 am and 12:00 pm on Sunday mornings, or during any Fellowship event or activity for which childcare is provided, they will be checked in by nursery staff or other volunteers. At the conclusion of the Fellowship activity or services, the child will be checked out with the signature of a parent, legal guardian or other previously authorized individual whose name is on file.

Children below the age of 13 leaving the sanctuary on Sunday morning to attend Religious Exploration classes will be checked in by the appropriate classroom teachers or assistants. At the conclusion of the class, the children will be checked out with the signature of a parent, legal guardian or other previously authorized individual whose name is on file. Youth aged 13 and over attending the Teen Class will be checked in by a classroom teacher, and will be required to sign themselves out at the conclusion of the class.

In the event that a parent or guardian cannot be located to sign a child out of the nursery or classroom, the Director of Lifespan Religious Faith Formation will be contacted. The DLFF will be responsible for releasing the child to the care of a parent or guardian after discussing the surrounding circumstances with the parent or guardian.

Off-Site Trips & Events

Permission Forms

Parent/Guardian Permission Forms and Medical Consent Forms must be completed prior to all trips. The two-adult rule must be followed throughout the trip with any foreseeable exceptions clearly stated and approved in advance by the parent or guardian. The total number of adults on each trip will be adjusted according to the requirements of the planned activities. Under no circumstances may one adult alone take or accompany minors on an overnight outing.

Ratios

The required adult to child/youth ratio for chaperones for any ministry with children or youth shall be 1:6. Gender balance is preferred. For overnight trips, an adult to child/youth ratio for chaperones of 1:4 is preferred, although 1:6 is permissible. Gender balance is preferred.

Rooming Arrangements

Rooming arrangements should provide for children and youth of the same gender to room together and adults of the same gender to room together.

When possible, adults' rooms shall be next to youth rooms and youth may be checked on during the night.

Ordinarily, adults should not share rooms with children. An individual minor may share a room with an individual adult if the two are related (parent/child), or if written permission has been granted prior to the event by a parent or guardian (in such cases as Intergenerational Mission Trips).

In situations where one large sleeping area is provided, two adults of the same gender shall accompany children or youth of the same sex, if possible.

Medical

Each child, youth, adult volunteer, and staff must submit a completed medical/insurance form. Each minor's forms must have a parent or guardian's signature.

Whenever possible, all activities with children and youth shall have a staff or volunteer adult leader with current-certification first aid/CPR training.

Group leaders should have a copy of all medical forms for overnight or off-site events. These forms will be kept on the event site for the duration of the event.

First Aid supplies will be available on the event site. All workers will be informed of the location of First Aid supplies/equipment and shall have access to information concerning specific medical conditions and concerns of participants.

A written report will be completed in the case of any accident, medical emergency or injury.

Driving Rules/Travel

As recommended by UUFC's insurance company, it is suggested that all drivers of children and youth be over 21 and under 65. In situations where this is not possible, parent permission shall be obtained before the trip and vehicles shall travel together.

When one vehicle is used for an event, the two-leader rule still applies unless parental permission is obtained prior to the trip. When several vehicles are taken for an event and two leaders are not available for every vehicle, keeping the other vehicle in sight at regular intervals is an acceptable substitution for the two-leader rule.

Travel arrangements for off-campus events will be coordinated through the church.

All adult drivers of children and youth will be screened through a driving history search. A valid driver's license will be required.

All vehicles should remain parked throughout the duration of the activity except for transporting children and obtaining supplies.

Seat belts will be provided for all passengers.

Outside Groups

All leaders of non-UUFC sponsored groups and events that use UUFC facilities and supervise children and youth are expected to adhere to these policies. Upon receipt of the policy from UUFC, the leaders must review the Child and Youth Protection Policy and sign the Outside Group Leaders Release Form to acknowledge their review of it and to confirm their agreement to follow the policy.

Illness Policy

Children and Youth

It is our desire to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of the children at UUFC. Parents are encouraged to be considerate of other children and youth when deciding whether to place a child under our care. Students should not attend Fellowship events, Religious Education classes or the nursery if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever – must be fever free without medication for 24 hours before attending
- Diarrhea or vomiting within the last 48 hours
- A harsh cough or large amounts of green or yellow nasal discharge
- Any bacterial infections, such as pink eye or strep throat until 24 hours after beginning antibiotic treatment.
- Any unexplained rashes, open sores, or weeping wounds
- Lice or other infestation
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

Children who are observed by our workers to be ill will be separated from other children and the parent or guardian will be contacted to request that the child be picked up for the day.

Staff and Volunteers

It is expected that all paid staff and volunteers working with children and youth will also follow the policy above. In the event of illness, whether personal or involving another household

member, workers should make every reasonable effort to contact the Director of Lifespan Faith Formation as soon as possible so that an appropriate substitute may be found. At least one scheduled substitute (employee or volunteer) should be available every week.

Medications Policy

It is the policy of Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Parents are reminded of our illness policy.

Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Parents of such children should address their situation with the Director of Lifespan Faith Formation to develop a plan of action.

Immunization Recommendations

We live in the most globally mobile era in history, but that same global interchange may put us at increased risk for infectious diseases, many of which were once thought to be nearly eradicated. These diseases are not minor illnesses: they can kill and they can maim. Routine immunizations for adults and children protect not only the individuals receiving the vaccines but also those around them being immunized as recommended may therefore be harmful to others, especially infants and small children, the elderly, and those who are immunocompromised.

In order to protect the health and safety of all participants in our programs and activities, UUFC strongly recommends:

1. That all adults and children in our Fellowship be immunized as medically indicated.
2. That all members consider others in the matter of immunization for themselves and their children. Not being adequately immunized places others at risk, of the weakest and youngest of our Fellowship.
3. That any adult teaching or assisting in the UUFC nursery or children's and youth religious exploration classes be immunized according to current medical standards.
4. That any child utilizing the UUFC nursery or attending children's or youth classes or activities be immunized according to current medical standards.

Discipline Policy

It is the policy of UUFC not to administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. There should be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of children. Workers should consult with the Director of Lifespan Faith Formation if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.

Fellowship Rules:

In order to keep UUFC a fun, safe and sacred space for people of all ages, the following Rules are to be followed. These Rules are drawn from the Unitarian Universalist principles found in our Children's Covenant.

In this Fellowship, we do NOT:

- Hit, kick, push, shove, or punch one another
- Throw sand or other objects that can do harm
- Yell or use disrespectful language
- Threaten others with our word or actions
- Take things that belong to others
- Stand or jump on furniture, roofs, walls or fences
- Disrupt our group by being noisy or uncooperative
- Damage church property, grounds or things belonging to others
- Leave the fellowship property without permission

In this Fellowship we DO:

- Listen, speak and act with respect
- Take turns and cooperate
- Participate in group activities
- Include people, especially newcomers, in our play
- Run, skip and jump outside
- Share toys, play equipment, and snacks
- Take time-outs and/or talk with someone when angry
- Ask adults or youth workers for help
- Help make the Fellowship a fun, safe, sacred place for everyone

Consequences:

When the Fellowship Rules are NOT followed, we can expect one or more of the following consequences to be given to help us improve our behavior and keep the fellowship a fun, safe, sacred space. We may be:

- Given a firm but gentle reminder of the rule to be followed.
- Dismissed from our group, if we are disruptive. If dismissed, we will be sent to the DLFF or CYRE Chair and expected to sit quietly in a designated place until group is over. Our parent(s) will be notified that this is how we spent our morning at the fellowship.
- Told to take a time-out of 5 – 10 minutes to cool off when we are angry or not following the rules.
- Asked to write a report on our behavior at the fellowship that day.
- Not allowed to continue playing that day if we repeatedly ignored the rules and/or put ourselves or someone else in danger. When this happens the DLFF or CYRE Chair will notify our parent(s).
- Given a verbal warning to stop our behavior if we are fighting or hurting ourselves or others. If we do not stop immediately, the teaching team may physically intervene to

keep people from being harmed. Such an incident will be reported to our parent(s) by the DLFF or the CYRE Chair.

- Taken into the meeting room to sit with our parent(s).
- Asked not to attend our group or play in the building *or playground* unless a parent is with us for a specified period of time.
- Invited to a meeting with the DLFF and our parent(s) to discuss our behavior at the fellowship.
- Excluded from attending class or playing on the outside equipment for a certain period of time.

Unsupervised Children

UUFC nursery staff, Religious Exploration teachers, and other classroom volunteers are responsible for the children entrusted to their care only:

- From the time a child is checked in to the nursery by a parent, guardian or authorized individual until they are checked out by a parent guardian or authorized individual.
- From the time a child leaves the sanctuary and is checked in to Religious Exploration classes by a teacher until a parent, guardian or other authorized individual checks them out of class. (Teens aged 13 and over may check themselves out.)
- For the duration of any Fellowship event or activity for which childcare or other volunteer supervision has been provided.

At all other times, children are the responsibility of their parents or legal guardian. Parents should be talking to their children about child safety on an ongoing basis and in an age appropriate manner. While at the fellowship parents should know where their children are at all times, provide necessary and appropriate supervision, and remind them of Fellowship Rules and basic safety considerations, especially during fellowship time following Sunday morning services. All families whose children are registered for Religious Exploration classes are asked to read, sign and return the Children's Covenant annually.

Any person or group using, attending, or visiting any area of the Fellowship campus may not leave their children 12 years of age or younger unsupervised. Children playing outside of the building without adult supervision are unsafe and are at risk of wandering off the fellowship grounds. The Teen Room shall be off limits to all children and youth unless an adult is present.

If a UUFC staff member, volunteer, or other adult finds one or more unsupervised children, they shall endeavor to locate a parent or guardian and take the child to the adult who should provide appropriate supervision. If an appropriate parent or guardian cannot be located, the worker will take the child to the Director of Lifespan Faith Formation, the Children's and Youth RE Committee Chair, or the minister.

Playground Policy

Use:

The fenced playground and its equipment located behind the main building are for the benefit and enjoyment of the children attending UUFC. Children 12 years of age or younger who are attending regular fellowship services, events or activities may use the playground so long as access is provided through the action of a responsible adult. A responsible adult is defined as:

- A Religious Exploration teacher or classroom volunteer, provided the child is checked in to class
- A nursery worker, providing childcare during services or other Fellowship activities or events
- A parent or guardian

Access Limitations:

Children may access the playground only while one or more responsible adults are present with the playground's confines or are standing at a location which provides a clear line of sight to and across the playground.

All children using the playground must abide by all posted playground rules as well as the Fellowship Rules contained in the UUFC Children's Covenant, and basic safety considerations. Any child engaged in disruptive or hazardous behavior will be asked to leave the playground and will be returned to their parent or guardian. Children must remain within the fenced playground area and within sight of the supervising adult(s) at all times.

.

The playground will be closed after dark and before dawn and at any time that its grounds are wet from rain or coated with snow and ice. All gates must be kept closed at all times.

Children whose ages exceed the design specifications of any individual piece of equipment on the playground will not be allowed to play on such equipment. As soon as practical or whenever equipment is replaced or modernized, design limits for each piece of playground equipment will be summarized and posted by the Director of Lifespan Faith Formation.

Maintenance Responsibilities:

When in use during Sunday morning Religious Exploration class time and/or during any approved Fellowship activity or event for which childcare is provided, classroom teachers/volunteers and/or nursery staff will be responsible for the oversight, care, and clean-up of the playground.

Adults supervising playground activities at any other time will be responsible for the oversight, care, and clean-up of the playground.

Necessary repairs to all playground equipment must be reported as quickly as possible to the Director of Lifespan Faith Formation and/or the Buildings or Grounds Committees. It will be the joint responsibility of the Children and Youth Religious Exploration Committee and the Buildings or Grounds Committee to determine how best to undertake and complete repairs.

Restroom Guidelines

As a Welcoming Congregation, UUFC is committed to providing safe, accessible and convenient bathroom facilities. Children and youth should use facilities that correspond to their sex or gender identities, or utilize bathrooms that are designated gender-neutral or gender-inclusive.

For the protection of all, workers should never be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed, and should never be in a closed bathroom stall with a child. Parents are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to each class.

If a child needs to use the restroom during classroom time, or other Fellowship sanctioned events, workers must supervise the child in accordance with UUFC Bathroom procedures.

UUFC Bathroom Procedures

Nursery Bathroom Procedures

Diapering

Parents should provide a diaper bag for each child which contains the correct size diaper, wipes, and any powders, creams or ointments. The nursery provides a limited supply of diapers and wipes. Absolutely no powders, creams, or ointments will be applied that have not been provided in a child's individual diaper bag.

All diaper changes should be done in the nursery in full view of another nursery worker, or other adult volunteer.

Workers should properly wash/sanitize their hands before and after changing a diaper, clean the child, and sanitize the changing area as necessary. Soiled diapers should be properly disposed of in the appropriate receptacle.

Classroom Bathroom Procedure

All preschool-aged children (four years of age or younger) or toilet-trained toddlers in the nursery should use the classroom bathroom. If a child needs assistance, the worker should leave the door ajar as they assist the child.

In the event that the classroom bathroom is unavailable, a nursery worker should escort the child to the gender-inclusive bathroom located in the hallway of the Religious Exploration wing. The worker should remain outside the bathroom door and escort the child back to the nursery. If the child requires assistance, the worker should prop open the bathroom door as they assist the child.

Bathroom Procedure for Elementary School-Aged Classrooms

These procedures shall apply to any UUFC children's religious education classes or other UUFC sanctioned children's events taking place in either the front or back classrooms in the Religious Exploration wing.

Children in either the front or back elementary classrooms should use the gender-inclusive bathroom located in the hallway of the Religious Exploration wing. One member of the teaching team from the classroom should remain in the doorway of the classroom, with a clear line of sight to the bathroom, until the child returns. If the child requires assistance, a worker should prop open the bathroom door as they assist the child.

In the event that the gender-neutral hallway bathroom is not available, a worker identifying as the same gender to which the child identifies should escort the child to the bathrooms nearest the sanctuary. The worker should check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, and then allow the children inside. The worker should then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the child back to the classroom.

In the event that a child needs to use bathroom facilities on a UUFC religious education field trip, a chaperone should escort the child to a single occupancy bathroom and remain outside the bathroom door. If the child requires assistance, a chaperone should prop open the bathroom door as they assist the child. If a single occupancy bathroom is not available, children identifying as the same gender should be escorted in a group to the bathroom by a chaperone who also identifies as the same gender.

Bathroom Procedure for Youth Programs (Middle School and High School Age)

Middle School and High School aged youth shall be permitted to use the hallway bathroom facilities without adult supervision. However, youth must notify their classroom teacher, program or activity supervisor, or other responsible adult, before leaving the classroom, program, or activity to use the bathroom.

Accidental Injuries to Children

In the event that a child or youth is injured while under our care, the following steps should be followed:

1. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care. There are first aid kits in each classroom.
2. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the worker's supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
3. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional. (On clipboard)

Training

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson will provide training on this child protection policy to all new childcare workers and will strive to provide opportunities for additional training classes or events on an annual basis. All workers are strongly encouraged to attend these training events.

Code of Conduct

Statement of Position

Adults and older youth in leadership roles in this Fellowship 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.

Statement of Expectation of Behavior.

All compensated and volunteer staff are expected to adhere to the following behavior:

- Religious Exploration workers shall not engage in behavior with children or youth that constitutes verbal, emotional, or physical abuse; this includes behavior or language that is personally threatening or demeaning.
- Religious Exploration workers shall neither indulge in sexually harassing behavior nor engage in sexual, seductive, or erotic behavior with children or youth.
- Religious Exploration workers shall not allow the use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or any illegal activities among children or youth.

Statement of Action. In the case of paid or volunteer workers failing to meet the abuse expectations, UUFC will take appropriate actions.

Statement of Agreement. All Religious Exploration workers must have read and understand the *UUFC Religious Exploration Child Protection Policy* and the *Code of Conduct*, and agree to abide by the provisions of the *Policy* and the *Code of Conduct* and to honor and preserve the trust placed in them by the members of this Fellowship.

Bullying

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson maintains a zero-tolerance policy on bullying. Individuals engaging in bullying behavior may be subject to the UUFC Disruptive Persons Policy.

Communication/Social Media

Social Media Policy

Adults should not submit “friend” requests to youth. Adults who minister to children and youth are strongly encouraged to set stringent privacy settings on any social networking profiles.

Adults are discouraged from accepting “friend” requests from minors or youth who are associated with their community of faith. If they do, other adult leaders must have full access to all aspects of that adult’s profile and correspondence.

Adults who want to connect via a social networking website with youth to whom they minister should set up a closed group account that youth may join. Youth requested to “friend” an adult on social media sites can then be directed to join the social media group. The purpose of these two separate accounts/profiles is to create a line of privacy and maintain healthy boundaries with youth and family, friends and colleagues.

Youth groups should create covenants to govern what content is appropriate in any social media site groups they may share. Two responsible adults should have access to the closed group.

Any material on any site (whether affiliated with the church or not) that raises suspicion that a child has been or will be abused/neglected/exploited should be immediately reported to the Sexual Misconduct and Abuse Response Team. Inappropriate material not covered by the mandatory reporting laws should be deleted from the site. Inappropriate material covered by mandatory reporting laws should be documented for church records and then removed from the site after consultation with the Sexual Misconduct and Abuse Response Team and/or the police.

Private texting and emailing between an adult and a youth is strongly discouraged. Any texts or emails to youth should include at least one other adult. Although there are situations that require privacy, there should be no secrets between an adult and a youth.

Adults should refrain from any form of video or visual chats. If video chats do occur, participants should consider what will be shown in the video and appear in an acceptable manner of dress. All transcripts of online chats should be saved when possible.

UUFC RELIGIOUS EXPLORATION CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Statement of Agreement. I have read and understand the *UUFC Religious Exploration Child Protection Policy* and the *Ethical Code of Conduct*. I agree to abide by the provisions of the *Policy* and the *Code of Conduct* and to honor and preserve the trust placed in me by the members of this Fellowship.

Name (Printed)_____

Signature_____

Date_____

UUFC Religious Exploration Child Protection Policy

Statement of Agreement for Building Use. I (We) have read and understand the *UUFC Religious Exploration Child Protection Policy* and the *Ethical Code of Conduct*. I (We) agree to abide by the provisions of the *Policy* and the *Code of Conduct* for the duration of my (our) contract for the use of any UUFC buildings or premises.

Name (Printed)_____

Signature_____

Name of Organization_____

Date_____