



Jefferson  
Unitarian  
Church



# YOUTH ADVISOR HANDBOOK

2019-2020

## Children and Youth Religious Education

**Jules Jaramillo**

Director of Religious Education  
Work Phone: (303) 279-5282 x18  
[julesjaramillo@jeffersonunitarian.org](mailto:julesjaramillo@jeffersonunitarian.org)



## Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>HISTORY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Current Youth Empowerment Working Definition</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Balance of Powers</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Power Dynamics with Youth</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Dos and Avoidances to Implement Youth Empowerment:</b>	<b>7</b>
As an Advisor DO:	7
Try to AVOID:	7
<b>Youth/Adult Shared Leadership</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Shared Leadership Spectrum</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Stages of Development by Dr. Tracey Hurd</b>	<b>9</b>
Middle Adolescent Development	9
Late Adolescent Development	9
<b>Characteristics of This Age</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Ways to Offer Support</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Web of Youth Ministry</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Dynamic youth ministry is an interdependent web of the following components:</b>	<b>12</b>
Spiritual Development	12
Community	13
Beloved Community	13
Justice Making	13
Faith Exploration	14
Multigenerational Relationships	14
Leadership	15
Identity Formation	15
Pastoral Care	15
<b>Vision, Mission, and Covenant</b>	<b>16</b>
Resources	18
<b>Emergency Contacts</b>	<b>19</b>
Emergency Phone Numbers:	19
You are located at:	19
JUC Contact:	19
<b>In Case of an Emergency</b>	<b>20</b>
In case of evacuation due to fire or fire drill:	20



In case of evacuation due to other emergencies:	20
Children’s Health and Medical Concerns:	20
<b>Safety Guidelines</b>	<b>21</b>
While at Jefferson Unitarian Church	21
Arrival and Departure	21
Rule of Three Guidelines	21
Playground Guidelines	21
Snacks	22
Digital & Social Media	22
While Off-Site of Jefferson Unitarian Church	22
Field Trips	22
Housing and Nighttime Supervision	23
Nighttime Supervision and Sleeping in Congregations	23
When youth have the option to stay awake	23
When youth are expected to sleep:	24
Cabins and Camp Facilities	24
Dormitories	25
Hotels and Convention Centers	26
Medications	26
<b>Expectations for Working</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>with Children and Youth</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>CODE OF ETHICS for Persons Working with Children and Youth</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Restorative Process</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>In case of a Breach of Children &amp; Youth Safety Policy</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Incident Report</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>PERMISSION FORM</b>	<b>33</b>



## **INTRODUCTION**

This training/orientation has been designed with the aim of giving youth ministry advisors tools to foster youth leadership, to help our youth explore Unitarian Universalism more deeply, and to nurture the soul of your advisor teams. Your presence is evidence that you are invested in the faith formation, spiritual and intellectual growth of the youth in your care. That is something to celebrate-thank you!

## **HISTORY**

The Liberal Religious Youth (LRY) began in 1954. It was an autonomous youth organization affiliated with the American Unitarian Association (AUA). This entity was governed entirely by youth. Adults were involved only in an advisory capacity. There was drug use. Overt sexual activity. Back then youth often hitchhiked to Cons.

As a reaction to the many inflammatory incidents that occurred throughout the period, YRUU, or Young Religious Unitarian Universalists, formed in 1981. Its primary areas of focus were youth empowerment, social activism, and building youth leadership.

In 2008, Rev Bill Sinkford commissioned the Youth Ministry Working Group to assess the UUA's continued support for youth programming nationally. Shortly thereafter continental YRUU was disbanded, but many districts and their Youth Adult Committees elected to continue with support of YRUU through district staff and in their congregations.

LRY has been referred to "The Youth Gone Wild Years". Adults were basically absent with faith formation essentially occurring in a vacuum, if at all. The situation was one where participants were expecting ministry to happen without coaching, without structure, without safe policies.

The 80's YRUU brought adults more clearly into the picture, and though they were present at youth gatherings and events many were unclear on their role and responsibility in the ministry to and with youth. Some functioned simply as a "fly on the wall" & some completely ran the show.



Currently, the Unitarian Universalist Association's (UUA's) Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries is part of the Ministries and Faith Development staff group where they:

- Advocate for the vision of multicultural, multigenerational youth and young adult ministries;
- Promote a diverse approach to youth and young adult ministries addressing their unique needs;
- Support on-campus and congregational ministry for students;
- Connect youth and young adult leaders across the country for mutual support, solidarity and recognition;
- Communicate success stories, challenges, hopes and dreams of youth and young adult ministries;
- Provide resources and materials for youth and young adult leaders, religious professionals, and their allies.

Mosaic Project Report: Dynamic youth ministry—described by the report as faith-centered, multigenerational, multicultural and congregation-based—continues to be our guiding light in youth leadership.

## **Current Youth Empowerment Working Definition**

Youth empowerment is a covenantal practice in which youth are safe, recognized, and affirmed as full and vital participants in the life of our shared Unitarian Universalist faith community. This covenantal practice is based on the following set of guiding principles:

- Love and trust between youth and adults, between youth and youth, and between adults and adults
- Mentoring relationships among children, youth, and adults, which draw from direct experience and wisdom
- The development of youth confidence and self-identity through building community, learning to use one's voice effectively, and realizing a more robust expression of themselves
- Encouragement for all to grow together in accountability
- Youth defining their issues and participating in the decisions that impact youth communities and the larger multigenerational communities we share
- Youth and adults having access to information through direct and honest communication expressed with grace, humility, and respect
- Trust in the competence of youth and the authenticity of their insights



- Appreciation of the prophetic wisdom and energy of youth to be agents of social change, justice, and service
- The recognition that youth ministry is an integral Unitarian Universalist ministry and part of our collective past, present, and future

## Balance of Powers

Youth Empowerment in youth ministry is not about advisors giving power to youth, or about youth taking power away from advisors. It involves youth finding the power within themselves to take responsibility for their actions. Advisors can be hesitant about youth handling this sort of power, and although it is much simpler for an advisor to organize youth group affairs, valuable lessons are learned by youth who are willing to take the time to organize these affairs themselves.

An important thing to remember is that youth learn from their mistakes. Lessons are learned and skills acquired whether or not the final outcome of an action is a positive or negative one. Youth empowerment teaches youth communication organization and social skills that help them grow in the this community and help them reach out to their own congregation as well as society as a whole.

## Power Dynamics with Youth

There are three types of power- *power over*, *power with* and *power within*.

*Power over* needs to be applied with caution, as it can be used in forms of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, manipulation or by an authority figure to silence someone. It is also a necessary form of power when it comes to immediate danger or safety issues. Our youth have experiences *power over* from their parents, teachers and other adults/authority figures and this has been an important part of their learning about who they are and how they are expected to act in this society. It for the most part has kept them safe and is an important part of the development.

What we do as advisors, is not to perpetuate the experience of *power over* that they have had with these adults but to work with our youth, with a model of *power with*. This is a model where we work with the youth, recognize their own internal power or power within, to help them grow into responsible, mature adults.



The *power within* is the inherent worth and dignity every individual possesses and is expressed in their own ideas, opinions, feelings and decision-making. It is to honor youths' voices and explore with them the possible pros and cons of the ramifications of their behaviors to help them make good choices. It is not telling them what to do, or when, but honoring their decisions even if we felt it might not be the best decisions. Youth also learn from their mistakes.

Of course, this doesn't mean that we never step in to use our inherent *power over* to influence the youth. We must step in anytime the youth are in are in imminent danger to insure the youth's safety. After the danger has passed, we can turn it to a *power within* situation where the youth discuss the danger and actions to be taken in the future to ensure safety.

You the advisors are accountable for understanding the effect of your power. Due to your age, you are always in a situation of having more power than the youth. What you do with that power is paramount to your effectiveness and the health of the youth group.

## **Dos and Avoidances to Implement Youth Empowerment:**

As an Advisor **DO**:

- Listen more than you speak, speak from a place of love and trust
- Be a reassuring presence
- Know the schedule and rules
- Delegate to and problem-solve with youth
- Protect facility property in a friendly manner
- Be social, drawing youth and yourself into the community
- Advise, suggest ideas, ask questions without directing
- Have fun!

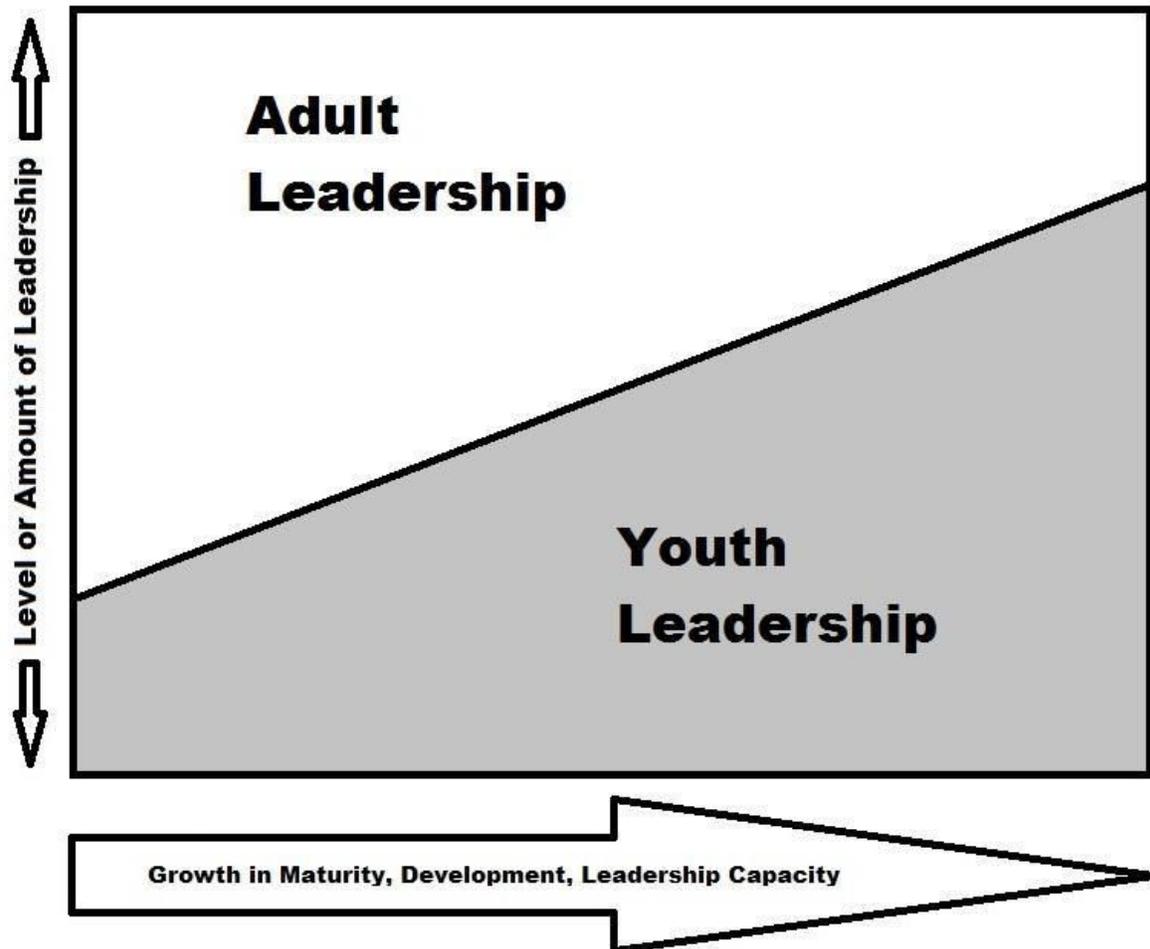
Try to **AVOID**:

- Primarily focusing on negative in situations
- Monopolizing or dominating
- Act hastily
- Being or acting one-dimensional "policing" or "babysitter"
- Overreacting to little things
- Giving directives to youth
- Adult cliques
- Doing it (whatever) by yourself- involve others



## Youth/Adult Shared Leadership

# Youth / Adult Shared Leadership



## Shared Leadership Spectrum

- It was developed when the Youth Ministry Renaissance Module
- Along the vertical Y Axis is the Level or Amount of Leadership necessary for a given endeavor.
- Along the horizontal X Axis is the Growth in maturity, development, and leadership capacity of particular youth.
- Note that the graph illustrates that one way or another the Adults are always involved in the leadership and decision making process. As youth grow in maturity and responsibility the adult “presence” diminishes but never disappears entirely.



## Stages of Development by Dr. Tracey Hurd

Tracey Hurd is a Unitarian Universalist with a doctorate in Developmental Psychology from Boston University. She is the author of [Nurturing Children and Youth: A Developmental Guidebook](#), a Tapestry of Faith Toolkit Book.

### Middle Adolescent Development

Physical	Cognitive/ Intellectual	Social/Affective	Moral	Spiritual/ Religious
Develops sexually; gendered attraction central	Can think deductively, inductively, hypothetically, conceptually	Tries to claim identities	Thinks conceptually	Sees religion as outside authority that can be questioned
Navigates increased risks relating to alcohol, drugs, sex	Practices mindfulness of self	Needs belonging and self-worth	Enjoys moral reasoning	Questions faith
	More critical of world	Struggles with gender/sexual identity	Principled morality with principles more important than laws or rules	Deepens spiritual and religious identity

### Late Adolescent Development

Physical	Cognitive/ Intellectual	Social/Affective	Moral	Spiritual/ Religious
Full physical development	Open to learning	Self-reliance	Wrestles with personal morality and life choices	Claims authority around issues of faith
More assurance about body image	Expresses ideas with more linguistic skill	Sense of identity and intimacy	Interest in moral and philosophical thinking	Engages in “faith” beyond organized religion
Sexual activity; more likely to be partnered	Sees many points of view	Sense of vocational and life choices		



## Characteristics of This Age

- Grows based on an individual trajectory (males often grow rapidly at this age while females are more likely to stop growing)
- Develops sexuality more fully
- Navigates greater risks relating to alcohol, drug use, and unsafe sexual activity
- Sustains the personal fable that “it couldn’t happen to me!”
- Practices increased cognitive skills such as deductive and inductive reasoning and conceptual and hypothetical thinking
- Engages in over-thinking
- Becomes less egocentric and more interested in the larger society
- Tries to claim an identity
- Considers friendship and peers important, with some shifting of alliances
- Needs to belong and have a sense of self-worth
- Continues to develop a racial or ethnic identity
- Participates in social groupings as a way to navigate race and racism (youth of color often claim alliance by race and/or oppositional behavior or do not claim racial identity as important)
- Recognizes privilege as white youth and challenges the colorblind perspective or does not consider racism and racial identity important
- Struggles with gender and sexual identities (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth often experiences increased stress)
- Explores sexuality
- Expresses growing interest in abstract values and moral principles
- Thinks conceptually and enjoys moral reasoning
- Engages in moral relativism
- Demonstrates increased empathy
- Favors principles over laws
- Enters Fowler’s synthetic-conventional stage of faith development
- Conceptualizes religion as an outside authority that can be questioned
- Questions faith, sometimes leading to deeper ownership of personal faith or disillusionment
- Develops a sense of spiritual agency through faith-based contributions
- Deepens or attenuates religious or spiritual identity



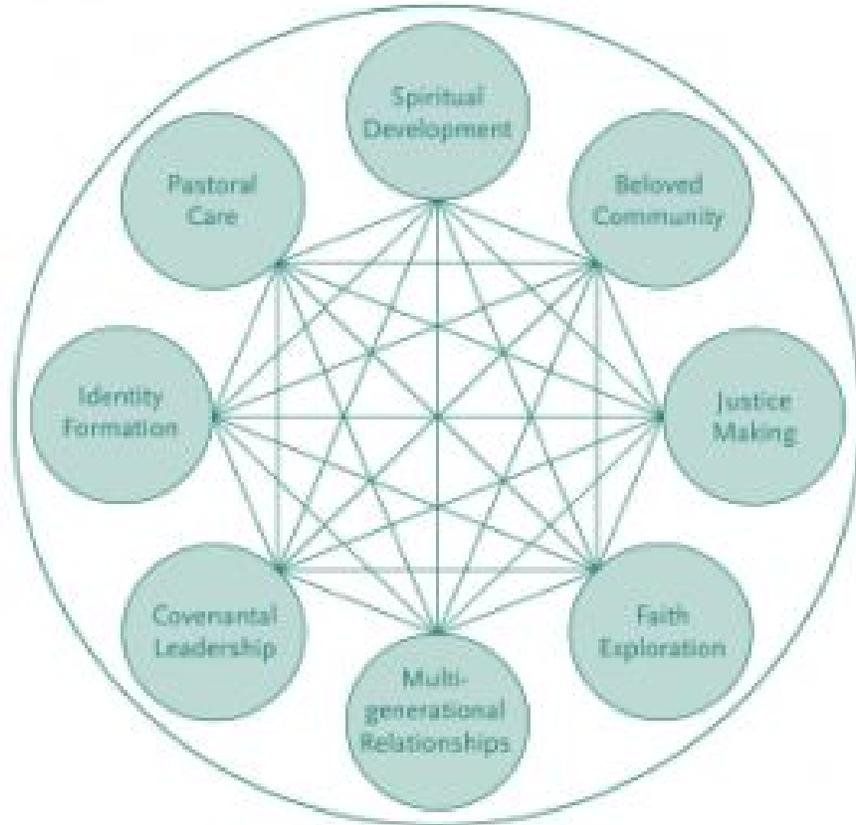
## Ways to Offer Support

- Promote a healthy self-image.
- Be present, flexible, and responsive.
- Model respect.
- Be available for conversation, be a sounding board.
- Offer fair and grounded support around risk taking; provide limits for safety.
- Enjoy the adolescent's new ability to think critically, hypothetically, and conceptually.
- Ask large questions that fully engage new thinking skills.
- Encourage practices that celebrate new adolescent mindfulness
- Understand that new thinking skills may result in new criticisms
- Respect the intensity of interest in peers.
- Understand that some adolescents need psychological distance from caregivers as they create their own identities.
- Support exploration of racial and ethnic identity.
- Recognize that adolescent vulnerability can be expressed as withdrawal, anger, or sadness and offer support.
- Encourage growing interest in the broader world.
- Welcome the adolescent's skill at thinking about principles, rules and laws.
- Engage openly in conversations about moral reasoning.
- Encourage participation in a faith/religious community.
- Provide outlets for questioning and talking about faith.
- Encourage faith-based work and experiences that deepen spirituality.
- Provide opportunities for leadership within and beyond the faith community.
- Have a sense of humor.
- Provide unconditional love.



# Web of Youth Ministry

ATtribution: Jesse Jaeger and Beth Dana.



**Dynamic youth ministry is an interdependent web of the following components:**

## **Spiritual Development**

Spiritual development – the intentional cultivation of spirituality – is an important component of youth ministry. As spiritual beings, youth have experiences of awe, gratitude, wonder, appreciation, and oneness. These experiences are nurtured and sustained through both individual and group spiritual practices. Individual spiritual practice may include: meditation, sacred reading, solitary walks in the woods, and journaling. Group spiritual practice may include: worship (youth and congregational), music (church band, choir, group singing), group meditation, outdoor activities, and storytelling. Youth ministry should



encourage and offer opportunities for engagement in practices that nurture and enliven their spirits.

## **Community**

Being held in the arms of community is an essential part of being a religious person of any age. In youth ministry, it is important for youth to be grounded in community by connecting regularly with people in their congregations where deep and authentic relationships can emerge. It is also important for youth to have a connection with the wider Unitarian Universalist movement. Camps and Conferences offer youth the chance to be part of a wider, global faith community and see the diversity of experiences that exist within Unitarian Universalism. Finally, interfaith community enriches youth and ministry with youth. As Unitarian Universalists we are open to and celebrate diverse religious perspectives. Unitarian Universalist youth live in a multi-faith world, and it is important for them to be able to cultivate meaningful interfaith relationships.

## **Beloved Community**

Youth ministry calls us to encourage and walk with youth in creating Beloved Community. This can happen in our meeting spaces, in our congregations, and beyond. Most importantly, we must be responsible for our own personal anti-racism/anti-oppression work before we partner with the youth being engaged in theirs. Our role is to provide resource, ask of question, be allies, and at times accomplices in creating Beloved Community.

*Dr. King's Beloved Community is a global vision, in which all people can share in the wealth of the earth. In the Beloved Community, poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated because international standards of human decency will not allow it. Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood. In the Beloved Community, international disputes will be resolved by peaceful conflict-resolution and reconciliation of adversaries, instead of military power. Love and trust will triumph over fear and hatred. Peace with justice will prevail over war and military conflict.*

## **Justice Making**

Our Unitarian Universalist faith calls us to work for justice in our lives, our local communities and the world beyond. This can be done in a myriad of ways. Service trips – in your neighborhood, in another state, or even another country – can help open youth's eyes to the realities confronting other people and inspire



them to work for justice. Organizing a social justice project within the congregation can connect youth to the rest of the congregation and place youth as leaders in the social justice work of the community. Youth can also do advocacy work around social justice issues that are important to them. Even curricula like the Our Whole Lives (OWL) comprehensive sexuality education program are part of justice making, and can help youth put their faith into action. In doing this work youth will grow their faith by practicing Unitarian Universalist social justice that strives to be in solidarity with all people who work to create justice in the world.

### **Faith Exploration**

Structured learning environments are an important component of youth ministry. Faith exploration takes place when youth engage with curricula such as Our Whole Lives (OWL), Coming of Age, and the Tapestry of Faith programs, which challenge youth to look deep and develop their faith. The free and responsible search for truth, meaning, and purpose contributes to youth faith development. The Unitarian Universalist approach to religious education and learning acknowledges that youth are learners and they are teachers; we all have something to teach from our own insight and experience.

### **Multigenerational Relationships**

Youth ministry is an important part of multigenerational faith communities. Multigenerational faith communities have programs that meet the specific developmental needs of different age groups, as well as bring people together across ages. Dynamic youth ministry strives to help youth connect with people of all ages. This can be done through sharing leadership with adults, inviting youth to help with the religious education program, building mentor relationships between youth and adults, forming multigenerational choirs, and youth leading workshops for adults in areas they are knowledgeable about. Celebrating Coming of Age and Bridging ceremonies in the life of a congregation can also build multigenerational community. Dynamic multigenerational youth ministry should support whole families and finds ways to include caregivers and siblings into a youth ministry program. It is important to remember that multigenerational relationships form through having fun together. Game nights, retreats, and outdoor activities that are open to people of all ages can help build multigenerational community and strengthen youth ministries. Covenantal



## **Leadership**

Youth leadership is a covenantal practice in which youth are safe, recognized, and affirmed as full and vital participants in the life of our shared Unitarian Universalist faith community. This is done by encouraging youth to take on more responsibility as they grow and develop. The goal is for youth to be empowered and effective leaders, but this happens over time with intentional leadership development. Youth can grow in their leadership through teaching religious education classes, taking on congregational leadership roles, being a leader within their local youth ministry, or taking on leadership in regional and national youth ministry.

## **Identity Formation**

Dynamic youth ministry recognizes that identity formation is an important developmental task for youth, and supports them in the journey. Youth are striving to figure out who they are as spiritual beings, relational beings, racial/ethnic and sexual beings, people of faith, justice makers, lifelong learners, leaders, and how they fit in multigenerational communities. Youth ministry helps youth develop a healthy identity in these areas and helps them live with integrity, such that their Unitarian Universalist faith is inseparable from their identity as a whole person. Understanding the myriad of ways youth identity is forming, and how that plays out in the other components of youth ministry, is important for supporting and nurturing youth identity formation.

## **Pastoral Care**

Like people of all ages, youth have specific pastoral needs. Supportive pastoral care is grounded in communities where people know how to listen deeply to each other. Both youth and adults should have skills in deep listening. Pastoral care with youth includes creating safe congregations, supporting youth who are in crisis, and celebrating their joys and accomplishments. It is giving youth the skills to care for each other and the awareness of when to reach out to adults to get help for a friend or for themselves. Pastoral care with youth is also strengthened when ministers have a relationship with the youth in their congregations. Everyone works together to create a religious community that watches out for and supports its youth.



# Vision, Mission, and Covenant

## ATTRIBUTION

*Definitions and sample vision and covenant drawn from "Vision, Mission, and Covenant: Creating a Future Together" in The Congregational Handbook: How to Develop a Healthy and Vital Unitarian Universalist Congregation (UUA, 2005).*

*Sample mission and mission objectives drawn from "Mission Workshop for an Empowered Youth Group" by Jan Taddeo (2006).*

Developing a vision, mission, mission objectives, and covenant helps us reflect and articulate who we are as religious people and religious communities. These statements should reflect who we are as Unitarian Universalists. Youth ministry guiding statements should also relate to the guiding statements for the congregation as a whole. The mission grows directly out of the vision, and the vision is built upon the shared values, concerns, and principles that are articulated in the covenant.

## **Vision:**

A carefully defined picture of where the youth ministry/program wants to be in five or more years. It is a dream of what the youth ministry/program can become.

Sample Vision: Together in community, we will build a world without borders where all are valued and supported as they navigate their individual religious journeys.

## **Mission:**

A concise statement of what the youth ministry/program wants to be known for, or known as, within the wider congregation and world; what the youth ministry/program wants to mean to the community.

Sample Mission: The mission of YOUR YOUTH is to empower youth to be life-long Unitarian Universalist leaders unified by friendship, trust and common values, through transformative social action and enticing group events that spawn deeper sharing.



Mission Objectives: Specific, measurable strategies for implementing and living out the mission. Should be SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time bound.

### **Sample Mission Objectives:**

**Leadership:** Restructure the Youth Ministry support team to operate more efficiently.

**Congregational Activities:** Conduct at least four intergenerational events with the congregation.

**Social Justice:** Raise at least \$1,000 for social justice causes to be determined by the entire group at the September youth retreat.

**Denominational Connections:** Be involved in District and Continental youth events including Rallies and General Assembly

**Community Building, Learning, & Spirituality:** Experience escalating participation in leadership opportunities: Social Justice, Retreats, Sunday morning youth group, and other events.

### **Covenant:**

A statement of how members of the youth ministry/program will be with, and will behave toward, one another, as well as what is promised to one another and to the youth ministry/program as a whole.

### **Sample Covenant:**

We covenant to build a community that challenges us to grow and empowers us to hold faithful to the truth within ourselves, living out the profound connections that bind each of us and all beings together. We will be generous with our gifts and open in hearts and minds, seeking to recognize and accept each other in all our complexity and diversity. (*Working Group Covenant, Second Unitarian Universalist Church, Chicago, IL*)



## Resources

- Sustainable Youth Ministry by Mark DeVries
- Essex Conversations: Visions for Lifespan Religious Education by the Essex Conversations Coordinating Committee
- Youth Ministry Working Group Report,  
<http://www.uua.org/re/youth/know/workinggroup/index.shtml>
- Polarity Management: Identifying and Managing Unsolvable Problems by Barry Johnson
- “Healing Community,” UUWorld by Thandeka
- We Would Be One: The History of Unitarian Universalist Youth Movements by Wayne Arnanan and Rebecca Scott
- Full Circle by Katie Tweedie (Covey)
- “Youth Ministry: A Balanced Approach” Webinar Presented 10-8-14 by Eric Bliss
- Ministry With Youth Renaissance Module Guide By Beth Dana and Jesse Jaeger  
[http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/lfd/ministry\\_wyouth.pdf](http://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/lfd/ministry_wyouth.pdf)
- Youth Ministry Advising Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries UUA Cary Mc Donald and Jeremie Bateman, Editors



# Emergency Contacts

## Emergency Phone Numbers:

911- Police, Fire, Ambulance, Poison  
Poison Control 1-800-222-1222

## You are located at:

Jefferson Unitarian Church  
13350 W 32nd Ave Golden CO 80401  
(303) 279-5282

## JUC Contact:

Jules Jaramillo  
Director of Religious Education  
[julesjaramillo@jeffersonunitarian.org](mailto:julesjaramillo@jeffersonunitarian.org)



# In Case of an Emergency

## In case of evacuation due to fire or fire drill:

- **Take your sign-in sheet with you.** Then evacuate, notify adjoining classrooms to evacuate immediately to your designated waiting area.
- Confirm you all the children or youth on your attendance clipboard.
- Notify the fire/rescue personnel and the DRE immediately if a child is missing.
- A fire extinguisher and escape plan are located in each classroom.
- Children will be released to a parent/guardian from the designated waiting area.

## In case of evacuation due to other emergencies:

- **Take your attendance clipboard with you.** Then evacuate, notify adjoining classrooms to evacuate to Maple Grove Park (½ block east)
  - Exit the building
  - Travel by foot to the park
  - Meet children by the park
- Check to be sure that you have with you all the children on your attendance clipboard.
- Wait for further instructions
- Children will be released to a parent/guardian from the designated waiting area.

## Children's Health and Medical Concerns:

- Children's health concerns will be noted in the classroom binders.
- We ask that parents/guardians whose children are on specific medications or have medical conditions alert their child's teachers to their needs as they see fit.
- **Children are not allowed in RE with fever, flu, or communicable illnesses such as chickenpox, conjunctivitis, etc.**
- Bandages and minor medical supplies are located in the classrooms and in the RE supply closet.

*Notify the DRE of all incidents requiring first aid attention before the family leaves the grounds. Fill out the Incident Report Form (located in each classroom and the RE closet files) and bring to the DRE or RE Coordinator. Always use rubber gloves to clean up vomit, urine, blood and/or other bodily fluids*



# Safety Guidelines

*The following guidelines are for the protection of our children, youth, and adult volunteers.*

## While at Jefferson Unitarian Church

### Arrival and Departure

- Take attendance each Sunday on the clipboard for emergency procedures.
- Children may be released only to their parents/guardians unless they have made prior arrangements directly with the teacher.
- At the end of class, please check the attendance sheet to verify that all children have been picked up by their parent or guardian.
- Children's Religious Education is concluded at 10:00 AM for first service classes and at noon for the second service classes. Parents/guardians are to pick up their children on time. Please alert the RE staff if parents/guardians are chronically late.

### Rule of Three Guidelines

- Any time a child or children are present, other than your own, Rule of Three must be followed. This includes classrooms, playgrounds, and field trips. (Adults who are married or in committed relationships are considered to be "ONE" adult.)  
RULE OF THREE
  - one adult and two children
  - two unrelated adults and one child
- Please tell the DRE or RE Coordinator if another adult is needed.
- Check with the DRE or RE Coordinator when arranging trips, outside activities or recruiting chaperones.
- When you are in the bathroom with a child, make sure your co-teacher knows where you are.
- Make sure two adults are present during dismissal. Do not stay in a classroom with just one child while waiting for parents to arrive.

### Playground Guidelines

- Parents/guardians are responsible for supervising their own children on the playground after they pick them up from Sunday school.
- Do not allow children to use the equipment in ways it was not intended.
- Please put all the toys back in their proper places.
- Report any safety concerns regarding grounds and equipment to the RE office ASAP.



## Snacks

- Parents/guardians should let the teachers know of any food allergies or special dietary needs for their children on the registration form and in person.
- **No peanut products are allowed in the classrooms for snacks or for crafts.**

## Digital & Social Media

When adults and youth are communicating digitally, pairs must copy an assigned advisor, teacher, mentor or designated church staff member. Adults must always copy another adult or a designated church staff member when communicating with a young person. If a teen initiates communication, the adult on the receiving end should reply and copy the appropriate person. Digital communication is preferred over voice communication as it provides an archivable record. If communication occurs which is not shared with an additional designated adult, the mentor is expected to notify the designated adult as soon as possible and not repeat the action. (If a voice phone conversation is needed, approved adults will call the parent phone number and ask the parent to hand the phone to the teen.)

Adults should not initiate “friend” requests with anyone in our church community under the age of 18 years, including their mentee. Teens may send “friend” requests to adults and adults should discern the level of contact they want to maintain with the teen prior to responding to these requests.

Adults are role models and your behavior and choices will influence your mentee and any other young people you include in your social media/social circle. “Friend” a young person only if you accept responsibility for what they will be exposed to on your social media accounts. This responsibility extends for the full length of time you are in contact with the young person, not simply the months you are volunteering in a youth program.

Obtain parental permission before offering advice about how to access or improve access to social media. Parents often object to their children using social media and we must abide by their wishes.

## While Off-Site of Jefferson Unitarian Church

### Field Trips

- When planning church-sponsored trips, whether around the church or away from the church, please alert the DRE and parents/guardians as far in advance as possible.
- All drivers must be 25 years of age (unless prior arrangements have been made), have a current driver’s license, be able to show proof of current insurance, **and have submitted to a criminal background check at least 2 weeks prior to the field trip.**
- When children are to be taken off the church grounds, the parent/guardian’s permission must be obtained and a liability/medical release form must be in the



possession of the lead teacher in case of emergency. (Unless location otherwise approved)

- If there is no release from signed, the child may not participate in the field trip. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- A minimum of two adults must be present with the children on trips, and there should be one adult per eight children/youth. This includes transporting children to/from church events.
- When it is not possible to provide two adult chaperones, parents/guardians must be informed **IN WRITING, IN ADVANCE OF THE EVENT** that only one adult will be supervising their child. Parents/guardians must sign a consent form outlining the details of the event including the number and names of chaperones.

## **Housing and Nighttime Supervision**

Events are held in congregational buildings:

- Our programs will follow congregational policies in addition to those set forth in these Youth Guidelines.
- We will follow building rules

## **Nighttime Supervision and Sleeping in Congregations**

- The sleeping policy will be shared with parents and guardians.
- Staff and/or volunteers responsible for the event will determine the implementation of these policies:
  - Each youth must have their own bedding. The floor must be visible between youth in the sleeping areas.
  - Youth leaders are expected to distribute themselves among the youth rather than self-segregating. Any leader who might need to be found at night, such as peer chaplains or those responsible for the community covenant, should have their sleeping space clearly marked. (i.e. with a colored plastic cone or other objects the community assigns to this role).
  - At all points during an event, any unneeded spaces which can be locked should be locked. Spaces which youth should not be in and cannot be locked will be clearly marked. Spaces which are used for daytime programming, but not for sleeping, should be locked at night if possible.
  - Single-gender and all-gender sleeping spaces will be provided if space and numbers allow. All-gender sleeping spaces are provided for the reasons detailed in the Inclusion section.
  - Since consent can only be given and received while awake, touch can only happen while youth are awake and in supervised space. (See Sexuality, Sexual Conduct and Boundaries section).

## **When youth have the option to stay awake**

- Adults will be housed in adult-only spaces.



- After the end of programming, adults not on overnight supervision duty are expected to be in the “awake” hangout room or in their sleeping room except for trips to the bathroom, to attend to personal necessity, or if needed by a youth they are sponsoring.
- Adults are not to wander the building alone at night.
- After the end of programming, youth will be expected to be in the “awake” hangout room or in a youth sleeping space except for trips to the bathroom or to attend to personal necessity.
- Not being in one of these spaces will be considered a violation of covenant in terms of exclusive behavior.
- Youth sleeping spaces will be provided such that the sleeping spaces are near each other and can be patrolled in a minimum amount of time.
- Each youth room must have at least three youth sleeping in it with a preference for larger numbers.
- Preferably, youth will be housed in the smallest number of spaces that will accommodate them for shorter patrol times.
- Supervision will be provided by two continually roving pairs, a pair of adults and a pair of youth leaders. The pair of adults and pair of youth will take turns “sweeping” the building with the other pair remaining in the “awake” space.
- Adults will organize their shifts in such a way as to minimize interference with drivers’ abilities after the event.

### **When youth are expected to sleep:**

- When there is a curfew as part of the rules/expectations and covenant staff or volunteers can approve the following policy in lieu of the “awake all night” supervision policy (above):
  - Congregations will provide sleeping spaces for youth and adults such that at least two adults sleep in each youth sleeping space positioned strategically for awareness of youth activity.
  - When numbers of adults permit, single-gender rooms will be offered in addition to the all-gender sleeping room.
  - Leaders should create a plan to wake up to check (in pairs) overnight at times not pre-announced to see that everyone is in their own bedspace and that boundaries are maintained.
  - Youth out of this space (for reasons other than trips to the bathroom or to attend to personal necessity) is a significant violation of the trust we place in youth and will have consequences. Such violations of curfew will be immediately reported to the right relationship team (group assigned to monitor the community well-being) and consequences may involve being sent home.
  - Adult leaders and sponsors will organize their shifts in such a way as to minimize interference with drivers’ abilities after the event.

### **Cabins and Camp Facilities**

When events are held at camp facilities:



- Camp facilities should be appropriately licensed for their state
- Events will follow all necessary rules to comply with state laws

### Nighttime Supervision and Housing in Cabins

- Events, where sleeping occurs in camps with cabins, will assign sleeping spaces by self-identified gender identity.
- Awake adult supervision is provided until curfew, after which youth are expected to be in their bunks, in their own bed, and asleep.
- If sleeping accomodation do not allow single bed accomodations teens may share a bed as long as they have their own sleep bedding (individual blankets or sleeping bags).
- All cabins will have two adult counselors sleeping in the cabin for overnight supervision- unless it interferes with drivers' abilities after the event.
- Adults need to be mindful to never be alone in the cabin with a youth camper (See Rule of Three).
- Youth should be asked if they need alternative accommodations and any requests for singles or other configurations based on orientation, gender identity, medical issues, etc. should be met if possible.
- Only individuals assigned to a cabin are allowed in the cabin during overnight or quiet hours.
- Violations of these boundaries or curfew will be immediately reported to the group assigned to monitor the community well-being and consequences may involve being sent home.

### **Dormitories**

- Dormitories are used when programs are on college/university campuses, some retreat centers, and hostels. They typically have 2 or more beds with either shared or en-suite bathroom facilities.
- A designated staff person (or equivalent responsible adult) must be available by predetermined means at all times in the building where youth are staying.
- Training events held in dormitories will house youth by self-identified gender identity. Youth with non-binary gender identity will be housed on a case by case basis, such as housed with another youth known to be supportive and affirming. Awake adult supervision is provided until curfew, after which youth are expected to be in their rooms, in their own bed, and asleep.
- Youth under 18 will not be roomed with youth 18 or older, to avoid putting youth over 18 into a legally unequal situation. Participants attending as youth will never be housed with participants attending as young adults.
- Youth should be asked if they need alternative accommodations and any requests for singles or other configurations based on orientation, gender identity, medical issues, etc. should be met if possible.
- Only individuals assigned to a room are allowed in the room when the door is closed.
- Violations of these boundaries or curfew will be immediately reported to the group assigned to monitor the community well-being and consequences may involve being sent home.



## Hotels and Convention Centers

*NOTE: This does not apply to multigenerational events such as General Assembly where youth are the responsibility of their parent/guardian or Sponsor.*

- Hotel-based programs or programs with hotel housing are rare for youth ministry events and have their own challenges. Hotel rooms typically have one or two beds with an option to get a cot and an en-suite bathroom. Some hotel rooms may be connected to other rooms directly.
- A designated staff person (or equivalent responsible adult) must be available by predetermined means at all times in the building where youth are staying.
- Under no circumstances should non-familial youth and adults be rooming together in a small room (e.g. hotel).
- Youth under 18 will not be roomed with youth 18 or older, to avoid putting youth over 18 into a legally unequal situation. Participants attending as youth will never be housed with participants attending as young adults.
- Every youth must have their own bed.
- When multiple youths are present, they are typically placed in single rooms or in same-gender double rooms based on the self-identified gender that youth indicate on their registration forms.
- Youth should also be asked if they need alternative accommodations and any requests for singles or other configurations based on orientation, gender identity, medical issues, etc. should be met if possible.
- Only individuals assigned to a room are allowed in the room when the door is closed. Violations of these boundaries or curfew will be immediately reported to the group assigned to monitor the community well-being and consequences may involve being sent home.
- NOTE: Most private hotels will not allow minors, or often those under 21, to register for or check into a room by themselves. UUA staff usually have to co-sign room registrations with youth.

## Medications

A designated adult will be in charge of administering medications during field trips and retreats to ensure medications are secure and taken when prescribed.



# Expectations for Working with Children and Youth

Adults and older youth working with children and youth in the context of our Unitarian Universalist faith have a crucial and privileged role. To help our children grow up to be caring and responsible adults can be a meaningful and joyful experience for the adult and a lifetime benefit to the young person. It is important to recognize that this role carries with it both power and influence. Whether acting as a youth advisor, chaperone, child-care worker, teacher, minister, mentor, or any other role, the adult has a responsibility in interacting with our young people in ways that are affirming and inspiring to the young people and to the adult. Adults who work with children and youth at Jefferson Unitarian Church events are expected to always have the best interests of child or youth at heart.

Adults are expected to nurture the physical, emotional, and spiritual growth of children and youth by fostering an environment of kindness, trust, respect, and fun. Our charge to adults working with children and youth is to encourage kindness and genuineness among the children and youth and to discourage unkindness and falseness. We intend to create an environment in which children and youth will be able to explore the spiritual and religious nature of their lives, both as individuals and communities. We expect that one person's enjoyment will not be at the expense of another person's health or self-esteem. In light of this, there are some specific expectations that JUC has of adults working with children and youth.

They are as follows:

- **“Friendship” with Youth** – Although we hope that youth and adults will have a genuine fondness for one another, any adult who looks to youth for “friendship” is not sufficiently mature to be in a position of responsibility over them. A “friendship” is reciprocal, where neither person has more responsibility for the health of the relationship than the other. This is antithetical to the adult/youth relationship, where the adult is the one who assumes primary responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries and cultivating an atmosphere of health and trust. It is expected that any relationships that an adult has with youth who have grown to adulthood will not become exploitative.
- **Sexualized behavior** – Adults play an important part in helping our youth develop healthy identities as sexual beings. Children, youth, and adults suffer damaging effects when leaders become sexually involved with young persons in their care. **It is never appropriate to engage in any manner of sexual behavior around or with a child or youth.** This refers not only to explicitly sexual behavior but also to sexually provocative behavior or language. It is not appropriate to tell jokes with sexual content, for example, or to make “double entendres.” This also includes displaying or engaging in this behavior with other adults around children or youth as well. Physical expressions of affection such as hugs have their place, but it is best to allow the child or youth to initiate them, and the adult must be sensitive not to allow them to be prolonged.



- **Confidentiality and Mandated Reporting** – Adults who work with children and youth under the age of 18 within the church are responsible not only to the children and youth but are accountable to the church as well. **Remember: you are acting both ethically and legally as an agent of JUC.** Sometimes you will learn that a child or youth is the victim of abuse, is suicidal, has a serious drug problem, etc. For this reason, please try never to give children or youth the impression that you will keep secrets for them. **If a child or youth asks you to keep something confidential- remember that you may not be able to do that in order to protect someone from harm.** A covenant of confidentiality will mean that you do not repeat information told to you in confidence, but when the information is of a major crisis nature, encourage the child or youth to seek help from a parent or other authority figure. Then, if you believe or suspect the child to be in danger of being harmed or of harming themselves, you, the person that it was reported to, should be the person to call Jefferson County Human Services at **303-271-HELP (4357)**. In addition, consult with a person in a position of greater authority in the church, which is the DRE or the minister about an appropriate course of action.



# CODE OF ETHICS for Persons Working with Children and Youth

Adults working with young people in the context of our Unitarian Universalist faith have a crucial and privileged role, one that carries with it a great deal of power and influence. Whether acting as a youth advisor, chaperone, child-care worker, teacher, minister, registrant at a youth-adult conference or in any other role, the adult has a responsibility to interact with our young people in ways which are affirming and inspiring to the young people and the adult. Adults can be mentors to, role models for, and trusted companions of children and youth. To help our children grow to be caring and responsible adults can be a meaningful and joyful experience for the adult and a lifetime benefit to the young person.

While it is important that adults be capable of maintaining meaningful friendships with the young people with whom they work, adults must exercise good judgment and mature wisdom in using their influence with children and youth and refrain from using young people to fulfill their own needs. Young people are in a vulnerable position when dealing with adults and may find it difficult to speak out about the inappropriate behavior of adults.

Adult leaders need to possess a special dedication to working with our young people in ways that will affirm the Unitarian Universalist's Principles. Good communication skills, self-awareness, understanding of others, sensitivity, problem-solving and decision-making skills, and a positive attitude are all important attributes.

Additionally, leaders should have a social network outside their religious education responsibility in which to meet their own needs for friendship, affirmation, and self-esteem; and be willing and able to seek assistance from colleagues and religious professionals when they become aware of a situation requiring expert help or intervention. It is ultimately the responsibility of the entire church community, not just those in leadership positions, to create and maintain a climate that supports the growth and welfare of children and youth.

Adults who are in leadership roles are in a position of stewardship and have a 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.

There are no more important areas of growth than those of self-worth and the development of a healthy identity as a sexual being. Adults play a role in assisting children and youth in these areas of growth. Sexual conduct of any kind between adults and children or youth is unethical and severely injurious. Therefore, leaders will refrain from engaging in sexual, seductive, or erotic behavior around or with children and youth. Neither shall they sexually harass or engage in behavior around or with children and youth that constitutes verbal, emotional, or physical abuse.



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

- Religious Education workers and volunteers shall not engage in behavior around or with children or youth that constitutes verbal, emotional, or physical abuse; this includes behavior or language that is personally threatening or demeaning.
- Religious Education workers and volunteers shall neither indulge in sexually harassing behavior nor engage in sexual, seductive, or erotic behavior around or with children or youth.
- Religious Education workers and volunteers shall not allow the use of tobacco, drugs or alcohol or any illegal activities around or among children or youth.
- Religious Education workers and volunteers shall never consume alcoholic beverages during activities in which they are supervising minors. Alcoholic beverages left from a previous adult event must either be removed from the premises or remain locked up and out of sight.

**Please sign and return to the Director of Religious Education.**

***Statement of Agreement:*** I have read and understand the **Expectations for Working with Children and Youth** and **CODE OF ETHICS for Persons Working with Children and Youth**. I agree to honor and preserve the trust placed in me by the members of this congregation.

Name (Printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Restorative Process

## In case of a Breach of Children & Youth Safety Policy

The purpose of offering restorative practices if there is a significant breach in the Children and Youth Safety Policy is to create a safer and less punitive approach in our faith community. We hope that this process will create trust and repair relationships between people in our community. The intention of a restorative process at JUC is to build a stronger community by repairing harm if it caused and restoring relationships if ones are broken.

With that said, if the immediate serious health or safety of any person is at risk, law enforcement shall be contacted. Anyone threatening another person shall be instructed to leave the church immediately. A subsequent conversation shall be scheduled between the senior minister and/or their designee to communicate with those involved about when or if the person who has posed such a threat may return to the church.

If serious safety policies are broken **and involve a minor**, they must be reported to the Director of Religious Education, Senior Minister or the Associate Ministers, immediately. If safety policies are broken and do not involve minors, and it is safe to do so, parties involved in the incident are encouraged to first engage in direct communication with the person(s) involved to resolve the problem.

If the parties to the conflict cannot resolve the situation between themselves, they may ask for assistance from the professional ministry team or other trusted individuals within the congregation to address the behavior. Responses should consider why the safety policy was broken, how to ensure it will be kept in the future, and what precautions need to be made. Possible solutions may include:

- Discussing the problem with those affected in a restorative process if possible
- Making a safety covenant with the individual(s)
- Limiting participation in certain events or activities
- Limiting participation with youth or supervision of youth
- Recommending to the Board that the individual(s) be removed from membership.

**Notification:** Timely notification of the incident shall be made initially to the Director of Religious Education who will report all necessary information to the ministry team including the Senior Minister and the Board of Trustees President regardless of the resolution of the incident.

### Incident Reports

An incident report and actions taken will be kept in the church office. This file shall be kept by the church administrator with access restricted to the ministers and those they deem necessary to have access.



# Incident Report

Jefferson Unitarian Church  
13350 W 32 Ave Golden CO 80401  
303-279-5282

**Date/Time/Location of Incident:**

**Name of Person(s) Involved:**

**Reported by:**

**Incidence Category (Check Below):**

Property	Threat	Health	Other
Church property, personal property, vandalism, theft, etc.	Actions that pose a concern for the safety of others: verbal threats, property threat, etc.	Injury/accident, communicable disease reported on-site, medical emergency, etc.	Suspicious item, improper or suspicious conduct, other.

**Child Involved? Yes** \_\_\_ **No** \_\_\_ (Notify parent or guardian and obtain initials below)

**Chronology and Description of Incident (attach more pages as needed):**

**Immediate action (attach more pages as needed):**

**Follow-up (Use back of form if needed):**

**Other Follow up Needed/Next Steps (Use back of form):**

Incident witness (printed name)	Initials	Date
Incident witness (printed name)	Initials	Date
Parent/Guardian (printed name) (if applicable)	Initials	Date

Church Staff (printed name)	Initials	Date
-----------------------------	----------	------

*Please attach any other relevant documentation and file this report with a minister or RE staff within one week of the incident*



# PERMISSION FORM

## Contact Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Child/Youth Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

## EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Parent/Guardian 1 Name & Contact Information:

Parent/Guardian 2 Name & Contact Information:

Parent/Guardian 3 Name & Contact Information:

Parent/Guardian 4 Name & Contact Information:

If parent/guardians are not available, please contact:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Physician \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Insurance Co. \_\_\_\_\_ Ins. # \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance phone to authorize treatment \_\_\_\_\_

## Medical Information

Health History:

Allergies:

My child has the following health concerns that need to be known:

I will send the following medications to the retreat for my child:



*A designated adult will be in charge of administering medications during field trips and retreats to ensure medications are secure and taken when prescribed.*

**Helpful Information**

If there is anything that we need to know to make sure your child has a positive experience, please write it below.

**Authorizations**

1) I hereby give my permission for \_\_\_\_\_ to attend

( \_\_\_\_\_ )

I understand that any young person who does not abide by the “Mutually Understood Rules” may be returned home after the parent or guardian is notified. This may involve asking a parent to come and collect young person.

2) I authorize any JUC Responsible Adult to give first aid to my teen and to obtain emergency medical care if needed. I agree to pay for expenses incurred. We will make every attempt to contact you if any medical emergency occurs.

3) I authorize JUC COA Responsible Adults to administer the following over-the-counter pain medications with the indicated dosage if my child requests it:

**Tylenol - indicate acceptable dosage** \_\_\_\_\_ **Advil – indicate acceptable dosage** \_\_\_\_\_

If you do not wish to authorize these over-the-counter medications, leave the dosage area blank.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian                      Date                      Print Name of Person Signing

