

Policy-Procedure

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Los Gatos

SAFE CHURCH for Children and Youth

1. No child or youth shall be unattended during Fellowship services:
 - a. Children and youths aged 15 and under must be under the care of either
 - i. their parents/guardians or
 - ii. a designated teacher and/or volunteer
 - b. Designated teachers or volunteers who are responsible for groups of 3 or more must periodically “count heads” to assure all group members are accounted for.
 - c. For the nursery/preschool classroom, parents/guardians must provide their names and contact information and child’s name and information about any allergies or other concerns.
2. The physical environment for children and youth shall be kept free of hazards.
 - a. Classrooms and furnishings shall be age appropriate and kept in good repair.
 - b. Teachers and volunteers shall conduct an annual safety inspection of the classrooms and furnishings to identify and correct hazards such as tripping hazards, falling hazards, items that are broken, dirty, or otherwise no longer useable, etc.
3. Supplies, materials, toys and equipment shall be age appropriate and safe.
 - a. Nursery/preschool classroom free play toys shall be nontoxic, with no choking or pinching hazards, no sharp edges, etc. Infants and toddlers shall have use of age appropriate toys and be closely supervised.
 - b. Children/youth shall use tools safely, including using personal protective equipment as appropriate.
 - c. Parents/guardians must be consulted about any allergies before any food is consumed by children or youth in the classroom. A list of children’s names and food allergy information shall be kept in each classroom.
4. Activities – both planned and unplanned – shall be conducted in a manner that is safe both physically and emotionally.
 - a. Traffic: Utilize orange traffic cones to prevent incoming traffic when using the asphalt or pine bark areas. Use caution when crossing to the butterfly garden.
 - b. Encourage positive interactions. No bullying allowed.
5. Activities shall be appropriately staffed.
 - a. Sunday morning Religious Education classes shall be staffed as follows:
 - i. Nursery/preschool – one teacher and one volunteer
 - ii. Elementary – one teacher and one volunteer
 - iii. Middle school – one teacher with another adult available
 - iv. Outdoor activities must be staffed with a minimum of one teacher and one volunteer.
 - b. Staff and volunteers shall be conscientious and responsible, with experience with children and knowledge of basic child development and safe practices.
 - c. A criminal background check shall be conducted for all staff and volunteers before they begin regular assignments and shall be renewed on a regular basis.
 - d. Parents/guardians may wish to accompany their child at first, especially in the nursery/preschool. This does not take the place of the regular staffing of one teacher and one volunteer. If the parent wishes to become a volunteer, a background check shall be conducted.
 - e. Staff and volunteers are “mandatory reporters” of potential child abuse under the terms of state law.

6. Emergency preparedness:
 - a. Each classroom shall be equipped with a first aid kit.
 - b. Teachers and volunteers shall have knowledge of basic first aid.
 - c. Teachers and volunteers shall have local emergency numbers programmed into their cell phones.
 - d. Each classroom shall have two clearly marked exits which are unlocked during class time.
7. Reporting:
 - a. Parents/guardians, children/youth, and other Fellowship members are encouraged to share concerns about the safety of children and youth (in general or a specific incident) with a member of the Religious Education Committee and/or the minister and/or members of the Board of Trustees for investigation and resolution.