

UUFB Safety Policy for Children and Youth *(Revised 2008)*

As members of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Bozeman (UUFB), our principles and purposes, as well as our conscience, require that we respect and protect our children of all ages. We will make every effort possible to ensure that no child shall be subjected to sexual, physical or psychological abuse whether at our facilities or at an event which we sponsor.

If abuse is suspected, reported, or observed, the matter must be immediately reported to CLE and the minister. These individuals will review the concerns and a report will be made to Children's Protective Services in accordance with state laws when child abuse is suspected. Because of its sensitive nature, such information will be otherwise held confidential.

Recognizing and desiring the need for a consistently safe environment for our children, the Lifespan Education Committee has developed the following guidelines:

1) Teacher, Volunteer and Childcare Worker Training

- a) Inform and educate teachers about the policy
- b) Include a copy of policy and reporting form in teacher notebooks
- c) Explain the policy in teacher orientation sessions.
- d) Provide training for teachers, LE Committee members and staff in recognizing and responding to suspected physical and sexual abuse.
- e) A screening process will be in place requiring applicants for UUFB paid positions to provide three references and if working directly with children, a criminal background check will be required.
- f) All employees and volunteers who have direct contact with children will be required to sign a Participation Covenant Statement.
- g) Annually present information on sexual abuse prevention and the contents of this policy to parents and LE teachers.
- h) No person who has been convicted of or pled guilty to charges of child abuse will be allowed to have direct contact with children or youth.
- i) All potential volunteers will be approved by the minister prior to assignment as a volunteer or teacher with children or youth.

2) Children and Youth classes, Activities, and Childcare

- a) There will be at least two adults present in UUFB sponsored children's activities, Sunday classes and childcare. The CLE, a parent or LE committee member will be assigned to supervise and provide immediate support for child care personnel as needed.
- b) Adults must be actively involved in UUFB activities for six months prior to assuming leadership roles in children's activities.

3) Field Trips:

- a) Parents must sign permission slips when children are leaving the church premises by vehicle. The destination and expected time of return must be communicated to parent/guardian on the permission slip. The leaders must have a list of children's full names, parent names, emergency contacts, and medical conditions with them at all times.

- b) There must be a minimum of two adults with the group.
- c) All drivers must be covered by car insurance. All drivers must be over the age of 21.
- d) Children four and under must be in appropriate car seats.

4) Building safety:

- a) A first aid kit must be readily available in the LE classroom area. An escape plan and the location of the fire extinguisher must be posted near each classroom door.
- b) A review of first aid skills and fire escape plans must be part of teacher training.
- c) The LE committee must conduct a Sunday morning fire drill annually.

5) Child protection and safety:

- a) There must be a minimum of two adults present in the building, at youth group meetings and at other events involving children and youth of the church.
- b) If a teacher or youth group leader suspects or is made aware of child abuse or has a concern about a child's safety and well-being, this information must be reported to the CLE and minister as soon as possible.
- c) There must be no use of alcohol or illegal drugs at events specifically created for the children or youth groups. At general UUFB events where children and youth may be present with their parent(s) or other supervisory adult, there may be use of alcohol by adults.

CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE (24 hrs-7days) 1-866-820-5437