First Unitarian Church

Teacher Training Manual

Revised July 11, 2017

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MINISTER'S WELCOME

Dear Teachers,

Thank you for volunteering to teach our Congregation's children! What an important role you will play. Through the carefully selected curricula, spontaneous conversation, role modeling, and good old-fashioned fun, you'll be helping young people develop meaningful spiritual lives and forge deep connections with our Unitarian Universalist faith.

Their early experiences as UUs will pave the way for our kids to live meaningful lives of love and service, and their faith will be a comfort to them during life's hard times. Nothing could be more important than teaching—and, as I hope you will soon find, nothing could be more rewarding.

Thank you again!

Blessings,

Rev. Angela Herrera
Senior Minister Elect

PHILOSOPHY

The great end in religious instruction is not to stamp our minds upon the young, but to stir up their own; Not to make them see with our eyes, but to look inquiringly and steadily with their own…William Ellery Channing (1842)

UU Principles for Children

Although Unitarian Universalism does *not* claim any religious doctrine as its supreme truth, there are seven key principles that serve as ready guideposts for what we generally agree is responsible, ethical, and just living. These principles have been adapted into kid-friendly language as follows:

- Each person is important.
- Be kind in all you do.
- We're free to learn together.
- We search for what is true.
- All people need a voice.
- Build a fair and peaceful world.
- We care for our planet.

Our Vision

Through participating in the Religious Education Program at First Unitarian, children and youth will:

- Develop social skills and connections that will make them a part of this Church community.
- Participate in practical experiences that relate to UU principles, and that will expand into their daily lives.
- Incorporate UU beliefs into their own beliefs that they can articulate.
- Learn about, appreciate, and respect people of other faiths and beliefs.
- Develop a spiritual foundation that will provide perspective throughout their life journey.

WELCOME FROM DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

First Unitarian's mission covenant calls for us to nurture the spiritual and religious development of all our members, children, youth and adult. Because our RE community operates as a cooperative, that opportunity to grow in faith and spirituality is shared by the teachers and advisors as well as the youth and children benefiting from the leadership of the adults. We grow together.

I would like to take this opportunity to again thank our youth adviser and teacher volunteers for their generosity of spirit as we undertake the good work of creating a thriving Religious Education community, together.

This *Manual* is a resource for you and includes RE-related policies, procedures, rules, suggestions, and guidelines. It is a living document. If you have suggestions or ideas for the Teacher's Manual, please contact the DRE at dre@uuabq.org.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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Hours

Church Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 am – 4:30 pm, Sunday 8:30 am – 1:00 pm
R.E. Office Hours: By appointment, Sunday 8:30 am - 1:30 pm

RE Website
Information about the RE Program can be found at the Church's website at http://uuabq.com/religious-education/re-children-and-youth/

RE Staff:

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TEACHING OVERVIEW

> "*Belief is many things,"* says one of our modern leaders, A. Powell Davies, *"and so is disbelief. But religion is something that happens to you when you open your mind to truth, your conscience to justice, and your heart to love."* In Unitarian Universalist congregations we do not try to make one another fit a given pattern of experience. But we do discover together that there are religious dimensions in all our varied human experience." *-From A Chosen Faith* by Buehrens and Church

Sunday in R.E.

First Unitarian provides a warm, open, supportive community within which our children can learn and grow. Our program encourages personal values and ethical living, and teaches UU principles and the varied sources of our religious heritage. UU religious education gives kids a framework to develop their own spiritual selves among friends and caring adults.

In our Religious Education program, we affirm the inherent worth and dignity of all beings, and we believe that each of us is responsible for and capable of helping to change the world for the better. Through continually learning and growing together, we encourage and support one another, and our children, to know and express our moral agency. From anti-racism and environmental justice to personal spiritual growth, using many formats for learning, Unitarian Universalist (UU) religious education taps the wisdom of diverse Sources. We help one another find grounding and connection with ethics, faith, spirit, and UU identity. We feed the faith development of everyone involved; teachers are learners, learners are teachers.

Faith formation and a connection between RE and the Sanctuary is fostered by Children's Chapel, a child-centered, minister-led service held in the R.E. building once a month, and attendance in the Sanctuary for all-ages programming once a month.

Volunteers teach religious education classes for Pre-K to 5th grade. Classes are held in the RE Building and are offered every Sunday morning at 9:30 am and 11:00 am. This week's class schedule is available on the calendar. Youth (6th to 8th grade and 9th to 12th grade) meet with Youth Advisers. The *Youth Programs Resource Manual* further describes youth programs http://uuabq.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Youth-Programs-Resource-Manual-2016-05-25-final.pdf

Religious Education Classes

Level	Class Times	Classes	Location
Nursery	9:15 am to 10:35 am 10:45am to 12:15 pm	Birth to 4 years	Room 5
Children	9:30 am and 11:00 am	• Pre-K • Kindergarten & 1st grade • 2nd & 3rd grade • 4th & 5th-grade	Room 4 Room 1 Room 3 Room 2
Mid-High Youth	11:00 am	6th-8th grade	Arnold Room
Coming of Age	9:30 am, January-April	8th grade	La Amikoj
High School Youth	11:00 am	9th to 12th grades	La Amikoj

Creative, loving childcare is provided each Sunday for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers by trained and paid nursery staff from 9:15 am to 12:15 pm in Room 5 in the RE Building. Child care staff are on break from 10:35 to 10:45, and children should be picked up by their caregivers right after services.

Religious Education Structure

Families register their children and youth for classes in our Religious Education department. Because our program is a cooperative, families are asked to volunteer 16 hours per year for the program. Many will sign up to teach and assist, but there are also other volunteer opportunities available. Feel free to encourage parents to sign up to be a floater!

Monthly

Children meet in the Sanctuary the second Sunday of the month, and then are escorted back to the RE Building by their teachers and RE Staff. The fourth week of the month is when children begin their Sunday in Children's Chapel, in the RE Building.

There are teacher holidays scheduled throughout the semester. Folks who have signed up to be a floater on teacher holidays will meet with the children for crafts, games and activities. Any holiday or event that will substantially interfere with regular Sunday RE will be deemed a teacher's holiday, at the discretion of the Director of Religious Education, or by one of the ministers. There are a number of activities for our elementary students to be involved in after services, such as Critter Club, and OWL

Special Events

We strive to cultivate a strong community of parents, caregivers, volunteers and children and youth, by providing a variety of special events. We hold a monthly RE Family picnic on the first Sunday of the month, so that children can continue to play on the playground and families have a more informal setting to get to know one another and develop friendships. Families bring a picnic lunch. We have an annual RE BBQ, a bigger party that our R.E. Department uses to honor our families and volunteers. There is an annual Field Day, where volunteers oversee games and activities for children, rounded out by ice cream and a bouncy house. There's also an annual swim party, held off campus. Some of our families have also formed extended families- family groups that meet outside of church for various activities like hikes, play dates, and camping trips.

Worship

Children and their families come to our Church to experience liberal religion and to learn about Unitarian Universalism. Actions such as gathering into a circle, lighting the chalice, and saying the children's UU Affirmation are expected rituals, and also help the children to know that it is time to settle down and attend to the class activities. You are not just the volunteer teacher for the day– you are an example and the children's religious leader while they are here.

Planning

Most of our curriculum is adapted from Tapestry of Faith, the religious education materials provided by the Unitarian Universalist Association. The DRE, RE Council's Curriculum Chair, and other RE staff work to adapt the lessons for our classes. Curriculum is provided to you a few days before your teaching date, for review. We are always happy for your insights on how the curriculum can best work in your class. The RE Aide will make sure that your classroom is set up with all the

materials that you need. Please make change requests by Thursday morning.

Teacher Teams

Teacher teams are utilized in the fall and spring semesters, and are groups of three or four volunteers that handle one class for four months. Each member of the team is obligated to teach once a month, and to act as the assistant once a month. There are 13 to 16 classes in any given semester. We use an on-line app, Sign-Up Genius, for signing-up RE volunteers for teaching and other RE-related tasks.

Teacher Team Organizer is responsible for:

- Contacting the team members and working out a teaching rotation, and making sure the teacher schedule is complete,
- Supporting and mentoring new teachers, and
- Being a contact person for parents and the DRE.
- The team should decide who their Organizer would be.

Lead Teachers– Every Sunday there is one lead teacher and one assistant teacher. The lead teacher is responsible for:

- Reviewing the lesson (expect about 15 minutes to read the lesson before Sunday).
- Arriving fifteen minutes prior to the start of class, and ensuring needed supplies are there.
- Sharing the information "Taking It Home" on the First UU Families page on Facebook.
- Leading the Circle, chalice lighting, and day's discussion. Leads and Assistants may divide these tasks as they see fit.
- Communicating via email with the assistant teacher and DRE with an evaluation of the class.

Assistant Teachers are responsible for:

- Supporting the lead teacher with whatever needs to be done during class.
- Dealing with behavior issues while the lead teacher leads the circle, lesson, etc.
- Helping to clean up at the end of class
- Evaluating and giving feedback to lead teacher about the class

Substitutions

Please let us know as soon as possible if you are unable to volunteer as you had scheduled so that a substitute can be found by taking the following steps:

- Call the assistant teacher first to see if they can handle the class as a lead.
- Call other team members to see if they can switch days with you.
- If further assistance is needed, call our RE Administrative Assistant as soon as possible! We can arrange for a floater to step in if team members are not available.

Floaters

Floaters are important volunteers who sign up weekly, independent of a teacher team, to assist our program if for some reason we need an extra teacher in one of the classes. There is a Sign-Up Genius just for Floater sign- up.

The Basics…

Being ready for teaching – Curricula has been prepared for Sunday's lessons. Please be prepared by reading the materials in advance of teaching class on Sunday**.**

Arriving on Sunday- Please arrive 15 minutes before the start of class. This will give you time to settle in and be able to greet children and parents in a relaxed manner. If parents arrive with children before the start of class, ask them to stay in the room until a second adult arrives. If you can't make a class you're scheduled to teach, please let the RE Staff know as soon as possible, whether that's a couple of days beforehand or last minute, so that we can try to find a replacement.

Signing children in – Our RE Aide ensures that the correct sign-in books are where they need to be. Make sure that parents sign their children into the Attendance Book. Usually the Attendance Books are in the classrooms, but sometimes we need to have them together, such as for Sundays when children start in the Sanctuary, or if it's a teacher holiday.

Parents can stay with children in classroom if they wish. . Siblings are also welcome to stay in a classroom with a younger sibling, until they feel comfortable being in the class on their own..

Lesson plans for your class will be emailed to you the Wednesday or Thursday before your teaching assignment. The page called Taking It Home (TIH) is a summary of the class, provided so that parents can know what's happening in their child's class and can make an opportunity to discuss the class with them. Taking It Home is available as a printed sheet, and should also be shared on the First UU Families Facebook page, after class is done.

If a lesson plan is not working, talk with others, ask for help, or ditch the lesson and do another activity, or go to the playground.

Leaving– Make sure the parents sign their children out in the Attendance Book. Once a child is 'signed-out,' the child is the responsibility of the parent. We appreciate help with putting things away at the end of the day, too!

Nametags- Children, teachers and staff should all wear their nametags. Children receive a printed nametag once they are registered in the RE program; otherwise, help children make a nametag sticker.

New children– Greet every child and parent, and let new families know that they are welcome to stay in the classroom until new children are comfortable, however long that may take.

Safety–There must be a minimum of two adults with any child at any time. We call this church policy "Safe Church". The two adults should be unrelated– i.e., not a married couple or partners. The hall monitor and staff are in the building in case a child needs to leave for the rest room, or be escorted to his or her caregiver . This is for the children's safety and for yours. It is ok to leave a single adult alone with their own children.

In each classroom closet, there is a **First Aid Kit**, children's food allergies list, and a list of those children who cannot be photographed. Room closets are always unlocked. If you use the first aid kit, please fill out an Ouch Report. (Copy of Report on page 24.) While the majority of our child-care Personnel and staff have first aid training, volunteers are not authorized to dispense medication of any kind. Please get the child's parent if s/he needs medical attention, or ask an RE Staff person to

do it.

Food and snacks are no longer a part of RE. Because of allergies and family food preferences, we reserve the use of food for when our families are together, and parents can monitor what their children are eating. At times, food can be a part of the curriculum (such as Pre-K making chalices out of food). Parents will be informed ahead of time.

Forming a Class Covenant

Covenant may seem like a simple agreement that we work on together with our children, so that the classroom can run well and respectfully. It is useful in that way. However, covenant is an important part of our UU religious life, and you are helping children to become familiar with it and participate in it. Uniting in the common bonds of relationship rather than in obedience to a religious dogma is a distinguishing feature of Unitarian Universalism. We are a covenantal religion.

Covenants in our R. E. classes are about promises- not rules. The promises are about how we wish to be together in a class. They are meant to be discussed, lived, broken, and renewed. A class covenant can provide a framework of behavioral expectations, such as giving everyone a chance to talk and everyone a chance to be listened to. It's also important that everyone takes ownership of the class covenant, and so make sure that you, as leaders, and the children each sign it. In future, when all the teachers on the team are present for the 'first day' of class, then the class has the opportunity to create their covenant together with you.

What's OK to say?

As Unitarian Universalists, we do not want to indoctrinate the children into any one belief or set of beliefs. There are UU Christians, atheists, mystics, agnostics, pagans, and humanists among us. There is a plurality of beliefs among the families who attend. Our job as religious educators is to support the search and encourage the journey in making personal meaning. Our job is to support families in whatever language and practices they use. PLEASE DO NOT**:** Use statements of belief as truth. "God is watching over us." "There is no God." "God has a plan for us."

What's OK to Do?

Emphasize respect for a diversity of opinions and beliefs: *"Isn't this wonderful and amazing how differently we are seeing the world? I am learning a lot from this!"*

Encourage children to be questioners and thinkers: *"You are being a good UU and thinking hard about this, I can tell."*

Encourage children to share their thoughts and opinions with each other: "*So how do you feel about this? What makes you think that way?"*

As an authority figure, a teacher, minimize the personal disclosure that you make about your beliefs. If it becomes necessary that you must share personal beliefs, be sure to make a disclaimer, such as "*I feel this way, but I know that there are lots of ways to believe in this church. That's why I like it here."*

Give your blessing to the variety of ways that the children express themselves and their beliefs and ideas. "*I'm glad you shared that with us. It's important to your family and you, I can tell."*

Remember that one of our principles is about encouraging spiritual growth and learning. By being together, we hope to learn from each other.

Volunteer Teaching FAQ's

Do I have to teach every Sunday?
No, and in fact, we do not recommend that. In the Fall and Spring, you will teach with a **team** of four adults who rotate responsibilities in the classroom. With three or four teaching Sundays per month, you can expect to lead once a month and assist once a month. Summer teaching is based on teacher availability, and teams are not used. Fall and spring teachers usually take a break during the summer.

How much preparation is involved? In fall and spring teaching teams, when you are lead teacher, you can expect around 15 minutes of preparation time, to read and familiarize yourself with the curriculum and activities. If you would like to make changes to the activities, the Director of Religious Education can help with suggestions. You let us know what you plan to do and what materials you'll require, if you make changes, and our RE Aide will make sure that your room is set up with those materials. Our RE Administrative Assistant can also answer your questions. When you are the assistant teacher, you will have no preparation time. You may just show up and support the lead teacher. In summer, Curriculum will be provided to you, and the activities and materials will be ready to go.

How many kids are in a class? Currently, we have between six and twelve children in most classes. Occasionally, there are more or fewer.

Should I teach my child's class? Many parents do, but some choose not to. Each family dynamic is different. Some children are proud to have a parent as a teacher, and make good helpers. Some children have a hard time 'sharing' their parent with other children. Once children reach middle school age, we do not recommend that parents teach a class that includes their child.

Do I have to be an expert? No! The curricula are very thorough, and you can ask for support for teaching from experienced teachers and the Director of Religious Education and RE staff. In fact, one of the best ways to learn about UUism is to teach about it at a child's level! **The most important thing adults can share with children and youth is their questioning and openness.** What is important in religious education is not how much you know about children, teaching, or even Unitarian Universalism, but how much you are willing to give of yourself, of your soul. The essential qualities of a good church schoolteacher are a love of children, a sense of wonder about life, empathy and the ability to listen, and a willingness to share who you are, more than what you know.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Positive, calm guidance and discipline are crucial because they help promote children's self-control, teach responsibility, and help children make thoughtful choices. Do not use physical force, threats, or put-downs with any child. Guidance and discipline includes the following topics: positive strategies; possible reason for misbehavior; positive discipline techniques; Is the child actually capable of doing what you expect; behavior plans for difficult moments; separation anxiety; temper tantrums and meltdowns.

Proactive strategies

Child misbehavior is impossible to prevent completely. Children are likely to do things that teachers will not expect. However, there are many positive steps teachers can take to help prevent misbehavior.

- Introduce class to fidget baskets, which are available in each classroom.
- Set clear, consistent rules. (Covenant!)
- Make sure the environment (room, playground) is safe and worry-free.
- Show interest in what the children are doing. Interact with them and ask them questions.
- Provide appropriate and engaging activities.
- Focus on the desired behavior, rather than the one to be avoided.
- Build children's image of themselves as trustworthy, responsible, and cooperative.
- Expect the best from the child.
- Give clear directions, one at a time.
- Say "Yes" whenever possible.
- Notice and pay attention to children when they are doing things right.
- Take action before a situation gets out of control.
- Encourage children often and generously.
- Set a good example.
- Help children to see how their actions affect others.

Possible reasons for misbehavior

If you understand why children may misbehave, you may be more successful at reducing misbehavior problems. Some common reasons are that they:

- 'Test the limits' and see if the adults will really enforce the rules.
- Expectations in R.E. and at home are different.
- Do not understand the rules, or are held to expectations that are beyond their developmental levels.
- Assert themselves and their independence.
- Feel ill, bored, hungry, or sleepy.
- Lack information and prior experience in this setting.
- Have previously been 'rewarded' for their misbehavior with adult attention.
- Copy the actions of their parents.

Positive discipline techniques

True misbehavior occurs when a child chooses to behave inappropriately. Before you take action, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the child really doing something wrong?
- Is there a real problem, or are you just tired and out of patience?
- If there is no real problem, release your stress away from the child.

- If there is a real problem, go to the next question.

Is the child actually capable of doing what you expect?

Think for a moment. It's always a good idea to explain the rules fully and clearly before misbehavior occurs. Whenever possible, involve children in making the rules for the classroom, as in a class covenant which is posted in each room.

- If your expectations are not realistic, re-evaluate your expectations.
- If your expectations are fair, go to the next question.
- Did the child know that they were doing something wrong?
- If the child didn't realize that they were doing something wrong, help them to understand what you expect, why, and how they can do that. Offer to help.
- If the child knew that what they were doing was wrong, and they intentionally disregarded a reasonable expectation, the child misbehaved.
- If the behavior was an accident, like wetting pants while sleeping, it was not misbehavior.
- If the behavior was not an accident, ask the child to tell you the reasons they had for doing what they did.
- If the child is old enough, ask them how they might solve the problem or correct the situation. By using a positive, problem-solving approach, children can develop skills in thinking through a situation and developing possible solutions.

Behavior Plan for Difficult Moments

Below are the steps to follow when handling disruptive behaviors in the classroom. In particular cases, some of the steps may be omitted or changed. As a general rule, you should try to follow these procedures in the order listed:

Younger Children

- **Fix Up:** If a child willfully damages something, they should help in either fixing it or cleaning it up. If they cause someone distress, they should help in relieving that. Do not try to get a child to say that they're sorry- they may not be capable of that, and you've gotten yourself into a power struggle. For example: "You hit your brother and he is crying. Looks like you hurt him. You think of anything you can do to make it better?" child might offer a hug, get an ice pack, draw them a picture.... might also choose to say, "I'm sorry."

- **Re-direct:** This strategy can work when you notice that a child is not following the rules and is being uncooperative. All misbehavior is not an opportunity for a teaching moment. Maybe the child is hungry, bored, missing parents, or something else. Check on those needs first, then, engage them in a new activity. Get the child's attention and introduce another activity. For example: "Tom, please help me put the crayons away. It's almost the end of our time together and I know you want to go get a snack in the social hall." Children also respond well to being a special helper. Consider their abilities or experience in some area and then give them a special job.

- **Time-out**: Time-outs should never be used to isolate or shame a young child. Teachers and assistants should not yell or speak across the classroom to redirect a child's behavior. Instead, the class assistant could take the child to a quiet corner and keep him with you to help him calm down. Do your best to get down to their level and talk to them quietly without attracting the attention of the rest of the class. In many cases, acting out behavior that requires a time-out happens because the child feels that they are not getting attention. For example: "You can choose to sit in the circle without hitting anyone, or sit with me while we read a story."

Older Children

- Ask the child to stop the behavior. Try redirecting, or give the child a new task.

- Issue the child a direct warning, reminding them of our covenant.
- Give the child a time-out outside of the classroom. Ask the class assistant to supervise the child having time out in the hallway just outside of the classroom. If need be, ask the hall monitor or another RE Staff person to come in to the classroom to maintain safe church. Time out is meant to be gentle but no-nonsense removal of disruptive, out-of-covenant behavior from the classroom. If the child can agree to come back to reasonable behavior, then they can return to the classroom.
- If the child returns to the classroom and the behavior continues, contact RE staff to request that the child be returned to their parents.
- In cases where behavior is dangerous or severely disruptive, the teacher has the right to escalate the behavior plan process at their discretion and contact the DRE immediately.

The goal is to alleviate the problem and welcome the child back into the classroom. **A positive environment must be maintained for those who have come ready and eager to participate.** We do no favors to a misbehaving child by letting them control the classroom in a negative way. Please inform the DRE if you are having problems or need further suggestions.

Separation Anxiety

The most common ages for separation fears occur at:

- 8 months
- 12 months
- 18 months-3 years

The child's crying and clinging is an expression with two different messages. First, the child may be crying because they fear that when the parent leaves, they will be gone forever. The second situation is when the child begins to cry upon the parent's return. This happens because the child is reminded of how they felt when the parent left. Factors that can contribute to separation anxiety:

- Tiredness,
- Illness,
- Changes in the household routine,
- Family changes such as birth of a sibling, divorce, death, illness,
- Change in caregiver routine

To support a child through periods of separation anxiety:

- Encourage parents to stay with the child in the classroom until they become familiar with the new surroundings.
- Let the child know that they will be all right.
- Let the child know, in words they can understand, that you know how distressing it must be to be separated from their mom or dad. Do this with understanding and acceptance, but not excessive sympathy.
- Never make fun of a child's distress or scold them for it.

Temper tantrums and meltdowns

Let RE Staff know if a child is having a tantrum, so that we can work together to get the parents.

- Some tantrums stem from outright rebellion, but in most cases, tantrums occur due to a frustration of some kind on the child's part.
- Preschoolers have yet to develop the skills that will allow them to express themselves the way they might like to. When they are unable to get their message across, a breakdown may occur.
- Sometimes a child may not know what they want. They could be tired, hungry, or just plain bored.
- Tantrums can sometimes occur when a child is trying something for the first time- tying shoes, for example, and just can't figure it out.

- They could just be having a bad day.

There are a couple of different methods for handling tantrums. Which one you choose will depend on what kind of child you're dealing with.

- Ignore it: If you can, try walking away, making sure that the child is safe first. Stay nearby, but make sure it's clear by your actions that their display has no effect on you. Don't make eye contact and don't talk to them. When the child sees that they're not getting a reaction from you, they may stop.
- Diffuse it: If you don't have the stomach to be passive, there are some techniques you can try. Soothe the child by rubbing it's back and talk to them in a low, quiet voice. Sometimes repeating the same thing over and over again, like "You're ok" or "It's alright", or singing a quiet song or nursery rhyme, may work. If you can get another adult into the room, try removing the child and redirecting their attention by holding them and walking them in the hallway.
- What you shouldn't do: Don't yell back at the child or try to reason with them when they are in the middle of an emotional outburst. There is no way to get through to them, and you may make it worse. You just have to wait until it is over.

If a child starts to bite, kick, hit, or show other aggressive behavior, take action immediately. Remove the child from the situation and call RE staff. Parents will be notified immediately.

Transitions from one activity to another can be hard for some children to adjust to. As children arrive and get settled, tell them some of the activities you will be doing later. About 5 minutes before you change activities, let them know: "In 5 minutes we are going to put toys away so we can have story time," or something like that. If you keep the same routine for activities each Sunday, the children will learn to transition more smoothly.

SAFETY RULES

Classroom Safety

To prevent the possibility of abuse or accusations of abuse, we follow the Safe Church Child Protection Policies. (See page 29 for the full policy) In summary, these policies are:

- "Two adults at all times" (Safe Church) shall be present for all activities.
- Childcare workers and teachers will be familiar with appropriate methods of maintaining classroom discipline.
- We maintain an open door policy, unless you are having trouble with children leaving the classroom unattended. Otherwise, all doors to classrooms should be left open at all times.
- Child/ adult ratios

Age	State Requirements		First U Requirements		Incline to add 1 adult when there are:
	Adults	Children	Adults	Children	
Baby/Toddler 0-3	1	6	2	6	More than 6 toddlers
Pre-school 3-4	1	12	2	12	More than 12 preschoolers
5 yrs and up	1	15	2	15	More than 15 school age

- Keep your cellphone handy and on vibrate. Do not use it for personal use while teaching, except for emergencies. Please include the cell phone numbers of the RE Office staff in your

contacts.

- If you take children outside, all of you need to go out as a group. Don't leave kids unattended inside or outside.

- Watch the kids closely when they are on playground equipment, or on other climbing structures, whether inside or outside. Don't ever turn your back on kids climbing trees. Children climbing trees must display the tree stamp on their nametag, indicating that their parent has signed the tree-climbing permission form. Count your kids and always know where they are and what they are doing.

Hall Monitor

One of the RE Volunteer positions is that of Hall Monitor. The purpose of the Hall Monitor is to observe activity in the hallway and be of assistance. The Hall Monitor will greet and gently question people who come in to the RE Building who seem as though they are not part of RE Programming or RE families. Additionally, the Hall Monitor will prevent children from leaving the RE Building who have not been signed out by their parents and appear to be leaving on their own. The Hall Monitor can also be called upon by volunteer teachers or RE staff to assist when needed in order to maintain Safe Church. Because of where the Hall Monitor sits at the RE Information table, they very often will be in a position to answer parent questions and maintain RE brochures and forms.

In case of injury

First Aid Kits are located in classroom closets. If a child is hurt during class time, fill out an Ouch Report. (See page 24 for a copy of the Report.) You must sign it as the teacher. The top half goes home with the parent, and the bottom half is handed to RE Staff, for our files.

In the case of a serious injury, immediately contact RE Staff or Church Administrator. An Incident Report will also need to be filled out by Staff. These are located in the main Church office. (See page 25 for a copy of the report form.)

Bathroom Rules

If older kids need to use the bathroom, alert the hall monitor. If no hall monitor is present, you can watch them from the doorway to see them go and come back, while still keeping an eye on the kids in the classroom. Same for watching them go get a drink from the water fountain. If a few kids are thirsty, take the whole class to the water fountain.

Child Protection Policies

We care about the safety and welfare of our children, youth and adults. Persons working with youth have a high level of responsibility for their own conduct and for vigilance in the protection of our young people. Our safety policies and procedures include:

- Two adults are present at all children and youth gatherings.
- If a parent is the first to drop off your child and there is only one teacher or adult, you must stay until another teacher or adult arrives.
- Background checks are performed on all staff and volunteers who work with children and youth.
- Parents supervise children on the playground before and after RE classes.
- Children must be registered and medical concerns noted.
- Parents sign in/out children 5th grade and under.
- Teachers are trained on the best route to exit in an emergency. Limited first aid kits are provided in every classroom and a more complete kit is in the RE Kitchen.
- Two doors are in all classrooms.

Preventing the Spread of Infectious Diseases

The most effective ways to avoid unnecessary exposure and provide a safe environment in the Church school setting is to learn how to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

General precautions include:

- Children who have an infectious disease that can be communicated to others should be kept at home.
- If a child becomes ill, the child will be kept separated from the other children, and parent(s) will be called to come and take the child home.
- The child may return to Church school when the illness has passed.

Measures to take to avoid unnecessary exposure (Remember rubber gloves are located with the First Aid Kit which are in the closet located in each room):

1. Procedures related to **personal hygiene**:
   - Implement a proper hand-washing technique: Apply soap with ten seconds of friction and then rinse with running water.
   - Wear disposable gloves when touching blood or other body fluids. Change gloves after contact with each child.

2. Procedures related to **food handling**:
   - RE staff, volunteers, and children will wash their hands before preparing or serving food, and before eating meals or snacks.
   - Surfaces used for food preparation and serving will be cleaned.

3. Procedures related to toilet use and **diaper changing**:
   RE staff, volunteers, and children will wash their hands after using the toilet, assisting a child with toilet use, or coming into contact with blood, urine, or fecal material. Child care staff must always wash hands after changing a diaper.
4. Procedures related to **cleaning**:
   - Surfaces soiled with urine, blood, or fecal material will be cleaned with a 10 percent bleach/ water solution.
   - Soiled materials (gloves, paper towels, tissues, and so on) will be placed in a readily identifiable bag for disposal.

Confidentiality is often a medical and legal requirement. Only RE staff and volunteer personnel who have a need to know will be informed of a child's specific health condition. Children will be informed in more general terms. The child's parents should notify the Church if the child has attended Church school while having an infectious illness. The Church will then inform parents of other children in that class so they can watch for potential symptoms. First Unitarian will not utilize a person whose health or conduct impairs the person's ability to properly protect the children's health, safety, and welfare.

Playground Rules

Approved by RE Council 2-21-16

Basic information

1. First Unitarian's RE program operates on Sundays from 9:30 until 12:30, during which staff and/or volunteers monitor the playground.
2. The playground to the east of Rooms 4 and 5 were designed for children under 6 years old. The

playground to the south of the RE building is designed for elementary aged children. Mixed ages may play together on this playground with careful monitoring.

3. When classes go to the playground, the RE Teacher will bring the Attendance Book for their class, so that parents may sign their children out of our care on the playground. The adults monitoring the playground should also monitor the sign-out process to be sure those children are leaving with the correct adults.
4. When children are in the playground outside of normal Sunday hours, and not during a church-sponsored special event for which childcare has been hired, children are considered to be under their parent's care and should not be left alone.
5. Children are not allowed in the South Garden area, behind the picket fence.

Playground Rules

1. Play safely at all times. Adults may stop any play that appears to be unsafe or inappropriate.
2. Adults should supervise and interact with the children. Do not become distracted by such things as talking with other parents, using cell phones, or other activities such as reading.
3. Children should treat each other respectfully, which means no unwelcome physical contact or name-calling.
4. Sand, rocks, and toys should stay on the ground. Please don't throw anything at other people.
5. Children being supervised on the playground should stay on the playground. If a child has to go to the bathroom or requires a drink, a third volunteer or RE staff member should be called upon to escort the child.
6. Adults may feel free to correct any infractions of the above rules.

Tree climbing

Parents of children registered in R.E. will be asked to sign a Tree Climbing Permission Form that allows their children to climb trees on the R.E. playground in their absence. Children who have a permission slip on file will receive a tree sticker on their nametag. (See page 25 for a copy of the Form. Parents will receive a copy of the Playground Rules and the signed Permission Form.) Children must wear their nametag and comply with the following tree-climbing rules, or the privilege will be removed.

Any child can climb in the trees if their parent is present and assures that the child complies with our rules.

- No more than two children in a tree. Please wait your turn and don't start climbing if there are already two children in the tree.
- Closed-toe shoes must be worn- sneakers or tennis shoes. Do not climb the trees with sandals, flip-flops, jellies, or bare feet.
- No one may be lifted into the tree. Tree-climbers must be able to get up into the branches on their own, without the use of an aid.
- Tree-climbers should stay out of the upper one-third of the tree, and away from the ends of limbs.
- Tree-climbers must be able to climb down by themselves.
- Adults may direct children to come down out of the tree if they assess that children are not following the tree-climbing rules.

Emergency Procedures

Evacuation

In the event that the fire alarm is activated (or a person of authority calls for an evacuation), an emergency evacuation of the RE building will take place. A staff person will tell you which exit to take and which gathering location to go to. Please follow these procedures:

1. Teachers, RE assistances and adult volunteers will stop all activity and say:
   "This is an emergency evacuation. Please stay calm and follow the instructions of the adults around you."
2. Immediately guide and escort all children by the nearest and safest exit to designated gathering location.

Rooms	Exits	Gathering locations
4 & 5 (east side classrooms)	1. Main door 2. Rear door	1. South end of playground behind swing set 2. East end of grassy field, by the gate 3. Steps of the Social Hall, main courtyard
1, 2, & 3 (west side classrooms)	1. Main door 2. Rear door	1. South end of playground behind swing set

3. Teachers will bring the class Attendance Book and conduct a simple head count as you exit the RE Building. Instruct children to walk in single file, led by a caregiver.
4. After reaching the evacuation site, teachers will check the attendance sheet and account for every child. In the event of any discrepancy, the Director of Religious Education should be notified immediately who will notify emergency responders, if applicable.

The Director of Religious Education (DRE), or designated staff substitute, will oversee the evacuation. RE teachers and assistants will be informed of procedure during their orientation. They should be familiar with the nearest exit path and be aware of a secondary path, should the first be blocked by fire, smoke or other hazards.

Teachers should tell the children to remain calm and exit in an orderly fashion (perhaps with younger children holding hands). Note: Treat every call for evacuation as if it is a real emergency. Within reason, do not allow children to gather belongings such as coats, backpacks or toys since this will delay the evacuation.

The DRE or designee will oversee a final sweep of the classrooms and bathrooms, verifying that everyone has been evacuated appropriately and closing all doors. The Hall Monitor will check non-classroom areas.

Parents and children in RE will be reunited at the designated gathering location. Parents who assume responsibility for their children during the evacuation must check in with the child's RE teacher and have their name checked off on the attendance list before they depart so the teacher can account for every child.

Lockdown

If a person of authority calls for a **lockdown**, please follow these procedures for rooms in the RE Building:

1. Immediately and quietly close the classroom doors. The doors will lock automatically. (This does not happen unless the lock has been set to the "lock position" after the door has been opened.)
2. Move everyone to a location in the room away from the windows and doors.

3. Instruction for children	
Older children:	Tell the children to stay totally silent. If applicable, instruct those with cell phones or other devices that can make noise to mute them.
Younger children:	Tell the children to play a game that requires everyone to stay silent.

4. Do not open the door to anyone, even if they identify themselves as part of the Congregation. A staff person can unlock and enter the room once it is safe.
5. Follow instructions from emergency responders, if applicable.
6. Release children to their parents after their name has been checked off the attendance list so the teacher can account for every child.

If a person of authority calls for a **lockdown**, please follow these procedures for the Arnold, Wesson, and La Amikoj. Renovations will soon be done in the La Amikoj including replacing doors and locks so that a safe space is created.

People in the Arnold, Wesson and La Amikoj rooms, in the event of a lockdown, should all proceed through the inner room doors to the La Amikoj room. The shades should be closed, and outer doors locked. As much as possible, people should stay away from the windows.
Do not open the door to anyone, even if they identify themselves as part of the Congregation. A staff person can unlock and enter the room once it is safe.

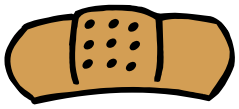
TEACHER RESOURCES

Eight Styles of Learning

www.gadoes.org

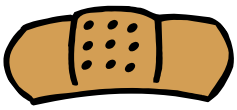
These Eight Styles of Learning is provided as background information which may be helpful. We are not expecting RE teachers to be familiar with these styles.

Type	Likes to	Is good at	Learns best by
Linguistic Learner-"the word player"	Read, write, tell stories	Memorizing names, dates, places, trivia	Saying, hearing, and seeing words
Logical/Mathematical Learner-"the questioner"	Conduct experiments, figure things out, work with numbers, ask questions, explore patterns and relationships	Math, reasoning, logic, problem solving	Categorizing, classifying, work with abstract patterns and relationships
Spatial Learner-"the visualizer"	Draw, build, design & create daydream, look at pictures, watch movies play with machines	Imagine, sensing things, mazes and puzzles, reading maps and charts	Visualizing, dreaming, using the mind's eye, working with color and pictures
Musical Learner-"the music lover"	Sing, hum tunes, listens to music, play an instrument, respond to music	Picking up sounds, remembering melodies, noticing pitches and rhythms, keeping time.	Rhythm, melody, music
Body/Kinesthetic Learner-"the mover"	Move around, touch and talk, use body language	Physical activities, sports, dancing, acting, crafts	Touching, moving, interacting with space, processing knowledge through body sensations
Interpersonal Learner-"the socializer"	Have lots of friends, talk to people, join groups	Understanding people, leading others, organizing, communicating, manipulating, mediating conflicts	Sharing, comparing, relating, cooperating, interviewing
Intrapersonal Learner-"the individual"	Work alone, pursue own interests	Understanding self, focusing inward on feelings and dreams, following instincts, pursuing interests and goals, being original	Working alone, individualized projects, self paced instruction, having own space
Naturalist: the "nature lover"	Physically experience nature, conduct observations, respond to patterning in nature	Exploring natural phenomena, seeing connections, seeing patterns, reflective thinking	Conduction observations, recording events in nature, working in pairs, long term projects



First Unitarian

OUCH REPORT



Child's Name:	
Date of Accident:	
Time of Accident:	
Nature of Injury:	
Location of Incident:	
What the child was doing:	
Caregiver response and first aid:	
Name of Caregiver that responded:	
Additional Information:	
Parent contacted?	☐Yes ☐No
Name of Parent contacted:	
Who contacted parent:	
How parent was contacted:	☐Phone ☐Email ☐Other:
Time parent was contacted:	
Other Contacts or Actions:	

Teacher/ Child Care Provider Signature

Date:_____

7/7/17

First Unitarian

INCIDENT REPORT

Reported by:		Follow up?
Report Date:		
Incident Date:		
Incident Time:		

Please write a brief narrative here of what happened, or attach a written report.

Contact Information	Full Name	Phone Number	Email Address
Reporter			
Person Involved			
Person Involved			
Witness			

TREE CLIMBING PERMISSION FORM

Climbing the trees on our playground has long been a rite of passage for children at First Unitarian Church. This permission slip makes parents aware of our tree-climbing rules, and gives us permission to let your children climb the trees without you present. Any child can climb the trees if their parent is present and they comply with the following rules:

- No more than two children in a tree. Please wait your turn and don't start climbing if there are already two children in the tree.
- Closed-toe shoes must be worn- sneakers or tennis shoes. Do not climb the trees with sandals, flip-flops, jellies, or bare feet.
- No one may be lifted into the tree. Tree-climbers must be able to get up into the branches on their own, without the use of an aid.
- Tree-climbers should stay out of the upper one-third of the tree, and away from the ends of limbs.
- Tree-climbers must be able to climb down by themselves.
- Adults may direct children to come down out of the tree if they assess that children are not following the tree-climbing rules.
- Children who are registered in our R.E. program and who have a tree sticker on their nametag will be allowed to climb the trees.
- Children are not allowed in the South Garden area, behind the picket fence.

I, _____, the parent or guardian of _____, do hereby give permission for named child to climb trees in the First Unitarian Church playground area. First Unitarian Church will not be held responsible for any injury resulting from said activity. I understand that this privilege can be revoked if my child does not comply with First Unitarian Church's tree-climbing rules, which I have received a copy.

_____

Date

Parents will receive a copy of the Playground Rules and the signed Tree Climbing Permission form.

First Unitarian

Teacher Training Manual Acknowledgement Form

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have received and read the First Unitarian's *Teacher's Training Manual*. I understand that the information provided in the *Manual* and the importance of complying with these policies, practices, and rules of the First Unitarian Church and the RE Program, specifically the Church's Safe Congregation Policy.

All staff and volunteers who regularly work with children will have a background check paid by the Church and conducted every two years.

Signature: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

9/12/16

Child Protection Policies (6.04)

Board approved 1-18-17

(Full *Congregation and Board Policy Manual* can be found at: http://uuabq.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Cong-Board-Policy-Manual-2016-09-29.pdf

These Board policies are created to address the special level of care and protection of children participating in our religious education programs, especially from sexual abuse from adults staffing and volunteering in our programs. ***With the exception of policy #1 and 2, these policies*** **apply only to Religious Education programs. (See definitions in #3)** Children and youth participating in general programs such as worship or adult classes are protected by the judgment and goodwill of the congregation and the caution of their parents.

1. General Child and Youth Safety Policy (applies church-wide)

No adult shall engage in sexual, sexualized, seductive or erotic behavior with children or youth under age 18. Neither shall they harass or engage in behavior with children nor youth which constitutes verbal, emotional, or physical abuse. Anyone witnessing or hearing about such behavior should report it to one of the following leaders:

- Inappropriate activity by the senior minister should be reported to the Board President.
- Inappropriate activity by other ministers or church staff employees should be reported to the senior minister.
- Inappropriate activity on the part of RE employees or volunteers should be reported to the DRE.
- Any other inappropriate activity should be reported to any minister.

2. Relationships between children and adults who are not staff or RE volunteers

It is our expectation that all adult-child interactions (e.g., at coffee hour) will take place in the full view
of other adults, and with the knowledge and implied consent of the child's parents.

- Anyone witnessing or hearing about an uncomfortable interaction between an adult and a child (an adult focusing on a child, luring them away from the group, or otherwise making the child uncomfortable,) should take whatever steps they think necessary to keep the child safe and inform one of the ministers of the problem.
- The ministers, in consultation with each other, have the authority to warn the offending adult that they are making the child uncomfortable, inform them that child safety is a cherished value here, and ask them to leave the property if they believe it necessary to protect our children. This request must be honored but the offender may appeal the decision to the congregation's Healthy Community Committee at a later date.

3. Child and Youth Safety in the RE Program

The RE Program consists of all programs offered for children and families with children which are the responsibility of the RE Director. Examples of these include but are not limited to Sunday School, Camp,

children and youth choirs, OWL and Coming of Age classes, Youth Groups, and travel to District and UUA activities for youth which have been arranged for by the church, social activities arranged by the RE Staff, and the child-care component of church events. "RE Programs" do not include primarily social groups of families or friendships, even if they begin at First Unitarian, however the general child safety policy #1 above does apply to those kinds of events.

The Board enjoins the staff to manage the RE program in a way that minimizes the possibility of any child experiencing abuse at the hands of their teachers, leaders, and advisors, or which exposes children or youth to unsafe conditions. In particular:

- All volunteers working regularly with children will be ongoing participants in the life of the congregation and known to the DRE. The DRE, in conjunction with one of the ministers, may ask any volunteer to withdraw from volunteering if they deem it advisable for the safety of children or the good of the program. There is no appeal for this decision.
- Anyone who has volunteered more than twice over a period of 12 months in our program is a "Regular Volunteer". Regular Volunteers and all Child Care staff will undergo a criminal background check at the congregation's expense. Child care staff will undergo a criminal background check completed prior to being assigned Child Care duties without accompaniment of another Child Care or qualified Volunteer. A Regular Volunteer will undergo a criminal background check as soon after their 2nd volunteer duty as possible. Issues arising from this background check will be discussed between DRE and one of the ministers and a decision about their volunteering conveyed to the volunteer.
- All persons asked to drive children or youth as a part of our program must go through a motor vehicle record check. Issues arising from this background check will be discussed between DRE and one of the ministers and a decision about their volunteering conveyed to the volunteer.
- With the three exceptions noted below, there will always be at least two persons who are likely and able to report on each other's' behavior working together with children at all times, staying within each other's sight or hearing whenever they are interacting with children. The RE Staff will create a detailed set of enforceable policies on this matter.

    - The ministers may meet with children or youth alone when absolutely necessary to care for them. Preferably this meeting will take place in a public place or during office hours. The other minister will be informed of such meetings.
    - One adult may drive teens to events, but there must be more than one teen in the vehicle. In any case such teens and adult shall have signed a covenant, which states that sex, or sexualized behavior between adults and youth is prohibited.
    - In an emergency situation, one adult may have to leave another adult alone to procure help for a child who cannot be moved. These situations should be considered as an emergency, handled as quickly as possible, and reported in full to the DRE immediately.

4. Staff/volunteer Ratios for child safety and other rules

The RE program will make every attempt to maintain safe conditions and staff and volunteer ratios

according to best practices for children's programs.
At least one parent or guardian must remain on campus while their child is being cared for except in the case of special programs such as overnights for which parents have left specific contact information and agree to remain contactable during the time their child is in our care.

5. Childcare (outside of Sunday morning)

All persons offering childcare to children on church property must be on the church's childcare staff, with the exception of a child's designated caregiver who is under the direction of the child's parent.
All children not in supervised programs are the responsibility of their parents and may be asked by staff to remain in their parent's vicinity.

6. Reporting Requirement

State Law requires some professionals, including church staff, to immediately report to NM Child Protective Services any suspicions of or knowledge that a child has been the victim of sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect (at church or elsewhere). In addition to making this official report, church staff is required and church volunteers are requested to inform one of the ministers of their report. (If the suspected perpetrator is one of the ministers, the president of the board should be informed of the report.)
If there is cause to believe that a staff person or volunteer in the RE program is a perpetrator of abuse, the DRE or DRE's supervisor shall be notified.