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| <b>Policy Location:</b>      | GSFD - 2                                                     | Created: 5/15/2024 |
| <b>Title:</b>                | Youth Lock Ins and Conferences                               | Revised: (date)    |
| <b>Policy Owner:</b>         | Faith Development Shared Ministry Team                       |                    |
| <b>Associated Documents:</b> | GSFD – 1 Faith Development Team Policy; G-5 Abuse Prevention |                    |
| <b>Last Reviewed:</b>        |                                                              |                    |

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### Purpose:

This policy is intended to protect the safety and well-being of participating youth and adults and conserve the property of the church.

This policy is designed to respect both the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) guidelines and the UU MidAmerica Region regulations for youth events.

### Pertinent Terms & Definitions:

**Faith Development (FD):** In this document, Faith Development refers to the Youth Program

**Director of Faith Development\* (DFD):** Staff person who oversees the Faith Development Program.

\*Includes Director of Faith Development or any designee of the DFD.

**Youth Lock-In:** A one-night on-site sleepover event for youth with chaperones. Lock-Ins can be for youth from 6<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> Grades.

**Youth Conference “Con”:** An on or off-site sleepover event for youth with sponsors. Designed primarily for high school youth but can sometimes be expanded to include middle school youth.

**Advisor:** Usually, the DFD, Youth Program Coordinator or volunteer Youth Group Coordinator who often attends events with the youth. May also be a sponsor or a chaperone.

**Sponsor:** An approved adult who is directly responsible for up to seven youth at a Conference.

**Chaperone:** Any approved adult providing oversight and supervision at any youth Lock-In or Conference.

**Approved Adult:** Any adult who has completed the church background check and is cleared to work with children, youth or vulnerable adults as per our **Abuse Prevention Policy (G-5)**. All attending approved adults are considered to be supervisors at events.

**Youth:** 6th through 12th grade children.

### Procedure:

#### Prior to the Event:

- The Faith Development staff person must approve the chosen date and clear it with Church administration before the date is reserved on the church calendar. Request should specify whether the event is a Lock-In or Conference and ensure ALL needed days and areas of the church are reserved. As much advance notice as possible is appreciated.
- ALL youth participants and their parents will be required to be registered in the FD Program and sign all applicable event release or consent forms. Forms specific to each event may also be required. In addition, the youth must also notify the FD staff via e-mail of their planned attendance of any off-site event and



## MANUAL OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES, & GUIDELINES

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must register with that host church. For on-site events, youth must register for the event with our church. Pre-registration is required at ALL events.

- Any medications must be noted on the health form, and the adult advisors must be made aware of medication location and dispensing instructions. Any controlled substances or sharps must be turned over to the adult advisors to be counted and stored. All information will remain confidential.

### **Conferences at Other Locations:**

- When youth from our congregation attend events at other locations, policies relevant to First Unitarian Universalist Church of Rochester will supersede less stringent policies specific to the event/conference.
- Youth from our congregation will attend site events only with the support of adult advisors from our congregation.
- An adult may “sponsor” no more than seven youth at any conference.
- Only adults aged 25 years or older may transport youth to church-sponsored conferences or events outside of Rochester. It is understood that their vehicles must be in safe driving condition, and they must have valid driver’s licenses and car insurance.
- All drivers must pass a comprehensive driving background check which requires the driver to submit their driver’s license number in addition to other background check information.
- If a youth is asked to leave the event, it is the responsibility of the youth’s parent(s) or guardian(s) to pick up the youth at the church or make alternate and immediate arrangements to have the youth involved returned to parental/guardian care. Youth may be released only to a parent or to an adult designated by the parent or guardian as expressed clearly to a supervising adult from our congregation present at the event.
- Parents or guardians of youth drivers must be contacted before allowing any youth to drive home after having been asked to leave.

### **On-site Events:**

- A ratio of one adult to seven youth must be observed.
- At least two unrelated adults must be present at all times, even if seven or fewer youth are present. This means two advisors need to arrive before the youth, and two adult advisors must be in attendance until all youth have left the church building.

### **During the Event:**

- All outer doors are locked following the arrival of the last participant. Doors other than the main entrance are only to be used in emergency. No one enters or exits the building without the knowledge and approval of the adult advisors.
- The office administration should be consulted concerning rooms available for the overnight. Some rooms may be off limits during events.
- No use of devices that involve a flame or could incite a fire, such as candles, chalices with candles, lighters, and fireworks are allowed.
- Event coordinators must provide their own supplies for the event unless arrangements are made before the event. This includes craft supplies, A/V equipment, pens, paper, etc.
- Church property and furnishings must be treated with respect. Responsible parties may be held financially accountable for any damages.



## MANUAL OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES, & GUIDELINES

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- There will be no sexual contact of any kind between participants. All rooms must remain open and unlocked at all times. At least two adult supervisors will be present and awake in all sleeping areas during overnight hours.
- No animals (except guide dogs) and no illegal substances (drugs, alcohol) or weapons are allowed.

### **Concluding the Event:**

- For a Saturday night Lock-In, all equipment, personal belongings, and food must be out of the church by 8:00 AM on Sunday morning or stored and labeled neatly in a spot designated by the FD staff. Checkout times for Lock-Ins scheduled for any other day of the week will be dictated by the church calendar of activities.
- All furniture must be returned to its original locations. If necessary, garbage cans should be emptied and new can liners inserted, bathrooms cleaned and stocked, and floors swept or vacuumed.
- A designated staff person should be contacted for urgent issues regarding the condition of the building. The office administration should be notified of all other building-related issues that need to be addressed, including, but not limited to minor repairs or cleaning that needs to be done following the event.

### **Social Media Use for and at Events:**

**Posting images from the youth event on social media is PROHIBITED\*. This includes posts by volunteers, staff, youth participants, etc.**

- Staff or Volunteers are discouraged from engaging with youth through social media and should never “like”, “post”, “pin”, “tag”, “tweet” or “retweet”, “friend” or “unfriend” any posts to or about specific individuals. They are not to be used for a personal nature and should always show respect for the church and its members and friends.
- After the event has occurred,, \*FD staff may share event images as outlined in their congregation's policies. Images cannot contain youth from other congregations.
- **The image sharing policy extends beyond the dates of the event, in perpetuity.**

### **Cell Phone Use & Emergency Contact During Events:**

- Youth may have cell phones at events, but it is within reason to limit phone usage during events by asking youth to adhere to “no phone” times at events.
- In the case of an emergency, Church phones may be used to call emergency responders and/or parents/guardians.

### **Reporting Misbehavior or Abuse at Events:**

- At events, we are in covenant with parents, the congregation, FD staff, the Minister, the UUA, the Mid-America Region, and our insurance company.
- Events can only happen when there is trust. Both adults and youth at events are encouraged to seek assistance with experience or perception of an event that is “weird” or “uncomfortable” without fear of retribution. Anonymity should be attempted if so desired when reporting events to the staff member and/or adult volunteer overseeing the event. -If necessary, the staff/volunteer will put together a team to interview those involved with compassion and with the intent of safety, inclusion, restoring right relationship, and restoring trust.

Abuse reporting will follow our **Abuse Prevention Policy (G-5)**; as such, staff and the Minister must be



## MANUAL OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES, & GUIDELINES

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informed of any reporting actions made or behavior consequences issued at an event.