

Safe Congregation Policy

Unitarian Universalist Area Church
at the First Parish in Sherborn

Unitarian Universalist Area Church
at the First Parish in Sherborn
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Safe Congregation Policy

I. Outline of Guiding Principles

At Unitarian Universalist Area Church we covenant to welcome all people to the table, to nourish and serve each other and to respect and honor the inherent worth and dignity of every person. To achieve these goals it is essential that we maintain a safe environment that protects children and adults from harm while fostering their spiritual growth. There are many facets of operating a congregation in which prevention, education and response need to be established and refined over time in order to assure such an environment. These include building safety, operation of the R.E. program, transportation and supervision of children during off site trips and special overnights, confronting disruptive behavior, and both preventing and promptly responding to incidents of verbal abuse and physical or sexual harassment.

The policies that are described in this manual are designed to make sure that all feel safe and free to follow their own spiritual paths in an atmosphere of respect and mutual support. These policies will naturally evolve over time as we respond to incidents and learn to better refine our safety procedures. All should consider this to be a living document and are encouraged to contact the various committees with primary responsibility for specific areas as well as the Board from time to time with suggestions about how it may be improved.

II. Relationship of Ministers to the Congregation

We place great trust in our ministers to use their positions and powers only for the best interest of all congregants, and never to take advantage of others for their personal gratification. Clergy sexual misconduct harms both the individuals involved and the church as a whole, because it breaches the minister's covenant with the entire congregation. We expect our ministers to understand thoroughly and always abide faithfully by the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association (UUMA) Code of Professional Practice. The complete text of the Code is published in the UUMA Guidelines and can be found at the UUMA website or by contacting the UUA at 24 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210.

In the event that the Safe Congregation Response Team receives allegations of clergy sexual misconduct it will immediately notify the Board, and will contact the New England Regional Lead and the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the UUA, which will be charged with the investigation. The Response Team will thereafter act as liaison between the Board and the New England Regional Lead and Ministerial Fellowship Committee, and will work with the Board to support, counsel and communicate with the congregation and those members who are most directly affected by the misconduct.

III. Relationship between Congregation and Other Staff

Like the Ministers, the other staff of UUAC have a special trust relationship with the congregation, and must never misuse the authority and power inherent in the position to exploit, manipulate or take advantage of any child, adolescent, young adult or adult participant in the congregation for personal gratification, including but not limited to sexual or physical misconduct or sexualized behavior.

IV. Preventing Sexual and Physical Abuse and Harassment

Preventing sexual misconduct, physical abuse, and harassment in our religious community requires multiple approaches on several fronts. We must focus on prevention, education, training, careful hiring, and safety procedures in order to create a safer environment for all concerned.

1. Definitions

The terms used in this document will have the following meanings:

Abuse includes non-accidental conduct that involves bodily injury or impairment; offensive physical or sexual contact, including physical or sexual abuse; physical or sexual harassment; physical or sexual molestation; or physical or sexual exploitation.

Physical abuse includes offensive physical contact or activity that causes bodily injury.

Sexual abuse means any sexual touching of a child or any activity that causes a person to engage in any sexual act or conduct without that person's consent, or in circumstances where that person is unable to refrain from consenting due to age or mental capacity or unusual vulnerability derived from the person's mental health or from the existence of a relationship of significant dependency or trust.

Physical harassment or molestation or exploitation means activity that places a person in fear of bodily injury by such acts as threatening or tormenting behavior, compelling a person by force or threat of force to engage in conduct from which the person has a right to abstain, knowingly restricting substantially the movements of another person without that other person's consent, communicating to a person a threat to commit an act against that person or another person or entity where the natural consequence of the threat is to place that person in fear or cause that person to engage in conduct in which that person otherwise would not engage, or similar repeated offensive physical or verbal conduct.

Sexual molestation and sexual exploitation means activity that places another person in a situation where that person feels compelled to engage in sexual conduct to which that person would not otherwise voluntarily consent, or in circumstances where that person is unable to refrain from consenting due to age or mental capacity or unusual vulnerability derived from the person's mental health or from the existence of a relationship of significant dependency or trust.

Sexual harassment means making sexual advances or requests for sexual favors to another person, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, where the other person by words or conduct has indicated that such words or conduct are not desired, or where a reasonable person would expect that such words or conduct would not be desired.

2. Education and Training

Education and training are critical to the creation of a safer congregational environment. Information, knowledge, and understanding support the development of healthy relationships based on self-esteem and respect for others. Greater understanding of sexuality and abuse will make us better able to avoid situations that could lead to abuse, and to move more effectively toward justice and healing for us all. To this end we believe it is important to promote self-esteem and personal responsibility among our children, our members and friends. We will provide programs as follows:

- a. The Assistant Minister of Youth and Families (AMYP) and Lifespan Faith Development Leaders are responsible for:
 - i. Offering age-appropriate information about development and sexuality for our children, youth, and adults on a regular basis, including clarification and understanding of the complex aspects of sexuality, as well as focusing on sexual abuse prevention and
 - ii. Keeping employees, advisors, and parents informed of this policy and reviewing it at least annually through the use of the following: the Code of Ethics for Those Working with Children and Youth herein identified as the Code of Ethics (See Appendix) and RE Safety Procedures (Section VII).
- b. The Board shall take responsibility for:
 - i. Promoting congregational awareness about this policy.
 - ii. Informing members and attendees regarding resources that address the issues of domestic violence and sexual abuse.

3. Hiring

Incidents of abuse and harassment often take place in the context of ongoing relationships. Therefore it is essential that recruitment and hiring procedures protect staff, children, youth, vulnerable adults, members and friends from injury as well as from unfounded accusations, and protect UUAC Sherborn from ethical and legal liability.

All persons seeking paid employment at UUAC Sherborn will be required to read and acknowledge receipt of a copy of the policy against harassment set forth in the UUAC Sherborn Employment Manual. They will be screened by the appropriate hiring committee, which will contact at least two references and maintain notes of each such contact, and conduct a criminal history record check, including a Massachusetts Criminal Offender Records Information (CORI) and such other multi-state records check as shall be available from alternative sources recommended from time to time by the Unitarian Universalist Association. The hiring committee shall conduct at least one formal interview with the candidate in person. The employment application and above reference material will be confidential and will be available

only as required by law and to those responsible for screening and hiring, or participating in the Safe Congregation Response Team.

V. Religious Education Safety Procedures

1. Adult Volunteers

a. Volunteers in the Religious Education (RE) programs at UUAC Sherborn must meet the following criteria:

i. Prior to participating in the RE and Youth Group programs, all volunteers will agree to a yearly CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information).

ii. They must sign the Code of Ethics for Working With Children and Youth (See Appendix).

iii. In addition, volunteer teachers will attend a yearly teacher training session to be scheduled by Assistant Minister of Youth and Families (AMYF).

b. Various supervisory methods are listed below. They will help UUAC Sherborn leaders avoid setting up situations in which personal boundary issues can become a problem. Some of these methods will help leaders and teachers decrease the risk of misunderstandings and offer some support for handling various concerns.

i. Regular consultations with the AMYF.

ii. On-going training

iii. Parental permission whenever necessary

iv. Visible classroom activity

2. Working with Children and Youth

a. It is ultimately the responsibility of the entire congregation, not just those in leadership and teaching positions, to create and maintain a climate that supports the growth and welfare of children and youth. We encourage all UUAC Sherborn members and friends to read and abide by the Code of Ethics for Working with Children and Youth (See Appendix). However, those working with young people in the context of our Unitarian Universalist movement have a crucial and privileged role, one which carries with it a great deal of power and influence. Whether acting as a youth advisor, chaperone, childcare worker, teacher, or in any other role, the volunteer has a special opportunity to interact with our young people in ways which are affirming and inspiring to all involved.

3. Mandated Reporting

Teachers, helpers, or youth group leaders who have gained the trust of young people are in a unique situation to observe behavior or be party to a conversation in which a possible abusive situation (either within or outside UUAC Sherborn) is revealed. In this situation, it is the adult's responsibility to report any reasonable cause to suspect child abuse to a UUAC Sherborn Mandated Reporter (the Ministers). The Ministers shall then notify the legal authorities as required by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 119 Section 51A.

4. Religious Education Classes/Programs (Nursery —12th Grade)

a. When possible, as dictated by common sense, two person teaching teams will be recommended. Parents may serve as classroom aides and/or visit classes at any time. Teachers are subject to the approval of the Ministers and Lifespan Faith Development Leaders. One individual may be alone with a group when the other must leave as dictated by common sense and necessity for such purposes as bathroom breaks and escorting individual children away from the group.

5. General Supervision Guidelines (Sunday Morning Programming)

a. Each child will have a registration form on file that includes information about allergies, special needs, and permission to accompany their RE class and teachers on walks around the building or neighborhood on Sunday mornings.

b. Aside from the RE Program, parents are responsible for their children at UUAC. Children 2nd grade and younger must be signed out of their classrooms at the end of the RE Program.

c. During services and classes, children must have a parent or another responsible adult on the premises unless prior arrangements have been made with the AMYF.

d. At the discretion of the Ministers or Lifespan Faith Development Leaders, there will be a walk through of all RE spaces to check in with teachers during classes.

6. General Sleepover & Youth Trip Guidelines

a. Adults supervising youth sleepovers and trips must be active participants at UUAC Sherborn and have had CORI checks.

b. There will always be a minimum of three adults present chaperoning youth regardless of the numbers of youth attending. Adults should be available to the youth at all times. During a sleepover at UUAC Sherborn or on youth trips there should be a minimum ratio of one adult to eight youth with one additional adult required for each additional four youth.

c. During sleepovers at UUAC Sherborn all outside doors will be locked against entry once the last youth has arrived and will remain locked until parents arrive for pick-up in the morning.

d. A Parent/Guardian Consent and Medical Release Form and a Medical Information Form (See Appendix) will be required for each youth at the sleepover or on trips.

e. Each youth will be required to complete and sign the Youth Code of Ethics (See Appendix) for each sleepover event or trip.

7. Transportation To and From UUAC Sherborn Sanctioned Events

a. It is the responsibility of the UUAC Sherborn RE Program, or the parents, to provide safe transportation to and from UUAC Sherborn sanctioned events. The UUAC Sherborn RE program requires the following:

i. When traveling to and from outings, conferences, meetings and other UUAC Sherborn activities, a parent/guardian signed permission slip is required for each child/youth participating or being driven to an off-site activity.

ii. Drivers must be at least 25 years old.

iii. Every person in the car will have a seatbelt and age appropriate seating arranged in reference to airbag safety rules.

iv. No driver may consume alcohol or use any form of drug, which can affect physical or mental performance before or during the carrying out of his/her duty as a driver.

v. Each driver must show proof of license, registration, and insurance coverage upon request.

vi. The primary on-site adult leader will have the phone number of parents of children on any UUAC Sherborn sponsored trips.

8. First Aid and Incident Reporting

a. First aid kits are available in each RE classroom and in the kitchen.

b. In case of serious injury, 911 will be called for emergency assistance. Parents and/or guardians will be notified as soon as possible and incident will be reported to the ministers.

c. In case of minor injury, appropriate first aid will be applied and the parent/guardian notified.

9. **Bullying**

Dedicated to providing a supportive and nurturing environment, UUAC Sherborn strives to ensure safety from violence and abuse of all kinds for our children and youth. To ensure the healthy spiritual development of all Religious Education participants, bullying will not be tolerated. Intimidation that may challenge the safety and well-being of Religious Education participants, whether the intimidation occurs physically at UUAC Sherborn or through electronically transmitted media, must be addressed.

a. Situations involving bullying will be brought to the attention of the ministers, the President of the Board, or the Lifespan Faith Development Leaders.

b. The ministers will work with the Lifespan Faith Development Leaders and parents/guardians of minors involved to resolve these issues. A referral may be made to the Safe Congregation Response Team (see Section VIII).

10. **Diapers and Bathroom Trips**

a. No diaper changing. Get parents from sanctuary during worship if needed.

b. Children ages 2-5 (through Kindergarten) are escorted to the bathroom, but do not help them wipe. Get parents from the sanctuary if needed.

c. Children in grades 1-8 go to the bathroom on their own.

VI. Responding to Complaints of Sexual or Physical Abuse or Harassment

There are several situations that may prompt a response regarding a complaint or concern about Abuse, including but not limited to:

1) A child, youth or adult reports possible abuse by a UUAC Sherborn official, member or attendee;

2) A UUAC Sherborn official, member, friend, or attendee suspects that a child or youth is being abused;

3) Child or youth reports possible abuse by a family member or other individual; or

4) UUAC Sherborn members, friends or officials learn that a UUAC Sherborn member, friend or attendee (child, youth or adult) is under investigation for allegedly abusing others.

Any member or official of UUAC Sherborn who receives a report of such abuse or who personally observes or has reasonable cause to suspect such abuse should immediately bring it to the attention of the Ministers.

VII. Reporting Child Abuse to Community Authorities

It is not the function of UUAC Sherborn, the Ministers, or President of the Board or the Safe Congregation Response Team to conduct an investigation into accusations of child abuse. Rather it is both the law in Massachusetts and the policy of UUAC Sherborn that in any situation in which the Ministers have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been, or is likely to be abused or neglected, an immediate report must be made to the State Department of Children & Families (DCF), by phone to the hotline that the DCF maintains for such purpose at 1-800-792-5200 and in a written report form promulgated by the DCF, a copy of which shall be provided to and kept on file by the Safe Congregation Response Team in a secure and locked file.

Once a report is made to the appropriate authorities, UUAC Sherborn will await the decisions of those authorities as to the validity of the complaint before taking any final actions. Pending the issuance of such a report it is also the responsibility of the Safe Congregation Response Team to consider and adopt, in consultation with the Board as time permits, such interim actions as may be prudent to temporarily restrict the privileges and access of any alleged abuser who is a member, friend or visitor to UUAC Sherborn or any of its programs or the programs of those organizations that use or rent its facilities, as further outlined in the Section below regarding Immediate Safety Needs Of The Congregation.

In all cases the Minister will also notify the President of the Board and the Mass Bay Area District Executive, and seek their advice and counsel. Additionally, UUAC Sherborn's insurance company will be notified.

VIII. The Safe Congregation Response Team

The Safe Congregation Response Team will be established and in place at all times, and will be composed of the Ministers and three members of UUAC Sherborn. At least one of member of the Team shall be a member of the Board and all members shall be appointed by the Board. It is preferable that two of the members of the team be familiar with issues likely to arise, to include but not be limited to sexual assault, sexual harassment, human resources and legal issues.

In cases of a conflict of interest, a Team member must be excused from participation and replaced by a suitable alternate. Their function, individually and collectively, will be to offer confidential support, advice, and counsel with concern for the safety of all parties involved. The Safe Congregation Response Team will generally have the following responsibilities:

- a. Know about community resources for child abuse, treatment for sex offenders, and support groups for survivors.
- b. Know about state laws regarding reporting.
- c. Be a resource for people to share their concerns.
- d. Evaluate concerns for Religious Education (RE) teachers and youth group leaders.

e. Receive allegations of possible abuse and develop a process for expedient handling of such allegations. See also the below section regarding Pastoral Needs of Congregation Regarding Reports of Abuse.

f. Meet with convicted sex offenders who may wish to participate in worship to develop a Limited Access Agreement for participation.

g. Determine whether to communicate information about incidents of suspected or alleged abuse to the congregation, and if so how much information to communicate and at what point during the investigation, after carefully weighing the interests and needs of the parties involved as well as the interests and needs of others in the congregation who are not directly involved.

All activities of the Response Team will be conducted in a confidential fashion to the extent consistent with a sufficient investigation to enable the Response Team to ensure that adequate measures are taken to protect the safety and dignity of all concerned, and may only be disclosed when necessary and appropriate as determined by the Response Team or as required by law.

IX. Immediate Safety Needs of the Congregation Regarding Reports of Abuse

Interim Safety Plan: When a report is filed by any person on behalf of any child and the suspected abuser is a church employee, member or attendee, the Response Team will develop an interim safety plan during the investigation of abuse. This plan may include, but not be limited to implementation of a draft Limited Access Agreement, with the assistance of legal counsel if the Minister and President of the Board determine that such counsel should be obtained. If the accused abuser is another youth, the plan must be developed with input from both sets of parents or guardians. The plan will be clearly communicated to the accused abuser or, if a minor, his or her parents or guardians, by the Response Team. The Minister and or Religious Educator may implement similar steps while awaiting initial recommendations of the Response Team.

Permanent Safety Plan: Upon final disposition by appropriate authorities, a permanent Limited Access Agreement will be developed by the Response Team that among other provisions, complies with any orders imposed by such authorities.

X. Pastoral Needs of the Congregation Regarding Reports of Abuse

1) Following a report of suspected abuse, the Safe Congregation Response Team will also develop, in consultation with the Ministers and lay Pastoral Associates, a plan to address the pastoral needs of our congregation, including:

a. The person or child who has allegedly been sexually abused: This may include providing information about or referrals to appropriate professional, community, and UUAC Sherborn or UU resources, as needed. Additionally the Safe Congregation Response Team may assist in dealing with Department of Children & Families, the District Attorney's or the Police Department as and when those authorities become involved in the matter.

- b. Other members and friends of our congregation:
 - i. Members, friends, or attendees immediately affected by the incident (such as family members or partners) whose needs we can help meet, either directly or indirectly;
 - ii. The Minister (or other members of the UUAC Sherborn staff) to aid in dealing with the pastoral needs of the victim or accused person;
 - iii. Other members and friends of the congregation who witnessed one or more incidents or, who having heard about them, are reminded of their own concerns and prior experiences; and
 - iv. Other congregation members and friends who are relied on to a great degree by the person or child who has allegedly been sexually abused or accused offender (or those connected to them).
- c. The accused person: Support may include helping the accused person access the appropriate professional, community and spiritual resources. While there may be feelings of ill-will toward the accused person, if that individual is a part of our community, he or she also deserves our support; withdrawing it at this critical point in that person's life might have severe detrimental long-term effects on his or her behavior in the future. It remains the mission of this congregation to recognize and support the integrity and inherent worth and dignity of that person even though we do not condone inappropriate behaviors, and to treat him or her with compassion.
- d. Other persons and children who have allegedly been sexually abused and who have been reluctant to come forward: If warranted, the response plan will include a way of reaching out to these individuals in a manner that is non-threatening.

2) The plan established will be such that both the alleged victim or victims and other individuals are not put at risk for further incidents.

XI. Guidelines Regarding Sexual Offenders

- 1) Situations may occur involving individuals accused or convicted of sexually aggressive or violent behavior. Those situations could follow, but will not be limited to the following steps, as advised by the Safe Congregations Response Team:
 - a. An individual who has been convicted of or pled guilty to a charge of sexual misconduct or who has been determined to have engaged in any form of child abuse in any civil, criminal, administrative or ecclesiastical forum will not have contact with children or youth in the congregation other than the individual's own children as permitted under law or have contact with the parties involved.

b. If an individual has been legally accused of sexual misconduct and is currently involved in civil or criminal litigation of such a charge, that individual will not have contact with children or youth or the parties involved until there is final disposition of the case (resolution).

c. In the event that a person has been convicted of a sexual offense and completed a term of incarceration and seeks to enter the life of the UUAC Sherborn, the Response Team will meet to make a determination as to whether or not and the ways in which the individual may be safely involved in the life of the congregation. If it is determined that the person can participate in congregation life, a Limited Access Agreement will be developed.

d. In all cases the Response Team, with approval of the Minister and President of the Board, may seek legal counsel before proceeding with either a draft or permanent Limited Access Agreement.

XII. Disruptive or Violent Behavior

Each Sunday we affirm our commitment to welcome all people into the celebration of life and to respect each person's inherent worth and dignity. But in order to secure that tradition, we recognize the need to address the disruptive or violent behavior, whether occurring physically at UUAC Sherborn or in the form of threatening phone calls, emails or other electronically transmitted messages, which may challenge our sense of individual and communal safety and well-being. Therefore, the following shall be the policy of UUAC Sherborn if and when such a challenge may arise:

1) Situations involving disruptive behavior will be brought to the attention of the Board President and the Minister who may refer the situation to the Safe Congregation Response Team. The Board will be notified of this action.

2) The Safe Congregation Response Team will investigate the matter, using this policy for guidance. In cases of a conflict of interest, a team member must be excused from participation and replaced by a suitable alternate. Members of the team will be educated in the Policy and will become knowledgeable about available resources for adults and children. Their function, individually and collectively, will be to offer confidential support, advice, and counsel with concern for the safety of all parties involved.

3) If an immediate response is required, this will be undertaken by the Minister or the leader of the group involved, or the Board of Directors of UUAC Sherborn if the disruptive or violent behavior occurs prior to, during or immediately following worship. This may include asking and/or requiring the offending person or persons to leave the meeting or the UUAC Sherborn building, or suspending the meeting or activity until such a time as it can safely be resumed. If further assistance is required, especially where physical harm to person or property has occurred or is threatened or is occurring, the Police Department may be called. Any time any of these actions are undertaken without the Minister being present, the Minister and the President of the Board must be notified as soon as possible. All plans for follow up steps will be referred to the Safe Congregation Response Team.

4) Persons identified as being disruptive or violent will be responded to as individuals of inherent worth and dignity.

5) Information concerning the alleged incident(s) that led to concern will be systematically collected from the concerned parties by delegated Response Team members and documented before any action is taken.

6) The Response Team will meet to assess the findings and decide on a course of action with the following four levels of response recommended to them.

Level One: A Response Team member or members contacts the person named as the source of the disruption and informs them of the nature of the concern. The person's viewpoint of the matter will be elicited, valued, and documented. Response Team members will then assess the situation.

Level Two: If the basis of the original concern is determined to be valid, this finding will be clearly communicated to the person in question and a contract for clearly defined behavior change will be negotiated. Such communication and contract will be documented.

Level Three: If the person in question refuses to negotiate a contract, refuses to abide by a contract or is engaging in behavior of sufficient severity, he or she may be excluded from the group whose meetings he or she disrupted or from UUAC Sherborn altogether for a specified period of time, with reasons for such action, and conditions for return, clearly communicated and documented.

Level Four: The person in question is permanently excluded from UUAC Sherborn and its premises, with steps taken as needed to enforce this decision.

1) Should the Safe Congregation Response Team decide that exclusion or expulsion from the UUAC Sherborn is necessary, they will consult the Board prior to action being taken.

2) The four levels of response recommended by this policy may be applied in the order determined by the Safe Congregation Response Team and the Board in their judgment.

XIII. Fire and other Life-Safety Emergencies

Preventing uncontrolled fires and other life-safety emergencies in our religious community requires multiple approaches on several fronts. We must focus on prevention, education, training, and safety procedures in order to create a safer environment for all concerned. To the extent a fire or other life-safety emergency occurs, the following life-safety procedures should be implemented:

1) Fire safety is a responsibility of every staff, member and guest of UUAC. It is in the discretion of the Minister and Board to ban use of candles, the fireplace in the Cooney Room and other temporary fires (e.g., fire pit on patio) if there is a fire safety concern.

2) The Board, in coordination with staff, shall be trained on an annual basis in the Evacuation Plan and should be prepared to assist in the event of an emergency. It is the

responsibility of the AMYF to provide no less frequent than annual trainings to leaders in the RE Program of the Evacuation Plan.

3) UUAC will maintain “Go Bags” that include life safety items, including but not limited to the following: flashlight, pens, two-way radio transmitters, building map with evacuation plan; flow chart identifying Fire Marshals and any assigned duties; list of important phone numbers (e.g., police, fire, Fire Marshals, etc.) and first aid kits. To the extent the Evacuation Plan is initiated, the “Go Bags” shall be taken out of the building with a Fire Marshall. The “Go Bags” shall be maintained at all times near the North, South, East and West entrances to the building, at the following approximate locations:

- North entrance: near the exit door
- South entrance: near the exit door
- East entrance: in Unity Hall near exit doors to back patio
- West entrance: at the back of the Sanctuary under the Usher Table

4) The Board and UUAC staff shall be deemed the “Fire Marshals” of UUAC. The Fire Marshals shall have primary responsibility to implement the Evacuation Plan. It is recommended that the Fire Marshals assign roles of Exit Warden to help direct persons in evacuating the building, Search Warden to help to clear the building where appropriate and Handicap Aids who will be responsible to help those who need assistance in an emergency. The Handicap Aids shall be familiar with all available handicap exits.

5) The Fire Marshal shall make sure there is sufficient coverage for Sunday services and other times where there would be a significant numbers of persons at UUAC. For the avoidance of doubt, the Fire Marshals shall have no duties to serve as Fire Marshals for tenants or persons that rent or use temporary space at UUAC (e.g., ECDC, Good as New, wedding or memorial service rental). However, if the Minister determines that a Fire Marshal is appropriate for any event, the event host may be asked to incur the reasonable cost for this service.

The Evacuation Plan:

1) If a fire is observed, the witness should call “911” and, if possible the witness or nearest Fire Marshal shall activate the fire-alarm system, which will notify the Town of Sherborn Fire Department that there is a fire in the building.

2) If the fire may be controlled without endangering anyone’s safety, it should be controlled through use of fire extinguishers or other fire retardants. If a fire cannot be controlled, the area should be sealed off by closing doors, proceeding to the nearest exit and evacuating the building in a safe and orderly manner.

3) Whenever the fire-alarm sounds, EVERYONE is to leave the building by the closest available exit. Each room shall maintain an accurate, readily-available Evacuation Plan.

4) The Fire Marshals shall have the primary responsibilities of ensuring all persons safely evacuate the building and, when appropriate, return to the building. The Fire Marshals shall stand and calmly announce that everyone must leave the building. The Fire Marshal shall alert persons to the closest available exit. The Fire Marshals shall be relieved of their responsibilities if they determine they are at significant risk of personal safety, or upon arrival of the Town of Sherborn (or other area) first responders.

5) The Fire Marshals shall remind and instruct Religious Education teachers to escort children to the front of the building and gather at the main building sign on the front lawn (sign reads: First Parish in Sherborn Unitarian Universalist), or if that location is determined not to be safe, then at a location determined to be safe at the discretion of the Fire Marshals.

6) Adults and children not participating in Religious Education shall be directed by Fire Marshals to gather near the front of the building at the main building sign on the front lawn (sign reads: First Parish in Sherborn Unitarian Universalist), or if that location is determined not to be safe, then at a location determined to be safe at the discretion of the Fire Marshals.

7) At the earliest time that it is safe to do so, the AMYF or Fire Marshal in charge will reunite children with their parents or guardians.

XIV. Appendices



Code of Ethics for Those Working with Children and Youth UU Area Church in Sherborn

Adult leaders and mentors are in a position of stewardship and play a key role in fostering the spiritual development of both individuals and the community. It is, therefore, especially important that they be well qualified to provide the nurture, care, and support that will enable youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of interdependence and responsibility. The relationship between young people and these adults must be one of mutual respect if the positive potential 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. Mentors and leaders who abuse their roles in these areas hurt not only the individuals involved, but also the whole community.

Experience dictates that all those involved suffer when adults become inappropriately involved or engage in negative or destructive behaviors with youth they are mentoring or leading. Inappropriate behavior includes the following:

- Sexual, seductive, and erotic behavior
- Physically or verbally abusive behavior
- Inappropriate use of legal or any illegal substances while working with youth in a leadership position
- Abuse of power or position within the youth community
- Mentors and leaders need to be aware of the strong influence they have in the community. It is expected that their influence will be exerted in a positive manner.

By signing below, I agree to this Code of Ethics. I understand that if I am found to be in violation of this code, appropriate action will be taken. I also consent to the congregation's conducting a check to determine whether I have a criminal background that would interfere with my ability to be an appropriate mentor or leader to young people.

Name

Date

Signature

**Unitarian Universalist Area Church at First Parish in Sherborn
Parent/Guardian Consent & Medical Information Form**

*Please return this form and the signed Youth Code of Conduct to Heather Concannon,
Assistant Minister of Youth and Families.*

Youth Name _____

Address _____ Home phone _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Name of Parent/Guardian _____

In an emergency, parent/guardian can be reached at: (____) ____ - ____ or (____) ____ - ____

If unable to reach this person, please contact: Name _____

Relationship: _____ Phone(____) ____ - ____

Youth's known medical conditions: _____

Known allergies: _____

Current medications: _____

Dietary considerations/restrictions: _____

I understand that the youth will be traveling in private vans/cars driven by licensed adults to and from the retreat.

My youth will be carrying an Epi pen ___ Inhaler ___ on this retreat. They know how to administer treatment for themselves.

My youth has medication (**either over the counter or prescription**) that will be handed in to one of the youth group advisors/ for administration as necessary. Clear instructions for administration are included with the medication.

Are there any physical/emotional conditions affecting the child/youth that could affect the safety of the child/youth and/or others? _____

Please list any other physical/emotional conditions of which teachers/advisors should be aware:

Describe any restrictions on activities in which child/youth may participate:

Health Insurance Co. _____ Policy Number _____

Physician's name _____ Physician's phone _____

Emergency Treatment Authorization:

The information provided on this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge. My child/youth has my permission to engage in all activities except as noted above. I understand that neither Unitarian Universalist Area Church at First Parish in Sherborn, its staff, nor its volunteers, assume any legal liability for the welfare of my child/ward, and I hereby release them of such liability.

I understand that every effort will be made to contact me and/or the emergency contact person listed above in the event of an emergency. If my child/youth requires emergency treatment, and I am not able to be contacted, I hereby authorize the physician selected by the adult leaders of the Senior Youth Group, or the staff of the Unitarian Universalist Area Church at First Parish in Sherborn, to secure that treatment for my youth.

I agree to assume all responsibility for any such medical expenses. This agreement shall remain in effect for the duration of the activity. This consent may be photocopied, and photocopies shall be as binding as the original.

Printed name of parent/guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____

Youth Code of Ethics
Unitarian Universalist Area Church at First Parish in Sherborn

Policy on Sexuality and Community for All Participants

While sexuality is a healthy and important part of young people’s lives, there are times and places where sexual behavior is inappropriate. This policy seeks to create a healthy and safe space for all participants. Exclusive relationships can detract from the community. All participants must abide by the following policies:

- Participants must respect each other’s physical boundaries.
- Participants shall refrain from sexual, seductive or erotic behavior while at the event.
- Sexual behavior between participants at the event is not permitted.

Sexual harassment is not permitted and will not be tolerated. Any harassment regarding race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, or disability will not be tolerated. Such harassment includes unsolicited remarks, gestures or physical contact, display or circulation of written materials or derogatory pictures directed at any of these categories. In addition, sexual advances, jokes, explicit or offensive pictures, requests for sexual favors, sexting, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment.

Behavioral Guidelines for Youth Participants

We covenant to respect each other and the Unitarian Universalist principles with our language and our physical behavior.

We agree to:

- respect the Policy on Sexuality and Community above
- follow any covenant that the retreat attendees create together
- leave electronic devices at home
- leave pets at home
- leave weapons at home
- use kind and thoughtful speech and behavior
- refrain from use or possession of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs
- remain on-site for the duration of the event
- respect the chaperones/advisors and follow their directions

The event leadership team is responsible for ensuring this policy is enforced. If a participant is in violation of this Code of Ethics, they may be asked to leave the retreat. Parents/guardians are invited to discuss this policy with their youth.

Youth Name	Signature	Date
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Parent/Guardian Name	Signature	Date
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