

# **UUFB Safety Policy for Children and Youth**

## **During services and RE classroom time (A) and during special events (B)**

### **Part A): During Services and RE classroom time:**

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

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

#### **1. Teacher, Volunteer and Staffing Policies**

##### **a. Screening and Qualifications**

- i. A screening process will be in place requiring applicants for UUFB paid positions to provide three references. A criminal background check will be required for all staff and volunteers over 18 years of age working with children and youth.
- ii. No person who has been convicted of or pled guilty to charges of child abuse will be allowed to have direct contact with children or youth.
- iii. All potential volunteers will be approved by the Minister prior to assignment as a volunteer or teacher with children or youth.
- iv. Adults must have been actively involved in UUFB activities for six months prior to assuming roles in children's activities.

##### **b. Staffing Requirements**

- i. There must be a minimum of two unrelated caregivers/teachers directly involved in all UUFB activities involving children, including but not limited to CRE, youth group, childcare, and game nights. No more than one caregiver may be a sitter who is at least 16 (sixteen) years old.
- ii. Adult caregiver numbers should be at or above the Montana state guidelines for group childcare:

[Administrative Rules of Montana|CHILD CARE CENTERS: CHILD- TO-STAFF RATIOS](#)

37.95.623 CHILD CARE CENTERS: CHILD-TO-STAFF RATIOS:

- (1) The child-to-staff ratio and maximum group size for a child care center are:
  - (a) 4:1 for children newborn through 23 months with a maximum group size of 12;
  - (b) 8:1 for children two years through three years with a maximum group size of 16;
  - (c) 10:1 for children four years with a maximum group size of 24; and
  - (d) 14:1 for five years and over with a maximum group size of 32.

- iii. There must be no use of alcohol or illegal drugs at events specifically created for the children or youth groups. At general UUFB events where children and youth may be present with their parent(s) or other supervisory adult, there may be use of alcohol by adults.

**c. Staff Training**

- i. RE Staff, employees, LRE committee members and volunteers shall be made aware of this safety policy during onboarding and ongoing training efforts, and the policy shall be kept in teacher notebooks in the RE classroom.
- ii. RE Staff, employees, LRE committee members and volunteers shall specifically receive training in recognizing and responding to suspected physical and sexual abuse. If abuse is suspected, reported, or observed, the matter must be immediately reported to the CRE and the Minister. These individuals will review the concerns and a report will be made to Children's Protective Services in accordance with state laws when child abuse is suspected. Because of its sensitive nature, such information will be otherwise held confidential.

**2. Parent Permission and Contact Information**

- a. RE Staff will be responsible for collecting and organizing appropriate information when parents are leaving their child in care of RE in the form of registration, permission slips or sign in sheets, including but not limited to:
  - i. Child's full names
  - ii. Parent's names
  - iii. Contact information
  - iv. Health History/Medical conditions
  - v. Photography releases
  - vi. Behavioral concerns
- b. Registration forms will be updated annually.
- c. Should UUFB Youth or children's activities have parents drop off children or youth off-site of the church, a sign in sheet or permission form shall be used to ensure staff have necessary information about children in attendance.
- d. Staffing requirements listed above apply for off-site events as well.
- e. All drivers transporting children for a UU event must have a valid driver's license and be covered by car insurance. All drivers must be over the age of 21.
- f. Per Montana state law, children six and under or under 60 (sixty) pounds must be in appropriate car seats or booster seats.

### 3. Building Safety

- a. A first aid kit must be readily available in every RE classroom. An escape plan and the location of the fire extinguisher must be posted near each classroom door.
- b. A review of first aid skills and emergency plans must be part of teacher training annually.

#### Part B): During Special events:

The CRE is only in charge of arranging childcare for two (2) Annual Meetings and two (2) Newcomer Orientations. For other events, the CRE will make available a list of any parties who are willing to provide childcare. Only childcare providers on this list may be used for UUFB events. Parties over 18 (eighteen) years of age will have passed a current background check.

1. Requests for childcare must be communicated to the CRE at least two weeks in advance of the event.
2. There must be a minimum of two unrelated, approved childcare persons providing child care at Special Events.
  - a. At least one of the childcare providers must be 21 (twenty-one) years or older.
  - b. Sitters must be at least 16 (sixteen) years of age.
3. Parents must RSVP to the CRE, or person coordinating childcare for the event, at least one week ahead of time with the number of children attending and their ages. If the parent does not RSVP in advance and requests childcare at the time of the event, the child(ren) can only be accommodated if their presence does not exceed the number of children per caretaker.
  - a. Adult caregiver numbers should be at or above the Montana state guidelines for group childcare:

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(1) The child-to-staff ratio and maximum group size for a child care center are:

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- (d) 14:1 for five years and over with a maximum group size of 32.

4. As of April 2025, the rate of pay for sitters is \$13.00 per hour. New rates may be set by the LREC. If no children show up, sitters will be paid for no less than one hour.
5. A budget line item for "childcare" will cover the cost of childcare for two Annual Meetings and two Newcomer Orientations per year.
6. For all other events requiring childcare, the committee/team organizing the event will cover the costs of childcare from their budget.