

Nursery Handbook For Parents and Caregivers



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Nursery Handbook for Parents and Caregivers

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Welcome to the Nursery At the Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills (UUCSH)

As Unitarian Universalists, we adhere to the Seven Principles:

1. The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
2. Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
3. Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
4. A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
5. The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
6. The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
7. Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

It is in the spirit of these Seven Principles that UUCSH developed this handbook for parents and for caregivers (paid and volunteer) who work with our youngest children in the nursery. Our goal is to provide a clean, safe, and nurturing environment for the children who visit our nursery.

Handbook Agreement for Parents

Each time you sign your child into the nursery, you are agreeing to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the ***Nursery Handbook for Parents and Caregivers***. If you have any questions or concerns about anything included in this handbook, please let us know so we can consider your views on the policies outlined. UUCSH will revise the handbook periodically to reflect new childcare needs at the church. After each revision, UUCSH will make an electronic available on the church website. Parents can request a printed copy directly from the Director of Religious Education or the Church Administrator.

Who Can Visit the Nursery?

The nursery is for babies who are crawling and toddlers through age four.

- Infants should remain with parents during the service. Parents can sit with fussy babies in the crying room on the second floor and still hear the service.
- Once a child reaches age four, the child will join the PreK-3rd grade RE class.
- After a child has visited the nursery four times, parents are asked to complete a RE registration form.

Parent Responsibilities when Bringing a Child to the Nursery

- Sign in your child
- Inform caregivers of any allergies
- Provide your cell phone number on the sign in sheet and make sure it is turned to vibrate when you are in service
- Make sure your diaper bag is labeled and full of necessary items
- Arrive promptly to pick up your child and sign them out
- Remain on church premises. (At least one parent *must* remain on church premises at all times while a child is in the nursery.)

Parents are welcome to stay to help their child adjust to the nursery. If a child cries more than ten minutes, a caregiver will contact parents and ask them to come to the nursery.

Nursery Hours

- The nursery is available year round and opens fifteen minutes before each service. (Service times do change throughout the year. Check the church calendar on the website for service times.)
- The nursery remains open during LifeCraft programming.
- The nursery closes promptly after the second service.

Nursery Basics

UUCSH takes the care of our babies and children seriously. We staff our nursery with two paid caregivers. Our lead caregiver must have been affiliated with UUCSH for at least six months before application can be made for a paid nursery position. Nursery caregivers, like our RE teachers, complete an application and screening form, sign a code of ethics, sign a teaching agreement, and pass a background check (please see appendix for sample documents).

Our goal is a ratio of one caregiver for every five children. If the number of children exceeds ten, we will ask a parent volunteer to assist the two paid caregivers. In the event that a paid caregiver is not available, a volunteer may step in to help. The volunteer is often the parent of one of the children in the nursery. If we cannot provide two caregivers (paid or volunteer), then we will close the nursery.

Supplies Provided by Parents

A bag labeled with your child's name that includes these items:

- Sufficient supply of diapers
- Wipes
- Bottle or sippy cup
- Change of clothes

Health and Safety

Illness. In the best interest of your child and in consideration of other children in the nursery, please keep your child home if any of these symptoms are present: green or yellow nasal discharge, temperature over 100 degrees, diarrhea, vomiting, sore throat, ear ache, unexplained rash, open sores, pink eye, drainage from eyes or ears, or any other sign of illness.

Hygiene. We strive to maintain a clean, healthy environment in our nursery. Caregivers must wash hands before beginning childcare, and hand sanitizer is readily available. Caregivers use non-latex, non-powdered gloves to change diapers, and caregivers wash their hands after every diaper change. We try to change diapers as necessary, if parents have provided all supplies. Either the Director of Religious Education or a caregiver brings the child to the first floor changing table in the bathroom. If this situation leaves only one caregiver in the nursery, this caregiver is 100% concerned with the

safety and security of the remaining children in the nursery. We try to avoid this situation at all costs.

Safety. UUCSH strives to maintain a safe environment in the nursery. Our goal is for every caregiver to be infant/child CPR certified. Currently, both the Director of Religious Education and the lead nursery caregiver are certified in infant/child CPR through MRTSA (Medical Rescue Team South Authority).

Child Incident Report

If an injury in the nursery results in a bump, bruise, or requires a band-aid, the caregiver will issue a Child Injury Report. One copy of the report goes to the parent of the injured child, and one copy remains on file in the church office. Parents—please let the caregiver know of a pre-existing injury (bump, bruise, cut, etc.).

Dietary Restrictions, Allergies, and Snacks

A small snack usually is provided to the nursery caregivers for distribution to the children. A typical snack is goldfish or animal crackers or Cheerios. Parents—please tell the nursery caregivers if your child has dietary restrictions (vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free) or has a food allergy. Parents are welcome to pack a light, non-perishable, non-messy approved snack for their child. Water may also be provided.

Responsibilities of Paid Nursery Caregivers

Arrival and Check In:

- Arrive by 8:30 a.m. and sign in with the Director of Religious Education (DRE)
- Wash hands
- Check nursery for safety and cleanliness
- Check for snack and snack supplies
- Wear a name tag so parents know who you are
- Greet parents and children as they arrive (learn children's names)
- Make sure every child is signed in by a parent
- Inquire about pre-existing injuries such as bumps, bruises, cuts, etc.
- Inquire about dietary restrictions and allergies

Nursery Care:

- Calmly contact parents if a child is injured (bump, bruise, cut, etc.), becomes ill, or becomes inconsolable (cries non-stop for ten minutes). First, send a text message to the parents. If the parents do not respond, locate the parents in the service and ask them to accompany you to the nursery. Keep interruptions to the service to a minimum, but remember that child safety comes first.
- A first aid kit is provided for treating minor injuries
- In the event of an injury, fill out an incident report, and contact the DRE
- Change diapers and supervise potty visits as necessary. While one caregiver is changing a diaper or accompanying a child to the potty, the other caregiver has 100% responsibility for the remaining children in the nursery.

- Use the changing table in the upstairs bathroom for diaper changes. Wear gloves during the diaper change and sanitize the changing table after. Wash hands after every diaper change.

As church services end, encourage children to help you tidy the nursery and put toys away.

- Please be mindful of Mushroom property!
- Make sure every child is signed out by a parent
- Put away remaining toys, sanitize tables, put away snacks, and vacuum room.
- If toxic or infectious trash was thrown away, tie up the trash bag and leave outside nursery
- Sign out with the DRE
- If you are unable to work as scheduled, contact the Director of Religious Education as soon as possible so that the director can identify a volunteer replacement.

Child Incident Report

Please complete two copies of the Child Incident Report.
Give one copy to the parents, and one copy to the Director of Religious Education.

Child's name: _____ Age: _____

Location of incident: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Description of events:

Parts of body involved:

Treatment given/action taken:

Treatment given by whom: _____

Name of parent notified: _____

Time notified: _____

Signature of person notifying parent: _____

Corrective action needed to prevent reoccurrence:

Signature of nursery caregiver: _____

Date: _____

Signature of parent/guardian: _____

Date: _____

**Agreement to Teach
For Religious Education Teachers and Youth Group Leaders**

Name: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home phone: _____

Cell phone: _____

Email: _____

- I have read and understand our congregation's policies for keeping children, youth, and vulnerable adults safe.
- I agree to uphold these principles in my work with the children, youth, adults, and families of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills.
- I have signed the Code of Ethics statement.
- I affirm that I have never been accused of, convicted of, or pled guilty to any sexual crime. I also have not pled guilty to a lesser charge after having been charged with a sexual crime. I have never engaged in any form of child abuse, including sexual abuse. I have never been determined to have engaged in any sexual offenses in any civil, administrative, or ecclesiastical forum or other forum.
- I further affirm that I have never been accused of, convicted of, or pled guilty to any crime, or any other activity, that would have an impact on my ability to perform my duties or affect the reputation or good will of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills.
- If there are any facts or circumstances in my background that call into question my being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of children, youth, or vulnerable adults, I have met to review this information confidentially with the Minister and the Director of Religious Education.
- Further, I agree to notify the Minister and the Director of Religious Education immediately should I be accused of sexual abuse, sexual offenses, sexual harassment, or other sexual improprieties in the time that I am working with children and youth in this congregation.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

**Volunteer Application and Screening Form
For Paid Caregivers and Volunteers (Confidential)**

Thank you for your interest in working with the children and youth of the Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills (UUCSH). UUCSH takes seriously our responsibility to assure the safety of our children and youth. Thank you for helping to provide a safe and secure environment for all of our children and youth.

Please return a completed and signed Application to the Director of Religious Education by _____.

Name: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____

Work Phone: (____) _____

Cell Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Have you ever used a different name? ___YES ___ NO

If you answered yes, please list names and dates used:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How long have you been attending UUCSH? _____

Please answer the following questions (please use the back if necessary):

1. What is your experience working with children/youth?

2. What skills and interests do you bring to this volunteer position?

3. What volunteer experience do you bring to this position?

4. Do you have a valid driver's license? ___ YES ___ NO

- Driver's license number: _____
- Expiration date: _____ State issued: _____

5. Has your license ever been revoked or suspended? ___ YES ___ NO

- If yes, please describe the circumstances:

6. Do you have a current PA Act 33 or 34 Clearance? ___ YES ___ NO

- If yes, date granted _____ (Please attach copy)

7. Have you had clearance from another youth-serving agency in the past year?

___ YES ___ NO

- If yes, date granted _____ (Please attach copy)

8. Background screening:

a. Do you currently use (1) illegal drugs, (2) any prescription drugs inconsistent with the prescription, or (3) any medication that can impair you mentally or physically?

___ YES ___ NO

- If yes, provide details:

b. Do you abuse alcohol? ___ YES ___ NO

- If yes, provide details:

c. Have you been accused or convicted of the use or sale of drugs?

___ YES ___ NO

- If yes, provide details:

d. Have you ever been accused or convicted of child abuse (physical or sexual) or neglect? ___ YES ___ NO

- If yes, provide details:

e. Have you ever been accused or convicted of any crimes against a person, including rape, incest, sexual exploitation of a minor, or sexual or physical assault or battery? YES NO

- If yes, provide details:

f. Have you ever resigned from employment or been disciplined or terminated by any employer for reasons related to sexual or criminal misconduct? YES NO

- If yes, provide details:

g. Have you ever resigned from employment or been disciplined or terminated by any employer or volunteer work for any reason other than poor performance, leaving for another job, dissatisfaction with your current position, moving, or layoff?

YES NO

- If yes, provide details:

h. Have you ever been accused or convicted of a criminal offense other than those listed in c or d? YES NO

- If yes, provide details:

i. Other than the above matters, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of young people? YES NO

- If yes, provide details:

Character References

Please list two character references. A character reference may not include a spouse, immediate family member, or member of Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills (UUCSH). Please include complete names, addresses, phone numbers, and relationship of reference to applicant (i.e. friend, co-worker, supervisor, etc.):

1. Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Relationship to Applicant _____

2. Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Relationship to Applicant _____

I understand that UUCSH may verify the information I have provided by contacting persons or organizations named on this form, or through a criminal background check. I hereby release from liability (1) any person or organization that provides information concerning me to any individual associated or affiliated with UUCSH and/or (2) any individual associated or affiliated with UUCSH. I also understand that I will be automatically suspended, pending further investigation, from participating as a volunteer if there is at any time any question regarding my violation of the Code of Ethics or local, state, or national laws. In signing this form, I affirm that the information I have given herein is true and correct.

I have received a copy of this Safe Congregation Policy Statement, and I acknowledge receipt of it by my signature. I have been given the opportunity to ask any questions I have about the contents, and I understand the answers to any of these questions.

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Code of Ethics for Adults and Older Youth Working with Children and Youth

Adults and older youth who are in leadership roles are in a position of stewardship and play a key role in fostering spiritual development of both individuals and the community.

It is, therefore, especially important that those in leadership positions be well qualified to provide the special nurture, care, and support that will enable children and youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility.

The relationship between youth and their leaders must be one of mutual respect if 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. Adults play a key role in assisting children and youth in these areas of growth.

At no time will the Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills tolerate sexual or inappropriate involvement with young persons in their care. At no time will the Unitarian Universalist Church of the South Hills tolerate harassment of any kind, including but not limited to verbal, emotional, or physical abuse.

Leaders shall be informed of the code of ethics and agree to it before assuming their role.

In cases of violation of this code, appropriate action will be taken.

I have read and understand the above statements of position, expectations, and actions.

I have been given the chance to ask any questions I have about the contents, and I understand the answers to any of these questions.

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____