

Safety Policy of the James Reeb UU Congregation

It is the policy of this congregation to provide a safe and positive environment for the children and Religious Education (RE) Volunteers involved in the RE program.

The following revised guidelines are the approved safety policy of RE Committee and are hereby submitted to the Board of Trustees for its official approval.

For the purposes of this document, RE is defined as group activities sponsored by James Reeb Unitarian Universalist Congregation for children ages 0-18. RE programs include, but are not limited to, Sunday morning classes, Our Whole Lives (OWL), Coming of Age (COA), and Youth Group (YRUU). RE volunteers include Sunday morning RE teachers, OWL facilitators, COA mentors, and YRUU advisors.

1. All RE programs require a minimum of three people including an RE Volunteer (the three people can include either two unrelated adults and a child or two children and an adult). This rule also applies to youth and teen-age assistants and baby-sitters who provide services to the RE Program. If three people are not present, RE programs should be cancelled, preferably in advance. This three person rule applies to all programs including transportation on field trips. Exceptions to this shall be known in advance, approved by the RE committee, and communicated to the parents/guardians of affected children.
2. High school youth may serve as RE teachers during Sunday service RE programs if approved by the RE Committee.
3. Any approved adult RE volunteer or the RE Coordinator can join an RE Program to ensure the three person rule is met.
4. In order to protect the privacy of our children, registration forms and other personal information shall be kept secure. Children in the congregation should never be photographed or videotaped except for purposes of the RE Program. Parents always have the right and opportunity to opt out.
5. Unobstructed windows shall be on doors/entrances of all classrooms.
6. First aid supplies will be available in each RE room. In the unfortunate event of an injury, an "ouch report" will be filed.
7. Each RE room will have clearly posted procedure in the case of a fire.
8. Field trips will require the completion of an "Activity Permission" slip.
9. The DRE/RE Coordinator shall maintain an active presence for RE classes during Sunday morning services.

10. Adults involved with our RE program will never engage in physical discipline (striking with open hand or implement for purposes of punishment) of a minor. Volunteers and paid staff shall not abuse minors in any way, including but not limited to physical abuse, verbal/mental abuse, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse of any kind. This rule also applies to youth and teen-age assistants and baby-sitters who provide services to the RE Program.
11. All adults involved with our RE program will avoid all inappropriate touching with minors. All touching shall be based on the needs of the individual being touched, not on the needs of the volunteer or paid staff. In the event a minor initiates inappropriate touching, the minor will be informed that such touching is inappropriate.
12. All alcoholic beverages, tobacco, drugs, contraband, or anything that is prohibited by law to provide to minors are prohibited in our RE program.
13. Potential volunteers in the RE program are required to complete three forms.
 - a) The [“Screening Form for Religious Educators and Children Group Staff and Volunteers.”](#) The RE committee will check references for non-members and those who have been members for less than one year.
 - b) The [DISCLOSURE AND AUTHORIZATION FOR EMPLOYER TO ACCESS CONSUMER REPORTS](#). For one-time volunteers, we will do free screens ([CCAP](#) and [Dru Sjodin](#)). For regular volunteers, we will run the [First Advantage](#) screen every five years.
 - c) Approved volunteers in the RE program are required to sign a [“Religious Education Volunteer Agreement Form”](#).
14. These three documents will be reviewed and signed by the RE volunteers annually, and then kept on file. Old copies will be shredded if replaced by updated forms.
15. The RE Committee will approve volunteers based on these three completed forms. Grounds for non-approval may include: conviction of a felony or misdemeanor offense which relates to the safety of children; incomplete or false information provided by the volunteer; unsatisfactory references.
16. RE volunteers are considered in the state of Wisconsin to be ‘Mandatory Reporters’ of suspected child abuse, and will report any concerns they have to the DRE or minister. <http://wcpds.wisc.edu/mandatedreporter/> is a useful on-line training about the law on reporting abuse.
17. If complaints arise, the parties involved shall follow the [“Grievance Procedures”](#) found in the RE brochure or linked from the website.

Approved by the RE Committee, 5-21-16

To: James Reeb Board of Trustees

From: Mary Wagner

Date: May 30, 2016

I attach the revised Safety Policy of the RE Program. This version is somewhat expanded from the version approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2005 and at a later date. The RE Safety Policy is shared with teachers and parents in the registration materials and Volunteer Packet.

In addition, the RE Committee makes the following recommendation to the Board:

While this safety policy is useful to prevent most dangers to our children, UUA recommendations for creating safe/sexually healthy communities are much more comprehensive than the RE Committee is able to implement. We recommend that the Board consider appointing a committee to study the UUA recommendations and determine what additional safety measures JRUUC should and can put in place. For more information see:

Safecongregations@uaa.org

www.uaa.org/safe/healthy/assessing

<http://www.uaa.org/safe/children/23444.shtml>