

SOUTHERN REGION, UUA PROTECTION POLICIES

September 3, 2014

PREAMBLE

We, the Southern Region of the UUA recognize the importance of fostering and creating communities where everyone, especially our most vulnerable populations such as children and youth, are protected.

We also recognize with sadness and outrage the reality of the physical, sexual, and emotional abuse of children and youth. We recognize its existence throughout all strata of society, including religious communities, and its potentially devastating impact on our children and youth, our families, our congregations, district, regional, and continental associations, and on our wider communities.

We recognize that religious communities, which should be sanctuaries in every sense of the word, can be particularly vulnerable to incidents of abuse because of the welcoming spirit, the ever-present need for volunteers, and the high level of trust and respect rightfully accorded those volunteers, especially in programs for children and youth. We seek to preserve that spirit of welcome, respect and trust in balance with our concern for the safety of our children, applying the test of “reasonable precaution” to any policies or guidelines we adopt. We further acknowledge that institutions operating in the best possible manner with all due concern still cannot guarantee an absolutely risk-free setting. With recognition of this, the Southern Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations has determined the appropriate ages for overnight convocations without parents to be 14-18 years of age.

Though we recognize the painful nature of this situation, and realize that to address it adequately will mean change and a sacrifice of some convenience, our responsibilities to these realities and to the values and principles of our faith call us to do all we can to create environments that lend themselves to justice in human interactions.

In this spirit, we adopt this policy statement and apply it to all events conducted under the purview of the Southern Region. We urge our member congregations to adopt (and add to) them for cluster and local activities involving children and youth.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This document contains the following overall sections:

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These policies will apply to all Southern Region events and groups that wish to be supported by the Southern Region

Though this policy is designed for Southern Region events, individual congregations, clusters and organizations are encouraged to develop their own local policies in concert with this, so that all children and youth may be better assured a healthy and safe environment so that they may explore their faith in a safe community.

I. SCREENING AND SELECTION OF WORKERS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

SS 100 POLICY STATEMENT

Adults* in a Southern Region leadership position working with children or youth at Regional events must meet the following criteria

- All adults must have been active and in Right Relation with a Southern Region congregation/covenanted community for at least six (6) months.
- All adults working with High School aged youth (14-18) must be at least 25 years old.
- All adults working with Middle School aged children (11-13) must be at least 21 years old.
- All other grade-level teachers, nursery workers and other childcare workers must be at least 18 years old.

Adults in Southern Region positions must fill out the application (Appendix B) and sign the standard form (Appendix A) to consent to a criminal background check:

Parents of participating children and youth are welcome at all Southern Region events.

SS 100 PROCEDURES

Adults applying for a position to provide direct care or supervision to children or youth at Southern Region events will:

- Complete and submit an application (Appendix B) to the Southern Region office
- Sign and submit a Consent for Criminal Background Check (Appendix A).

Criminal background checks will be conducted by the Southern Region office at the Region's expense (for Regional Events) if there is not a current one on file with their home congregation. The Southern Region may ask for a copy of this report from the congregation.

The interview in Appendix D will be conducted by a Congregational Life Staff or designee.

The Southern Region office will maintain interview and background check records. A record of disqualified applicants shall be kept on file in the Southern Region Office indefinitely, and all registration forms shall be checked against this list. This record shall include adults who have been sent home from a Southern Region or any District event for breaking a law as well as any who have been disqualified by Southern Region Staff.

SS 101 POLICY STATEMENT

All adults working with children and youth in Southern Region programs or events will be carefully selected by the responsible event coordinator with due diligence according to the procedures of the policies outlined herein.

Any member congregation has the right to contest the appropriateness of any adult or youth to participate in Southern Region programs. Disputes regarding appropriateness of attendees shall be heard and decided by Southern Region Staff.

II. SUPERVISION

SUP 200 POLICY STATEMENT

In all cases there will be a minimum of two screened adults scheduled at all Southern Region events. Two adults who are in a committed partnership or marriage cannot satisfy the requirement of having at least two adults present around youth unless approved by Southern Region Staff in advance of the event.

Specifically:

- For groups involving children ages 0-13 the adult to child ratio is 2:6, one additional adult for each additional 6 children.
- For groups involving youth ages 14-18 the adult to youth ratio is 2:8, one additional adult for each additional 8 youth.

If the host site for an event involving children and youth has established more stringent adult-to-child/youth ratios, those of the host site will be used. If they have no such policy, or if the host has a less stringent policy, then the Southern Region policy shall apply if sponsored by or listed as a District or Regional event.

Corporal punishment will not be used under any circumstances.

Once at a Southern Region event, at least two adults should be together with children or youth at all times except for brief periods when unforeseen circumstances make it impossible for two adults to be present. If that happens and an adult other than a parent or guardian has a private one-to-one meeting with a child or a youth during the event, an adult in charge of the event shall be notified either during the event or promptly afterward.

At no time shall one adult and one child/youth be alone together out of sight of other adults unless the adult is a parent or legal guardian of the child/youth. This policy should be clearly communicated.

No adult, other than a parent or guardian, is to be alone with a child or youth off-site.

SUP 201 POLICY STATEMENT

Fire Safety will be a primary concern of adults responsible for Southern Region events.

SUP 201 PROCEDURES

Prior to Southern Region events, adults responsible for programming shall exercise care to note the location of all fire-safety equipment (extinguishers, etc.), to ensure the posting of evacuation-route maps, and to determine a safe place to congregate in the event of an evacuation.

During opening gatherings at Southern Region events, the issue of fire safety and response to fire shall be addressed. Participants shall be cautioned about safe use of chalices, candles and other open flames. Location of fire extinguishers and evacuation-route maps shall be pointed out, and the designated place to congregate in the case of evacuation shall be announced.

In the event of evacuation, adults responsible for programming shall take attendance roster and Emergency Releases to gathering site and to take roll immediately.

III. TRANSPORTATION

TRANS 300 POLICY STATEMENT

It is the responsibility of the local congregation or the parents to provide safe transportation to and from Southern Region events.

Adults driving youth to, from or during Southern Region events shall be at least 25 years of age and possess current license valid to operate the vehicle to be driven and proof of insurance. There must be two adults in a vehicle with youth at all times if not being driven by a parent.

In every vehicle in which seat belts are required by law, vehicle occupancy shall not exceed the number of seat belts, and all occupants shall be properly secured in the seat belts.

Written permission of the parent/guardian of all minor passengers will be obtained prior to being transported (See Release Form, Appendix G). The permission will include all relevant details pertaining to the event, such as date and location, name of drivers, time of departure and return. No driver may consume alcohol or use any form of drug that can affect physical or mental performance during or before carrying out his/her duty as a driver.

TRANS 301 POLICY STATEMENT

At no time shall child or youth participants leave the campus of the hosting institution, except as part of planned and previously announced offsite activities under the leadership of the host institution. A minimum of two adults must accompany a group going off-site. At all times the appropriate youth or child to adult ratio must be maintained. (2 adult to 6 children or youth ages 0-13; 2 adult to 8 youth ages 14-18, at all times the adult to youth ratio must be maintained. See SUP 200) In the event of an emergency, the primary on-site adult leader may make exceptions.

All off-site functions shall begin and end on the grounds of the hosting institution, unless parents are specifically notified otherwise in the registration form for the event. Side trips en route to or from an event are prohibited unless authorized in advance in writing by a parent of each child or youth involved.

Youth will not drive themselves or ride with a youth driver to Southern Region events. However, in the event that a parent deems it necessary for their youth to drive themselves to or from a Southern Region-sanctioned event, they must contact a Congregational Life Staff. They may have NO passengers. (See TRANS 301 Procedures).

Adult advisors or sponsors shall have in their possession signed medical release forms for all children and/or youth with whom they are traveling and they shall be responsible for obtaining appropriate medical care for any child and/or youth in their custody. After check-in, the hosting institution is responsible for assisting the adult responsible for the child or youth in obtaining such care. A parent shall be notified of the need for and provider of care as soon as is possible without endangering the child or youth. In the absence of a parent, an adult advisor shall accompany the child or youth to the medical care facility.

TRANS 301 PROCEDURES

In the event that youth must drive themselves to or from a SOUTHERN REGION event, they must have a current license valid to operate the vehicle to be driven, proof of insurance, and the express written consent of their parents. They must have NO additional passengers. Upon arrival at the event, they must park their car until the end of the event and they must agree to get at least 8 hours of sleep the night before the event ends.

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Parents and/or guardians are responsible for their dependent children and/or youth and are required to ensure those dependents are in compliance with all policies and procedures herein.

All adults, whether compensated or volunteer, who work with children and youth at Southern Region events, have responsibilities to the children and youth, to their local congregations, their district, the Southern Region and the larger Unitarian Universalist movement, and must balance these responsibilities at all times.

ACC 400 POLICY STATEMENT

All adults, children and youth at Southern Region events will adhere to all federal, state and local laws as well as to the Big Four:

1. Respect for self and others
2. No sex or patently sexual behavior
3. No weapons, violence or threats of violence.
4. No possession, distribution or use of alcohol, cigarettes or illegal drugs for the duration of the event including transportation back to the home congregation Any minors taking prescription drugs, or over the counter medications, must have them listed on the parental permission slip and listed medications are to be in possession of an adult advisor for the duration of the event. (See Release Form, Appendix G)

ACC 400 PROCEDURES

All Southern Region events are to be non-smoking and there will be no alcohol where minors are present.

ACC 401 POLICY STATEMENT

All drivers shall have the opportunity to sleep for at least eight hours on the night prior to departure from an event. The Southern Region promotes events that maintain enough time for proper sleep schedules for all persons involved to be healthy and safe. The hosting institution will be responsible for providing adequate adult roamers to monitor the facility during drivers' sleeping hours. These roamers shall be responsible for challenging inappropriate behavior, and for ensuring that fire exits remain free of obstructions.

Each adult shall take individual responsibility for getting adequate sleep to promote good judgment and clear thinking.

Sleeping arrangements for youth, children and adults:

- one person under a blanket/sleeping bag
- all sleeping areas will be open and monitored by at least two awake adults at all times.

Visibility and accessibility shall be maintained into all activities rooms at all times, including sleeping rooms and movie rooms, via either an open door or unobstructed interior window into the space. All doors must remain unlocked, and there must be enough light in all rooms for roamers to identify the people in the room.

ACC 402 POLICY STATEMENT

Due to the inherent power imbalance between adults and children or youth, adults will assume the primary responsibility for setting and maintaining appropriate boundaries and cultivating an atmosphere of health and trust.

Adults who look primarily to children or youth for friendship will not be considered for a position of responsibility. Adults are expected to maintain a support network of other adults.

ACC 403 POLICY STATEMENT

Care must be taken to discourage the reality or appearance of an inappropriate relationship. If any significant contact occurs outside regularly scheduled Southern Region events or meetings, due diligence must be exercised to contact appropriate adults (parent/guardian, church official – DRE, minister, and/or president). Sometimes a genuine mentoring relationship will develop between a youth and an adult. Such relationships can be healthy and transformative for both. It is in the best interest of both the adult and the youth that the parents as well as regional or congregation leaders be aware of these outside activities and relationships.

ACC 403 PROCEDURES

For significant contact outside the context of Southern Region events, all adults will:

- Obtain parental permission for meetings with children and youth, and
- Hold these meetings in a public place where all behaviors are easily observable, and/or in the presence of one or more of the child or youth's parents or a designated second adult approved by the parents, and
- Notify at least one of the following: the child or youth's minister, DRE, and/or congregational president.

ACC 404 POLICY STATEMENT

Recognizing that the means for communication, especially electronic communication, are changing rapidly, the Southern Region upholds the principle that parents are the final arbiters of how and when their child or youth should receive communication from adults.

Adults will not initiate Instant Messaging with a child or youth except when all of the following conditions have been met:

- All other forms of communication have failed.
- The IM is sent only to direct the child or youth to another form of communication for the purpose of conducting the business of the group.

Adults responding to communication from a child or youth will maintain appropriate boundaries and use discernment, always acting in the best interest of the safety and wellbeing of the child or youth.

Facebook and other social networking for the Southern Region will be managed and administered by Regional Staff.

ACC 404 PROCEDURES

Should any communication indicate imminent harm to the child or youth, whether by self or others, the adult should use his or her best judgment in staying engaged in the conversation and seeking help for the child or youth as soon as possible.

ACC 405 POLICY STATEMENT

When communicating in online communities, adults in Southern Region leadership positions working with children or youth at Southern Region events will maintain appropriate boundaries

Adults will not advertise, promote, or publish links to their own personal journals, blogs or websites to children or youth.

ACC 406 POLICY STATEMENT

Training of adults working with children and youth will include an explanation of the limits of confidentiality and rules for reporting.

Adults will explain these limits to children and youth in their care.

ACC 406 PROCEDURES

The Southern Region Staff will ensure that an explanation of the limits of confidentiality and rules for reporting will be provided to all leaders of trainings for adults working with children and youth at the Regional level.

ACC 407 POLICY STATEMENT

Adults will be mindful of any ongoing relationship with children or youth that have grown in to adulthood, and assure they do not become exploitive.

It is never appropriate to engage in any manner of sexual behavior with a child or youth. This refers not only to explicitly sexual behavior, but also to sexually provocative behavior or language.

Physical expressions of affection such as hugs certainly have their place, but it is best to allow the child or youth to initiate them, and they should be kept as brief as possible under the circumstances.

Adults should avoid telling jokes with sexual content.

Congregations should implement the Our Whole Lives sexuality education curriculum for as many age levels as possible, in order to give children and youth life skills and language to avoid, confront and/or report inappropriate behavior.

ACC 408 POLICY STATEMENT

Adult, children and youth may NOT be in possession of the following items at Southern Region events: firearms, fireworks or other explosives, sheath knives or other weapons of any kind; illegal drugs; alcohol or pornography. Any minors taking prescription drugs, or over the counter medications, must have them listed on the parental permission slip and listed medications are to be in possession of an adult advisor for the duration of the event. (See Release Form, Appendix G)

ACC 408 PROCEDURES

The hosting institution has the right to request to search any person and their belongings that might harbor such contraband, and the owner of the contraband must leave the event immediately. We will destroy or dispose of dangerous substances, including illegal drugs and alcohol, and turn over weapons or offensive materials to a staff person at the sponsoring institution. If any person refuses consent to search their person or belongings, that person will be sent home immediately at their own (or parent/guardian's) expense.

That institution will decide if, how and to whom confiscated materials will be returned at the conclusion of the event. Possession of contraband shall be reported to those in charge who shall determine eligibility of the offender to participate in future events.

Erotic or offensive text messages on clothing or other materials can be protested by anyone who is offended and those in charge can confiscate it on the grounds of respect.

An incident report of injuries requiring medical care, possession of contraband or other infractions of event rules shall be completed by the persons involved and shall be filed with the hosting institution, and the Southern Region Office and reported to the Southern Region Staff.

ACC 409 POLICY STATEMENT

Neither adults nor children nor youth may offer or receive body piercings, permanent tattoos, or other permanent body modification at Southern Region events.

ACC 410 POLICY STATEMENT

Adults, children and youth will abide by Southern Region policies specific to individual Regional events, including, but not limited to, faith development and leadership training events.

Adults, children and youth will abide by any policies specified by a local congregation or site hosting an event. Whichever policies are more stringent (local or regional) will be followed.

Youth attending any Southern Region events will be in Right Relations with their congregation and be recommended for attendance by Southern Region Staff or their home congregation's leadership (i.e. Minister, DRE or Congregational President).

V. SUSPECTED ENDANGERMENT

SE 500 POLICY STATEMENT

Adults and youth shall report to the adult(s) in charge of the event and the sponsoring advisor (if applicable) any signs of:

- Physical or sexual abuse (based on observation or disclosure by the child or youth)
- Threatened or attempted suicide
- Self-destructive behavior (e.g. cutting, drug abuse, eating disorders)

All adults at Southern Region events are expected to act in accordance with mandatory reporting laws of the host state. (Appendix F)

If the responsible adult(s) in charge ascertains that a child or youth is at immediate risk, the responsible adult(s) shall take any necessary steps to protect the minor.

The responsible adult(s) shall follow Procedures to contact congregational and Southern Region leaders, parent(s) of the involved minor, and Child Protective Services, as warranted.

Otherwise, the matter is to remain confidential. Release of information could interfere with successful prosecution or could result in unwarranted damage to the reputation of the accused.

If child abuse is suspected, the adult who has been suspected of unwarranted conduct will be immediately relieved of any duties involving the supervision, care, or teaching of children and youth.

SE 501 POLICY STATEMENT

Any child, youth or adult participant in Southern Region programming has the right to protest any activity or arrangement that, in their opinion, would put the health or safety of any person at risk. Disputes will be decided by the Southern Region Staff, in relationship with all parties.

Any youth or adult in an elected or appointed Southern Region position of leadership is empowered to veto and otherwise prohibit any activity that would put at risk the health or well-being of any person, or that would result in destruction of property or violation of national, state or local law. Disputes will be decided by the Regional Staff in relationship with all parties.

SE 502 POLICY STATEMENT

If the media contact a congregation, or leader about an alleged abusive situation involving the Southern Region, only the Southern Region Lead(or his/her specific designee) shall speak for the Southern Region.

In general, the following guidelines apply for these situations with the public media:

- Because of the issue of confidentiality, in the best interests of the child, specific cases cannot be discussed in a public context. Particularly if litigation seems possible, it is important to protect both the interests of the child and the Southern Region.
- However, the Southern Region Lead or designated spokesperson will freely discuss what steps have been taken to guard against abusive situations.

VI. CONSEQUENCES AT SOUTHERN REGION EVENTS

CON 601 Violation of the Law by an Adult

In the event that an adult at a Southern Region event has violated the law:

- The adult will leave the premises immediately (as soon as is safe).
- The adult's church contact is called immediately to inform and to arrange for proper adult supervision/transportation of children or youth from their church. In addition the adult's

minister or president will be informed. The local congregation is encouraged to minister to this individual.

- When appropriate, the event Community is informed of the process and results.
- The incident will be reported in writing as quickly as possible, but not more than 24 hours after the incident to a Congregational Life Staff, who will report appropriate details to the Regional Lead and any other authorities that is deemed appropriate or that is required by law.

CON 602 Violation of Southern Region Policy by an Adult

In the event that an adult at a Southern Region Event has violated a Southern Region policy:

- A decision is made by adults in charge of the event as to whether or not the adult will be permitted to stay at the event.
- If the adult is asked to leave, the adult's church contact is called immediately to inform and to arrange for proper supervision /transportation of children or youth from their church if needed. In addition the adult's minister or president will be informed. The church is encouraged to minister to this individual.
- When appropriate, the event Community is informed of the process and results.
- The incident will be reported in writing to a Congregational Life Staff who will report appropriate details to the Regional Lead, any other bodies required by law and the home congregation.
- All mandatory reporting laws for the applicable state will be observed.
- Southern Region Staff will determine further consequences related to other Southern Region Events.

CON 603 Violation of the Law by a Child or Youth at a Southern Region Event

In the event that adults in charge determine a law has been broken by a child or youth

- The child or youth's parents/guardians are called immediately. A safe route home is established.
- The child or youth's church contact is called and told of the arrangements made. The church official is encouraged to provide ministry needed to this child or youth and not to shut him/her out of their local congregation.
- The child or youth's adult sponsor carries out arrangements made for the child or youth to leave the event immediately (or as soon as is safe). Example: The advisor takes all children or youth back to hometown; advisor arranges for the offending child or youth to go home by bus/plane at parents' expense; parent comes to get child or youth.
- When appropriate the community is informed of the process and results.
The incident must be reported in writing as much as possible, but not more than 24 hours after the incident to a Congregational Life Staff.

CON 604 Violation of a Southern Region policy (other than the "Big Four") by a child or youth

In the event that adults in charge determine that a child or youth has violated event policy but has not broken the law

- A decision is made as to whether or not the child or youth will be permitted to stay at the event. At some events, the Spirit Committee should convene to make this decision. In the event there is no Spirit Committee in place, the hosting institution shall convene an acting committee of three adults and three youths, to include a staff member or member of the local governing board.
- If the decision is made that a child or youth leave, he or she may either be sent home or to a safe house.
- The child or youth's parents/guardians are called immediately, told of the incident and the consequence. A safe route home is established if required by those in charge or if parent wants child or youth home.
- The child or youth's church contact is called and told of the incident and consequences. The church official is encouraged to provide ministry needed to the child or youth and not to shut him/her out of the local congregation.
- The adult responsible for the child or youth carries out arrangements made for the child or youth if he/she is to leave the event immediately (or as soon as is safe). Examples: The responsible adult takes all the children or youth back to hometown, arranges for the children or youth to go home by bus/plane at parent's expense, parent comes to get children or youth.
- The child or youth should be offered the opportunity to apologize to the community, either in person or in writing. Further, the child or youth should be offered the opportunity to perform some act of reparation.
- The child or youth should be made aware that his/her local church community will be informed, and that they may impose additional consequences.
- The community is informed of the process and results.

The incident must be reported to a Congregational Life Staff who will then determine whether this youth should be suspended from future Southern Region events. Requirements may be imposed on this youth to be able to rejoin the Southern Region community. Any incident should be recorded and the information given to a Congregational Life Staff, the youth's home church and the youth's advisor. It should be clearly established to the local church entities and the youth that the local youth group or congregation may levy their own consequences in addition to those determined by the Congregational Life Staff. It is hoped that these consequences will always be determined in the spirit of love, and that the youth will never be totally excluded from the community.

APPENDIX A

February 2013

Dear prospective volunteer,

Thank you so much for giving of your time and effort to support the Southern Region. You are very much appreciated. As part of the process to officially volunteer, we ask you to please fill out the attached application form along with the permission to perform a criminal background check.

For your information, we perform criminal background checks through the Dallas Volunteer Center. They use VeriFYI (www.verifyi.org) to conduct these checks. VeriFYI is a comprehensive criminal background check program that encompasses a variety of ways to obtain criminal history. Despite the detailed paragraph on the form (which we may not alter due to the Fair Credit Reporting Act), the only information we will be obtaining or verifying is listed below. We will never check for credit history, military, professional license, or education. This search will NOT access or disclose ANY financial history. We only want to verify that the social security and date of birth match you as a volunteer for the SOUTHERN REGION.

VeriFYI's standard search, what they call their National Search and Social Security, is a multi-state search that includes:

- State records. Most state records show offenses and convictions committed in certain states. Information is taken from Department of Corrections records, Sexual Offense records, Department of Public Safety records, Bureau of Investigations records or Administrator of the Courts records where applicable. To see what information each state provides, go to www.verifyi.com.
- Texas State records. Available only in Texas. This typically includes all prior arrests and convictions, including adjudicated records and juvenile offenses committed in Texas. Information is reported by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS).
- Social Security trace. To verify identity and ensure that the person being checked is, in fact, who they say they are. This trace includes out-of-state residence information as well.
- Multi-State database search of criminal and sex offender records. This will scan databases from around the country to find any record of arrest, conviction or sexual offense perpetrated.

The Fair Credit Reporting Act states that any access to credit history must be disclosed to the applicant. The background check program verifies the Name, SS# and DOB with the Credit Bureau Equifax, therefore the Fair Credit Reporting Act rules apply. This search will NOT access or disclose ANY financial history.

These reports will go to the Southern Region Office and will be seen only by qualified staff. If something comes up on your report, you will be notified and allowed to see the report yourself. All

records must, by law, be destroyed within 30 days. There is an appeal process in place if you believe the report to be incorrect.

Automatic disqualification will occur if the following offenses are discovered:

Murder; Abduction of children; Sexual assault; Aggravated assault; Crimes against children; Indecency with a child; Abuse and neglect of a child; Abandoning or endangering a child; Injury to a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual; Possession of or trafficking in child pornography; Or, any equivalent offense within this state or any other.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to call the Southern Region office at 877-216-2986.

Thanks again for your commitment to Unitarian Universalism in the South.

Peace,

Congregational Life Staff
Southern Region, UUA

Background Verification Release Form
AGENCY INFORMATION

Date	Agency Name Southern Region UUA		
Contact Name			
Agency's Main Phone Number (800)549-0751		Agency's Fax Number	

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Applicant Full Name (Last, First, MI)			Maiden or Other Name(s) Used		
Current Address					
City		State	Zip Code		County
Social Security Number		Date of Birth	Driver's License Number		State Issued
Position Applied For					
Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		Race <input type="checkbox"/> African American <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Anglo <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> Other			

I hereby authorize VERIFYI and or its Service Provider to request and receive any and all background information about or concerning me, including but not limited to my Criminal History, Social Security Number Trace including a consumer report under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C 1681, Driving Record, Employment History, Military Background, Civil Listings, Educational Background, Professional License from any Individual, Corporation, Partnership, Law Enforcement Agency, and

other entities including my Present and Past Employers.

The criminal history, as received from the reporting agencies, may include arrest and conviction data as well as plea bargains and deferred adjudications and delinquent conduct as committed as a juvenile. I understand that this information will be used, in part, to determine my eligibility for an employment/volunteer position with this organization. I also understand that as long as I remain an employee or volunteer here, the criminal history check may be repeated at any time. I understand that I will have an opportunity to review the criminal history as received by client/agency and a procedure is available for clarification, if I dispute the record as received. I also understand that the criminal history could contain information presumed to be expunged.

I further release and discharge VERIFYI and their Service Provider and all of their Subsidiaries, Affiliates, Officers, Employees, Contract Personnel, or Associates, from any and all claims and liability arising out of any request for information or records pursuant to this authorization, procurement of an investigative consumer report and understand that it may contain information about my character, general reputation, personal characteristics, and mode of living, whichever are applicable.

I understand that I have the right to make written request within a reasonable period of time to VERIFYI for additional information concerning the nature and scope of the investigation. I acknowledge that I have voluntarily provided the above information for employment/volunteer purposes, and I have carefully read and understand this authorization.

_____ Applicant's Signature	_____ Date
_____ Applicant's Printed Name	_____ Parent/Guardian's Signature (if under 18 years of age)

APPENDIX B

See next page for the SOUTHERN REGION Events Adult Application. You may also download a copy from www.uuasouthernregion.org

VERIFY

SOUTHERN REGION Application to Work with Children and Youth

I am applying to work the following event: _____

Last Name	First Name	e-mail address	Gender	DOB
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Address	City	State	Zip Code	Cell Phone
Phone Number _____				

Church/Covenanted Community	Address	City/State/Zip Code
Phone Number _____		

Employer	Address	City/State/Zip Code
Phone Number _____		

Do you have a current valid driver's license?	Yes	No	License #	State
Expiration Date _____				

Please complete this section concerning automobile liability insurance. We recommend automobile personal injury liability insurance of \$100,000 minimum.

Policy Holder Name	Insurance Company	Policy #	
Expiration Date _____			
Are you named as an insured driver on this policy?	Yes	No	If not, explain below:

Congregations/covenanted UU community attended regularly within the past five (5) years:

Congregation attended	City, State	Years
Congregation attended	City, State	Years
Congregation attended	City, State	Years

Experience you feel qualifies you to work with children or youth in SOUTHERN REGION, i.e. teaching, advising, trainings, etc.:

Work # of years _____ Position/Type of work _____

Other # of years _____ Position(s) _____

List any special training, education, skills, abilities and talents: _____

List any leadership experiences at congregational/cluster/district/Southern Region/UUA levels: _____

References (no relatives, please). Please include a reference from your congregation (i.e. minister, religious educator, youth director, or congregation president).

1 _____ # of years known
Name/Church leadership position Phone Number

Address City State Zip Code e-mail address

2 _____ # of years known
Name Phone Number

Address City State Zip Code e-mail address

3 _____ # of years known
Name Phone Number

Address City State Zip Code e-mail address

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a criminal offense related to sexual misconduct or child abuse?

Yes No

Has any civil judgment ever been made against you for reasons related to sexual misconduct or child abuse?

Yes No

Have you ever resigned from employment or been disciplined or terminated by an employer for reasons related to sexual misconduct or child abuse?

Yes No

Other than the above, 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 children or youth?
Yes No

Have you ever been convicted of Driving-Under-the-Influence or Reckless driving?
Yes No

Have you ever been diagnosed or are currently receiving treatment for any condition (medical/psychological) that might preclude you from involvement in working with children or youth?
Yes No

If you answered yes to any of the above, please explain (attach a separate sheet). A yes does not necessarily exclude you for consideration.

Applicant's Statement

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or churches listed in this application to provide any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for work with children or youth.

I have received and read a copy of the SOUTHERN REGION Child and Youth Protection Policy and agree to be bound by and uphold them.

I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing release and know the contents thereof and I sign this release as my own free act. This is a legally binding agreement, which I have read and understand.

Applicant's signature and title as appropriate for credentials listed on this form Date

Witness Signature Date

APPENDIX C

ACCORDANCE WITH THESE POLICIES

Adults in leadership positions in the Southern Region working with children or youth at Southern Region events who disagree with any provision of these Policies are free to discuss their opinions with the Southern Region Staff. However, until such time as the Southern Region chooses to alter any portion of its provisions, the adults must abide by the Policies as written.

Eligibility of youth to participate in Southern Region Programming shall be consistent with current policy, including age requirements and getting signatures from parents and church officials.

APPENDIX D

SCRIPT FOR BACKGROUND CHECK OF CANDIDATES PROVIDING
DIRECT SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH
AT SOUTHERN REGION - EVENTS

Date:

Candidate:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

NOTE: Whenever possible, interviews are to be held in person, in a private setting. When this is not possible, phone calls may be made. Answers to all questions are to be recorded, in writing, as the interview is taking place.

Hello, I am _____ and I serve the faith as _____

It is my understanding that (name of candidate) attends your congregation and I'm calling to ask you a few questions in order to help determine whether or not (name of candidate) is qualified to serve in a position that requires the direct supervision of children and youth.

This interview may take up to twenty-minutes. Is this a convenient time for you?
(If "yes", proceed; if "no", determine time when you may call again.)

Your responses to these questions will be turned in to the Southern Region Congregational Staff; and in the event of an appeal to the outcome of the interview process, may be shared, in part or in whole, with the candidate.

How long have you known (candidate)?

How well would you say you know (candidate)?

(If interviewee does not know candidate well, please ask ** directly below.)

**I'd like to complete this interview and would also like to know if there is someone else on your staff, or in a position of lay-leadership, who may be better acquainted with (candidate). I'd like to interview them as well. Would you please share their name and contact information with me?

Has (candidate) worked directly with children or youth in your congregation?

How long has (candidate) been involved working with children or youth?

Has (candidate) proven to be trustworthy, and able to set appropriate boundaries with children and/or youth?

In what other capacities has (candidate) served your congregation (chaired committees, served on task forces, served on Board)?

In your opinion does (candidate) understand programming for children and/or youth within the context of the strategic goals and/or mission of your larger congregation? Can you give me an example of how (candidate) has exhibited her/his ability to see the "big picture"?

What do you believe to be the primary motivation behind (candidate's) desire to work with children or youth?

Does (candidate) exhibit ability to work well with other adults as part of a team? Can you give me an example?

Does (candidate) respect and adhere to your congregation's policies regarding safety and accountability?

Is (candidate) dedicated to strengthening the future of Unitarian Universalism?

Does (candidate) exercise good judgment and decision-making? Can you give me an example of that?

Do you feel that (candidate) is someone capable of setting a good example for other adults working with children and youth and for the children and youth themselves?

Is there any reason that you can think of that (candidate) would not be an asset to the _____ committee/staff/board?

Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about (candidate)?

Is there anything of a confidential nature that would have a bearing on this interview that you do not feel comfortable sharing with me? (if "yes" ask *** directly below.)

***Would you feel comfortable sharing this with:

- a. the Southern Region Congregational Staff
- c. the President of your District Board, _____(name)_____?

Thank you for your time. I have only a few more questions to ask.

Do you have any comments regarding this interview process that you would like to pass on to the Southern Region Congregational Staff?

Do you feel that this interview has been conducted in a fashion that allows you to end this interview feeling that you have been able to:

 speak candidly?

 address any concerns you may have about the candidate?

 feel more confident about the checks and balances in place to insure that the children and youth in our Southern Region are working with responsible and caring advisors?

Now I'd like to take just a few minutes to read to you the notes I've made in response to each question I asked you. If you feel that I have not accurately represented your responses, please stop me at any time so that I may revise my notes to accurately reflect your comments.

(READ EACH QUESTION AND THE EXACT WORDS YOU HAVE RECORDED AS THE INTERVIEWEE'S RESPONSE. CONTINUE UNTIL INTERVIEWEE IS SATISFIED WITH WHAT YOU HAVE WRITTEN.)

Again, thank you so much for your time. We will consider your input carefully. Good-bye.

APPENDIX E

DEFINITIONS

Congregational Life Staff: Congregational Life Staff of the UUA

Context of Southern Region Events: includes the planning, implementation, and evaluation phases of an event hosted by, sponsored by, or affiliated with the Districts of the Southern Region or the Southern Region of the Unitarian Universalist Association.

DRE: Director of Religious Education

Group: those minors who have been assigned to a nursery, pre-school, or individual elementary class or specific program or activity within the context of that class, as well as youth who are taking part in a planned, organized component of their program.

RE: Religious Education

Region: Southern Region

Supervision: the reasonable exercise of thoughtful action and responsibility by adults working with their respective age groups, realizing that the immediacy of such direct supervision will vary with the ages of those in a group and the context of the activity.

Time frame covered by these Policies: Policies governing Southern Region events begin at the arrival at the departing congregation, through the event and end upon departure from the congregation of origin.

UUMA: Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association

APPENDIX F

WHO IS A MANDATORY REPORTER?

We are **all** mandatory reporters. Every event will be aware of the state laws in the individual states.

Appendix G
UUA SOUTHERN REGION
PARENT/GUARDIAN'S CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM

I, _____ (parent/guardian name) am the parent or legal guardian of _____ (youth name). I give my consent for him/her to attend the _____ (herein after known as "THE EVENT." I give my consent and authority for the UUA Southern Region ("SR") staff or designated adult to take action to help ensure the safety, health and welfare of my child. I understand that if my child breaks any federal/state/provincial or local laws, s/he will be asked to leave THE EVENT and I will be responsible for getting my child home and all costs associated with.

The child covered by this authorization is:

Health Care Information:

Full Name _____
 Age _____
 Parent/Legal Guardian _____
 Home Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Home Phone _____
 Business Phone _____
 Cell Phone _____

Name of Doctor _____
 Phone _____
 Name of Dentist/Orthodontist _____
 Phone _____

In Case of Emergency during THE EVENT Contact:
 Name _____
 Day Phone _____
 Evening Phone _____

Do you carry family medical/hospital insurance?
 Yes No

Name of parent/person with insurance policy:

Medical / Health Problems:

Is your child under the care of a physician for
 Epilepsy yes no Diabetes yes no

Health Insurance Company:

Policy # _____
 Group # _____

Please note if your child has any of the following:

Allergies _____
 Surgeries _____
 Seizures _____
 Headaches _____
 Broken Bones _____
 Asthma/ Respiratory Issues _____
 Heart Problems _____
 ADD _____
 Stomach Issues _____
 Other _____

My child currently takes the following medications:

My child may **NOT** take the following over the counter medications as needed:

Are there any other medical/health issues which event organizers should be made aware of?

Note: Individuals not immunized due to religious objection - 28 - submit a written and signed statement from parent/guardian stating objection to their child's immunization due to religious beliefs. Youth not immunized due to medical exemption must submit a statement signed by a physician.

Authorization for Medical Treatment: I hereby give permission to SR staff or designated adult to provide basic first aid treatment and care to my child within the scope of their training. I also give permission to the medical personnel selected by the SR/designee to order x-rays, routine tests, and treatment; to release any records necessary for insurance purposes; and to provide or arrange necessary related transportation for my child. In the event that I cannot be reached in an emergency, I give permission to the physician selected by the SR/designee to secure and administer treatment, including but not limited to hospitalization, anesthesia, emergency surgical care and prescriptive drugs for the health of my child.

Waiver/Release Agreement: I, the undersigned, as a parent/legal guardian of the above named child, in consideration of the services of the UUA Southern Region, its officers, employees, agents and volunteers, (herein after collectively referred to as the "SR"), agree to release, indemnify, and discharge the SR, on behalf of myself, my spouse, my children, my parents, my heirs, assigns, personal representative and estate as follows:

1. I acknowledge that my child's participation in THE EVENT entails known and unknown risks that could result in physical or emotional injury, paralysis, death, or damage to my child, to property, or to third parties.
2. My child's participation in THE EVENT is voluntary, and I elect to allow him/her to participate in spite of the risks.
3. I hereby voluntarily release, discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the SR from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action that are in any way connected with my child's participation in THE EVENT.
4. I certify that I have adequate insurance to cover any injury or damages my child may cause or suffer while participating in THE EVENT, or else I agree to bear the costs of such injury or damage myself. I further certify that I am willing to assume the risk of any medical or physical condition my child may have.
5. I realize that any photos or video taken of my child or writings or other materials produced by my child as part of the program during THE EVENT become property of the SR and may be used in SR materials. I realize there will be no compensation for the use of these photos. (If you **do not** want your child's photo used in SR materials, please initial here. _____)

Parent/Guardian's Name (printed): _____ **Date** _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____

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