

First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Arlington

Youth Group Policies

2012-2013

I. “Unbreakables”

At the beginning of the church year, the Youth Group will covenant together. Breaching the covenant is serious because it disrupts the respect of one another and of our community that is at the foundation of the youth group. Breaches of the covenant are handled by the YAC. In addition to the covenant, there are certain Unbreakable Behavior Guidelines that youth must follow, which include:

- Only unsexualized behavior at all youth group events
- Youth Group is a violence- and weapon-free zone
- Youth Group meetings and events are alcohol and drug free

These serious infractions will be handled directly by the Youth Coordinator and Director of Religious Education.

II. Confidentiality

Youth Group is a safe space for youth to share. All information shared during Candles and Worship is confidential, meaning that it should not leave the youth group community (youth, advisors, and youth program staff).

However, the Youth Coordinator will break confidentiality in the following circumstances:

- It is deemed that the youth presents an immediate danger to him/herself or others.
- Child abuse or neglect is reasonably suspected.
- The youth appears to be in immediate danger.

When possible, the Youth Coordinator will tell the youth prior to breaking confidentiality.

If the Youth Coordinator is not present and confidentiality needs to be broken, volunteer adult advisors are encouraged to consult with the DRE or RE Assistant, if time allows. If danger is deemed immediate adult volunteer advisors can break confidentiality to protect the safety of the youth.

III. Joining Youth Group Policy

Youth Group is open to all 9th-12th graders who belong to church member families and/or have completed the Coming of Age program at First Parish. Other interested youth may also join the youth group, but must complete certain requirements in order to fully join and participate in the group. All Youth Group members must turn in a **Religious Education Registration Form** within 1 month of their first youth group meeting. Youth cannot attend lock-ins, retreats, or field trips if this form is not on file. All Youth Group members must also complete a **Youth Contact Form** at their first meeting.

There are 4 Sundays during the church year that are designated as Newcomer Nights. To preserve the sanctity of the group dynamics and our community, Newcomers are only invited to join Youth Group at one of these designated Newcomer Nights. On each Newcomer Night, there will be a 45-minute Newcomers Orientation before Youth Group with Youth YAC members, which newcomers are required to attend.

For youth who are interested in joining youth group whose families are not members of First Parish and the youth did not complete the Coming of Age program here, the process of joining youth group is as follows:

- 1) Attend a Newcomer Orientation and Youth Group Newcomers Night.
- 2) Submit the **Youth Family Sponsorship Form** along with the ordinary registration materials. (All non-member-family youth must be sponsored by a member family.)
- 3) **Attend 1 Sunday morning church service** to better understand what our larger church community is about.
- 4) Introduce oneself to **Tina Schultz, Religious Education Director**.

These four items must be completed within 1 month of the Newcomers Night.

IV. Attendance Policy

Youth may attend youth group as frequently as they wish. Youth who we haven't seen in a while are always welcome to come back to a youth group meeting!

However, in order to attend a lock-in, retreat, or field trip, youth must have met minimum attendance requirements. This is to preserve the sanctity of our community bonds and create a unified intention regarding the event. This minimum attendance requirement is that youth must attend 2 out of the last 3 Youth Group meetings, prior to the event in question.

In order to attend the Service Trip this summer, youth must attend 4 out of the first 6 youth group meetings, and then 2 meetings per month for the rest of the year.

V. Youth Group Friends Policy

- Friends of youth group members are welcome to attend 1 meeting as "friends" or "visitors".
- To continue coming to youth group after 1 meeting, friends must register to become a member of the youth group themselves and attend a Newcomers Orientation.
- Non-registered friends are not allowed on field trips, lock-ins, or other sleepovers due to safety and liability issues.
- Either the Youth Program Coordinator or the Youth Co-Leaders must be notified ahead of time if a youth is bringing a friend to the meeting.

Youth/Adult Committee (YAC)

Co-Leaders: Adam K & Jessica S

Worship Coordinators: Sarah W & Dan W

Social Action Coordinator: Gabriella H

Chaplain: Kendra M & Chloe S

District Liaison: Samantha F

Communications Coordinator: Larsen L

Music Coordinator: Tristan J

Fundraising Coordinator: Pete C

Treasurer: Kiki C

Adult Advisors: Paul Franzosa, Marcie Griffith, Rachel Hodge, Cindy Kiburz, Christina Schultz

All YAC members: yac@firstparish.info

Jessie and Adam: youthgroup@firstparish.info

Kendra and Chloe: youthchaplain@firstparish.info

Adult Advisors

Meg Candilore, Dave Deakin, Cindy Kiburz, Andy Kobayashi, Lynne Jacoby, Bill Licea-Kane, Rob Meier, Maggie Orme-Johnson

Youth Program Staff

Marcie Griffith, Youth Program Coordinator

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Rachel Hodge, Religious Education Assistant

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Christina Schultz, Director of Religious Education

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