

Unity North Atlanta
Policy and Procedure

Policy Name: Youth Programs	Date Created: June 3, 2015
Policy Number: UNA-150001	Date Approved: August 20, 2015 Revision Date: August 16, 2018 Date Renewed: December 6, 2018
Category: Ministries	Expiration Date: December 6, 2021
	Approved by: Policy and Procedure Committee Board of Directors

Purpose of Policy: It is Unity North Atlanta’s goal to provide high quality youth programming that teaches the principles of Unity and critical thinking in a safe and supportive environment. Youth programming encompasses Sunday school and all other UNA-sponsored on-site and off-site events for individuals from birth to eighteen (18) years of age (“Youth Programs”). Guidelines for Childcare are the same as this Policy.

I. Roles

Spiritual Leader:

Oversees the Curricula and paid and unpaid Staff of UNA’s Youth and Family Program.

Executive Director:

Responsible for Administration Oversight of Youth and Family Program.

Lead:

Paid Employee or Contractor responsible for implementation of curricula and oversight of programs, including proper registration documentation. In addition, the Lead is responsible for providing a safe environment for all youth.

Guide/Sponsor:

Adult Volunteer in Youth Programs working under the direct supervision of the Lead.

Teenage Volunteers

A teenage volunteer (13 to 18) working under the supervision of a Lead or Guide/Sponsor.

Caregiver:

The Parent or Legal Guardian of youth registered for a UNA-sponsored Youth Programs. The Caregiver is responsible for keeping the registration record(s) for their youth up to date. Caregivers are asked to participate in the spiritual education of their youth and provide Youth and Family Ministry (YFM) Guide hours as needed. Caregivers are responsible for following Policies and Procedures relating to our Youth Programs.

Youth/Child

An individual from birth until 18 years of age participating in a Youth Program.

II. Curricula

With the exception of the Y.O.U., curricula are developed by Leads and the Spiritual Leader and are based on Unity Principles. Curricula are reviewed annually and are age appropriate. Y.O.U. creates its lessons under the supervision of the Lead(s) and input from the Spiritual Leader.

- i. All Guides/Sponsors will follow the curricula as presented by the Lead.
- ii. Activities of the day for infants through Grade 5 will be shared with Caregivers. A letter describing the curriculum is provided to the Caregivers of Uniteens.
- iii. Caregivers are encouraged to continue the lessons at home.

III. Adult/Youth Ratios: The following ratios are required for all Youth Programs. (Requirements as recommended by our insurance carrier.)

KidzChurch (Infant through 5th Grade):

Nursery	1:3	Infant – 3 years
PreK	1:6	3 years (potty trained) – 5 years (Pre-K)
Kids 1	1:6	K – 2 nd Grade
Kids 2	1:6	3 rd -5 th Grade
Childcare	1:5	

Uniteens - (Middle School):

Sundays and Rallies	1:7 (2 Sponsor Minimum)
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Y.O.U - (High School):

Sunday & Wednesday	2 Sponsors minimum, preferably 1:7
Rallies & other events	1:7 (2 Sponsor Minimum)

IV. Safety: (UNA Policy No. 150002 - Safety and Health is incorporated herein by reference)

1. **Role Responsibilities:** Proper supervision of UNA-sponsored activities will help us to limit potential problems and ensure a successful program.
 - a. All Leads are responsible for following all Policies and Procedures established by UNA relating to our Youth Programs. The Leads are responsible for training of all Guides/Sponsors within their respective programs ensuring that applicable Policies and Procedures are followed. Training is done annually for all Guides/Sponsors and whenever a new Guide/Sponsor is added to the team.
 - b. All Guides/Sponsors are responsible for following the instruction of their respective Lead and

for communicating on a regular basis to their Lead all information regarding the youth they are teaching/supervising.

- c. All Caregivers are responsible for communicating to the Lead all information pertinent to the care of their children. Caregivers are responsible for following Policies and Procedures relating to our Youth Programs. A copy of these policies and procedures will be available to each Caregiver.

2. Youth Protection

a. Volunteer Screening

- i. Application Form: Each prospective volunteer will complete the application form attached hereto as Exhibit A. Note that the application includes a consent to release information for the purpose of obtaining a criminal background check. If a prospective volunteer declines to sign the authorization form, s/he will be unable to work with our youth.
- ii. Interview: This step will explore why the prospective volunteer wants to work with our youth and the experience they have in doing so. The Lead will conduct all interviews and determine suitability of applicant for volunteer position.
- iii. UNA References: Each volunteer will provide at least two references, preferably from UNA members. The references provided will be contacted either in person or via telephone to obtain input on the volunteer's qualifications to work with youth. Information received during this step will be documented on the Application form. All information will be held strictly confidential.
- iv. Background Check: Full Background checks will be conducted prior to placement and annually, at the expense of UNA, for all staff and volunteers who work with youth in our Youth Programs. The Senior Spiritual Leader and/or the Executive Director will be responsible for reviewing background checks and determining whether or not prospective volunteers will be allowed to work with youth.

b. Teenage Volunteers (13 to 18)

UNA encourages teenagers to serve by helping in the classroom. In the event that teenagers are volunteering to work with younger youth, the following will apply.

- i. Teenage Volunteers will be screened as specified above with the exception of 2. a. iv.
- ii. Teenage Volunteers must be under the supervision of a Lead or Guide/Sponsor.
- iii. Teenage Volunteers must never be left alone with youth except in an emergency.
- iv. Teenage Volunteers do not fulfill the Two Adult Rule (see below). In the event a second adult is not present, the Open-Door Policy (see below) must be followed.

c. Check-in/Check-out Procedure for School

For youth below Grade 6, a secure check-in/check-out procedure will be followed. These children must be signed in and out by a Caregiver. Only Caregivers or individuals expressly

identified by the Caregiver may remove a youth from classroom. Photo identification of the person designated by the Caregiver must be shown before the youth is released. The Sign-in sheet attached hereto as Exhibit B will be used as part of the check-in/check-out procedure.

If an unidentified individual attempts to pick up a child, the Lead will be contacted. The Lead will be responsible for releasing the youth, but only after speaking with and gaining explicit permission from the Caregiver.

d. Supervision

- i. **Two Adult Rule** No youth should ever be left alone with an unrelated adult at a Youth Program. A minimum of two adults must be in attendance whenever youth are being supervised during Youth Programs. The two adults shall not be related to each other nor from the same household.

The only exception to the Two-Adult Rule is for youth classes where only one adult teacher is in attendance during the class session. In such cases, the Open-Door Policy (below) shall apply.

Staff members and volunteers should never send an older youth off with a younger youth to a room or other location by themselves.

During off-site Youth Programs, a youth and an unrelated adult should never be separated from the group.

ii. Open Door Policy

When only one adult is present during a class session or during childcare, classroom doors shall remain open unless there is a window in the door. Classroom doors will never be locked while people are inside a classroom. Classroom doors without windows that are located near exits will have half doors with the bottom half of the door closed and locked when only one adult is present.

iii. Overnight Guidelines

On overnight trips the sex of the chaperones will reflect the sex of the group with a ratio of 1 adult to 7 youths. Girls and boys will sleep in separate rooms.

f. Driving

When it becomes necessary to transport youth to or from a Youth Program, drivers must be a minimum of 25 years old and maintain insurance as legally required in Georgia. Whenever possible, cars should caravan and have two adults in any vehicle with youth. In the event that a youth needs a ride, and no one is available to accompany the adult, the adult should contact the Caregiver by phone and gain permission to drive the youth without an additional adult present. An adult should avoid being alone with an unrelated youth.

e. **Photographing/Videotaping**

A Minor Photo Release Form (herein attached as Exhibit C) must be on file as part of the youth's registration packet prior to any photographs or video recording being done. The Photo Release Form should be included as part of the child's initial registration into our Youth Programs. This form will remain in effect until it is changed or rescinded by the Caregiver.

3. Sick Youth Policy

Caregivers are encouraged to be considerate of others when deciding whether to place their child under our care. In general, youth with the following symptoms should NOT attend Sunday school or other Youth Programs:

- Fever
- Diarrhea or vomiting within the last 24 hours
- Green or yellow runny nose
- Eye or skin infections
- Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease

Youth who are observed by our staff/volunteers to be ill will be separated from other youth and the Caregiver will be requested to remove the child.

a. **Medications**

It is the policy of UNA not to administer either prescription or nonprescription medications to youth under our care. Medications must be administered by a Caregiver.

Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to Caregivers of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions) or youth with a medication regimen that overlaps UNA and Youth Programs, so long as the exception is requested in a writing (attached as Exhibit D) signed by the Caregiver and given to the Lead. Reasonable accommodations will be made for youth with special needs. Parents of children with special needs should address their situation to the Youth Education Coordinator, Camp Director or Uniteen/Y.O.U. Leads to develop a plan of action.

4. Discipline

It is the policy of UNA not to administer corporal punishment, even if a Caregiver has suggested or given permission for it. There will be no spanking, hitting or other physical discipline of youth. Neither will there be any verbal abuse, such as ridicule, sarcasm or shaming. Guides/Sponsors should consult with their Lead if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues. Any Volunteer or paid Staff not adhering to this will be immediately and permanently released from their position.

Youth who exhibit unruly behavior will be taken away from the other youth, asked to correct the behavior and will have consequences of future unruliness explained to them.

If the youth continues to behave in an unruly manner, the youth is to be taken to his or her Caregiver or the Caregiver will be called to come for their child. The Lead will talk privately with the Caregiver or follow up with a phone call to the Caregiver. The Lead will advise his/her Guide/Sponsor of the youth's behavior and the follow-up action taken which may include permanent removal from the program. A Special Concerns/Incident Report (Exhibit H) will be completed on the day of the event and a copy given to the Caregiver. The original will be filed with the Executive Director.

5. Restroom Guidelines

If a youth, four (4) years of age and younger, requires assistance, staff/volunteers should escort those youth to the bathroom and will leave the stall door open as s/he assists the youth.

For the protection of all, staff/volunteers shall never be alone with a youth in a bathroom with the door closed and shall never be in a closed bathroom stall with a youth. Caregivers are strongly encouraged to have their youth visit the bathroom prior to each class.

6. Accidental Injuries to Youth

In the event that a youth is injured while under the care of UNA staff or volunteers, the following steps should be followed:

- a. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, staff/volunteers will provide first aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the youth's Caregiver of the injury at the time the youth is picked up from our care.
- b. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple first aid, a call will be placed to 911. The Caregiver and the Lead will be summoned.
- c. In all cases, a Personal Injury Incident Report (attached as Exhibit E) will be completed by a person witnessing the incident or attending to the youth after the incident. The report will then be given to the Spiritual Leader and/or Executive Director. Once the Incident Report is reviewed, a copy of the signed report will be given to the Caregiver.

7. Training

All staff/volunteers are required to attend applicable training events as scheduled. If a staff/volunteer is not able to attend the training before starting their duties, they must receive individual instruction from the Lead.

8. Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse

If a member of the UNA staff or volunteer has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused, that person will notify the Spiritual Leader or Executive Director [“the person in charge of

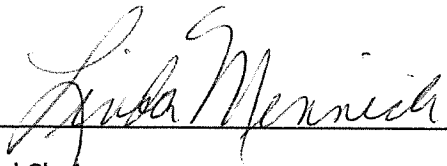
the facility or the designated delegate thereof”] who will immediately (but in no later than 24 hours from the time there is a reasonable cause to believe a youth has been abused) report or cause a report to be made, orally (followed by a report in writing, if requested) to a child welfare agency providing protective services (Cobb County DFCS), as designated by the Department of Human Services or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney. Report of Suspected Child Abuse attached herein as Exhibit F.

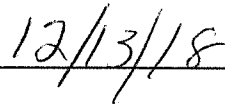
The report of suspected child abuse will contain the names and addresses of the child and the child’s caregivers, if known, the child’s age, the nature and extent of the child’s injuries, including any evidence of previous injuries, and any other information that the reporting person believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries and the identity of the perpetrator. Under Georgia law, photographs of the child’s injuries to be used as documentation in support of allegations by hospital employees or volunteers, physicians, law enforcement personnel, school officials, or employees or volunteers of legally mandated public or private youth protective agencies may be taken without the permission of the child’s parent. Such photographs will be made available as soon as possible to the chief welfare agency providing protective services (Cobb County DFCS) and to the appropriate police authority.

9. Allegations of Child Abuse Against UNA Staff or Volunteers

If child abuse is alleged to have occurred at UNA or during UNA-sponsored activities, the allegation should be reported immediately to the Lead, who will utilize the following procedure:

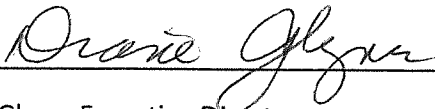
- a. The child’s caregivers will be notified and the child will be removed from the situation. Do not confront the accused until the safety of the child has been secured.
- b. The incident will be reported immediately to the Spiritual Leader and Executive Director. The Executive Director will contact government authorities as required by law.
- c. The Executive Director will promptly notify UNA’s insurance company of the allegation.
- d. Executive Director will promptly notify the UNA Board of Directors of the allegation. When the child is safe, the person alleged to be the perpetrator of the child abuse will be removed from working with any of our youth pending an investigation. This individual will be handled with dignity and respect. If the accused is a paid employee of the church, s/he may be suspended with pay until the allegations are cleared or substantiated.
- e. The Report of Suspected Child Abuse form attached herein as Exhibit F will be completed.
- f. UNA will cooperate with any investigation by state or local authorities. In the event there is no investigation of the incident by state or local authorities, the Board of Directors will form a team to investigate the circumstances of the incident and to make recommendations, if any, to the Board. The team will be under the oversight of an officer of the Board.
- g. The role of the church is to provide spiritual care, comfort, and pastoral care for all parties, including the victim, the alleged perpetrator and their families. The church staff will not act as a detective or investigator. Staff members should not prejudge the situation and should show care and support to all parties.
- h. Public statements and media interviews, if any, will be handled under guidance of outside counsel and through spokesperson designated by the Board. All others will refrain from speaking to the media.






Linda Minnick, Board Chair

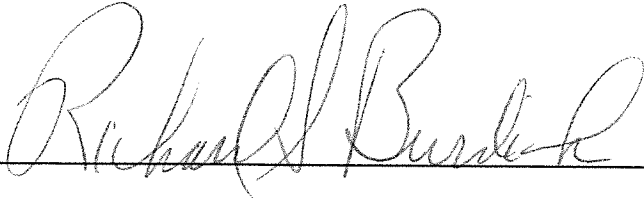
Date





Diane Glynn, Executive Director

Date





Richard Burdick, Senior Spiritual Leader

Date