

## **UCCNB Youth and Children's Ministry Guidelines**

*To help the United Church of Christ in New Brighton provide for the safety of the children, youth, and adults who participate in our Church School and Youth Programs, these guidelines will be observed:*

- 1) Parents of children and youth who participate in church school or youth group activities will be asked at the beginning of each program year to complete or update a health information and emergency contact form for each child. These will be kept in a confidential file in the Associate Minister's office, and will be on hand for every activity in which the children participate.
- 2) Parent permission, including the signature of a parent and/or a responsible adult, as well as an emergency phone number, will be required for participation in any youth activity off church grounds.
- 3) Only licensed drivers over the age of 21 will be allowed to provide transportation for other youth or adults during a youth activity. All passengers in vehicles used during youth activities must use seat belts.
- 4) All youth transportation plans must be set up ahead of time and communicated to the main adult leader of the event/activity. If plans change at any time, the parent/guardian of the youth must be in direct communication with the responsible adult leader.
- 5) If someone other than a parent or legal guardian is picking up a child from an event or youth activity, the adult leader must know ahead of time.
- 6) A youth may not come and go during an activity or event. If they leave, they may not return, unless prior arrangements have been made with the leader. Parents will be called if a youth leaves and no prior arrangements have been made.
- 7) One adult will staff church-sponsored retreats and overnights for every four youth, with a minimum of two adults present. When children and youth of both genders are participating, the adult advisors must include both males and females. Youth will sleep in single-sex groups and will be supervised in common areas.
- 8) Films used for entertainment purposes will be age-appropriate; no R-rated films will be shown for educational purposes without consent of the parents of youth who are participating.
- 9) The use of alcohol, tobacco, and the abuse of drugs will not be permitted by any participant, including adults, during church-sponsored youth and children's activities.
- 10) All adults who work in any specific capacity with the youth and children: teachers, child care volunteers, youth mentors, etc., will be required to complete a Volunteer Covenant and authorize a criminal background check through the Minnesota BCA. UCCNB will facilitate and pay for the background checks. Each person on whom a report is completed has the right, by law, to be informed of the results, obtain a copy of the report, and dispute the findings.
- 11) The Associate Minister will receive the Covenants and the BCA reports and keep them in a locked file. Without revealing names and other identifying information, the Associate Minister will report to the chair of the Youth Support Team and the chair of the Christian Education committee any information that could exclude the volunteer from working with youth or children in the above named capacities. If it is determined that the volunteer is to be excluded from such work, the Associate Minister will make a confidential pastoral response to the volunteer. An excluded person may request the Associate Minister to reconsider the decision made regarding their volunteer status; the appropriate persons will be consulted before any further decision is made.

The convictions which exclude volunteers from working with youth or children in this congregation are listed on the BCA Child Protection Background Check form.

The Youth Support Team and the Christian Education committee or Church Council may suggest random re-checks after 3-5 years, but one background check should suffice as long as the person remains in continuing service or participation in the congregation's life.