

UUMAN Ministry with Children and Youth (MCY) Overnight Policy for Youth Events

Overnight events, such as 'Lock-Ins' or Retreats, are an important component of our Ministry With Youth at UUMAN. The following policy is a tool we intend to use to create a framework that is essential for the development of our YRUU's vision of a *'Safe, Loving, Supportive Community'*.

The following policies apply to all Overnight (O/N) Events sponsored or organized by UUMAN.

All Overnight Events must comply with UUMAN, MCY & YRUU Covenants, policies & rules (including the 'Big 4').

Event Coordinators (*under the supervision of the DMCY*) are responsible for ensuring that each Overnight Event has an Orientation for all participants that include explanation, discussion, clarification of, & agreement to, all covenants, policies & rules that apply to the event.

All Overnight Events must be approved by the DMCY or Minister.

In order to be approved an event must have the following in place;

- *A date, time & place (checked against the MCY & UUMAN Calendars)*
- *A deadline date for registration*
- *A Youth & an Adult Coordinator*
- *A stated purpose & schedule (outline)*
- *A cost estimation (& fee, if necessary) based on minimum number of participants. (Budget, if appropriate)*

Signed Permission Slips & Youth Agreements are required for all Youth attending Overnight Events.

- *A signed Annual 'Lock-In Permission Slip' & 'Youth Agreement' may be kept on file for O/N Events held (on site) at UUMAN*
- *One-time, specific, forms are required for away (off site) O/N events*

Signed 'Code of Ethics' forms are required for all adult advisors attending Overnight Events.

A maximum of 7 Youth to 1 Adult Advisor (7:1) ratio (with a minimum of 2 Adults) is required for Overnight Events.

Sleeping Rooms/Areas: *Separate, 'same gender' sleeping rooms will be available with an adult advisor (of the same gender) in each room with 2 or more youth present.*

For 'COA' & Sr. Youth - A Co-ed sleeping room (with an adult advisor) will also be available.

These sleeping arrangements also apply to UUMAN organized & run 'off campus' overnight events, but does not include Mountain or MidSouth District Cons which have their own policies.

We understand that we all share a basic human need for closeness & connection. Young people are no exception. It is our intention to create a safe space for experiencing (non sexual) physical closeness that helps to meet that need. In order to allow our Youth to safely experience this kind of closeness the following policies are required;

- *No shared bedding. Each individual shall have their own bedding (covers, sleeping bags, pillows, etc.) which will not be shared.*
- *Youth may share space on mats, couches, mattresses, etc. whilst keeping to their own bedding.*
- *Hands should be visible (outside bedding) if Youth are sleeping next to one another.*
- *Adults may not share a bed or immediate sleeping space with Youth.*

Supervision - There shall be at least one adult awake as long as there are youth awake. Adults may sleep once everyone is sleeping soundly.

- *Advisors may take shifts, or additional advisors may be brought in for an 'up all night event'.*
- *Whilst youth are still awake, the awake adult should make regular checks on all sleeping rooms.*
- *Plans should be made to take into account the need for adults offering programming support or transportation to get adequate rest in order to safely fulfill their duties.*
- *Adult advisors in sleeping rooms must stay awake as long as youth in that room are awake. Once youth are sleeping, the adult may sleep.*

No Youth or Adult Advisor shall leave the building (or site) without the permission & knowledge of the Adult Coordinator.

No Youth shall leave the building (or site) without an Adult Advisor.

In the event of a violation of Covenant, policy or rules the Youth and Adult Event Coordinators should implement appropriate steps, on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with all UUMAN, MCY and YRUU policies and procedures.

In an emergency the Adult Coordinator may consult with the DMCY or Minister or call emergency services as the situation requires.

- *Contact information for parents/guardians of youth participants will be available on permission slips.*
- *Contact information for DMCY, Minister and emergency services must be available at the event.*

We believe that these policies can provide a framework that creates the conditions necessary for a safe Ministry with Youth. As a faith community, our ministry is guided by our UU Principles and Purposes that give life and meaning to the work that we do together. By living these core values, within the framework of these policies, we are able to build the safe, loving, supportive community that we seek.

This policy takes effect immediately (April 2013) and will apply to all O/N events, including on-site lock-ins and off-site retreats. The Youth Adult Committee (YAC), under the guidance of the MCY, will review this policy Spring 2014. Any recommended change in policy will be submitted to the UUMAN Board before it is implemented.

15 March 2013

Respectfully submitted by the MCY Council on behalf of the UUMAN YAC