

Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship

Professional Guidelines and Expectations for Childcare Providers and Childcare Recipients

As a childcare, you are one of the first people that new families with young children will meet when they come to BUF. In addition, they are trusting you, with their children—which is not always easy for parents to do. Accept this as an important responsibility and take it seriously. You are being paid to care for the needs of young children in a fully present, enriching and engaging manner!

BUF Is A Spiritual Community!

Adults come to BUF in order to be fed spiritually. They want to be nurtured, supported and challenged to be their best and truest selves. They bring their children to BUF for the same reasons. They want their children to find meaning in higher ideals and principles than are readily available in popular culture. Ideally this will be a place where children, youth, and adults feel safe to be real and explore the deeper meanings and connections in life. **All experiences at BUF inform our religious education.** As leaders and staff, let us do our best to model our principles and create a sacred space.

As Representatives of BUF, Childcare Providers are Expected To:

- Dress appropriately—think school dress code—no cracks, cleavage, midriff, boxers/underwear visible....
- Keep homework and books in bag or at home.
- Keep ipods, phones, and other electronics in bag or at home.
- Save the task of checking phones for before and/or after providing childcare.
- Be fully aware for and present while greeting families warmly.
- Have a variety of activities ready for you and children to do together.
- Keep conversations mostly with children and minimal with co-workers while children are in the room.
- Be in the room with children at all times (especially if you are providing care alone).
- Make mental notes of positive things that children did while they were in your care so you can share that information with parents (this is very reassuring).
- Treat parents and children with the utmost of kindness and respect.
- **Leave the childcare space in the same condition (or better) than it was in at the beginning of the session!**

As Members of Our Religious Community, Parents of Children Seeking Childcare are Expected To:

- Register children for Religious Education (even toddlers who come to more than 3 childcare sessions in a single church year).
- Communicate special needs/dietary restrictions directly to childcare providers.
- Take care of diaper needs (childcare providers will come get you if it is an issue).
- Only bring food if you are bringing enough for everyone to share.
- Pick up children promptly after services, meetings or events and never leave a childcare provider alone in the building (event leaders or other adults knowledgeable about locking up should be the last to leave).
- Support our childcare providers and help them be successful in their ministry.

As Members of Our Religious Community, Children Receiving Childcare Are Expected To:

- Enjoy their time with other children and the childcare providers.
- Only bring toys or other items from home if they are willing to share them.
- Listen to the directions of the childcare provider.
- Keep themselves and other children safe by staying in their own body space.