

Abuse Policy approved 1993

CODE OF CONDUCT

No minister, adult leader, child care employee, church school teacher nor any other person working in a paid or volunteer capacity under the auspices of the First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Diego shall engage in sexualized behavior with persons under the age of eighteen. Neither shall anyone engage in behavior with children, youth or adults which constitutes sexual harassment or verbal, emotional or physical abuse.

PURPOSE

First Church strives to ensure the existence of a caring religious community free of violence and abuse of all kinds, including intimidation, coercion, sexual harassment and physical and sexual abuse. Examples of these might include: offensive sexual remarks inappropriate physical contact demeaning comments threatening gestures or statements.

PROCEDURE

A Caring Team will be available to all who have concern about violence or abuse. The Team will be comprised of the ministers and two other church members (including one church board member) selected by the Board of Trustees based upon appropriate qualifications. The responsibilities of the Team and the names of the Team members will be posted on the church bulletin board. Problems or concerns may be brought to the attention of any member of this Team. The Team will be knowledgeable about resources and reporting procedures. These individuals will proceed at all times in a sensitive and confidential manner. The Team will focus on the following:

Abuse of Children. Abuse, neglect or violence may be self-reported by a child or may be suspected by the child's behavior or physical appearance. Child-care workers, adult leaders and church employees are required, and other adults are urged, to bring their concerns to the attention of any member of this Team immediately. The Team will notify the Child Abuse Hotline, as required by law, if reasonable suspicion exists.

Ethics of Adult Leaders. Anyone who has concerns about inappropriate sexual conduct, violence, intimidation or physical abuse by child-care workers, teachers, or other adults in the church community will also be able to receive guidance from this Team. Individuals with concerns about the conduct of a minister may receive assistance from any other member of the Team to bring these to the attention of the UUA Department of Ministry and/or the Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association.

Support Resources and Referrals. This Team may be used as a resource for children or adult survivors of sexual abuse, victims of violence, and purported

perpetrators in treatment as their look to their religious community for nurture and support. Community resources will be suggested as appropriate.

[The Board Committee on Abuse Policy also recommends the adoption of the following codes of ethics and professional practice:]

Code of Ethics for Leaders of Children and Youth

Adults and older youth who are in leadership roles are in positions of stewardship and play a key role in fostering spiritual development of both individuals and the community. It is, therefore, especially important that those in leadership positions be well qualified to provide the special nurture, care and support that will enable children and youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility.

The relationship between young people and their leaders must be one of mutual respect if the positive potential is to be realized. There are no more important areas of growth than those of self-worth and the development of a healthy identity as a sexual being. Adults play a key role in assisting children and youth in these areas of growth. Wisdom dictates that children, youth and adults suffer damaging effects when leaders become sexually involved with young persons in their care, therefore, leaders shall refrain from engaging in sexual, seductive or erotic behavior with youth. Neither shall they sexually harass or engage in behavior with youth which constitutes verbal, emotional or physical abuse.

Leaders shall be informed of the Code of Ethics and agree to it before assuming their role. In case of violation of this code, appropriate action will be taken.

- Adopted by the Unitarian Universalist Association, 1986

Code of Professional Practice

As a sexual being, I will recognize the power that ministry gives me and refrain from practices which are harmful to others and which endanger my integrity or my professional effectiveness. Such practices include sexual activity with any child or with an unwilling adult, with any counselee, with the spouse or partner of a person in the congregation, with interns, or any other such exploitative relationship.

- Adopted by the Unitarian Universalist Ministers' Association, 1988 (revised 5/93)