

LOS ALTOS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
COVENANT
FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Please read this document carefully, then sign and return a copy to the Church Office.
Keep a copy for your own reference. Thanks!

IN ORDER TO:

- provide a safe and supportive environment for children and youth and the persons who work with them at Los Altos UMC
- provide a strong and healthy volunteer environment at Los Altos UMC
- minimize the possibilities of child abuse occurring in connection with Los Altos UMC programs

WHEN I AM WORKING WITH CHILDREN OR YOUTH AS PART OF A LOS ALTOS UMC PROGRAM I AGREE TO:

- Treat all children and youth with respect and consideration.
- Treat all children and youth equally regardless of gender, race, religion or culture.
- Use positive techniques of guidance such as redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism.
- Have age-appropriate expectations and establish guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline.
- Refrain from any behavior that could be considered abusive to children or youth including:
 - physical abuse - striking, spanking, shaking, slapping
 - verbal abuse - humiliation, degradation, threats
 - sexual abuse - inappropriate touch or verbal exchange
 - mental abuse - shaming, withholding love, cruelty
 - neglect - withholding food, water, basic care
- Remain at all times with any child under the age of 8 who has been left in my care.
- Release a child under the age of 8 only to his or her parent, unless specifically instructed otherwise by the parent.
- Immediately inform the staff member responsible for children or youth ministry if I believe there is any reason that a minor child should not be released to the care of their parent, guardian or designated adult.
- Remain in view of others at all times whenever I am working with a child or youth.
- Check the restroom or ask a staff member responsible for children or youth ministry to do so to ensure that it is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing a child under the age of 8 to use a restroom.

- Leave restroom doors open when assisting a younger child.
- Conduct or supervise private activities, such as diapering, with another adult or where I will be visible to others.
- Respect children's and youth's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and their right to say no to touching.
- Maintain an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact and maturity in order to be a positive role model for children and youth.
- Refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children and youth.
- Not use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during the times I am working with children or youth. Anytime that I am scheduled to work with children or youth, if I am under the influence of alcohol, any illegal substance or prescription drug which impairs my ability to work safely with children or youth, I will call and inform the staff that I cannot work and no questions will be asked.
- Not use profanity, tell inappropriate jokes or share intimate details of my personal life in the presence of children or youth.
- Not date Los Altos UMC program participants who are under 18 years of age (applies ONLY to those 18 years and older.)
- Inform a staff member responsible for children or youth ministry if I believe there is any reason I should not be charged with the care of children or youth, including any physical or psychological condition.
- Be aware of the health of children and youth, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc., and to report any concerns I have about suspected abuse to a staff member responsible for children or youth ministry.
- Attend orientation sessions offered by Los Altos UMC that include the recognition of the signs of child abuse and Los Altos UMC's policies and procedures regarding the care of children and youth.
- Comply with the Los Altos UMC Volunteer and Child Protection Policy.

I understand that abiding by these promises is important and necessary to my participation with children and youth as part of Los Altos UMC programs.

Signed by: _____ **Date signed:** _____

Please print your name

Stored in Los Altos UMC Records Library, "Policies & Procedures"