

Code of Ethics for Adults and Older Youth Who are in leadership roles with children or youth.

(As adopted by the Unitarian Universalist Association in 1986)

*Revised and approved by the UUCSC RE Committee 2010

Adults and older youth who are in leadership roles are in a position 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 nurturing, 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 selfworth 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 will not:

- *Engage in sexual, seductive or erotic behavior with children and youth.
- *Sexually harass children or youth by means of inappropriate touching, verbal comments, innuendos, pornographic videos, obscene phone calls, obscene or pornographic use of the internet, obscene emails, exhibitionism, or allowing children to witness sexual activity.
- *Engage in behavior with children or youth, which constitutes verbal, emotional, or physical abuse.

In addition, in accordance with Rhode Island State Law:

- *All adult church volunteers and staff are "mandatory reporters" of suspected emotional, physical, or sexual child abuse and/or neglect.
- *Reports of abuse by caregivers must be filed with DCYF Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-742-4453 within 24 hours of suspected abuse.
- *Reports of abuse by non-caregivers must be filed with the police within 24 hours.
- *Reports may be made anonymously, but must be documented and reported in the presence of a witness.
- *Convicted sex offenders will not be allowed to participate in activities specifically for the children and youth.
- *Reports must also be made to the Director of Religious Education and the church Minister within 24 hours.

I have read this code of ethics and agree to uphold all of its contents.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Witness: _____