



# YOUTH MINISTRY TRAINING SERIES

Webinar #3: Safety in Youth Ministry

November 9 @ 1pm (EST), November 10 @ 8pm (EST)

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[uua.org](http://uua.org)



## Presenters

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# Opening





# Introduce Yourself



**“One of the keys to providing a space where youth feel comfortable to grow, develop, and express their Unitarian Universalist values is to have clearly defined boundaries and safety policies. The goal of creating these boundaries is not to guarantee that nothing will go wrong, but rather to model healthy relationships and protect everyone involved: you, the youth, and the congregation.”**

McDonald, Carey, and Jeremie Bateman. *Youth Ministry Advising: A Complete Guide*. Boston, MA: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2012.

# Assumptions:

- We are talking about ministry to and with high school aged youth or the home schooling equivalent, generally ages 14-18.
- We are talking about congregationally based youth ministry and events.
- The adults working with our youth are ages 25 or older.
- We have a shared commitment to maintaining safety for our congregations, youth, and adults who work with them.
- Adults are background and reference checked according to policy.



## Other Areas of Safety

- Covenant – February webinar
- Adult boundaries – October webinar
- Leaving site – handout to come
- Permission forms – see Central East sample
- Safety procedures on site
- Leadership code of ethics – see Central East sample





**Training**



**Social Media and Communication**



**Sleeping Arrangements**



**Sex, Minors, and the Law**



**Structures and Training to  
Encourage Youth to Report**







## Training – all staff and volunteers

- signs of sex abuse
- sex abuse prevention
- mandated reporting requirements
- congregational reporting procedures
- state specific laws around minors and sexuality
- specific implications for youth after they turn 18.



# Abuse Prevention Awareness

- Children, youth, parents/guardians at least every other year
- Context of positive sexuality
- Can include:
  - safer internet use
  - bystander and anti-bullying education
  - harm to self or others
  - Consent.

# Training tips for all including youth

- Train your youth!
- Clear description of definite “harm to self and others”
- Clear guidance on the grey areas
- Process to “expand confidentiality”
- Clear training on affirmative consent
- Why to report “weird” or “uncomfortable” things
- Case studies are awesome for youth and adults





# Social Media and Communication



- Written policy on use of church computers/other technology and social media for clergy, staff, volunteers, etc.
- Policy should address such issues as staff and volunteer interaction with minors; tagging, posting, and friending policies; statement that the use of technology in faith-based organization should be public, observable, and monitored by church staff.





# **Sleeping Arrangements: large or multicongregation**

- **single gender room options**
- **multigender room option for trans inclusion**
- **after programming youth must either in sleeping rooms or single lit awake supervised space**
- **no shared bedding and visible floor space between youth**
- **a pair of youth and a pair of adults sweep the building alternating so one pair remains in the awake room**

**Guiding Principle: witnesses present for any touch**

# **Sleeping Arrangements:**

## **small events, single congregation, leaders**

- **two adults sleep in each room of youth**
- **youth agree to sleep**
- **two adults awake as long as youth are awake**
- **no shared bedding and visible floor space between youth**

### **Requirements:**

**Covenant with youth and adults**

**Trust in your youth**

**Trust in your adults**

# Don't hold an overnight event without trust

...with parents

...with youth

...with adults

...with congregational leaders

...with you





# Sex, Minors, and the Law

**“While sexuality is a healthy and important part of young people’s lives, there are times and places where sexual behavior is inappropriate...Exclusive relationships distract from the community.”**

- **Participants must respect each other’s physical boundaries.**
- **Participants shall refrain from sexual, seductive, or erotic behavior while at the event.**
- **Sexual behavior between participants at the event and sexual harassment are not permitted and will not be tolerated.**





## Research project for you!

- Age of consent? For sexual contact? Conduct?
- Which violations count as child abuse?
- Sharing substances with minors?
- Sexting? Creation and possession of child porn?



# Structures to Encourage Youth to Report

- Create your structure knowing that most issues don't start out as obviously in need of reporting
- Be clear who is responsible
- Do not give the responsibility to those already overloaded running events
- Have more than one person responsible. Have some youth included.
- Have a clear process including interviews that include compassion and hearing the root causes.
- Emphasize safety, inclusion, restoring relationship, and restoring trust



An overhead photograph of several people sitting around a rustic wooden table. Some are writing on papers, others are looking down or at each other. There are coffee cups on the table. The image is slightly faded to allow text to be read over it.

# Training to Encourage Youth to Report

- Clearly communicate your structure and process to youth *and* parents
- Show youth how they are in covenant with parents, the congregation, you, the insurance company...
- Help them understand youth events only can happen when there is trust.





# Training to Encourage Youth to Report

- We know things happen. We need to trust the youth will help all of us respond appropriately when they do.
- Help youth understand why to seek assistance with things that are “weird” or “uncomfortable”
- Emphasize to youth that the process is about **facilitating covenant** which includes keeping each other safe.
- Use a case study with youth!



# Case Studies



- What's the “big deal”?
- What are the root causes that helped allow this to happen?
- What information did the youth need? The adults need?
- What can be done to prevent similar situations?

What does this bring up for you?

$$E = mc^2 = \left\{ m = \frac{m_0}{\sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}}} \right\} = \frac{m_0 c^2}{\sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}}}$$

$$\frac{v}{c} = \gamma \ll 1 \Rightarrow (1 - \gamma^2)^{-1/2} \approx 1 + \frac{\gamma^2}{2} + \dots$$

$$\rightarrow E \approx m_0 c^2 \left( 1 + \frac{v^2}{c^2} \right) = m_0 c^2 + m_0 v^2$$



# FOLLOW UP



- Discussion and Reflection Questions
- Resources
- Then...Work on your next steps
- Congregational Life Staff are here to help

# Closing

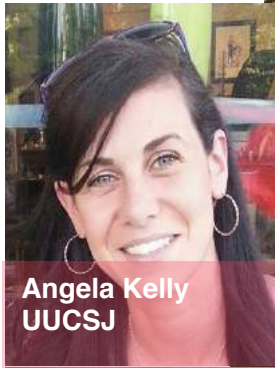






# The Youth Ministry Roundtable Thanks You!

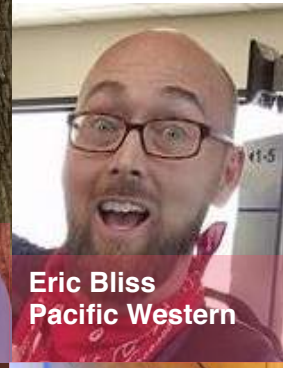
Youth & Young  
Adult Ministries  
&  
Congregational  
Life Staff.



Angela Kelly  
UUCSJ



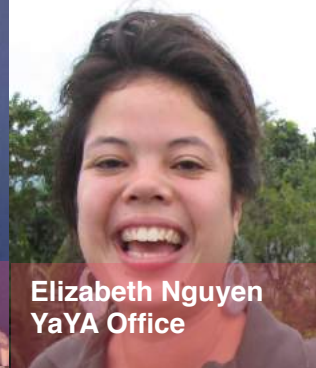
Nancy Combs-  
Morgan  
MidAmerica



Eric Bliss  
Pacific Western



Bart Frost  
YaYA Office



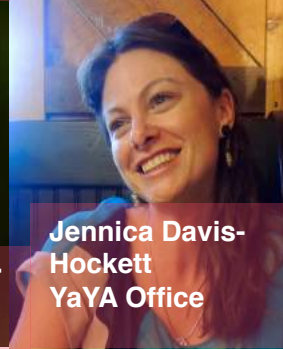
Elizabeth Nguyen  
YaYA Office



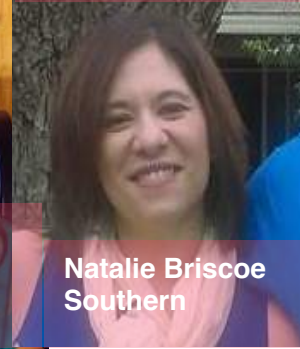
Kim Sweeney  
New England



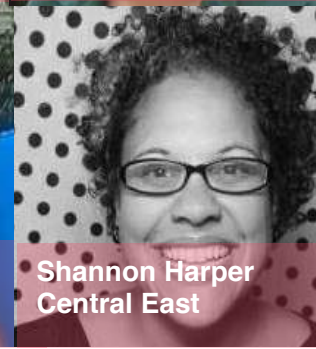
Evin Carvill-Ziemer  
Central East



Jennica Davis-  
Hockett  
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Natalie Briscoe  
Southern



Shannon Harper  
Central East



**Next Month's Webinar:**

# **Pastoral Care to/with Youth**

December 8<sup>th</sup> at 8pm (EST)

Devember 13<sup>th</sup> at 1pm (EST)

**Register at [uua.org/ymwebinars](http://uua.org/ymwebinars)**

**[uua.org](http://uua.org)**





# THANK YOU!

## THIS WEBINAR HAS BEEN

## RECORDED AND WILL BE

## AVAILABLE AT [uua.org/ymwebinars](https://uua.org/ymwebinars)

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