

**Willamette Quarterly Meeting  
Youth Safety Policy  
Draft February 7, 2018**

Introduction

WQM is committed to making sure that children and youth are safe while participating in WQM sponsored child/youth events. These policies and guidelines are meant to provide a structure for parents and youth care workers to help ensure child and youth safety.

WQM is part of North Pacific Yearly Meeting. These policies are adapted from the NPYM Youth Safety policy for WQM's particular situation.

WQM meets three times a year, in the fall in the Eugene area, in the spring in the Portland area and in the winter in Corvallis. In each location WQM will use the policies of the host meeting if they are more restrictive than these policies and if requested by the host meeting. The WQM Planning Committees are responsible for implementing the Youth Safety Policy.

**WQM Child and Youth Safety Policy**

1. Screening

- Child and youth workers should be at least 17 years old and at least 4 years older than the group of youth they are working with.
  - Junior Friend and Central Friend Advisors and Friendly Adult Presences (FAPS) should be active in a Monthly Meeting, Preparative Meeting or Worship Group for at least 6 months prior to the event. This will be verified with the MM/WG clerk.
  - **Child and youth care workers**, will be subject to a criminal background check. Note: Walk-in volunteers under the supervision of approved child and youth care workers, need not have a criminal background checks.
2. Prior to each event, or when they are approved, the child and youth care workers are provided a job description as well as clearly defined responsibilities and expectations as laid out the in the WQM Youth Safety Guidelines.
3. Safeguards are provided through careful monitoring and staffing. Classrooms and gathering spaces for children and youth are set up according to NPYM Youth Safety Guidelines. **Where a guideline cannot be complied with in specific situations, there should be documentation about how safety concerns will be addressed.**

## **WQM Youth Safety Guidelines**

### **BEFORE A CHILD/YOUTH CAN PARTICIPATE**

1. Each child/youth must have a signed WQM medical release form, which must be given to the teacher/leader before the child can be left in the care of the teacher/leader. The medical release form includes a phone number for the parent, guardian or sponsor, which can be used during the session to contact the parent, guardian or sponsor if needed. These forms can be filled out in advance of the event and sent to the registrar; or may be filled out upon arrival. The original form will remain in the classroom/gathering area, or carried by the adults in charge during an outing. A copy of each medical release form should be kept at the registrar's table, if possible.

### **IN THE CLASSROOM / GATHERING AREA**

2. At least 2 adults will be present in each classroom during scheduled youth program times. Where it is not possible to have 2 adults, a roamer should check in frequently.

3. At each overnight JF or CF event, at least one of the adult leaders needs to be a woman and at least one needs to be a man.

4. Nursery care and Children's Program classrooms should be located in close proximity to each other. At all costs avoid isolated classrooms away from adult traffic or other classrooms.

5. Walk-in volunteers are welcome and greatly appreciated in WQM children and youth programs at Quarterly Meeting; however, youth and child care workers who have not been approved through the official WQM screening process, including "walk-in" volunteers, will be under the supervision of approved workers.

6. Minimum ratio of adults to children is as follows.

Nursery (infants and toddlers) 1:4

Children's Program/Central Friends (age 4 through 8<sup>th</sup> grade) 1:8

High School 1:10

7. Classroom/gathering area doors should be left open at all times during a scheduled youth event (unless the door has a large window).

8. The teacher/leader in charge of each class or youth group must ensure that there is a signed medical release form in the classroom or gathering area before a child/youth may be left there without parent, guardian or sponsor.

9. (*Nursery and Children's Program*) The teacher/leader in charge of each class must have a check-in sheet and must ensure that each child is **checked in and checked out** by a responsible adult for each session. During or after class, a child must not be allowed to leave the teacher/leader's presence unless accompanied by a responsible adult.

10. Each classroom or group must have ready access to a **first aid kit**, and each teacher/leader must know where it is kept.

### GOING OFF CAMPUS

11. The following requirements apply whenever a child or youth group leaves the campus (includes wherever the QM is held) as part of a scheduled official WQM youth event, whether driving, walking, taking public transport, cycling or traveling by other means. (Note: these guidelines do not apply to transportation to or from WQM.)

1. Parent, guardian, and sponsor pre-approval: The parent, guardian or sponsor should be informed beforehand about an off-campus event, and given an opportunity to ask questions and decide if they do not want their child to participate. Ideally, the parent, guardian or sponsor should sign a form giving permission for their child to participate in specific off-campus activities. Where that is not practical for JFs, the JF advisors should use good sense in allowing off campus events.
2. Drivers must be 21 years of age and have a valid driver's license. Owners of any privately owned vehicles being used to transport youth must have proof of car insurance. **Drivers are responsible for ensuring that vehicle safety measures (seat belts, child safety/booster seats, etc.) are adhered to.**
3. First aid kits: when a youth group leaves the campus, the leaders or adults in charge should carry a basic first aid kit with them and carry working cell phones.
4. Medical release forms: When a youth group leaves the campus during a WQM event the leaders or adults in charge must carry a signed medical release form for each child participating in the off-campus field trip. (Note: these should already be available in the classroom.)
5. While they are officially participating in a WQM youth event, children in grades pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade are not allowed to leave campus unless accompanied by the responsible youth leaders. High school aged youth might leave campus with the consent of the leader in charge (or according to the JF code of conduct, by signing themselves out). The leader in charge must know the JF's destination, who they will be with, a phone number where the youth can be reached, and when the youth will return: the youth must then

check back in upon returning to campus. It is expected that at least one person in any JF group leaving campus will carry a working cell phone so the JF leaders are able to contact them is necessary.

### **Additional Resources**

#### JUNIOR FRIENDS CODE OF CONDUCT

Each year, the high school aged youth who participate in the Junior Friends program at North Pacific Yearly Meeting Annual Session develop their own code of conduct for appropriate behavior at NPYM events. The 2010 JF Code of Conduct will be posted on the WQM website along with these guidelines. Anyone with any questions, comments or concerns about the JF Code of Conduct should contact the JF Clerk.

MULTNOMAH MONTHLY MEETING CHILD AND YOUTH SAFETY POLICY is available on their website.

EUGENE FRIENDS MEETING document titled *Safety in Children's Meeting Information* will be posted on the WQM website. This document was created in September 1997 and updated October 2017.