



Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northern Westchester Religious Exploration Ministry

SR Youth Group Advisor Roles & Responsibilities 2013 – 2014

(This is a working document, to be revised and updated as needed to meet the need of our youth ministry.)

Team Collaboration, Ongoing Training and Rotation

Youth advisors are asked to work as a team. New advisors are asked to attend a UU Metro New York District-led or sponsored youth advisor training within their first six months. To keep current on evolving philosophy and best practices for working with youth, returning advisors should attend a District-led or sponsored training at least every other year while acting as an advisor, and are encouraged to attend the bimonthly meetings of DREs and youth group advisors from neighboring UU Fellowships, hosted by our Fellowship. The UUFNW RE website (<http://uufellowship.org>) offers many resources for advisors, including our Handbook.

Responsibilities

Below are key elements involved in building and maintaining a vibrant High School youth ministry. Advisors are encouraged to coordinate sharing responsibilities among UUFNW advising team members, with advisors from neighboring UU Fellowships, and empowering youth to take leadership roles.

1. Communication via e-mail, FaceBook, Remind 101 texts and other means with youth and parents about monthly YG meetings, participation in worship services, District and cluster events, and leadership opportunities at the Fellowship and around the District.
 - Tracy will share the RE spreadsheet containing contact and other information for the Senior High youth. When you get new contact information for the youth and parents, please let Tracy know so she can update the RE spreadsheet.
 - Dates for District events and registration are found at <http://uumetrony.org/events>. Scroll down to "Summary of Events for Youth."
 - We discuss cluster (local UU) events and collaboration at our bimonthly meetings with DREs and YG Advisors from surrounding Fellowships. Dates are listed on our Fellowship website.
2. The youth group should meet at least twice each month with programming to balance leadership development, education, worship, service and community building. Youth should be invited to lead a 10-15 minute worship at the beginning of each meeting, followed by check-in. Chapter seven in the new [Youth Ministry Advising](#) guide is dedicated to balanced programming and serves as a good resource (Tracy can send you a copy). I'm happy to help identify resources for you and assist in planning meetings. I compiled a fairly comprehensive list of resources, which you will find on our website. Of note:
 - There are valuable resources on the UUA site: <https://www.uua.org/re/youth>.
 - The [Advisor-L](#) discussion list for youth advisors is a forum to ask questions and share best practices about working with youth. Join here: <http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/advisor-l>.
 - The Central Eastern Regional Group (CERG) offers webinars on youth ministry. [Audio Recording of CERG Youth Ministry Webinar for Religious Educators and Youth Advisors \(MP3 – 49 minutes\)](#) and [PowerPoint Presentation of Webinar \(PDF – 14 pages\)](#) are online.
 - [Blue Boat: blog of youth and young adult ministries](#)

3. Coordinate youth and adult attendance at District and cluster events. When youth attend District Cons we need to send an adult with them. This can be an advisor or parent. Adults from other Fellowships can be designated the 'advisor' for our youth if we do not have an adult who can attend and they have not exceeded their youth:adult ratio, which is 8:1.
4. Coordinate collaboration among local Fellowships interested in combining youth groups for meetings and activities. This would be an opportunity for advisors to share responsibility, and it would create a larger group of youth which is more fun for them. Tracy will provide you with a contact sheet.
5. Work with the RE Ministry Contact coordinating children and youth participation in multigenerational services and Rev. Michael to broaden multigenerational participation in worship services.
6. Social Justice Projects: Include youth in Fellowship-wide projects such as the Emergency Shelter, Neighborhood Link activities, Food Pantry donations, and other opportunities. Encourage youth to identify SJ action they would like to initiate at the Fellowship and in the surrounding community.
7. Encourage youth to share their experiences with the Fellowship by writing reports or stories for the newsletter or website after Cons, social action events and other activities.
 - One of our Fellowship members is an editor at the NY Times and offered to give a workshop for the youth about writing for a newsletter.
8. Bridging. Youth in their senior year of High School can participate in a Bridging program that affirms their journey into young adulthood and reinforces for the congregation our role in supporting them. The advisors and RE Ministry Team, in consultation with bridging youth, should discuss a plan in the spring. Bridging youth will be celebrated at a spring worship service.
9. Advisor and youth liaisons to the RE Ministry Team, attending monthly meetings or checking in with Tracy prior to each meeting to raise youth issues and share information. The REMT welcomes and values youth participation, and as members of the congregation we want to encourage youth to assume leadership in our community. The RE Ministry Team would love to have youth voice on the team. They are invited to attend and we will help provide transportation for youth – they should contact Tracy or Suzi. Remaining 2013 – 2014 REMT meetings are Thursdays, 5:30-7:00 at the Fellowship: *October 9 [Wednesday]*, November 7, December 5, *January 9*, February 6, March 6, April 3, May 1, and June 5.

Support for the SR Youth Group Advisors from the RE Ministry Team

1. Meetings during the year with the DRE and REMT Chair to discuss youth group needs and progress. These might take place, for example, in mid-August (preparing for the year ahead), early December (mid-year check-in) and April (winding down the year and summer activities).
2. The REMT will help educate the congregation about our youth ministry, and make sure the youth feel welcome and included in our Fellowship community.
3. Youth perspective and voice are important and valued. Beyond inviting youth to have voice on the RE Ministry Team, we will encourage other ministry teams to welcome youth participation, e.g., Social Action, Worship, or others that are of interest to the youth. Most Ministry Teams meet monthly. Youth members might rotate each year or after 6 months; the youth should present a model that works for them and provides consistent participation.
4. The RE Ministry Team, in collaboration with the youth advisors, will explore other ways for the youth to assume leadership at UUFNW.