

# Event Childcare

One person from the committee and/or the member who signs the contract sponsoring an event at the Church is responsible for ensuring all Childcare Procedures for Activities at Foothills Unitarian Church are followed and clean up is complete. Please review all child care procedures.

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# Event Childcare Overview

The Family Ministry Coordinator (Lauren Farley) is the staff lead for Childcare for Foothills-sponsored events.

Drop-in childcare will always be available without registration for all-congregation events.

Cf. [Events with Automatically Provided Childcare](#)

For other specific events we've decided to offer childcare for, our procedure is that childcare will be available with 48 hour advance registration.

This is important because we need to have enough time to find available childcare providers (we try to always have TWO providers, so if one person needs to go get a child's parent, no other children are left alone) and we need to manage our available budget for paying workers. Childcare may be cancelled if fewer than 2 children are registered or no childcare worker is available. We also need time to give participants adequate notice if childcare or the event itself will be cancelled.

Unsupervised children are not permitted at any event. If children are present and childcare staff are not, children need to remain in the event space with their parent/guardian/responsible adult and be directly supervised. Busy bags are available in the Welcome Kiosk in the entry hall and toys for young children are available in the Family Lounge for parent-supervised use.

We provide childcare free of charge to participants for events 2 hours and under. For events longer than 2 hours, please consider building in an option for a small donation (e.g. \$5-10) to offset the cost of paying for workers and snacks and supplies for children.

If your event is offering food, be sure to consider that children in childcare will need an opportunity to eat as well, and be sure to gather information about food allergies/intolerances in registration.

Events sponsored by outside organizations/renters provide their own childcare and are responsible for adhering to Foothills policy and guidelines for safety and building use.

# Events with Automatically Provided Childcare

At Foothills Unitarian Church, certain congregation-wide events automatically include childcare services to ensure all families can participate fully in our community life. These events are integral to our communal worship, decision-making, and celebration. The automatic provision of childcare for these gatherings reflects our commitment to inclusivity and support for families with young children.

## Events with Automatic Childcare:

1. **Sunday Worship Services:** Every Sunday, as a core part of our communal spiritual life, childcare is provided to allow parents and guardians to engage fully in worship.
2. **Congregational Meetings:** Meetings that involve important decision-making processes, including votes that shape the future of our congregation, ensure that all members can participate without childcare concerns.
3. **Events Requiring a Congregational Vote:** Any event specifically organized to facilitate congregational voting, recognizing the importance of every vote in guiding our church's direction.
4. **Special Congregation-Wide Celebrations:** Key events in the church calendar that bring our community together for celebration, reflection, or commemoration.

## Key Characteristics of Automatically Provided Childcare:

- **Drop-In Availability:** No prior registration is required for these events, offering flexibility and ease for families attending.
- **Ensured Safety and Engagement:** A minimum of two childcare providers are present to maintain safety standards and engage children in appropriate activities.
- **Free of Charge:** This service is provided free to participants, underscoring our commitment to accessibility for all church members.

This practice on automatically provided childcare for essential congregation-wide events ensures that Foothills Unitarian Church remains a welcoming, inclusive space for families of all shapes and sizes. By removing barriers to participation, we foster a more engaged and vibrant community.

# Childcare Request Procedure

To streamline the process and clarify roles in managing childcare requests for Foothills-sponsored events, we've divided responsibilities between the event's Staff Lead and Lauren Farley, the Family Ministry Coordinator. Here's how the tasks are split:

## What the Staff Lead Does:

### 1. **Assess Childcare Needs:**

- Determine if the event qualifies for childcare (considering automatic childcare provision for congregation-wide events or if a separate request is needed).
- Decide based on event type and anticipated attendance if childcare is necessary and aligns with the 48-hour advance registration policy.

### 2. **Submit Childcare Request Form:**

- Complete and submit the childcare request form via [Direct Form Link](#), providing details such as the event date, time, expected number of children, and any special requirements (e.g., allergies).

### 3. **Communicate with Participants:**

- Inform event participants of the childcare availability, including registration deadlines and policies regarding cancellation and unsupervised children.
- Ensure attendees are aware of any contributions suggested for events longer than 2 hours and communicate about food provisions for children.

### 4. **Prepare for the Event:**

- Coordinate with Lauren to ensure a designated area is prepared for childcare, considering safety and comfort.
- Arrange for busy bags and toys for children who stay with their parents in the event space, ensuring all materials are available and accessible.

## What Family Ministry Coordinator Does:

### 1. **Review and Approve Requests:**

- Assess submitted childcare requests for completeness and feasibility, considering factors like event type, duration, and specific needs.

### 2. **Coordinate Childcare Providers:**

- Confirm the availability of at least two childcare providers for each event, adhering to safety policies and ensuring reliable care.
- Handle any necessary communications with childcare workers, including confirmations and cancellations.

### 3. **Manage Logistics and Budget:**

- Oversee the logistical arrangements for childcare spaces, ensuring they are safe, welcoming, and appropriately equipped.

- Monitor the childcare budget, taking into account the event's length, number of children registered, and any specific needs that might affect costs.

#### **4. Follow-Up and Feedback:**

- Collect feedback from parents and childcare providers post-event to evaluate the service and identify areas for improvement.
- Address any issues that arose during the event and make adjustments to policies and practices as needed.

By clearly delineating these responsibilities, Foothills Unitarian Church ensures a smooth and efficient process for providing childcare at church-sponsored events, supporting our families and upholding our values of inclusivity and community engagement.