

Brief Survey on Children in the Service

February 2011

Since this fall, we have been involving our children with the congregation by having them sit in the front of the room for the first part of the service. What is your overall reaction to this process?

Positive **15**

Neutral **1**

Negative **1**

Please offer comments, if you would like, about this or about other ways to strengthen the intergenerational nature of UUCO.

It seems to be a foregone conclusion that our programs need more intergenerational participation, which is not true for me. Once a quarter is probably adequate. Obviously parents who wish to have their children present for services, assuming the children are old enough to benefit from particular services, are free to have the children present. I see the real benefit our congregation provides for the children is religious education and I am in support of acquiring more building space so we can offer classes for children of different ages. When my children were growing up, we did not have the option of a Unitarian Universalist congregation and I remain steadfast in my commitment to provide that opportunity in our community.

I'm OK either way, but I don't think the kids like it — especially on days when a lot of boring (to them) stuff happens at the start.

New song to sing children out

1. The children, not the adults, should be directly addressed when the story/message is delivered.
2. If possible, the presenter should sit or kneel to get to kids' eye levels.
3. The story/message should be short to fit kids' attention spans.

We need more people who can be storytellers for the first part of the service. It is an incredible opportunity to have everyone's attention & we should use it to teach our values & tell our stories.

Even the smallest of children need to learn our practices and traditions, however briefly. Keep it up!

Anything that increases the participation of children, yet still controls the level of chaos in the room, is very welcome.

I really enjoy seeing the kids.

Love seeing the evolution of the children' understanding of our process, their improving attention & interaction — Keep it up!

Involving children at the first part of the services has been great. They are more comfortable with the adults & it feels more like we are one community rather than two separate parts. We must continue, & find more ways to be intergenerational. How do we teach our children to be generous? To give? To be good stewards? A program in the "RE Road Map" called "Secret Friends" is a way to pair a child with an adult (in safe ways, of course) — we could do that. (But can't ask RE Trustees to do more — needs to be someone else.)