Foster Care Connection Handbook
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Welcome!

He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

Matthew 18:2-5
New International Version (NIV)

You are about to undergo a transformational journey. You are part of a mission of care for those whom Christ gathered to himself.

At The Children’s Home, we envision a world where every child is raised in a loving, compassionate and nurturing home.

Sadly, that is not the case today. There is currently a child welfare crisis in Georgia. Over 12,000 kids today are in state custody. That number has doubled in the last 5 years. 150 children a month in Georgia are sleeping in hotel rooms supervised by state contracted employees. All because there are not enough foster homes.

Together, we can get kids out of hotel rooms and into loving, compassionate, and nurturing homes.

You are now part of a support system of exceptional people who all have a common goal: to demonstrate the love of God and family to children, as Christ calls us to do. You play a vital role in this process by performing services for foster families, smoothing their way so that they can focus on the task of loving children. Welcome, and thank you!
What is a Foster Care Coalition?

Foster Care Coalitions are formed by groups of churches that are geographically close to one another and who are interested in starting a Foster Care Ministry. These churches invite their congregations to either be foster parents to children in their communities or to support foster families by volunteering (we call this kind of support a Care Connection.) Coalitions can be ecumenical, as long as churches share the desire to connect and to restore children and families from trauma through Jesus Christ.

A Church Coalition Steering Committee invites local churches to connect and serve. If your church does not belong to a foster care coalition, you are welcome to volunteer with another coalition near you, or you may wish to talk to your church leadership about joining a nearby foster care coalition or forming a new one.
What Is a Care Connection?

We are not all called to do the same thing, but we are all called to do something! There is a role for everyone, whether you are called to bring a child into your home or responsible to care for those who do. James 1:27 declares that pure religion is to care for orphans in their distress. Foster kids are today’s orphans.

The United Methodist Children’s Home has a long tradition of providing outstanding support for our Foster Care families. The Care Connection continues and expands that tradition by surrounding each foster family with a strong circle of volunteers. Care Connection allows foster families to focus on their child while receiving the support they need. Each foster family selects the volunteer services appropriate for their situation.

Volunteering with Care Connection is a blessing and a privilege. The opportunity to become part of a foster family’s life touches the lives of each family member and each volunteer. And each Care Connection role uses your particular gifts and graces.
The Care Connection: A Role for Everyone

Volunteer Descriptions

Church Recruiter – 1 per church
The Church Recruiter identifies, recruits, and recognizes Care Connection volunteers within their respective congregation and community. An in-depth position description is provided in the section Church Recruiter and the Foster Family Angel.

Foster Family Angels – 1 per family
Foster Family Angels insure that the needs of the foster family are met through the volunteers. Angels are matched with a family by the Church Recruiter and coordinate the family’s roster of volunteers.

Angels:
• Visit the foster home in order to get to know “your” foster family and help to determine needs (observed and requested)
• Serve as the scheduler and coordinator of all services put in place for your foster family (meals, sitters, transportation, etc.)
• Remain on the foster child’s Care Connection team until reunification or adoption occurs, typically within a 12-16 months
• Commit to serve for the length of the foster child’s placement (an average of 9-12 months)

Meals
Meals for the Foster Care family can be most important during the early stages of a child’s placement when the family is dealing with significant changes. Meals are also important when an illness or a crisis occurs within the family. The family determines the frequency and duration of meals delivery and coordinates with the Foster Family Angel. Delivering meals as a family teaches children the importance of volunteering, nutrition, and being part of a community of caring.

Meals volunteers:
• May request to provide meals for the same FC family to develop a familiarity with their preferences
• Receive information about special dietary needs when a foster family match is made
• Can expect a meal delivery to take 1 hour, maximum
• Are not expected to enter the foster home and set up the meal for the family
• Commit to one delivery each month

**Babysitting**
Babysitting is one of the most important services Care Connection volunteers provide. Babysitters give the family opportunities to reconnect and recharge. Foster parents need to spend time alone together to nurture their relationship. If they have biological children, it can be important to spend time with them. Babysitters provide assistance during training events, appointments, as well as for personal family times. In compliance with the child caring regulations of the State of Georgia Office of Regulatory Services, all babysitting volunteers must be fingerprinted and pass a Criminal Records Check at UMCH’s expense.

Babysitting schedules are
• coordinated with the family
• flexible based on the family’s needs
• It is preferable to match the same babysitter(s) with a family to establish trust and a warm environment for each visit

The Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Act states that Foster Families may engage friends or extended family members to babysit for foster children for up to 3 instances without needing to be background-checked. However, in keeping with The United Methodist Children’s Home’s standards, and to ensure the safety of the children and families we serve, we require background checks on all Care Connection volunteers who will be engaging 1:1 with the children in our care.

Babysitters:
• Commit to serving one time per month
• Pass a background and fingerprint check
• Provide proof of a valid driver’s license, DMV records, and car insurance

**Transportation**
Transportation is one of the most valued means of support for foster families who work, experience illness, or have flexible schedules. Transportation volunteers drive foster children to school, medical and dental visits, counseling sessions, visitation, court hearings, and extra-curricular activities. In compliance with the child caring regulations of the State of Georgia Office of Regulatory Services, all babysitting volunteers must be fingerprinted and pass a
Criminal Records Check at UMCH’s expense, in addition to obtaining a 3-year satisfactory Dept. of Motor Vehicles Report (MVR) at their own expense. The fee for a 3 year MVR is $6.00.

Transportation volunteers:
- Commit to serving one time per month
- Serve as back-up drivers to supplement the support of respite families when they are unavailable
- Receive one week’s notice to confirm or adjust the transportation schedule
- Receive occasional requests for a same-day transportation need
- Pass a background and fingerprint check
- Provide proof of a valid driver’s license, DMV records, and car insurance

Prayer Partners
Prayer Partners provide spiritual enrichment and support for the foster family. A family may have one primary Prayer Partner or a team of partners, based on their needs.

Prayer Partners:
- Connect with the foster family directly or through phone conversations, emails, mail, or messaging
- Receive specific prayer requests from the foster family
- Are required to have a background check and training if they choose to engage in direct contact with a foster child
- Make a commitment of one hour per month for a year

Play Date Pals
Foster families and children welcome opportunities to come together with other families and children. A simple outing to a playground or a trip for lunch or ice cream gives families a chance to feel connected and engaged. Play Date Pals coordinate these fun activities directly with the foster parent based on the foster parent’s desire and availability.

Lawn Care
Lawn Care volunteers perform basic duties so that the foster family can enjoy leisure time and focus on more important things. Lawn care allows volunteers to work outside and is a wonderful opportunity for college students, retirees, and families to serve together. Scheduling is flexible and is coordinated by the Foster Family Angel. Foster families may have lawn care equipment or the volunteer can provide their own equipment.

Lawn Care volunteers:
- Mow, weed, mulch, and rake or do other general yard work projects
- Should be comfortable using lawn mowers and outdoor tools
- Should be able to work outside during the spring, summer, and fall months
Shopping
Shopping volunteers support the UMCH tradition of providing for the immediate and urgent needs of foster children. Children often enter a foster home on short notice. On-call shoppers purchase and deliver clothing, supplies, and equipment needed for care of the children. Deliveries may be made to the foster home or to UMCH for delivery by the family’s case worker.

Because sizes vary and it is sometimes necessary for foster parents to exchange items, we ask shoppers to shop at either Target or Wal-Mart and to include a receipt.

Shoppers may choose from the following options:
• When I am able to shop, I will be able to cover the cost of the purchases.
• When I am able to shop, I will not be able to cover the cost of the purchases.
• I am not able to shop, but I would like to sponsor an on-call shopper by making a contribution to the UMCH Foster Care ministry at the time of a new placement.

Biological Family Advocates
Advocates work to develop and nurture a relationship between the biological family and the foster family. The relationship can aid in the goal of reunification of the child with a member of their birth family. Occasions such as a foster child’s birthday, a holiday, or the recognition of an accomplishment are opportunities for the two families to come together and celebrate with the child. Advocates ideally remain on the foster child’s Care Connection team until reunification or adoption occurs, typically within 12-16 months.
Behind the Scenes
There are Church Coalition volunteer roles that support the foster care ministry and Care Connections “behind the scenes.” These volunteers are part of the Church Coalition structure, one person in each role per Coalition. They coordinate their duties with the Coalition Steering Committee and work with the Church Recruiter.

Sponsors
We accept financial gifts from generous friends like you who commit to our mission and are excited to help children in need. Financial support for the UMCH ministry helps us recruit, train and support foster families.

Database volunteers:
- Are able to volunteer from home, at their convenience
- Receive training on cloud-based volunteer database from UMCH staff
- Input data for volunteer records
- Run pre-written reports as requested by Steering Committee
- Generate monthly database report of all volunteers’ skills and abilities
- Maintain updated records of volunteer service activities and hours
- Attend Steering Committee meetings as requested
- Commit approximately 10 hours per month for the first two months, 5-7 hours per month following

Communications/Public Relations Coordinator and volunteers:
- Promote Care Connection to all relevant audiences to promote growth, awareness and outreach
- Generate ongoing information updates for their church publications and websites
- Regularly post updates and invitations on social media
- Visit foster care families for informational interviews as appropriate
- Identify and interview Care Connection volunteers
- Take photos as appropriate of interactions with the families and volunteers

Fundraising Coordinator:
- Cultivate a spirit and culture of giving in support of the foster care ministry
- Create and execute a fundraising plan in coordination with UMCH Development team:
  - Promotional materials
  - Speakers’ presentations on Sundays in churches
  - Communication with sponsors/donors
Care Connection roles vary, with some volunteers maintaining close contact with members of the foster family, some interacting mainly with the foster children, and some volunteers not having much contact with the family at all.

All Care Connection volunteers are asked to complete the highest level of screening so that they may change the level of interaction with the foster family with minimal effort if desired. Volunteer Forms section of the handbook, you’ll find a list of all necessary screening and documentation for Care Connection volunteers.
Care Connection Questions and Answers

Will I be helping one family or many?

You may make that choice based on the volunteer position you select.

What does a Foster Family Angel do?

The Angel visits the foster family to get to know them and their needs. Angels insure that these needs are met through Care Connection volunteers.

Will I have to pass a background check?

All Care Connection volunteers are asked to complete the highest level of screening so that they may change the level of interaction with the foster family with minimal effort if desired.

How soon can I start volunteering?

After completing the application process, volunteers will receive specific training for their volunteer position. Your Church Recruiter will then match you with one or more foster families and you may begin.

I want to help but I can’t make a long commitment. What can I do?

You may choose a role with a short-term commitment such as meals, lawn care, or shopping. All volunteer contributions are valuable!

Do all volunteer roles involve direct contact with children?

No, there are roles that do not involve contact with the children.

Can I fulfill more than one Care Connection role at a time?

Yes, if doing so doesn’t affect your ability to perform your original role, and as long as you have completed all screening necessary for each position (for example, an Angel may babysit for their foster family ONLY if they have passed all background checks and other screenings.)
Volunteer Roadmap

Volunteer attends orientation and training

Volunteer is invited by Recruiter to learn more about supporting UMCH’s Foster Care ministry

RSVP’s to attend a Foster Care Info Meeting at fosterrsvp.org

Attends meeting Discerns Calling Signs up to serve at fosternow.org

Volunteer is matched with family and begins serving

Spreads awareness of Foster Care Ministry to family and friends

Background checks and any other necessary screenings are submitted

Volunteer is connected with Church Recruiter

Volunteer Interviews with Recruiter and submits paperwork

Volunteer attends Foster Care Info Meeting at fosternow.org
Church Recruiter and the Foster Family Angel

Now that you are part of the Care Connection, let’s meet two people who work closely together to support you as you support the foster family: The Church Recruiter and the Foster Family Angel.

In addition to recruiting potential foster families, the Church Recruiter invites people into foster care ministry as volunteers and matches them with a foster family. (S)he also looks for a Foster Family Angel, a person eager to engage in direct ministry with a specific foster family – someone who is a good organizer and is enthusiastic about getting to know the family’s needs and concerns. It may be a friend of the family who is already familiar with their home and routines. In the recruiting process for other Care Connection roles, someone may volunteer for this position, or the Recruiter may identify a good match for a family and invite that person to serve in the role of Angel.

The Foster Family Angel is the “go to” person for the foster family. The Angel’s job is to ensure that the needs of the Foster Care family are met. Angels coordinate volunteers with the Recruiter and serve as the scheduler and coordinator of all services.

You will meet your family’s Angel at a Meet & Greet with the other volunteers in your specific Care Connection. Your Angel is your “go to” person for questions about interactions with the family and your schedule. If your availability changes or you have concerns about your volunteer service, the Angel can help you. If there are matters that your Angel cannot solve, you can go to your Church Recruiter for assistance.
Scheduling Your Volunteer Service

Your foster family (or their Angel) may post volunteer opportunities on a database so that you may sign up for online for a specific date and time to bring a meal, babysit, or serve the family in some other way, so that it is convenient for both you and the family. Or, depending on the family’s preference, your volunteer service may be scheduled more informally.

Please be sensitive to the needs of your foster family and always make sure that they know when you are coming so that they are not caught unaware. If you and the family are not using an online calendar to schedule service dates, it is always good to ask for confirmation of texts or emails about scheduling. Remember, their lives have added layers of complexity, and volunteers are there to reduce, not add to, the complications.

Additionally, if you are unable to keep your appointment, please let the family – or the family’s angel – know in advance.

**Also, please remember to keep a log of your volunteer hours.** You will be asked for a total of your hours each month. It is the volunteer’s responsibility to accurately report hours served, so that the Database Coordinator can provide accurate reporting. Volunteer hours’ reports, like feedback from foster families, are an important part of evaluating the success of the Care Connection.
Volunteer Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

The popular image of a volunteer is the selfless, giving, altruistic individual who's willing to take on any task that comes their way. In truth, there are very real rights and responsibilities to volunteering. In the Care Connection, the Foster Family Angel is the direct volunteer supervisor for each foster family. ***Volunteers should discuss their rights and responsibilities directly with their family’s Angel rather than the family itself. ***

The following is an article from www.Idealist.org.

A volunteer's rights

1. The right to feel safe
One of the benefits of volunteering is that we can decide to intentionally leave our comfort zones in order to experience new and challenging situations, environments, or roles. However, there is a big difference between feeling off-center or uncomfortable and feeling at risk or unsafe. As a volunteer, you have the right to be apprised of any potential risks as well as have precautionary measures and safety procedures in place to ensure your physical and emotional well-being.

2. The right to information about your volunteer role or project
Whether it's questions about the application process (why do I need to have a background check? when will I find out if I've been accepted?) or the volunteer role or project itself (who will I be working with? how will my efforts make a difference?), you have the right to know the who, what, when, why, and how of your volunteer position.

3. The right to feel valued
Volunteering—whether for two hours or two years—is a significant commitment that you choose to make. In return, you have the right to feel that your time and contribution—however long you've volunteered and whatever your task—is valued. Similarly, you have the right to feel that an organization or volunteer effort is using your skills and talents well (keeping in mind that they may not always have the capacity to take on some or all of your ideas or proposed
projects) and that the work you do—and this can be anything from mowing the lawn to managing the volunteer database—has meaning and makes a difference.

4. **The right to negotiate your volunteer role**
Find yourself in a volunteer position that just isn't working for you? You have the right to talk to your supervisor to discuss ways you might be able to shift your role or take on another project or position. And if you still can't find a good fit...

5. **The right to leave**
...you have the right to leave. This isn't a decision that should be made hastily but, if after talking to and working with your supervisor, you still feel unhappy, unappreciated, or unsatisfied with your volunteer experience, you do have the right to do something, or go somewhere, else.

A volunteer's responsibilities

1. **The responsibility to communicate your needs**
Feel like your work isn't meaningful? Not what you thought you'd signed up for? Or just bored and ready for something else? Talk to your volunteer manager or supervisor, providing specifics about your dissatisfaction and at least a few suggestions of ways to make it better. If you don't let them know that you're not getting from the experience what you'd hoped, they can't work with you to improve things. Similarly, don't hesitate to let them know if you feel you need additional tools, training, or support; if they can't provide it directly, they should at least be able to point you in the right direction.

2. **The responsibility to follow through on your obligations**
There's a pervasive myth that volunteers are unreliable. While of course this isn't true across the board, there are plenty of flaky volunteers who reinforce such negative perceptions. Help improve the reputation of volunteers worldwide by doing what you say you'll do, whether it's honoring the volunteer role and schedule you'd agreed to, providing ample notice if you're unable to perform your tasks or responsibilities, saying no or stepping away from volunteering when necessary, or simply serving as a good representative of the organization in the community.

3. **The responsibility to not promise what you can't deliver**
While related to #2, this one is worth singling out as it's fairly easy to unintentionally promise too much when one is excited about making a difference. This is especially important to avoid if you are working with a vulnerable population like children. An example: say you've promised to take a young person whom you're mentoring to a concert. You then forget or get busy and are unable to go. By not following through with your promise, not only can you potentially hurt the reputation of the organization and undermine its work but, more importantly, you could unintentionally do harm by giving the young person a reason not to trust you—or possibly even others.
4. The responsibility to honor the organization's investment in you
Another pervasive myth about volunteering is that volunteers are free. In fact, organizations invest quite a bit in their volunteers via staff time, tools, training, and so on. This is why it's important to research your volunteer position first to determine if it's a good fit for you, and, once you're in the role, to always first try negotiating your volunteer role if you're unsatisfied, rather than just suddenly leaving.

5. The responsibility to take care of yourself
Last but most certainly not least, you have the responsibility to make sure that you aren't overextending yourself, burning out, or causing yourself physical, mental, or emotional harm by taking on roles that aren't a good fit or that you aren't prepared for. While some stress and burnout may be inevitable depending on the project—for example, anyone volunteering in a hospice is likely to have some difficult moments—you can significantly limit it by seeking out support (talk to your supervisor and fellow volunteers), taking a break (either as you're volunteering or stepping away from volunteering altogether for a while), injecting some fun into your service portfolio (even if it's just a one day gig on the side), and having realistic expectations about what can be accomplished and when.
Mandated Reporting

Part of every Care Connection volunteer’s orientation and training is to watch a tutorial video on Mandated Reporting.

In Georgia, all volunteers and staff members in ministry with children and youth are mandatory reporters of child abuse, as are all clergy. To be in compliance with this Mandatory Reporter law, we require all volunteers to learn your responsibility as a mandated reporter.

This video will be shown as part of your volunteer orientation. If you miss the orientation meeting, or attend a “make-up” orientation session, you may access the video from your own computer:

Step 1: Go to http://www.hanover.com/risksolutions/education.html

Step 2: Select Client Protection

Step 3: Select Mandated Reporter Responsibilities

Step 4: Fill in your First Name, Last Name, Company (The United Methodist Children’s Home) and Email Address (so that you will be emailed your Certificate of Completion which you will turn in to UMCH along with the rest of your paperwork.) Click the disclaimer link to read, and click the button stating that you have done so. Click Submit.

Step 7: Following completion of training, you will be prompted to complete a survey. You will need to complete this survey, in order to receive your Certificate of Completion. The certificate will be emailed to you. Please forward the email to your United Methodist Children’s Home Volunteer Coordinator at sroush@umchildrenshome.org.
Volunteer Paperwork

In order to protect the safety of our families, children and volunteers, you will be required to submit certain types of information before you join a Care Connection. Any forms that you will need to complete are in this section of the Handbook. Please complete and bring to your Church Recruiter at Volunteer Orientation.

**Volunteer Screening Checklist**

- **Information needed for all volunteers**
  - Volunteer Application
  - Liability Waiver
  - Child Safety Agreements
  - Authorizations and Understandings
  - Mandatory Reporter Certificate of Completion
  - Confidentiality Agreement
  - Criminal Record Check Application
  - Copy of driver’s license
  - Media Release

- **Additional forms needing signature for Babysitting and Transportation Volunteers**
  - MVR – The volunteer requests this report online
    - Go to [http://www.dds.ga.gov/drivers/dldata.aspx?con=1740840381&ty=dl](http://www.dds.ga.gov/drivers/dldata.aspx?con=1740840381&ty=dl) to order a non-certified copy which you can view online and print
    - The cost of the MVR is $6.00 for a 3 year report
    - Bring a printed copy of the report to the Volunteer Orientation
  - Proof of car insurance
## THE UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN'S HOME
### VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FOR FOSTER CARE CONNECTION

| Name: |  |
| Current address: |  |
| City: | State: | ZIP Code: |
| Phone: (1st) | (2nd) | Email: |

### EMERGENCY CONTACT
| Name: |  |
| Phone: | Relationship: |

### HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT UMCH AND THE FOSTER CARE CONNECTION?

### CHURCH AFFILIATION (OPTIONAL)
| Name of Church: | City/County: |

### CARE CONNECTION AREAS OF INTEREST
- ____ Recruiter
- ____ Foster Family Angel
- ____ Transportation (requires additional screening)
- ____ Babysitting (requires additional screening)
- ____ Meals
- ____ Play Date Pals
- ____ Lawn Care
- ____ Shopping
- ____ Prayer Partners
- ____ Sponsors
- ____ Behind the Scenes (database, communications, fundraising)
- ____ Biological Family Advocates
- ____ Respite (Requires same training as for Foster Parents)

*Would you be willing to serve families who attend a different church?*
- Yes
- No

### REFERENCES

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### AVAILABILITY

Volunteer Shift length depends on the schedules of the volunteers and the families/children they serve.

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### MISSION/VISION STATEMENT

UMCH Mission: We restore children and families from trauma through Jesus Christ.

UMCH Vision: We envision a world where every child is raised in a loving, compassionate, and nurturing home.

By signing below, I state that I am able to uphold UMCH’s mission with everyone I interact with in the course of my volunteer activities with the United Methodist Children’s Home:

| Volunteer Signature: | Date: |

| ________________ Date Application Received | ________________ Date of Follow up | ________________ Coalition Assigned |
I, __________________________, have freely and voluntarily chosen to provide services ("Services") for United Methodist Children’s Home ("UMCH"). I understand and agree that, while providing Services as a volunteer for UMCH, there are certain risks (some of which I may not fully recognize) and that injuries, death, property damage or other harm could occur to me during or resulting from the provision of the Services. I understand that, because of the potential danger in providing such Services, UMCH is unwilling to allow me to provide Services unless I sign this Volunteer Release, Waiver and Hold Harmless Agreement. I therefore covenant and agree, on behalf of myself and my heirs, assigns, and any other person claiming by, under or through me, as follows:

I accept and voluntarily assume all risks of any injuries, damages or harm which arise during or result from my provision of the Services, including any risk associated with any special medical needs or conditions that I may have, whether or not these risks are caused in whole or in part by the negligence or other fault of UMCH or its directors, officers, employees, agents or insurers (the "Released Parties"). I understand that I am not an employee, and that except as otherwise agreed to in writing, UMCH does not carry or maintain health, medical, or disability coverage for volunteers. I understand that I am expected and encouraged to obtain adequate health or medical insurance to cover any injury, loss of income, and loss of life that I may suffer or cause while providing Services at UMCH or its directors, officers, employees, agents or insurers (the "Released Parties").

I waive all claims against and hold harmless any and all of the Released Parties for any injuries, damages, expenses, liabilities, losses or claims arising during or resulting from my provision of the Services, whether known or unknown, EXPRESSLY INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO ANY INJURY, HARM, DEATH, OR OTHER DAMAGE ARISING OUT OF OR RELATED IN ANY WAY TO ANY ACTIVE OR PASSIVE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASED PARTIES OR ANY OTHER PERSON OR ENTITY, AND FOREVER RELEASE AND DISCHARGE THE RELEASED PARTIES FROM ALL SUCH CLAIMS.

I release and forever discharge the Released Parties from any claim whatsoever which arises or may hereafter arise on account of any first aid, treatment, or medical service rendered in connection with my provision of Services.

I agree to hold harmless and indemnify the Released Parties from and against all liabilities, obligations, damages, losses, claims, demands, recoveries, settlements, deficiencies, costs or expenses (including reasonable attorneys’ fees) for any injury and/or death to any person or damage to any property arising, or alleged to have arisen out of any reckless or intentional act or failure to act on my part or arising from any untruthful information that I may have provided to UMCH. It is my express intent that this Volunteer Release, Waiver and Hold Harmless Agreement shall bind my successors, assigns, heirs, and personal representative.

I acknowledge and agree that this Volunteer Release, Waiver and Hold Harmless Agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the State of Georgia. If any portion of this Agreement is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance of this Agreement shall continue in full legal force and effect.

I agree to abide by the rules and policies adopted from time to time by UMCH.

I represent that I am of lawful age and legally competent to sign this Volunteer Release, Waiver and Hold Harmless Agreement. I also understand and agree that the terms herein are contractual, and that they are not a mere recital or simply for informational purposes.

I acknowledge that I am signing this Volunteer Release, Waiver and Hold Harmless Agreement freely and voluntarily. I have been given a reasonable opportunity to review this Agreement and to consult with an attorney.

I HAVE READ THIS VOLUNTEER RELEASE, WAIVER AND HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT CAREFULLY AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. NO ORAL REPRESENTATIONS, STATEMENTS OR INDUCEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE BY ANY OF THE RELEASED PARTIES APART FROM THE FOREGOING WRITTEN AGREEMENT.

Volunteer Signature: __________________________ Date: __________________________
Authorizations and Understandings

Please read and initial each Paragraph of Understanding written below.

(Ask the interviewer for an explanation if you do not understand any part.)

_____ I authorize the United Methodist Children’s Home (UMCH) to investigate my references and other matters related to my suitability for volunteering. In addition, I hereby release UMCH, my current and former employers, and all other persons, corporations, partnerships and associations from any and all claims, demands or liabilities arising out of or in any way related to such investigation or disclosure.

_____ I understand that UMCH complies with the child caring regulations of the State of Georgia Office of Regulatory Services. I also understand that a criminal records check in my name must be returned as "Satisfactory."

_____ I understand that if the area of help I am interested in requires driving a foster child in the course of volunteering, my acceptance is contingent on a satisfactory check of my driving record through the Department of Motor Vehicles.

_____ The Child Safety Agreement has been thoroughly explained to me by a UMCH Volunteer Coordinator and I understand and will support the foster parents’ compliance with its provisions regarding Motor Vehicle and Bicycle Safety, Storage of Medication, Animal Safety, Water Safety, Firearms and Lethal Weapons Safety, Discipline, Supervision and Position on Smoking.

_____ I understand that any false or misleading statements or omission of questions asked on this application will be just cause for removing my name from consideration as a volunteer or for immediate dismissal from volunteering.

_____ I certify that I have never abused, neglected, sexually exploited or deprived a child or an adult. I further certify that I have never subjected any person to serious injury as a result of intentional or grossly negligent misconduct.

My signature below certifies that I have read and understand this complete page and agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this document.

_________________________________________  ____________________________________
Signature of Applicant                              Date

_________________________________________
Printed Name of Applicant
Confidentiality Agreement

I understand the UMCH policy on confidentiality requires that I shall not disclose or knowingly permit the disclosure of any information concerning a child or his/her family, directly or indirectly, to any unauthorized person, including social media platforms including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or YouTube.

I will abide by agency policy with regard to client privacy and general confidentiality, and I will not release any client’s name, photograph, video or identifying information. I also understand that failure to follow this policy of confidentiality is reason for immediate dismissal from the volunteer program.

My signature below certifies that I have read and understand this complete page and agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this document.

____________________________________  ____________________
Signature of Applicant                  Date

____________________________________
Printed Name of Applicant
**GA DEPT OF HUMAN RESOURCES RECORDS CHECK APPLICATION**

**APPLICANT TYPE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>____Director/Manager</th>
<th>____Non Employee (having regular contact with children, i.e. volunteer member)</th>
<th>____Owner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name:</th>
<th>First Name:</th>
<th>Middle:</th>
<th>Maiden:</th>
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<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of birth:</th>
<th>SSN:</th>
<th>Place of Birth:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Height:</th>
<th>Weight:</th>
<th>Race:</th>
<th>Eyes:</th>
<th>Hair:</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Email:</th>
<th>Address:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City:</th>
<th>State:</th>
<th>ZIP:</th>
<th>Home Telephone:</th>
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**Driver’s License number and state:**

I hereby authorize the department of human resources/office of investigative services and my potential employer named below to receive any criminal history record information pertaining to me which may be in the files of any criminal justice agency. as required by law, i have attached an affidavit disclosing the nature and date of any arrest, charge and conviction for the violation of any law in any state, except for motor vehicle parking violations.

**Notary Signature:**

**Notary Public of (County)______________, GA**

My Commission Expires: (Date)

**Applicant Signature:**

**AGENCY SECTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Facility: United Methodist Children’s Home</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address: 500 S. Columbia Drive</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City: Decatur</th>
<th>State: GA</th>
<th>ZIP Code: 30030</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Facility: ____Residential Child Care Institution/Outdoor Therapeutic Treatment Program</th>
<th>X. Child Placing Agency (Foster Families)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

My signature indicates that I, as director/owner, have verified the identifying information on the above applicant by checking a picture identification and other documentation as required.

**Signature of Director:**

**Date:**

**Phone of Facility: 404-327-5820**

**Printed Name:**

**Email Address:**

**Address:**

**City/State/Zip:**
Criminal Records Check Application Instructions

1. Please use a ball point pen, press firmly, and PRINT legibly.

2. Print your full name, including your MAIDEN name.
   
   DO NOT use initials if your have a given name.
   
   Print your date of birth. Print either: Male or Female.
   
   Print your race: Black, White, or Other.
   
   Print your Social Security Number.
   
   Print your place of birth: City or County, State and Country if not USA.
   
   Print your height.
   
   Print your weight.
   
   Print the color of your eyes: Do NOT abbreviate: Brown, Black, Grey, Blue, Green, or Hazel.
   
   Print the color of your hair: DO NOT abbreviate: Brown, Black, Grey, Red, Blonde, or Bald.
   
   Print your home address.
   
   Print your home telephone number.

2. Please scan and email a copy to Suzanne Roush at srush@umchildrenshome.org

3. ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE NOTARIZED. Read consent statement. Sign your name as you would on a bank check or business letter. You may find a notary at your local bank. Please remember to take your drivers’ license when you go to have the document notarized.

DIRECTOR/MANAGER WILL COMPLETE THE LOWER PORTION OF THE APPLICATION MARKED AGENCY SECTION.

4. Record check results will be mailed to the address that is entered here. Print clearly and give complete mailing address. Indicate name of your facility as it appears on your permit application. Print the mailing address of Your Facility. Print the city/state/zip. Print the county. Print the surveyor if known. 5. Check the correct box for your type of Child Care Facility. 6. Director or Manager must sign his/her name as it would appear on a bank check or business letter
THE UNITED METHODIST CHILDREN’S HOME

MEDIA RELEASE

By signing below, I give permission to The United Methodist Children’s Home, Decatur, Georgia (UMCH), and those acting with the permission and authority of UMCH, to make and use pictures of me and/or my dependents for nonprofit publicity and fundraising purposes. I understand that I will not be compensated for any photograph(s) that may be used in this capacity. I hereby waive any right to inspect or approve the finished photograph(s) or the eventual use for which the photograph(s) may be applied.

By signing below, I am expressly releasing The United Methodist Children’s Home, its employees and those acting with the permission and authority of UMCH, from any and all claims which I may have for invasion of privacy, right of publicity, defamation, copyright infringement, or any other causes of action arising out of the use, adaptation, reproduction, distribution or exhibition of said photograph(s).

_____________________________________________
Full Name (Print)

______________________________________________
Signature (must be a parent or guardian if under eighteen)
Putting Our Faith into Action

We hope you are inspired and motivated to take this transformational journey. Your role in providing support enables more people to answer the call to be foster families. As a result, more children will be loved and restored from trauma because you are demonstrating the love of God and family.

Our prayer is that your own life will be blessed through your role as a servant to others. Each of us is called to participate in the outreaching ministry of Jesus. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, described this work in simple, practical terms:

“Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all the places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as ever you can.”

Putting faith into action is at the very heart of the Christian calling. By volunteering to serve every person has the opportunity to serve and to live their calling more faithfully.

God bless you for your service and for answering the call!