

Pacific Yearly Meeting
Children's Program Committee
Report to Representative Committee (RepCom) 2022

We are being asked to provide a children's program at Mt. Madonna, as we have done in the past. But this year we are faced with a variety of problems that we have not faced before.

First, setting up a children's program after two years of the Annual Session being on Zoom is difficult because the children did not attend Zoom sessions, so the children and their families are out of touch with our program.

Second, a dwindling number of young adults are able and willing to staff a children's program.

Third, there are fewer and fewer families involved with our Monthly Meetings.

Last year, knowing that children would probably not attend the Annual Session, we organized a series of field trips -- gatherings all over the bay area and the state. These were day-long events scheduled over two months, all of them on the week-ends. Attendance at these gatherings was encouraging, and wonderful connections were made among parents and children. There is enthusiasm both in our staff, but also among families, to have more of these field trips in the year ahead.

At the same time, we foresee some difficulties with the Mt. Madonna site:

- The classrooms are a distance from the gathering
- Camping is far removed from the gathering
- There is a need for lifeguards/ concerns about the cleanliness of the pond
- Lack of outdoor activities for the children and teenagers
- We lack staffing for both in-person programming and planning for field trips. Bringing in materials, taking responsibility for the well-being of a group of children, and planning for meaningful and enjoyable activities takes time and work. Bringing all the material needed for a pre-school and elementary school program is daunting, and if left for just a couple of people, as it often has been in the past, is exhausting.

We also have faced scheduling problems in the past. Although we have been told that many people in the Yearly Meeting want families and children to be present, The events that we scheduled last year were designed to be at slightly unusual times in order to avoid conflicts with activities that many adults would find compelling and important. But last year our careful plans were preempted the xxxxxxxx Committee, so that during our story hour time, for example, no one came.