

Elements Learning Collaborative  
Elements Nature Program

## Volunteer Guidelines

Elements Nature Program(ENP) volunteers are expected to:

- Be on time on their day of scheduled volunteering, and be present for the time they have discussed with the Camp Director.
- Dress appropriately for the weather and for walking in the woods, sitting on dirt and grass, etc.; close toed shoes, sun hat, pants or shorts(avoid skirts or dresses), apply sunscreen and bug spray before the start of the day.
- Help to maintain the adult:child ratio of 1 adult to every 5 children.
- Model kindness and respect when interacting with children and staff members.
- Speak calmly and respectfully to all children in the group, including their own.
- Remain part of the group, and be present where the Camp Director has asked for your assistance.
- Assist in keeping all the children in the designated area with the group
- Be willing to do small chores, such as set up or clean up an activity, accompany children to the bathroom to oversee hand-washing.
- Show interest in the activity, model curiosity, share your own experiences relevant to the activity.
- Inform a Director of any and all injuries.
- Help children in conflict to identify their needs or wants, and model how they can kindly speak to the other party to get their needs met. Affirm their feelings and sympathize with any distress.
- Keep children away from fences(most are low-voltage electric. Assume that they all are), and from touching or feeding livestock.
- If participating in lunch(Morning & Full Day), pack a healthy lunch to model healthy eating habits

-Inform a Directory if there is a conflict or emotional distress that you are unable to calmly resolve, or that is escalating

-Refrain from speaking negatively or descriptively about their children or others, i.e. "she never listens", "he drives me crazy", "she's lazy, she never wants to tie her shoes", "he's always getting into trouble".

-Offer to help children if they seem like they may need it, but refrain from helping if children do not ask.

-Avoid conversation with other staff that takes away focus on the activity at hand

-Address children's emotional needs when they are hurt, stressed, or otherwise overcome by strong emotion.

-Avoid telling children they are "okay" or that they aren't hurt, if they're visibly sad, hurt, scared or stressed. Instead, help them identify their emotion, or show you their injury, ask how it happened, listen to their story.

-Avoid encouraging children to "brush it off", "get over it", or tell them "you're okay". Instead, acknowledge their pain or sadness, remind them that it won't last long, and be there to transition them back to what they were doing.

-Avoid using gender stereotypes when doing activities that could be labeled as being "boyish" or "girly" such as climbing trees, sewing, etc.

-Refrain from using cell-phones for anything other than emergencies (no texting, emailing, taking photos, using social media, etc.). Phones should be silenced if they are with you during volunteering hours.

-Refrain from bringing any non-prescription medication with you. If you have prescription medication or an as-needed medication please inform the Director and have them safely store it for you until you need it. Inhalers and Epi-pens can be kept with you; they should remain out of sight unless needed for use.

-Follow all Camp policies and procedures, including but not limited to, Drug & Alcohol policy, No-Smoking policy, Care of the Building, etc.

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_