

WELCOME!

To all Ebersole Environmental Center (EEC) visiting staff:
Welcome! As an essential member of the center staff, you will find yourself in a leadership role, looked up to by the campers and relied upon for their many needs while visiting the Center.

The purpose of this staff handbook is to assist you in performing this important job. Please try to familiarize yourself with its contents before you arrive at EEC. Paper copies of this handbook are available from the Ebersole office, upon request.

Your presence at the Center is vital due to State of Michigan requirements that there be one adult in residence for every ten children. But your role and impact go well beyond simply complying with required ratios -- the very success of this program depends heavily on you.

Your assistance with the program will help make it meaningful, memorable, and safe. You will be called upon to help in many ways and the hours may be long. Your compensation will be the satisfaction of guiding young people toward a new awareness of themselves, each other, and the natural world. To paraphrase Rachel Carson:

"If children are to keep alive
an inborn sense of wonder. . .
they need the companionship of at
least one adult who can share it,
rediscovering with them the joy,
excitement and mystery of the world we live in."

Thank you for your help!

ROLE OF VISITING STAFF

A visiting staff member is a leader. Expectations from fellow staff and campers will be high, but when the job is done well, the personal rewards are great.

A VISITING STAFF MEMBER:

- ▶ is familiar with Ebersole Center policies and procedures.
- ▶ is friendly, enthusiastic and fun to be with.
- ▶ participates in activities with campers.
- ▶ helps campers follow rules.
- ▶ is concerned about campers' safety.
- ▶ is considerate of campers' medical and emotional needs.
- ▶ helps campers dress properly for weather conditions.
- ▶ is fair and has no favorites.
- ▶ is a model for campers to follow.
- ▶ tries to generate team spirit.
- ▶ is an organizer and a motivator.
- ▶ helps with discipline when necessary.
- ▶ tries to make the camping experience meaningful.

A VISITING STAFF MEMBER *NEVER*:

- ▶ Strikes or abuses students.
- ▶ Gives *any* drug -- even Tylenol or ointments -- to *any* child (except his or her own) without first consulting with the EEC health officer.

EBERSOLE CENTER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following regulations and procedures have been developed so that the EEC can operate smoothly, and provide a safe and satisfying visit for all:

A. GENERAL RULES

1. Each visiting staff member must complete and sign an **EEC personnel record** form (available on the Center website) and turn it into their group leader or the Center office two weeks prior to arriving at the EEC.
2. No alcoholic beverages are permitted.
3. Smoking is prohibited on school property.
4. No illegal drugs are permitted
5. Staff members should not leave the center without notifying the lead teacher/staff coordinator.
6. Persons under the age of 18 are required to have Parental (or guardian) consent before leaving the center except for scheduled field trips. A release form must be filled out and signed before ANY UNSCHEDULED DEPARTURE from the Center.
7. Campers are to be well supervised at all times.
8. The lead teacher/staff coordinator for your group is in charge of staff communications and should be notified immediately of any problems you may have.
9. Groups are responsible for housekeeping during their stay at the center, except for cleaning toilets and dumping trash, which is done by Ebersole staff every morning. Cleaning supplies are provided by the Center, and groups should have a daily cleaning schedule and do a thorough clean-up prior to departure day check out.
10. Visiting staff that are not willing to follow and support EEC rules may be asked to leave.

B. DORMS

Nearly all major injuries occur in the dormitories when children are not properly supervised! Remind the campers that dorms are only for quiet socializing and sleeping.

DORM RULES:

1. No standing or walking on top bunks or jumping from bunk to bunk. Children must sit, kneel or lie down.
2. No running.
3. Use of emergency exits is prohibited except during fire alarms.
4. No throwing of objects.
5. No defacing or destruction of center furniture or facilities.
6. Bunks must not be moved to remain in compliance with the fire code.
7. Staff rooms are reserved for adult leaders and should be kept locked when unoccupied.
8. Visiting staff should bunk with campers. At least one adult should bunk in each section of the campers' bunk area (there are four bunk sections in each dormitory).
9. Maintain proper nighttime adult: camper ratio (1:14).
10. Dorms must remain locked when adult supervision is lacking.
11. Propping interior doors open is a violation of fire code.

C. GLADYS OLDS ANDERSON MAIN LODGE

The main lodge is the hub of Center activity. It contains the dining hall, clinic, main office, and kitchen.

1. Dining Hall

- a) Campers should never be in the dining hall unsupervised.
- b) Campers should enter and exit via the side double doors.
- c) Campers should not use the main (east) entrance unless going to the clinic. The front hallway is reserved as a staff lounge and visitor reception area. Also, this area is used extensively by the Center cooks when serving meals. Please help keep it neat and clean for adult use.

- d) Campers should not use the bathrooms in the main lodge. Ample time should be provided before and after each meal to use the designated bathrooms.
- e) Campers should be on time when it is their turn to be a **hopper** (see page 14). Before leaving the hall, they should be sure their job is finished and check with the dining hall supervisor.
- f) Fireplaces are to be tended by adult staff only.
- g) Fire regulations dictate that the glass doors be closed whenever there is a fire in the fireplace. (This also conserves energy.)

2. Clinic, Camp Health Officers and Camp Director

A certified camp health officer operates the clinic. Under rules administered by the Michigan Department Human Services, camp health officers may:

- ▶ administer prescription and non-prescription medication.
- ▶ respond to medical emergencies involving airway, breathing and circulation.
- ▶ transport campers or adults for emergency treatment at a hospital.

THE HEALTH OFFICER MUST ALWAYS BE INFORMED OF ANY MEDICAL PROBLEM, ABNORMAL EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR, OR ACCIDENT THAT OCCURS AT THE EBERSOLE CENTER.

There are four scheduled clinic calls each day, one during each meal and again at snack time. Anyone who needs to visit the clinic should report to the clinic during the first half-hour of each meal. Open clinics will be announced over the P.A. system.

In the event of a severe medical emergency, the patient should either be brought to the clinic, or the clinic informed immediately.

Patients with possible head, neck, or back injuries or possible broken bones should not be moved. Treatment of any problems that are not severe, and do not require immediate medical attention, should be delayed until the next regularly scheduled clinic call.

The Center director and health officer are also responsible for the security of the staff and students visiting the center. For this reason it is extremely important that anyone entering or leaving the Center at any time other than the scheduled arrival and departure time notify the secretary. **IT IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT THAT NO STUDENT LEAVE THE CENTER WITHOUT A STUDENT RELEASE FORM SIGNED BY WHOEVER IS TAKING THE STUDENT.**

The Center director oversees the day-to-day administration of the EEC, supervises all of its employees and sees to its maintenance and improvement. Should a problem arise relating to Ebersole staff or the operation of the center, visiting staff should report the problem to the Center director as soon as possible.

Should need arise after normal business hours 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., visitors should contact the handyperson on duty, the Center director, or health officer by using the two-way radio or intercom line on all Ebersole Center phones.

3. Main Office

The main office is the center of communications. During business hours a full-time secretary is available and can assist with many of your needs.

4. Kitchen

Trained staff operates the kitchen. Due to health and union regulations it is available only to authorized food service personnel.

D. DAVID SCHULERT CLASSROOM BUILDING

There are four classrooms in this building. Large groups using both dormitories will have all four rooms available for their use. Smaller groups using one dorm will have two classrooms. Equipment and materials in the classroom building storeroom and library are to be checked out from the naturalist by the visiting staff. Any equipment breakage or damage must be reported to your naturalist.

E. FIRE BOWLS

The fire bowls can be dangerous if not well supervised. Fires should be small and well contained. During the summer months groups should keep a bucket of water near the fire. During extremely dry times of the year, a fire may not be possible. Running and jumping on or around the benches could lead to serious injury.

F. TRAILS AND NATURAL AREAS

Our natural areas are the primary reason many groups visit the Ebersole Center. The trails were developed to minimize human impact on these natural areas and yet permit visitors to experience the diversity and beauty of the site. Through the cooperation of visiting groups, the Center can remain the interesting and beautiful place it is. The protection of these natural areas, as well as concern for the safety of visitors, dictates the following trail rules:

1. **CAMPERS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON THE TRAILS WITHOUT A STAFF MEMBER.**
2. Picking or collecting plant or animal life is prohibited.
3. Destroying or damaging plant or animal life and/or trail equipment is prohibited.

4. Visitors must stay on trails or in designated teaching station areas. Going off-trail is permitted if supervised by EEC Staff, but only in non-boardwalk areas.
5. Students should stay behind their adult trail guide.
6. All litter **MUST** be carried out and placed in the proper container.
7. Here's a good adage to teach the campers:

"Take nothing but pictures
Leave nothing but footprints
Kill nothing but time".

NOTE: In addition to the usual poisonous plants, there are a very small number of Massasauga rattlesnakes. If a suspected rattlesnake is encountered, **LEAVE IT ALONE**, and please notify the naturalist or Center director immediately! Snakes that appear to be dead may just be cold, and can still bite.

G. WATERFRONT

The waterfront can be dangerous if children are not properly supervised. Here are some specific rules regarding the use of Jackson Lake:

1. Swimming is not allowed in Jackson Lake. When swimming is scheduled we swim at the state park beach at Gun Lake. A separate set of rules will be provided for off-site swims.
2. All canoeing or boating must be under the direct supervision of an **aquatic supervisor** whose certification is on file in the camp office.
2. Your group must provide sufficient **aquatic observers** to comply with state rules. One adult must be in each canoe for K-3rd grade. For grades 4 and up a ratio of one adult supervisor per 10 students must be helping with the class.
4. Leaders of other waterfront activities (e.g. fishing) should be conscious of potential hazards and consult with one of the naturalists.
5. **EVERYONE** using a canoe or boat must wear a properly fitted personal flotation device (life jacket).

6. Canoeing or boating is prohibited between the hours of dusk and dawn.
7. Any staff member under the age of 18 cannot use canoes or boats unless an aquatic supervisor is at the waterfront.
8. Adult staff (18 and over) should have another adult with them when using any watercraft.

H. ARCHERY

The procedures to be followed will be made available to groups requesting this activity (**SEE INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE FOR ARCHERY ACTIVITY in the Curriculum Book**). Please follow all archery safety rules posted at the archery range.

I. BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

The behavior management policy will vary from group to group. Visiting staff should check with their lead teacher/staff coordinator.

Detailed recommendations for behavior management of campers are contained in **Positive Approaches to Managing Campers: A camp counselor's guide to behavior management** (Carr, DP, NJ Jaskiw and NP Jaskiw, 1995). You may obtain copies of this small book from the Center office free of charge.

Good general rules for behavior management include:

1. Authorized personnel (usually a teacher or lead person) should be the only ones to discipline students. (Ebersole Center director may become involved in discipline in some cases).

At no time should corporal or physical punishment be used as a disciplinary practice (Michigan Department of Human Services).

2. No student shall be deprived of food, sleep, be placed alone without supervision, observation and interaction, or be subjected to ridicule, threat, or excessive physical

Satisfactory results usually result from verbally reminding students of the rules and/or contacting the authorized personnel in charge. If a student continues to violate Center rules and procedures, he/she will be sent home.

J. CHILD PROTECTION PLAN

In order to comply with Act 238 of the Public Acts of 1975, we ask your help to ensure child protection issues are handled properly.

1. Before departure from school, or upon arrival at the Center the visiting staff and Ebersole staff shall screen the physical condition of all students. If a student has marks which you suspect may be signs of abuse, the Center director must be notified so the Center health officer can make a note of any bruises, cuts, or marks on a student's body.
2. The visiting staff shall watch for any signs of abuse or neglect.
3. If abuse or neglect is suspected, report suspicions to the camp director and the lead visiting staff member.
4. If a camper confides in anyone about being abused or neglected, report this **to the Center director only**. Do not tell any student or other staff member.
5. Abuse or neglect that is alleged to have been caused by a staff member, the staff member must be immediately removed from student contact until the issue is resolved.
6. Student's records and application forms shall be kept confidential. No one shall have access to the Center and visiting group files except the Center director, secretary, health office, and authorized government officials.

K. POLICY: BRINGING FOOD TO THE EEC

Ebersole has a fully staffed and equipped kitchen, which can provide almost any meal or snack food item a group might wish to serve (including birthday cakes). [Some food requests will require an extra charge.] All menus can be arranged by calling the kitchen manager.

If your group wishes to bring pre-packaged snacks, homemade snacks or prepared fast foods (e.g. subs, hamburgers, pizza) to the Ebersole Center, we must ask that you agree to the following conditions on behalf of your group.

1. Your group absolves Ebersole of responsibility for any illness resulting from food brought to the Center by you or people in your group. Ebersole can only be responsible for the quality and safety of food prepared by Ebersole kitchen staff.
3. All food brought by your group must be stored and consumed in the main dining hall and the group must clean up afterwards. Food stored or consumed in the dormitories, staff rooms or classrooms attracts pests and is a violation of State and Allegan County Health Regulations. We cannot guarantee there will be room in our refrigerators for perishable items, soda or any other food. The Ebersole Center is happy to provide portable coolers - however, coolers are not recommended for food storage. If in the regular conduct of their jobs Center staff notice any food in the dormitories, staff rooms or classrooms, it will be moved to the dining hall. Leftover food (e.g. pizza) must be thrown away, not left out.

A TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00.....	Wake-up call
7:45.....	Hoppers report
8:00.....	Breakfast
8:30.....	Clean-up duties
9:00 - 10:15	Activity period 1
10:30 - 11:45	Activity period 2
11:45.....	Hoppers report for lunch
12:00	Lunch
12:30.....	Clean-up, Rest period
1:30 - 3:00	Activity period 3
3:15 - 4:45	Activity period 4
4:45.....	Hoppers report for dinner
5:00.....	Dinner
5:30.....	Clean-up, dorm time
6:00.....	Evening program
8:00.....	Snacks
8:30.....	Prepare for bed
9:00.....	Bedtime
9:15.....	Lights Out
9:45.....	Staff meeting

NOTE: Schedules vary day to day depending on weather and other situations. It is important that visiting staff communicate with each other prior to and during their visit. We suggest a daily staff meeting while in residence.

SPECIAL DUTIES

A. HOPPERS:

Hoppers are students assigned to set and clear dining room tables for meals. Hopper duty is usually explained the first day at the EEC and is generally rotated among the students at their table. The duties of a hopper include:

1. Reporting to the dining hall 15 minutes before the meal with clean hands.
 2. Setting the table with plates, silverware, etc.
 3. Serving the food from cold carts.
 4. Serving hot food after everyone is seated in the dining room.
 5. Waiting on tables during mealtime and making sure the food is shared.
 6. Clearing and cleaning tables and then stacking chairs on tables after the meal.
 7. Sweeping under tables.
 8. Taking organic waste outside and placing in compost pit.
 9. Checking out with dining hall supervisor before leaving.
- When groups choose buffet style serving, hoppers will be responsible for items 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, and 9 only.

A visiting staff member must act as a **dining hall supervisor** at each meal. He or she supervises the hoppers and assists with meal serving and cleanup as needed. Hoppers usually need assistance in being dismissed by tables to go to the salad bar after hot food is served and remembering where to put leftover food, plates, silverware, etc. They often need guidance in clearing tables and organizing their work so they can perform their job efficiently.

B. DORM CLEANUP

Keeping the dorm clean and neat helps everyone have a pleasant stay at EEC. Your group may decide to have cleanup each day, or to put off the cleaning until departure day.

Campers assigned to dorm duty are responsible for:

1. Reporting on time.
2. Sweeping out bunk beds with hand brooms or wet/dry vac.
3. Sweeping shower and bathroom area.
4. Wiping out sinks with paper towel.
5. Wiping off mirrors.
6. Sweeping bunkroom.
7. Sweeping entrances.
8. Sweeping sidewalks in front of entrance.
9. Picking up litter around building.

Visiting staff will be asked to organize and supervise campers assigned to dorm duty and should assist when needed. Visiting staff should check finished work.

C. DEPARTURE DAY CLEANUP

Visiting staff will be asked to organize and supervise campers during the various departure day cleanup tasks as described in the **DEPARTURE DAY CLEANUP GUIDE**. This guide will be given to and gone over with each group by their naturalist prior to the last day.

SUGGESTED CLOTHING/EQUIPMENT LIST

(This list is for a 3-day stay. Clothing should be increased to accommodate a longer stay when needed.)

ESSENTIAL ITEMS

Bedding:

1 sleeping bag or sheet & blanket(s)
1 pillow and case

Toilet articles:

1 bath towel
1 wash cloth
1 comb or brush
1 toothbrush
1 tube of toothpaste
1 soap in container

Clothing:

1 jacket
2 shirts
2 pr. jeans or heavy pants
2 sweatshirts or sweaters
1 rain coat/poncho
2 pr. appropriate footwear
2 pr. shorts (in summer)
1 pr. pajamas
1 pr. slippers
Socks
Underwear
Warm mittens (in winter)
Hat or scarf (in winter)
1 bathing suit and towel (in summer)
1 pr. boots (in winter)

Activities will be held outdoors. Please equip yourself to meet the appropriate seasonal needs. The list of items varies according to the season.

CONVENIENCE ITEMS

Toilet articles:

Kleenex
sunscreen
Chap Stick
medication if needed
insect repellent that contains **Deet**

Optional items:

camera and film
stationery/stamps
pencils
clipboard/notebook
sunglasses
money

FORBIDDEN ITEMS:

alcohol
guns
illicit drugs
fireworks
radios/ MP3 players
food (candy, gum, etc.)
matches
jewelry
knives
silly string, shaving cream
and other prank items
cell phones or pagers

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

A. SEVERE ILLNESS:

In case of a severe personal injury or illness to campers or staff during the hours of 8:00 a.m. -- 5:00 p.m., visiting staff members should contact the secretary, EEC director or health officer. After 5:00 p.m. please call the health officer on duty, either by using the two-way radio located in the lobby, or by using the Center phone intercom system.

B. FIRE:

Please refer to fire procedures posted on bulletin boards throughout the Center. These procedures are reviewed during orientation but may be reviewed again in dorms.

C. TORNADO OR SEVERE WEATHER:

Please refer to tornado procedures posted on bulletin boards throughout the Center. These procedures are reviewed during orientation.

D. SNOWBOUND:

Large amounts of snow and/or ice may require the canceling or postponing of bus transportation. Students at the Ebersole Center will remain until transportation can be made available.

E. LOST CAMPER:

Please refer to the lost camper procedures posted on bulletin boards throughout the Center.

F. LOST SWIMMER/CANOEIST:

Please refer to the aquatic safety procedures available to those groups requesting an aquatic activity.