

Eliot's Policy for the Safety of Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults

(Updated June 2024)

Definitions:

1. Children are generally those campers age 13 and younger (8th graders and younger). For summer camps, the grade is the one they will be entering in the fall.
2. Youth are generally those campers age 14 – 17 (rising 9th - 12th graders). Some youth with late birthdays may be entering the youth program at age 13.
3. Vulnerable adults are those with limited ability to advocate for themselves or maintain their own safety.

Staff Ratios:

Eliot requires the following staff to minor ratios at all Eliot camps during supervised morning program time:

1. Under 3 year olds: 1 staff member for every 3 children. Lead staff members must be at least 18 years old. Assistant staff members must be at least 14 years old.
2. Age 3-10: 1 staff member for every 5 children. Lead staff members must be at least 18 years old. Assistant staff members must be at least 14 years old.
3. Age 11-13 (MAGs): 1 staff member for every 6 children. All staff members must be at least 18 years old.
4. Age 14-17 (Youth): 1 staff member for every 8 youth. All staff members must be at least 25 years old.
5. In all cases we require a minimum of two adults for every group of minors.
6. Note that especially in the Age 3-10 bracket, there may be multiple groups, for instance "Lower Elementary," "Upper Elementary," per the discretion of the Children's Program Director. In every instance, these groups will have at least two staff members. It is sometimes the case, especially for Winter Eliot, that we may have only one child in the youngest category, followed by an age gap, then several Lower or Upper Elementary or MAG campers. In this case, one adult may be assigned to the young child, but they will be co-located with the larger group of children.
7. The linked [chart](#) provides assistance for camp leadership to determine the number of staff necessary.
8. Other chaperoned activities:
 - a. For youth late nights and overnights, two adults age 25 or older must be present at all times. We do not require background checks for these individuals.
 - b. For MAG special events and late nights, two adults must be present at all times. We do not require background checks for these individuals.
 - c. Chaperoning adults attend at the discretion of and involvement with the Youth Advisor, MAG Lead, and/or Children's Program Director; and must attend a pre-event chaperone meeting.

Background Checks:

Eliot's Health and Safety Committee has requested that all camp staff who work closely with children and youth have a criminal background check performed on them. All those working in the youth and children's morning programs, as well as all waterfront staff are in this group, as well as the deans and the board representative. The Eliot Registrar is in charge of running these background checks, which are valid for two years. All information provided is strictly confidential. Should a prior incident crop up as

a result of the search, the staff member will be notified by the Registrar. The Registrar will open a discussion with the potential camp staffer, the dean, and the board representative to determine an appropriate course of action. The safety of our children and youth will be of paramount importance, with consideration made to each staffer's specific circumstances and privacy.

Background checks for US residents are run via a company running national background checks for employers. The process for Canadian residents differs, and camp staff must deal directly with the Canadian RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) to request a criminal background check.

For anyone who works or volunteers for an organization that requires a background check, staff may provide proof of a current background check in lieu of this process.

Reporting Suspected Misconduct to Eliot Leadership and to Seabeck Conference Center:

Eliot staff members are expected to report to the deans or Board Representative, any unsafe behavior, violations of behavioral expectations, poor adult boundaries, and any possible child abuse or other ways youth are in danger including substance abuse and suicidal thoughts. At their discretion, the deans or Board Representative will share this information with the Children's Program Director or Youth Advisor. In case of child abuse, neglect, or sexual misconduct, the Board Representative will report to child welfare services and to the Executive Director of the Seabeck Conference Center. The report to child welfare services should go to the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, & Family (<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/safety/report-abuse>) by calling 1-888-713-6115, which is the reporting hotline established by the State for Kitsap & Pierce counties. A parent or guardian will also be provided the report, unless they are suspected of being the perpetrator.

Method of communicating Respectful Behavior Expectations to parents, guardians, and sponsors at every camp.

The Respectful Behavior Expectations are included in the "Eliot Survival Guide" which is distributed electronically to all campers at every camp. In addition, during the Arrival Day meetings of the whole camp, the children's program orientation, and the youth program orientation, camp rules and expectations are presented to all campers, parents, sponsors, and minors.

Supervision Outside of Structured Program Hours:

After the morning session, children are the responsibility of parents, guardians or sponsors. In practical terms this means that children under age 7 should always be with a responsible caretaker. You can hire a babysitter (check with youth), or swap childcare. But, since this is a family camp, we urge you to take advantage of all the things you can do with your children.

While many children are able to function independently at camp, they are still the responsibility of parents, guardians or sponsors; it is up to these individuals to set limits and/or grant freedoms to the children in their care in accordance with their level of maturity. These adults are also responsible for monitoring behavior of children in their care, even if they allow the children to be independent on the Seabeck campus.

For children of all ages, it is the responsibility of parents, guardians and sponsors to mediate any issues that arise with the children in their care. It is not the responsibility of camp staff to resolve behavior issues that occur outside of the morning program, with the exception of serious violations of camp rules, which will be addressed by the Board Representative, as needed.

Children and youth under age 18 who have demonstrated a need for supervision, according to the sole discretion of the Board Representative, should always be with a responsible adult or guardian 18 years of age or older.

Older children and youth may become very independent of their parents or guardians. Eliot can provide a chance to give them some freedom. Please consider, however, what is age-appropriate and supervise them accordingly. Safety is the number one concern.

Some parents become concerned that they are not seeing enough of their older kids. Different families handle this in different ways. Some eat at least one meal together or have a daily check-in time. Feel free to set rules for your family that meet your needs.

Specific Rules for Children and Youth

1. Youth and children's curfew is 11pm, unless set earlier by parents or program staff. Youth may stay out for youth activities until 1 a.m. provided they are in a designated youth area and have two adults, age 25 or over, present. After curfew, children and youth should be in their sleeping quarters or with a parent or sponsor.
2. Children and youth must obtain permission from a parent or sponsor whenever leaving the Conference Center grounds, including trips to the General Store, Pizza Parlor, or Espresso Stand across the street.
3. Parents and sponsors are responsible for their children/youth following the morning program and through the balance of the day, especially around the playground equipment and the waterfront. Parents and sponsors are expected to know the whereabouts of their children/youth at all times.
4. Cooperative childcare is encouraged, or parents may hire a youth.
5. Skateboards, scooters, riding toys, guns, squirt guns, and similar toys are not allowed in camp.