



Nature Kids 2023 Program Policies

Inclement Weather Policy

Nature Kids will run outdoors rain or shine! Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather conditions. We are able to lend appropriate outdoor gear to our participants as needed; please reach out to us if this is something your child would benefit from. In the case of severe inclement weather such as thunderstorms, snowstorms, or high winds, Nature Kids will be held indoors if allowed by current public health guidelines, and be cancelled otherwise.

Behavioural Policy

Green Venture is a safe and welcoming space for all staff, children, and volunteers. We strive to be encouraging and model positive, kind, and respectful behaviour. If we find that your child's behaviour is leading to an unsafe environment for others, you will be contacted and your child may be asked to leave Nature Kids. Examples of unsafe behaviour include (but are not limited to): violence toward themselves or others, bullying, damaging property, refusing to follow safety rules, repeatedly running out of sight, continued disruption to the program, or being disrespectful. When conflicts do arise, Green Venture staff can help to guide children to resolution and offer suggestions to parents for improving behaviour during the program.

Cancellation Policy

Registration is required for Nature Kids. Your child's registration will be confirmed once your registration form has been submitted. This program runs on a first-come first-served basis with preference to individuals belonging to equity-seeking groups. Children will be added to a waitlist once the session maximum is reached. If a spot becomes available, the next person on the waitlist will be contacted.

We encourage children to attend every session. If a registrant misses two sessions in a row without notice, or one session without any communication even after the session, they may lose their spot to the next person on the waitlist. We understand that sometimes something comes up that may prevent your child from attending, but if you are not able to give us advance notice we ask that you follow up after the missed session to let us know you are still interested in continuing with the program.

Drop off and Pick Up Policy

Participants are welcome to arrive up to 30 minutes before the session begins. Upon arrival, participants will meet staff and volunteers on the red porch, located above the garage. It's best to enter on the driveway on Ambrose Ave. When you arrive, a staff member will let you know which group your child is in and their corresponding pick-up location.

Only parents and caregivers listed in the completed online registration form can pick up registrants at the end of each session. Please provide identification at pickup time every day. With so many participants (and several participants with multiple people on the approved list for pickup) it is challenging for our staff to get to know everyone in such a short time. Please ensure



all parents and caregivers who have permission to pick up your child are listed on your registration form and bring photo ID with them.

When you arrive for pick up please approach the entrance to your designated pick up location. A staff member will confirm which participant you are here to pick up, and check your photo identification. The staff member will notify the participant that it is time to go home, and bring them to you.

Due to the high demand of the program, we can only accept participants who are able to be present for the full time each week. Early pickups to get to other scheduled programs cannot be accommodated.

Snacks and Dining

A healthy snack will be provided by Green Venture during each session. During registration, you will be asked to provide a list of participants' food allergies and sensitivities. While none of these items will be included in the snacks provided, EcoHouse is not an allergen-free workplace and cross contamination is a risk.

Participants are encouraged to bring their own reusable water bottle with their name on it. Participants will eat outdoors.

Staff and volunteers will assist participants with hand hygiene before and after snacks each session.

Adventurous Play Policy

Adventurous Play, also called Risky Play, has numerous benefits for child development. Research shows that risky play supports the development of self-confidence, resilience, executive functioning abilities, and risk-management skills. Risky play also reduces the risk of injury as children gain more independence later in life. In Green Venture's Nature Kids program, we provide opportunities for Outdoor Free Play and Outdoor Risky Play. This includes age- and skill-appropriate running, climbing, and playing with sticks. We follow the principle of "as safe as necessary" over "as safe as possible". An example of what this looks like during Nature Kids sessions is: children sometimes climb trees on the property, but must first learn to assess risk. This includes climbing only onto the lowest branches, and checking the ground for hazards such as rocks and roots and then climbing only where there are no major hazards to fall on. Program Guides are always nearby to supervise and redirect behaviour as needed. You can read more about the benefits of Risky Play [here for a scientific overview](#), and [here for a summary](#). Reach out to us if you have any questions.

Missing Child Procedure

To minimise the risk of missing children, staff carry out frequent head counts, particularly when transporting children between locations. We also break the group up into smaller groups, each with a guide who will stay with the group all week. The guides of the smaller groups will get to



know the children better and will keep track of the participants in their group. If a child cannot be located, the following steps will be taken:

- All staff will be informed that the child is missing.
- Staff will conduct a thorough search of the premises and surrounding area.
- After 10 minutes the police will be informed.
- The Staff Leader will then contact the child's parents or carers.
- Staff will continue to search for the child whilst waiting for the police and parents to arrive.
- We will maintain as normal a routine as possible for the rest of the children.
- The Staff Leader will liaise with the police and the child's parent or carer.
- The incident will be recorded in the Incident Log.

A review will be conducted regarding this and any other related incidents along with relevant policies and procedures. We will identify and implement any changes as necessary.

Illness and Injury Policy

To reduce the risk of illness including Covid-19, Green Venture staff will continue to encourage self-screening, physical distancing, personal hygiene measures including hand washing, and will be performing cleaning and disinfecting of frequently touched surfaces. Participants are welcomed and encouraged to wear a mask but it is not required.

If a participant becomes ill or is injured during a Nature Kids session staff will record the incident in the Incident Log and contact their emergency contact if required. Staff will provide first aid or call for emergency services as needed. If staff deem it necessary the participant will be isolated from the rest of the group and a staff member or volunteer will stay with them until they are picked up from the program.

If you or your child feels ill Green Venture recommends that the individual completes the [Ontario Covid-19 self-assessment](#) to determine next steps for them and the people in their household.

If we are notified of any positive Covid-19 cases among staff or participants, staff will voluntarily notify all parents/guardians of participants who were present at the relevant session. The name(s) of the affected individual(s) will not be shared.

After failing the Covid-19 screening or experiencing symptoms of illness, participants may return to the program after isolating for 5 days if they have no fever and any other symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours (or 48 hours for symptoms affecting the digestive system such as nausea, vomiting or diarrhea).

Off Site Policies:

General Procedures

- Children must always be able to see at least one of the staff members



- Staff will have hand sanitizer with them at all times
- Staff will carry portable first aid kits
- Staff will have an established means of getting the children's attention

Crossing the Street

- When using a crosswalk
 - Hold hand with youngest children
 - Staff at front and back of group, and one in the middle of the crosswalk until all children have crossed
- When not using a crosswalk
 - All staff will wear bright yellow and orange safety vests
 - Hold hand with youngest children
 - One staff member will stand in the middle of the road to block any oncoming traffic (although we will also wait for a gap and cross in small groups if necessary). There will be a staff member leading the group at the front and taking up the rear.

Activities Near Water

- Staff will give a safety talk to the children beforehand, including:
 - Establish boundaries
 - Everyone has a buddy
 - Lowering centre of gravity before leaning over the water (for ex, to look for bugs)
 - What to do in case of falling in water (in Davis Creek, stand up)

Litter Clean Up Safety

- Set clean up boundaries and rules (ie, stay with an adult at all times)
- Wear gloves, adults will carry garbage & recycling bags
- Children are not to pick up anything hazardous, including:
 - Needles
 - Broken glass and other sharp objects
- If children find something hazardous they should alert a staff member
 - Staff will follow city procedures to pick up needles if found
- Ask children to tell adults when they find something they are not sure about

If you have any questions, please contact naturekids@greenventure.ca