



WILDBOREAL FOREST SCHOOL

**EVERY OTHER WEDNESDAY
STARTING
SEPTEMBER 13TH 2023
FULL LIST OF DATES ENCLOSED**

PARENT HANDBOOK





What is WildBoreal Environmental Educators?

WildBoreal is an environmental education business that I started in December of 2021.

A small business hoping to inspire an interest in nature and the environment by bringing the youth of today outside to explore and adventure. To provide exciting, engaging environmental education programs to families and children about the wildlife and plants, as well as many other environmental processes found here in the Boreal Forest of Alberta!



Who Am I?

I am the program head and the owner of WildBoreal Environmental Educators. I graduated with my diploma in Environmental Science, majoring in Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation in 2021.

Following my education I decided that it was time to create a renewed passion and interest in nature in the communities of Alberta. Thus WildBoreal Environmental Educators was born.

With tons of help from my friends and family I settled on the name and the logo and started bringing my dream to fruition.

I has always loved being outdoors, camping, fishing, building forts and many other activities.





What is Forest School

Forest school is a form of education that introduces children to our natural world allowing them to explore and imagine at their own pace! Forest schools have been around around since the 1950's, and have been growing in popularity worldwide, though the concept is still relatively new to Canada.

Forest school allows for regular access to a natural space for children to experience play-based learning, while encouraging the development of relationships with the land, educators, others and themselves. Allowing them to learn outside the classroom and away from the desk in a way that doesn't feel like learning!

Potential Benefits of Forest School

- Increased confidence
- Increased Social Skills
- Better Communication
- Greater Concentration
- Fine and Gross Motor Skill Development
- Physical Health and Stamina
- Environmental Respect and Literacy
- Healthy Safe-Risk Practices

And so many more!





What are you signing up for?

Your child will arrive at the WildBoreal site where they will be allowed to explore and adventure. They will be provided with different activities depending on the session theme, they will receive instruction and their materials and tools and allowed to work independently or together in the self led activity.

Allowing them to explore the activity themselves with little intervention unless requested allows the kids to build confidence in trying new things and building their problem solving skills.

All activities encourage skill building, social skills, confidence and imagination and engaging in safe risk practices that allow them to understand the importance of safety, while helping the children to connect with nature and learn through play!

When signing up there will be a comprehensive waiver to be signed, and we are available for any questions or concerns via email at wildboreal@gmail.com or phone at 780-805-4436





Dates

2023 Dates All Sessions Run 4:00pm-6:00pm

September 13th	January 31st	May 22nd
September 27th	February 14th	June 5th
October 11th	February 28th	
October 25th	March 13th	
November 8th	March 27th	
November 22nd	April 10th	
December 6th	April 24th	
January 17th	May 8th	

\$400 for the year

We only have 10 spots available in each session. If your child attends Kinuso School they can catch the bus to our site and will just need picked up after the session. 18 sessions total each with a different theme and different activities.

Payment plans can be arranged depending on circumstances and at the discretion of our Educator.





Inclusion and Accessibility

One of the priorities of WildBoreal EE (environmental educators) is to ensure that our programs and our forest school sessions are accessible to all children and families regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, language, physical abilities, neurological differences or socioeconomic status.

We intend to do everything in our power to provide fun accessible programming to your child(ren) and families.

Please contact us if there are any ways that we can work together with your family to provide support to your child(ren) and family to participate in our programs and forest school sessions.

Contact
Braidie Locke
780-805-4436
wildboreal@gmail.com

Preparing for Forest School

We are excited to welcome your child(ren) to our forest school sessions. Please ensure that you read the following to make sure that your child comes prepared to forest school. We reserve the right to send children home due to a lack of preparedness without refund for the session.

All participants must be able to use the bathroom facilities on their own, our educators will not assist children when using the bathroom.

Children who attend Kinuso School are able to ride the school bus to our site, a parent or guardian is required to pick them up at 6:00pm. We will not release children to anyone who is not a primary, secondary or emergency contact or otherwise specified on our waiver.





What to Wear

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that your child is appropriately dressed for being outside in the weather conditions of each session.

Dressing appropriately for the conditions is crucial for the health, safety and comfort for your children when participating in outdoor forest school sessions.

Our priority is to ensure that children are able to have fun with us and be comfortable while playing outside for an extended period of time.

Specific layers and clothing are dependent on the weather conditions on the date of the session. Please check the forecast the morning of the session to determine the appropriate clothing to send with your child.

Closed-toed shoes are a requirement during session. Long pants are highly recommended to protect legs from scrapes and scratches as well as insect bites.

When the weather is rainy/wet waterproof footwear and rain gear is recommended and may be required.

Wool socks and gloves are recommended for the colder or wet days, wool continues to insulate even when wet, try to avoid cotton.

It is recommended to include a good quality toque and wool mittens (recommended) or gloves as we quickly lose heat through our heads and hands in cold conditions. Again try to avoid cotton and thin knit gloves.

During rainy and cold winter conditions a sturdy breathable waterproof layer is highly encouraged, as remaining dry helps avoid minor hyperthermia and discomfort causing grumpy attitudes.

Note that most snow pants and nylon fabric splash pants are water resistant not waterproof meaning they will eventually get wet, look for waterproof breathable materials instead.





What to Bring

Please include all items listed in a sturdy backpack suitable to your child's size as they are required to carry their own packs.

Please do not pack extra items as it adds to the weight of the pack. Consider packing items like bug spray and sunscreen in travel sizes to reduce weight and bulk in their packs.

All of the tools and materials required for each session will be provided by WildBoreal EE.

We recommend that you label your child's things to ensure that everything returns to your child's bag. If items are left we will place them in the lost and found, available at request.

WildBoreal EE is not responsible for any lost or damaged items.

Checklist

- Spare Clothing (especially socks and mitts)
- Water Bottle
- Small Snack
- Sunscreen
- Bug Spray
- Extra Layers

Please Do Not Bring

- Toys
- Electronic Devices
- Pocket Knives or Tools

Ticks

Ticks are a possibility when spending significant time outdoors, please check your children and their cloths for any ticks after each session. If a tick is found please contact us so we can let other parents know to be vigilant.





Food

Please provide your child with a small snack, our sessions are in the evening after school and children may want an afterschool snack. Some programs we may make food over the fire, you will be informed prior to the session if we will be providing food, and you can include and food allergies or restrictions on your waiver when you sign your child up. We will keep all allergies and restrictions in mind when providing food.

Sunscreen and Bug Spray

Please provide your child with sunscreen and bug spray. We will have additional supplies on hand, however you must give permission on the waiver to allow us to provide either to your child. Our staff is available to help the children apply/re-apply their sunscreen and bug spray.





Policies and Procedures

Terms and Conditions

In order to participate in our forest school sessions we need;

- All registration forms to be completed and signed
 - Payment Policy
 - Informed Consent and Liability Waiver
 - Unsafe Weather Policy
 - Appropriate Clothing Policy
- Payment in full or in accordance with personal payment plan

Refund Policy

Refunds will be reviewed on a case by case basis, and are not generally given unless there are extreme circumstances that prevent the child from participating in our sessions. WildBoreal EE reserves the right to assess the circumstances and decide if a refund will be given

No refund will be given if a session is cancelled due to weather .

A full refund will be provided if there are insufficient registration numbers.

Personal Information Privacy Policy

WildBoreal EE is committed to ensuring that all personal data remains protected and private, except for when consent has been given (photo and video use). We will not share any information with third parties unless prior consent is granted or we are legally obligated to do so.

When signing up for our forest school sessions you are providing us with sensitive information about you and your child, the information provided is used to communicate and protect your child's safety and health during our programs.

Information that is crucial to successful programming and safety will be documented and in a printed form for access by our educators during programming in the case of an emergency. This information includes your child's name, allergies, medications, emergency contacts etc.





Policies and Procedures

Social Media and Photo/Video Use Policy

WildBoreal EE posts photos and videos of programs and activities on our website and social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok). We may also use photos publicly for promotional purposes, as well as to allow parents and caregivers with photos of their children participating and exploring, to help with parental understanding of your child's learning and experiences. Our photo consent policy applies to our website and all our social media accounts.

Illness Policy

If your child is ill (including cold and flu) we ask that you do not attend the forest school session of that day.

If your child experiences any illness symptoms including stomach upset and sore throat while attending the session a parent will be contacted to pick their child up immediately.

If your child is experiencing Lice we ask to be informed so we can let other parents know that their child may be exposed and they should watch for lice.

Bathroom Policy

All children must be capable of using the bathroom facilities on their own, our educators will not assist children in the washroom.

We have an outhouse on site however we may be a distance from it and children may have to answer nature's call outside, they will be given the privacy to do so or they can wait until we get back to the outhouse area.

Water, soap or hand sanitizer will be provided to clean hands after washroom use.





Policies and Procedures

Emergency Procedures and First Aid

In the event that an emergency arises that impacts the entire group, we will muster at the trailer and parents will be contacted for an emergency pick-up

The most likely injuries that occur are bumps, bruises, scratches and scrapes, debris in eyes, bug bites and stings.

To date we have not experienced a serious or permanent injury.

Risk Management

Risk is a part of forest school and outdoor learning. Learning how to manage risk through problem solving and experience is a part of what makes forest school unique. Our Educators frequently assess and manage on-site risks, while allowing the participants to help providing them the opportunity to learn risk management skills.

An extensive Hazard assessment form is available upon request and includes mitigating attempts

Some risks may include;

Weather Associated Risk

- Chill or hyperthermia (improper gear)
- Falling debris when windy
- Thunderstorms

Activity Associated Risk

- Slipping/Tripping/Falling
- Unsafe handling of sticks
- Rough play with others
- Tool use injury

Animal Associated Risk

- Bug Bites/Stings
- Ticks
- Scratches/Bites from domestic animals
- Scratches Bites from Wildlife

Plant Associated Risk

- Stinging Nettle
- Thistles
- Thorns
- Twigs and Sticks





Policies and Procedures

Weather Policy

Educators will monitor weather forecasts regularly and will check the day of to make an informed decision about all planned activities.

Some sessions can be moved indoors in the event of inclement weather, however we reserve the right to postpone or cancel a session due to the weather. (see refund policy on weather).

Inclement or Severe Weather conditions may include

- Strong Winds
- Thunder/Lightening
- Excessive Heat
- Excessive Cold


If a session is cancelled or postponed parents will be notified as soon as possible.

If severe or dangerous weather develops while a session is under way we will move indoors to wait it out or if cancellation is decided parents will be contacted to arrange pick up.

Plant Exposure Policy

If your child is exposed to Stinging Nettle, Thistle or other irritating plant species the area will be washed well to reduce irritation. To help prevent exposure we require close-toed shoes and strongly recommend full length pants and long socks.





Policies and Procedures

Tool Use Policy

Various tools will be used for various activities and various sessions. We will not introduce tools until we have assessed the ability and personality of participants to ensure safe use of tools.

Tools may include

Hammers, Hand Saws, Hand Drills, Pocket Knives, etc. All tool use will be supervised by our educator.

All tools will be inspected regularly to ensure they are in safe use condition. Proper use and technique as well as risks and safety will be demonstrated by an educator prior to participant use. If the educator feels a child is using a tool unsafely an attempt to correct the use will be done and if further misuse continues the tool will be confiscated.

Emergency Procedures and First Aid

WildBoreal EE has written emergency procedures, and all educators will comply by them. A copy of the emergency procedures and emergency contacts will be carried by the educator at all times.

All educators have a backpack first aid kit on their person, as well as a large first aid kit at the base location. All first aid kits are replenished as soon as possible after use.

Our educators are trained in first aid and CPR

In the event that urgent care is required for a child the parent will be contacted immediately and the educator will remain with the child until a parent or guardian arrives, and an incident report will be filed.

In the unlikely event that an emergent injury occurs and a child is needing to be transported to the hospital by ambulance, parents will be contacted to head to the appropriate hospital and an incident report will be filed, a follow-up will occur once all other participants have been picked up by a parent.





Staff Duties and Responsibilities

Staff responsibilities include;

- Conducting risk assessments and implementing safety measures prior to session.
- Support children in their experience with the outdoors and planned activities.
- Encouraging children to explore and participate in cooperative, unstructured, learning through play.
- Engage in clear communication with children, families and other staff.
- Participate in pick-up (we will not release a child to anyone who is not specified on the waiver)

Communication with parents and family will be via email (wildboreal@gmail.com) or phone (780-805-4436). If your child will not be attending or will be late for a session please contact us. If contacting us via text please include your name and the name of your child to provide clarity for our educator.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parents and guardians are responsible for;

- Completing and submitting all registration forms
- Provide staff with any information that will help us meet your child's needs
- ensure that your child is prepared for the session with appropriate clothing, snacks and water.

Contact the educator with any questions concerns or grievances we will make every effort to address and resolve any issues in a timely manner.





Emergency Contact

To maintain the enjoyment of the outdoors we would like to limit any interruptions and disturbances our staff will have cell phones on thier person, however ringers will be silenced. They will check their phones periodically during the sessions.

If there is an emergency please call us, if we do not answer text us and inform us that it is an emergency and we will contact you as soon as possible.

Emergency contact number
Braid Locke 780-805-4436

