Q: What advice would you give to new Tiny Trees Families?

“Embrace the mud and plenty of laundry. It’s all so much worth it.”

“Layers. Lots of layers and a wet bag to put soggy clothes in.”

“Just know that your kids are a lot more resilient than you think they are! And you will take home WAY less germs/colds than you ever did in a ‘normal’ school.”

“There will be tough days. Part of the unique experience is to educate kids in how to deal with discomfort in the elements and how to pack/dress to be prepared and avoid that discomfort. The sunny days are priceless!”

“Flexibility and a sense of humor.”

“Do everything you can to make your morning easier...make lunch and set out clothes the night before and still leave yourself extra time in the morning.”

Q: What clothing items/gear were most efficient for the rain and cold weather? Where are the best places to find them?

- **Thermal tops/bottoms**: Costco (Kirkland brand)
- **Fleece tops/bottoms**: Local thrift stores/Old Navy
- **Down jacket (under rain suit)**: Costco/R.E.I/thrift
- **Snow pants (under rainsuit)**: Thrift/Costco
- **Wool socks**: SmartWool/Amazon/LL Bean/Costco
- **Shell mittens** (completely waterproof, wear over other thermal gloves): Polarn O. Pyret/Abeko gloves
- **Waterproof mittens/gloves**: Outdoor Research Adrenaline/Costco HEAD Ski Mittens
- **Thermal gloves**: Outdoor Research Flurry, Costco
- **Thin gloves**: Amazon, Costco Head Tech Gloves
- **Hand/foot warmers**: Buy disposable hand/foot warmers at Costco. Warm and insert into gloves and boots at drop off, leave extra in backpack
- **Child-sized back pack**: Imagine that your preschooler can carry this around the park with their layers inside. For scale, check out R.E.I Tarn 12 pack or Osprey brand!
- **Lunchbox**: Lunchbots/bento boxes, plus a thermos for soup/warm meals/drinks.

Q: What additional items or tips would provide support to new parents?

- Boot dryer rather than extra pair of boots: Cabela’s
- Tote/dry bag in car for muddy, wet clothes: Lowe’s, Amazon
- Extra pairs (3) of waterproof and thin gloves.
- Thin pair of gloves in lunchbox for eating in the cold.
- Thermal clothing can be worn consecutively if it remains dry. Only 1-2 pairs needed.
Q: Outdoor gear can be expensive. Where do you find the best deals?

- Thrift and second hand stores: We’re fans of LifeLong Thrift on Cap Hill, The Good Will outlet store (for the serious bargain hunters) or one of Goodwill’s many locations.
- Consignment stores: Chrysanthemum Consignment in Columbia City is a favorite or check out Red Tricycle’s recommendations to find a store near you.
- **Buy Nothing**! Join your local Buy Nothing Facebook group to help families looking to pass on their used gear.
- Costco! Kirkland brand thermals and fleeces and HEAD brand mittens are often on sale.

If you like to search online for deals:

- **Oakiewear** (take 15% off most items with the discount code “outdoorschool"
- **REI Outlet**
- **REI**
- **Campmor**
- **Sierra Trading Post**
- **Columbia** (check out the Columbia Outlet in Marysville)

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**Essential Winter Layers**

When the temperatures reach below 45 degrees, keeping your preschooler extra warm and dry is essential. Here is what your preschooler should wear on a cold, wet day at outdoor preschool.

Remember: NO cotton, NO jeans, and pack lots of extras!