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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Updated 11.15.2019

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2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR LOCATIONS & PROGRAMS

Seattle
Beer Sheva Park
  Mornings 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
  M-F; M/W/F; T/TH

Camp Long
  Mornings 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
  M-F; M/W/F; T/TH
  Afternoons 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM
  M/W; T/TH

Carkeek Park
  Mornings 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
  M-F; M/W/F; T/TH
  Afternoons 1:00 PM - 4:30 PM
  M/W; T/TH
  Afternoons 1:00 PM - 4:30 PM (3.5 hrs)
  M-F; M/W/F; T/TH

Jefferson Park
  Mornings 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
  M-F

Olympic Sculpture Park
  Mornings 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
  M-F; M/W/F; T/TH

King County
Big Finn Hill Park
  Mornings 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
  M-F; M/W/F; T/TH
  Afternoons 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM
  T/TH

Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park
  Mornings 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
  M-F; M/W/F; T/TH
  Afternoons 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM
  T/TH

Five Mile Lake
  Mornings 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
  M-F; M/W/F; T/TH

Seahurst Park
  Mornings 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM
  M-F; M/W/F; T/TH
  Afternoons 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM
  T/TH
ABOUT TINY TREES PRESCHOOL

Tiny Trees Preschool gives children a quality education and a joyful, nature rich childhood: one full of play, exploration and wonder. By creating joyful, outdoor classrooms in public parks throughout Seattle and King County, Tiny Trees makes preschool and nature accessible. Tiny Trees is committed to hiring and retaining staff who are committed to equitable early education and aims to support a diverse community of administrators and educators. Tiny Trees is an official partner of Seattle Parks and Recreation; King County Parks and Recreation and Burien Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services. Most Seattle locations are providers for the Seattle Preschool Program – Pathway, which provides free tuition at Tiny Trees for children in households below 350% of the federal poverty line during our school year programming. More information is available at TinyTrees.org.

Our mission is to use outdoor classrooms to make a quality education in reading, math and science accessible for families and to give children a joyful, nature rich childhood – one full of play, exploration and wonder.

Our vision is to create a community where all children have access to high quality education and develop the social, emotional, and academic skills needed to thrive in school and life.

Our core values are the constants that guide our work. As we grow, stumble, innovate and change we focus on:

![Quality](image1)
![Families](image2)
![Play](image3)
![Evidence Based Practice](image4)
![Emotional & Physical Safety](image5)

Our program philosophy is based on the belief that preschool education can incorporate reading, math, and science necessary to succeed in kindergarten and the social and emotional skills to thrive in school and life all while giving kids a vibrant and rich childhood, full of exploration, play, and wonder.

TINY TREES PHILOSOPHY

How We View Children & Childhood

Children are capable, strong, and resilient humans. Children should be seen as citizens, as leaders, and as active participants in the community. At Tiny Trees, children are honored for where they are at developmentally and emotionally/physically/spiritually on any given day.

Children learn everything through play. Play, afterall, is the work of the child and should be respected as a serious form of development for children. Nature provides children with endless opportunities to play. Observing and supporting this play is the most important work of the early childhood educator.

We use the HighScope approach and Teaching Strategies Gold as launching pads for understanding developmentally appropriate practice. These approaches guide us in best practices for adult-child interactions, setting up the camp environment, and planning activities.
Anti-Bias Education

Based in the roots of our vision for equitable, accessible early childhood education, one of the core components of our curriculum is anti-bias work. By celebrating individual children’s interests, cultures, and skills, we seek to create an inclusive learning environment that celebrates difference. Yet, we recognize that simply celebrating difference too often leaves room for bias to develop in young children and deeply impacts young children from marginalized communities. It is thus our goal for our learning environments to model a world where bias is worked against and dominant, privileged culture is de-centered.

We challenge children to become critical thinkers around topics like race, ability, gender, socioeconomic status, biological sex, ethnicity, language and communication, and other identity markers. In doing this work, we seek to elevate the voices and perspectives of those who have not had adequate representation. We do this through books, discussions, puppets, and play in a developmentally appropriate way. According to *Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves*, by Louise Derman-Sparks and Julie Olsen Edwards, the four main goals of anti-bias work with young children are:

1. **(Identity)**: Each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities.

2. **(Diversity)**: Each child will express comfort and joy with human diversity; accurate language for human differences; and deep, caring human connections.

3. **(Justice)**: Each child will increasingly recognize unfairness, have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts.

4. **(Action)**: Each child will demonstrate empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions.

Our goal is to dive into these topics naturally based on interactions in children’s play, children’s questions, and conversations throughout the school day. Yet, we believe that these subjects are too important to always wait for the subject to emerge from the children. At these times, we very thoughtfully and gently introduce new ideas, activities, and discussion topics to share with the children in our care.

Public parks are a wonderful setting to do this work; children are encouraged to care for the land and people around them and become activists for the community and for a better world. We use principles of place-based education to guide the way that we engage with the park and the social and environmental justice associated with being in this space. Children become stewards for the community and, ultimately, for the people and planet around them.

We operate on Coast Salish Land. Learn more at [WashingtonTribes.org](http://WashingtonTribes.org).

Connecting to Nature

*E.O. Wilson once shared that if children do not have meaningful interactions with the outdoor environment before age 5, they will not develop environmental values later in life. Preschool is a critical time to help children develop these values.*
Tiny Trees Preschool is not just a preschool outside. We believe that children’s interaction with the natural world plays a critical role in their healthy development across content areas and fosters their curiosity and understanding of their place within the natural world. We are grateful each day to the Coast Salish people whose land we operate on and seek to incorporate their knowledge and perspectives into our practices.

There are several principles that guide our work in the context of existing in public, outdoor spaces:

**Building a Sense of Wonder:** We observe and are immersed in the changes from season to season gaining insight and experiencing awe. We develop our understanding and knowledge of the plants and animals we share our space with through observation, foraging and other activities. Nature activates students’ curiosity and imagination and our educators structure healthy risky play opportunities using natural materials available to us. We take the time to lay in the grass, to listen to nature’s “cinema,” and we model gratitude.

**Civic Engagement & Social Justice:** At Tiny Trees, we use a Place-Based Learning (PBL) approach to developing curriculum, where children are present, engaged, and activities for the community where they attend school. According to Nate McClennen, author of *Communities as Learning Environments*, “Place-Based Education approach can serve as a framework to connect learning models, increase the power of our educational system and serve as the foundation for a thriving democracy.” In alignment with our anti-bias work, children will be invited to think critically about the classroom community, the park community, and who is and is not served by these settings. They will build an understanding of community roles, diversity within the neighborhood, and inequities as they are visible or invisible around the park.

**Cultivating Stewardship:** Our teachers work to scaffold students’ development of attitudes towards stewardship, connection to place, resilience, and understanding of human impact on nature through our daily explorations and investigations. Children should be engaged actively in protecting the park. Some examples include:

- Knowledge of indigenous species and their importance in the park
- Identifying litter and discussing its impact
- Working in collaboration with the parks staff to understand the conservation work that occurs there
- Identification and possible removal of invasive species
- [Wild Tending](#), or respectful human-nature interactions, including responsible material collecting and thoughtful set up and takedown practices in the classroom
- Staying on trails and identifying sensitive plants when they go off trail
- Learning “hiking etiquette” so that other hikers can also enjoy the park

**Using Natural Materials, or Materials to Supplement our Interactions with Nature:** We are in the process of finding ways to reduce the amount of human-made materials in our class spaces in favor of items found in nature to inspire imagination and curiosity in our students. We believe that nature provides us with ample materials for learning across domains. Materials that are brought into the classroom should meet the following criteria:

- Be used to connect children further with nature or be set up in a way that encourages mixing of nature and human-made materials
- Be ‘real’ or found/recycled materials whenever possible. *For example, instead of a kids’ plastic tea set, we would use real tea cups and tea pots.*
- Have limited environmental impact (no microplastics such as glitter or sequins, styrofoam, small plastic particles, chemicals, or other possible pollutants)
Honoring Indigenous Culture & Practices: We are working to incorporate indigenous knowledge and perspectives into our practices through partnerships with local tribes. While we do not have an official partnership at this time, we are inspired by the Since Time Immemorial Curriculum and recognize the Coast Salish peoples as the first outdoor early learning experts on this land and are working to build this knowledge.

Evaluating Our Organization’s Impact: As we grow, Tiny Trees is reflecting on our nature-based practice and working to deepen our commitment to stewardship by further evaluating our environmental impact on the spaces we use and across our administrative practices and systems. This work will be discussed in our strategic planning process, with the greatest focus being on how we incorporate sustainability education at our classroom level.

We believe that schools need to provide spaces for children to be respected as citizens of the planet and that they can build a reciprocal respect for the Earth by intentional connection and modeling care for the environment around them. When providing children with a joyfully muddy childhood, the earth smiles a little wider.

Administration and Staff Hiring

Staff Hiring: When hiring teachers and administrators, we value diverse education and life experiences. We look for staff members who have a passion for working with young children and their families in unique outdoor settings. Our teaching team is built upon teachers who:

- Are knowledgeable about developmentally appropriate practices for three to five year-old learners.
- Are prepared and eager to share life experiences, talents, and interests.
- Enjoy the outdoors and have a personal connection to the natural world.
- Are professional, creative, and experienced in fostering growth of the whole child and developing an emergent, child-driven curriculum.
- Are interculturally fluent and invested in equity and anti-bias work.
- Can laugh at the rain, happily make mud pies day after day, embrace teachable moments, and find joy in being outside with children every day.

Teacher to Child Ratio: We believe in the importance of maintaining high standards regarding staff to child ratios. All classes will have a minimum of two teachers (usually a lead and an assistant) and a third adult volunteer, staff, or intern when classes are enrolled with more than 12 children. All classrooms will have a maximum of 16 students.

Volunteers and Interns: If you would like to be more involved in class, interacting with children and helping our teachers, we would love to work together to make that happen! Volunteering in the classroom is very impactful for children and teachers alike. If you plan on volunteering please respect and listen to teacher instructions at all times, as well as do your best to engage with all children present.

The first step in our volunteering processed would be to fill out a quick, non-invasive background check. The background check is free of charge to families and will take less than five minutes. We believe background checks in our spaces are often helpful because we work with potentially vulnerable populations of young children. However, we recognize that the background check process itself can feel like a disproportionate barrier. Our background check process does not ask, nor search for, information on citizenship, immigration status, or place of residence. Once submitted, we do not share or store any of the information provided. All we require is that
prospective volunteers submit their name and their birthdate. That information is run through the Washington State Patrol database, which does not cross-reference with any federal databases. Tiny Trees staff are the only ones handling this information, and after processing, we only record that the background check has been processed.

If you’d like to help out in the class, but the background check process feels harmful or onerous, please reach out to our Family Services team, and we would love to work through the process with you. It is always our goal to most fully support your family in fully accessing outdoor education!

Once you have submitted a background check, please contact Tiny Trees administrative staff to arrange a volunteering schedule. Our Special Projects Manager, Corbin Muck, is happy to help you to schedule this opportunity and to determine your capacity as a volunteer (corbin@tinytrees.org).

THE PRESCHOOL EXPERIENCE AT TINY TREES

Eligibility

To enroll in a Tiny Trees Preschool Summer Camp, students should be at least 3 years old and be no older than 6 by August 31, 2019. All students should be comfortable using a porta-potty with minimal teacher assistance prior to the start of class. We are an inclusive program -- if you have questions or concerns or need resources on potty training, please reach out to admissions@tinytrees.org. Children cannot attend both a morning and afternoon session.

Curriculum

Tiny Trees classrooms use HighScope, a research-based, play-centric and child-led curriculum. It is the ultimate form of emergent curriculum. This type of curriculum is focused around the interest and play of the child where a theme can change week to week, day to day, and even minute to minute. A key tool in HighScope is the “Plan-Do-Review” model that is used by students to decide what they want to explore during their work time (free choice time) and by teachers to make sure we are prepared to meet the daily needs of our students. High Scope is designed to help teachers create a daily plan that will strengthen children’s skills and focus activities and lessons towards the child’s interest.
Our curriculum celebrates that young children learn through hands-on/minds-on experiences. Opportunities are provided each day for children to select, explore and practice skills using a variety of materials and activities. What may look like “child’s play” to an adult is actually learning in progress. Through play, your child will develop problem solving, social and language skills. Active learning provides opportunities for cognitive, physical, social/emotional, language, and self-regulation development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What activities will we use to teach children reading, math, and science? Examples include:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>READING</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading aloud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using complex language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story dictations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journaling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing in front of children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using children’s names</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using different languages in the classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examining trail signs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do we teach social and emotional skills?

In addition to academic learning, we foster social and emotional skills. We teach to the whole child so children enter kindergarten not only ready to learn to read but also have the executive functions and social skills for lifelong success.

**SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS**

- Group play and cooperative learning
- Promoting culturally-rich classrooms with children from different communities sharing and supporting each other
- Cultivating emotional literacy and empathy to develop positive self-esteem
- Nurturing self-expression, creativity and reflection
- Encouraging peer interactions
- Allowing children to make and experience the consequences of choices
- Developing activities that encourage cognitive growth and problem-solving skills
- Providing a supportive, safe learning environment to encourage discovery, questioning, and experimentation
- Encouraging family involvement
- Supporting and including multilingual students and students whose first language is not English

Student Assessment & Evaluation

Our teachers will connect with families at the beginning of the school year or upon joining the class to discuss your hopes, goals, and concerns about your child. We view parents as partners and seek to create a team with you that will work together to support your Tiny Tree. Using this information and information about your family, we will create a culturally responsive environment in which your child can thrive.

To track student social emotional, cognitive, physical, and academic progress, teachers use a variety of best practices. Differing learning styles, interests, and skill levels become evident as teachers informally observe students daily and record this information through written notes, photographs, and videos. These pieces of documentation are then compared to learning standards established by Teaching Strategies Gold. These standards helps us gain insight about children’s cognitive,
language, social, emotional, physical, and self-help skills. Because we utilize authentic assessment, it is informal and happens as a routine part of the day. The sole purpose of our assessment is to discover each child’s needs and is on-going. This information informs our curriculum and ensures that we are providing rich opportunities that are developmentally appropriate. Teachers meet weekly and incorporate assessment information into lesson plans. Parent/guardian-teacher conferences are held twice yearly. Teaching Strategies Gold is used formally for all children attending 5 days per week in Seattle Preschool Program Pathway classrooms and informally in all other classes, through application of the tool to other reporting styles, rooting student evaluation in authentic assessment.

**Developmental screening** is another important way that our program can help to support each child individually. These are opportunities for us to use authentic, objective information about your child to learn about if they would benefit from early intervention supports either formally or informally in the classroom. Families have access to the ASQ, or Ages and Stages Questionnaire, which helps for us to flag students whose development may benefit from additional physical, emotional, or cognitive supports. The ASQ is required in SPP Pathway classrooms and optional in all other classrooms. Tiny Trees also can support families in completing referrals for Child Find and other support services and is committed to being an inclusive program.

Seattle Preschool Program Pathways families will also have access to health screenings, vocabulary assessment and their child’s Teaching Strategies Gold development.

**NOTE:** All forms of student evaluation are transparent and accessible to parents. Student records, however, are kept confidential. Families can access these upon request by emailing admissions@tinytrees.org.
A Typical Day

We value spontaneity and take advantage of “teachable moments.” While we do not follow a rigid schedule or rush to complete projects for the sake of moving on to the next activity, we realize that young children benefit from knowing what to expect. We will maintain a schedule of predictable events. Following a consistent routine day after day gives children a sense of security they need to make choices and take risks, and it opens the door to exciting learning opportunities. Our teachers are facilitators, not dictators, of learning. The following is an example of a possible classroom schedule based on our morning hours (time modifications are made for afternoon programming):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30</td>
<td><strong>Arrival</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Both adults and children sign-in. After greeting teachers and friends, students enjoy free exploration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45</td>
<td><strong>Group Meeting</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children take part in conversation, engage in music and movement activities, interact with stories and participate in other whole-group activities. This is a time to talk about the day, see who’s here/absent and where the exploration will be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td><strong>Small Group &amp; Plan</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult-directed activities based on children’s interests that often introduce materials or promote new skills. Working in small groups provides students the opportunity to ask questions while allowing teachers to evaluate each child’s needs and progress. Students will then “Plan” what they want to do during Work Time (materials to use, questions and ideas to explore, friends to play with).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:20</td>
<td><strong>Work Time</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
45 to 60 minutes of child-directed exploration. Children carry out their plans or shift to new activities that interest them. Students will be able to choose from activities including: building, art, sensory, science and discovery, writing, reading, dramatic play, music and movement.

10:20 Clean Up
Children participate in tidying the classroom, helping to take ownership for the space and community. We also focus on making sure that we tend the nature around the classroom.

10:30 Snack & Review
Teachers and students eat healthy foods “family style” while enjoying each other’s company (snack is provided by Tiny Trees). Students “Review” and recall what they explored and learned during Work Time.

10:45 Exploration & Hike
Students will hike, explore and enjoy large group games in the park. Hikes include opportunities to visit a special destination or to focus on the journey, stopping at spots on the trail to identify plants, balance on logs, and discover hidden secrets.

11:45 Lunch
Students in morning classes bring lunch from home. Students and teachers eat together.

12:15 Group Meeting
An opportunity to reflect upon the day and come together as a community with music, stories, or movement.

12:20-12:30 Pick Up Window
Adults sign out students and have the opportunity to check in with teachers. See Late Pick up Policy.

What to Bring Each Day

1. A child-sized backpack large enough to hold a water bottle and extra clothing layers. Please assist us by familiarizing your child with the contents of their backpack before school begins so that she/he is able to find needed items on their own.
2. A water bottle, labelled with child’s name (filled with water).
3. 2 changes of clothing (shirt, pants, underwear, socks) in case of bathroom accidents or water play. Be sure to update your child’s changes of clothing based on the season!
4. Appropriate weather-related clothing layers. Students must have rain gear with them at all times.
5. Lunch (may be packed separately from the backpack). Morning classes only.

Snacks & Lunches

We approach diverse family values around food in the same way we support the individuality of each child. Meals are a time for coming together as a community and sharing observations and stories. Teachers encourage conversation by sitting and eating with the students. Tiny Trees Preschool provides snacks, but children attending morning classes need to bring their own lunch.

Allergies: In cases of severe allergies or dietary restrictions, parents may be asked to exclude certain foods from their child’s lunch. If your child has an allergy or food restriction, documentation must be on file. You can find a copy in the 2019-20 Parent Portal or request one via admissions@tinyltrees.org

Dressing for Outdoor School

All fully-enrolled students at Tiny Trees are provided with a waterproof rain jacket and pants to
keep throughout the year and beyond. Due to shipping delays, gear may not be delivered until several weeks after the first day of classes; we will communicate with families as best we can when we will be sending gear to the classrooms.

Please be prepared in the interim with waterproof and water resistant gear. In 2019-20, Tiny Trees will not be providing boots to families. However, Tiny Trees Preschool will work with families who require assistance in meeting their children’s clothing needs. Staff and/or families may contact the Family Services Manager with this request via gear@tinytrees.org.

Additionally, families are required to follow Tiny Trees’ Outdoor Clothing Policy to minimize chances of illness and exposure to extreme weather, including:

- Dress children in long pants, closed-toe shoes, and high socks
- Apply bug spray or sunblock prior to arrival at school
- Provide children with hats and extra clothing
- Dress children in layers to allow for weather changes throughout the day
- Teachers will have limited extra clothing on-site if needed
- Teachers will contact parents if child is not appropriately dressed for outdoor activities and/or weather conditions. Children may be sent home if they are improperly dressed or families may need to deliver appropriate clothing during class.

Outdoor discovery requires freedom of movement in non-restrictive clothing. Students need comfortable, protective shoes with gripping soles for running, jumping, and climbing. You should expect your child (and their clothing) to get dirty after a day spent outdoors! If at any time your child’s clothing becomes wet and uncomfortable, we will assist them in changing into their extra set of clothing.

Items hanging around children’s necks (necklaces, lanyards, scarves) are discouraged; teachers will check children’s necks before climbing due to hazards.

Please label all clothing and other belongings with your child’s name, accidents happen and it’s easy for clothes to get mixed up, especially when it comes to mittens and hats.

**Sunscreen and Insect Repellent**

Unshielded exposure to sun and mosquitoes can be a danger and discomfort for your child. We recommend sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 30 and Insect Repellent with a maximum of 10% DEET. Repellent containing 10% DEET is as effective as higher DEET repellents, but must be applied more often. Most often, we use repellents with all natural ingredients. We ask that you apply sunscreen and insect repellent when appropriate on your child before you drop them off at school. We will let you know when and if insect repellent becomes necessary following the emergence of mosquitoes in the spring. We strongly encourage you to give consent on the Emergency authorization, liability, and media release form for our teachers to apply sunscreen and repellent on your child. You may provide labeled bottles of sunscreen and repellent for us to use on your child if certain types or brands are preferred. If you’d like to provide your own, you will need to list it on the Health & Safety form in the medication section.

**Parent & Guardian Involvement**

To ease the transition from home to school, it is a great help to talk regularly with your student about their new experiences. It is an opportunity to share the excitement of meeting new people and sharing new ideas. Your child will benefit from your support and understanding as they begin to
grow outside the home. Recognizing the important connection between home and school, we ask that your involvement include:

- Meeting the teachers and learn what to expect from your child’s time at Tiny Trees.
- Volunteering in the classroom or helping teachers with making playdough, taking home snack dishes to wash, photography, musical presentations, etc. Please discuss possibilities with your child’s teachers.
- Attending parent/guardian and family activities.
- Reading email communications, newsletters and announcements.

We value family participation in our program. If you are interested in spending time your child's classroom or participating in activities, please reach out to your teacher, who can get you started on our volunteer process (more about volunteers in the classroom on page 8).

Before volunteering, you will need to make sure you have completed the following steps:

- Make contact with Tiny Trees administrative team or the teaching team at the site where you wish to volunteer.
- Complete the Tiny Trees background check. It can be found on the Tiny Trees website by searching “background check”, or be obtained by request from the administrative team.
- Have your schedule confirmed by the Tiny Trees Special Projects Manager and the teaching team at the site where you wish to volunteer.

Because we want to make sure that volunteering always enhances the classroom experience, please be advised that requests to volunteer should be initiated no later than three days before the intended day of volunteering.

A note about background checks:

The background check is free of charge to families and will take less than five minutes. We believe background checks in our spaces are often helpful because we work with potentially vulnerable populations of young children. However, we recognize that the background check process itself can feel like a disproportionate barrier. Our background check process does not ask, nor search for, information on citizenship, immigration status, or place of residence. Once submitted, we do not share or store any of the information provided. All we require is that prospective volunteers submit their name and their birthdate. That information is run through the Washington State Patrol database, which does not cross-reference with any federal databases. Tiny Trees staff are the only ones handling this information, and after processing, we only record that the background check has been processed.

If you’d like to help out in the class, but the background check process feels harmful or onerous, please reach out to our Family Services team and we would love to work through the process with you. It is always our goal to most fully support your family in fully accessing outdoor education!

*Please do not leave valuables in your car or in the classroom. We are in public parks! Tiny Trees will not be responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

Communication

Communication between staff and parents/guardians enriches the educational experience of our students. We regularly touch base with parents to provide a narrative of your child’s experiences and needs. Staff will make time to conference with you via text, phone, email or in person during
non-instruction times should you have a specific question or concern. Please take advantage of these special times to dialogue about your child’s progress. In seeking balance for our staff, we ask that you schedule communication during working hours between 8-5 unless otherwise coordinated by our teaching staff.

We appreciate when families keep the lines of communication open and let us know of significant events. Visitors, moving, new babies, identity development, divorce, illness or death can affect children at school. When we are informed about these changes, we are better equipped to offer support and encouragement to your child. If you are aware of an unexplained change in your child’s behavior, we hope you feel comfortable talking with your child’s teachers, program supervisors, the Director of Education or family services team.

**NOTE:** The teachers’ first priority is with students when they are present. If you have a concern that needs discussion, please request a meeting outside of class time or reach out to your classroom’s Program Supervisor for immediate attention.

**Confidentiality**

Teachers and staff will not discuss private and confidential information regarding the programs, fellow employees, families or children with anyone outside of Tiny Trees Preschool. Furthermore, teachers and staff will not discuss your child’s development or situation with any other parents in the program. The only exception to this is authorized personnel on a need to know basis, particularly as it relates to mandated reporting laws.

All Tiny Trees employees are mandated reporters.

**Seasonal Celebrations, Holidays & Birthdays**

In our outdoor and nature based classrooms, each day brings adventure and discovery. We minimize the commercial aspects of holidays and instead focus on changes in seasons and events in the natural world. Our proximity to plant and animal life cycles means that we will have the opportunity to celebrate and appreciate changes in seasons and in the environment around us.

Each teaching team develops their own celebrations and honoring a child’s birthday is a special occasion. Some classes use a Montessori tradition where each child on their birthday will carry a globe around a “sun” for each year since their birth. Others will invite families to share their child’s favorite book or song. In accordance with our emphasis on health and connection to nature, bringing in sweets is strongly discouraged, but if families want to host a celebration after class, this is welcome.

**Social Media Policy**

Tiny Trees teachers and program supervisors uses a combination of social media platforms -- Facebook, Shutterfly, Google Pictures to name a few -- as a way to build community amongst families and staff. All groups are set to private and are only accessible to invited family members and staff that are a part of the class. We encourage your participation in these opportunities in a positive manner. Members are prohibited from posting language or images that are defamatory to any student, staff, or family member or could create a hostile learning environment. Members cannot post malicious, fictitious or assumptive comments about any member of the community. If any member is in violation of this policy, they will be immediately restricted from the classroom page and comments deleted.
Per our Family Code of Conduct that each family signs, all family members agree to only share media from these albums on personal social media if it is only their child depicted, or they have explicit permission from the family of any other children.

ENROLLMENT, ATTENDANCE, & TUITION

Eligibility

To enroll in a Tiny Trees Preschool Summer Camp, students should be at least 3 years old and be no older than 6 by August 31, 2019. All students should be comfortable using a porta-potty with minimal teacher assistance prior to the start of class. We are an inclusive program -- if you have questions or concerns or need resources on potty training, please reach out to admissions@tinytrees.org. Children cannot attend both a morning and afternoon session.

Unlike in traditional indoor programs, your child will need to frequently negotiate layers of clothing on their way to and from the bathroom. Therefore, the ability to regulate toileting is an important skill for an outdoor preschooler to develop with the support of our educators and their families.

Enrollment

To enroll your child in Tiny Trees Preschool, you will need to complete our online enrollment form at tinytrees.org/ and pay any appropriate fees, deposits, or tuition due. You will be able to apply for financial assistance at the time of enrollment; please plan to submit your pay stub or tax return information. Once enrollment is confirmed, you will be asked to complete the Health & Safety form, provide any medical documentation for medication or allergies, and provide your child’s up-to-date immunization record.

Enrollment Fees & Deposits

At the time of enrollment, every family is required to pay a non-refundable enrollment fee of $50 per student. This fee covers the administrative costs of enrolling your student. Exceptions to this fee are families who are applying for one of the Seattle Preschool Program-funded spots. If a family is not ultimately enrolled in an SPP spot, they may be billed the $50 fee.

To secure enrollment spots, Tiny Trees asks families to put down an enrollment deposit equal to one one-month’s tuition or $350, whichever is smaller. This deposit acts as tuition guarantee for Tiny Trees in the event of an early withdrawal, including if a family withdraws during the period between enrollment and the start of class. Per our withdrawal policy (outlined below), a family must give Tiny Trees 30-days notice of withdrawal. The deposit paid at the time of enrollment will be credited to a students last month’s tuition (please read on). Deposits are non-refundable in the event of early withdraw. This includes the period between registration and the start of class.

Enrollment in 2020-21

Families with 2019-20 students who are eligible to enroll at Tiny Trees in the 2020-21 school year will be contacted in February to re-enroll. During this window of time, 2019-20 families have first priority in open enrollments in all locations. Space allowing, families can make adjustments to their enrollments by location, days of the week, or time of day. Families choosing to re-enroll will have their 2019-20 enrollment deposit rolled over for the next school year and will only be responsible for paying the non-refundable enrollment fee of $50 per student.
After this re-enrollment window of time is closed (usually early March), enrollment spots will be made available to new families and 2019-20 families, while prioritized for the sake of continuing education for the students, are not guaranteed enrollment in the 2020-21 school year.

**School Year Tuition**

Tiny Trees tuition is calculated annually and split into equal monthly payments. **We cannot pro-rate monthly tuition rates for any reason.** Tuition is due on the last day of the month for the following month’s enrollment and is **late after 5 days**, at which point a late fee of $30 will be added to your account. Invoices are auto-sent on the 15th of each month through our online payment system Curacubby ([tinytrees.curacubby.com](http://tinytrees.curacubby.com)). If tuition remains unpaid 7 days after the deadline, your child will not be able to attend until the account is up to date.

**If your family is having difficulty making a tuition payment, please contact admission@tinytrees.org** so that we can find a solution that does not disrupt your child’s school experience.

Families are responsible for tuition regardless of your child’s attendance. There is no reduction in tuition for non-school days, missed days, or for days when classes are delayed or canceled. **Tiny Trees is unable to pro-rate monthly tuition for any reason.**

Tiny Trees does not charge additional fees for supplies or materials and provides all full-year-enrolled students with a rain suit to use throughout the year. This is made possible by the generosity of donors and is not added to or factored into tuition costs.

**Split Payments**

Tiny trees is able to set up split payments for joint-custody parents with at least 30-days notice. Please contact admissions@tinytrees.org to set this up.

**Financial Assistance**

Tiny Trees Preschool offers financial assistance at 30% off the full price fee for all camp sessions and locations for qualifying students, based on family size and income. Financial assistance is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis and a third of spaces are reserved for students requesting financial assistance. To apply, select a financial assistance spot at the time of registration. Be prepared to provide income verification in the form of tax returns or recent pay stubs.

**Seattle Preschool Program - Pathways**

We are excited to have been selected as a provider for the Seattle Preschool Program – Pathways. Under this program 40 students at Carkeek Park, Camp Long, Jefferson and Be’er Sheva parks will receive FREE tuition paid for by the City of Seattle. To qualify you must make below 350% of the federal poverty guidelines, live within Seattle city limits and be enrolled in a 5-day class. Registration is contingent upon submission of the Pathway application and approval by the City of Seattle.

**Best Starts for Kids Bridge-Funding**

For the 2019-20 school year Tiny Trees was awarded a grant from the [King County Best Starts for Kids Initiative](http://www.kingcountywa.gov/about-us/communities/community-activities/best-starts-for-kids/index). As part of this grant we have set aside money to assist families who may need additional financial support to make Tiny Trees a viable option for their family. This can include funding that assists with removing barriers like proper gear for outdoor play in all weather,
transportation to and from our park locations, and more. If you believe your family is in need of additional help that is not part of typical tuition assistance, please reach out to admissions@tinytrees.org. Bridge Funding is primarily reserved for families enrolled at Beer Sheva, Camp Long, Five Mile, Jefferson, and Seahurst. However, families enrolled at other locations are encouraged to reach out as well.

Withdrawal Policy

Tiny Trees Preschool is a year-long commitment.

Families choosing to withdraw early must give 30 days’ notice and are liable to pay up to two month's tuition or until the enrollment spot is filled. This is not only a function of standard enrollment procedures in the industry, but also our invoicing system. If you withdraw your child before the start of the school year, the deposit is forfeited but no additional tuition will be due.

To withdraw, a family must contact Family Services in writing via admissions@tinytrees.org.

Exceptions to the 30-days notice may be considered in the event of withdraw due to active military duty or family emergency and are subject to approval by the Leadership Team. Exceptions and refunds will not be given in the event of child illness or other change in family plans (vacation, travel, moving, etc).

Late Pick-Up Fee

Please pick up your child promptly when class ends at 12:30 PM or 4:30 PM. Our teachers set up and take down the classroom each day, so it’s important that if you are unable to pick up your child on time, please contact your teaching team directly to notify them of the situation. There is a 10-minute grace period, after which you will be charged $1 for each additional minute. If you do not arrive within a timely manner, we will begin contacting people on your emergency list to pick up.

Attendance

Regular attendance is an important element of your child’s success. If your child will be missing school for any reason, please contact their teacher. There is no refund for missed days at school.

Expulsion Policy

Tiny Trees is a non-expulsion school. We believe that children have the best chance of success if they stay in school. There may be instances where a child may benefit from parent presence or from being picked up:

- If a child is unable to follow directions regarding safety issues in the classroom or on adventure and explore time, parents/caregivers will be asked to accompany the child during school hours until safety rules are determined to be understood and followed to keep children safe and the classroom functioning.

- If there is repeated behavioral or safety concerns, teaching teams, program supervisors, directors, and family services team will assess the circumstances and create a plan of action with the family.

- Parents/caregivers will be asked to meet with a family services team member and the Director of Education to determine how to best move forward and may be provided with resources and additional support in the community.
We expect all family members and community members to follow our Code of Conduct, which helps to maintain the emotional and physical safety of our classrooms. An alternative participation plan or withdrawal will be necessary in the event that adults do not follow the Code of Conduct.

**School Closures & Calendar Changes**

As an entirely outdoor program, Tiny Trees Preschool is more affected by extreme weather than indoor schools. As much as possible, we will follow the Seattle Public Schools, Lake Washington (Big Finn Hill), Issaquah (Cougar Mountain), Highline (Seahurst) and Auburn (Five Mile Lake) school districts for inclement weather closings. Any schedule changes will be communicated to families at the earliest opportunity via email, text, facebook.

For school district inclement weather notifications, turn to local news (radio, web, tv):
- **Seattle School District:** Camp Long, Carkeek, Jefferson, Beer Sheva, Olympic Sculpture Park
- **Lake Washington School District:** Big Finn Hill
- **Issaquah School District:** Cougar Mountain
- **Highline Public Schools:** Seahurst Park
- **Auburn School District:** Five Mile Lake

**1-hour delay:** morning sessions will have a 1 hour delay, afternoon sessions will run as scheduled.
**2-hour delay:** morning sessions are cancelled, afternoon sessions will run as scheduled.
**Early closures:** afternoon sessions are cancelled or end early. You will be notified.
**Cancellation:** all classes are cancelled.

Because your child’s safety and learning experience is paramount to us, there may be an occasion when inclement weather may cause the limitation or cancellation of school hours independent of the public school system. In case of closure, we will always do our best to notify you as far in advance as possible. If class should need to close early, you will be notified by text, phone, and email.

**Air Quality/Smoke Policy**

Tiny Trees Preschool will carefully monitor the air quality during periods of smoke or heavy pollution using [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov). The Director of Education and Program Supervisors will advise staff when Air Quality reaches an Unhealthy rating.

To make sure our children and teachers stay safe, it is our policy to close school if the Air Quality becomes **Unhealthy (151 AQI or above)**. Families will be notified by email, Remind text, and Facebook post within 2 hours of the start of class if this is the case; if the air quality worsens after the start of class, early pickups may be called. Teachers are also asked to monitor students closely and may send students home if any symptoms arise.

At an Unhealthy-to-Sensitive Groups level, families are encouraged to keep their children home if they are concerned or if their child has any health issues that might make them more susceptible to impact. If an Unhealthy-to-Sensitive Groups level is combined with other risk factors such as heat/cold/humidity/wind as noted by the Childcare Weather Watch Chart, Tiny Trees Preschool will evaluate and close as needed.

If an Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups Air Quality Rating (101-150 AQI) occurs for a prolonged period (more than 2 hours), Tiny Trees Preschool will assess and close as needed.

In the event that AirNow’s website is down or does not provide numeric data for our locations, we will use the World Air Quality Project website ([http://aqicn.org/here/](http://aqicn.org/here/)) and WA Department of...
Ecology websites to determine our closures.

As we are an all-outdoor program, we will stay outside during the class day and attending during times of poor air quality is at families' own risk.

Weather
We abide by the Scandinavian saying of, “there’s no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing.” Our play-based curriculum keeps children moving and encourages them to listen to their bodies. By managing their own clothing systems, we help campers learn self-care and resilience. Each classroom has a weather kit complete with wool and synthetic layers, fleece, extra socks, and items to warm up if it gets chilly and a pair of shorts and a t-shirt for students who are overdressed. In the worst weather, we use park picnic shelters, pop-up canopies and have designated emergency facilities in which to take cover.

SAFETY AND SUPERVISION

Outdoor Preschool Risk Policy
Risk management is a significant portion of our practice at Tiny Trees. We have policies and procedures for possible risks and hazards at Outdoor Preschool, which are outlined in our Risk Management Handbook and Waiver. These include how families will be contacted and reunited in the event of an emergency. All families should review the Risk Management Policies and Procedures in addition to this Family Handbook. By clicking these links, you can refer to the Risk Management Handbook and Waiver.

General Safety and Supervision Procedures
Tiny Trees classes are made up of 10-16 children and have a minimum of two teachers per class (many classes will have three adults). Additionally, there are regular volunteers and interns. A cell phone, student medical forms and emergency contact information, first aid kit, emergency medications and a teacher with current first aid/CPR training will be with the group at all times. An adult will never be alone with your child. To maintain a proper ratio, another adult or other children will always be with a teacher and your child. Volunteers are always under the supervision of Tiny Trees Preschool staff. No child, or group of children, is ever left alone with a volunteer.

*A criminal background check is required of all staff, volunteers and interns. Tiny Trees is compliant with state, county, and federal laws prohibiting the consumption of alcoholic beverages, cannabis, illegal drugs, or misused prescription drugs in our classrooms and public spaces. We also do not allow anyone—including all staff, volunteers, or family members--on the premisses who are under the influence of alcoholic beverages, cannabis, illegal drugs, or misused prescription drugs while children are in care.

Our program promotes independent learning but teachers always monitor students by sight and sound.

Bathrooms
Tiny Trees uses a combination of port-a-potties and public restrooms. Port-a-potties are padlocked when class is not in session and for Tiny Trees use only. When using public restrooms, a teacher enters first to ensure it is clean, empty and set up for children’s use. Teachers are available to respond to any bathroom emergencies as well as make sure no one else enters the restroom while Tiny Trees students are present. Hand washing is supervised and in the case of an accident,
Teachers will assist students in changing into their extra clothes. In the event that the accident requires a more intensive clean up, families will be contacted for an early pick up.

We make bathrooming exceptions for children with documented disabilities or developmental needs. Please contact us at admissions@tinytrees.org with questions.

Health Policy

You can help us keep students and staff healthy:

- **Symptoms**: we do not expect that a child be kept at home every time they have the sniffles; but please see examples of symptoms below to help decide whether or not to send your child to school.
- **Diagnosis**: inform your child’s teacher right away if your child has been diagnosed with any communicable or childhood diseases (see below). This will allow us to inform other families of possible symptoms to look for in their children (your child’s identity will not be shared).
- **Exposure**: please inform us as soon as possible if your child has been exposed to an illness or disease. This will help us to prepare for and be alerted to the specific symptoms of that illness or disease.
- **Good Hygiene**: you can help us reduce the spread of disease by teaching good hygiene habits at home. Remind your child to wash hands before eating, after using the toilet and after blowing her or his nose. Help your child learn to sneeze or cough into her or his arm and to blow their nose when needed. Instilling these habits at home helps reduce the spread of germs both at home and at school.

**Symptoms that indicate the need for your child to stay home:**

- **Fever of 100 degrees F or higher** accompanied by one or more of the following: diarrhea or vomiting, earache, headache, signs of irritability or confusion, sore throat, rash or fatigue that limits participation in daily activities. The child’s temperature must return to normal (98.6°F) for at least 24 hours before coming back to school.
- **Vomiting**: 2 or more occasions in the past 24 hours.
- **Diarrhea**: 3 or more watery stools in the past 24 hours or any bloody stool.
- **Eye Discharge or Pink Eye (conjunctivitis)**: conjunctivitis is highly contagious. students may only return to school when eyes are clear or after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.
- **Lice or Scabies**: Children who are found to have lice will need to stay home until all lice and nits have been removed. Students with scabies may return after treatment.
- **Skin Rash/Lesions**: especially with fever or itching.
- **Open or oozing sores**: unless properly covered and 24 hours has passed since starting antibiotic treatment, if antibiotic treatment is necessary.
- **Sick appearance, not feeling well, and/or not able to keep up with program activities.**

**Communicable Diseases**

Any child having symptoms of a known communicable or childhood disease may not be at preschool. They should be kept home until a doctor has determined that the child does not have a communicable disease, the child is no longer contagious, or the symptoms have disappeared. In the case of communicable diseases, Tiny Trees Preschool may request a doctor’s note indicating the child is no longer contagious and is healthy enough to return to school. Please report any communicable or contagious diseases (such as Bacterial Meningitis, Chicken Pox, Diphtheria, Hepatitis, Measles, Mumps, Pertussis [Whooping Cough], Pneumonia, Rubella, Scarlet Fever or Strep Throat) to your child’s teacher as soon as possible. A full list of notifiable conditions can be
found on the Washington State Department of Health’s Website. We notify parents and guardians when their child may have been exposed to a communicable disease or condition (other than a common cold) and provide relevant information. Individual child confidentiality is maintained.

**Immunizations**

To protect all children and staff, each child is required to have the following immunizations:

- DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)
- IPV (Polio)
- MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
- Hepatitis B
- HIB (Haemophilus influenzae type b) *until age 5*
- Varicella (Chicken Pox) or Health Care Provider verification of disease.
- PCV (Pneumococcal bacteria) *until age 5*

**Proof of immunization or exemption must be provided prior to the start of school.**

As of July 28, 2019, all children will be required to provide evidence of an MMR vaccine and no certificates of exemption will be accepted for MMR. Children exempted from other immunization by their parent or guardian will not be accepted into care unless that exemption is due to an illness protected by the ADA or WLAD or by a completed and medical-professional-signed Certificate of Exemption.

**Food Allergies & Restrictions**

If your child has a food allergy or intolerance, parents/guardians will also be required to provide an Allergy/Intolerance Report that is signed by the child’s caregiver(s) and physician. For food restrictions that are non life-threatening (i.e. vegetarianism), please communicate with the teaching staff and admissions@tinytrees.org so that we can document this in your child’s file. Parents of students with allergies or food restrictions may be asked to supplement the snack provided by Tiny Trees for their child.

In cases of severe allergies or dietary restrictions amongst students or staff, parents may be asked to exclude certain foods from their child’s lunch. Nut-free means the exclusion of (at least) peanuts, coconuts, walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, cashews, pistachios, macadamia nuts, and Brazil nuts. (See: https://www.foodallergy.org/common-allergens/tree-nut-allergy for more information.)

**Medication Plan**

All medications will only be given with prior written consent of the child’s parent or guardian on the Health and Safety Form (for sunscreen & insect repellent) or a Medication Authorization Form (for all others). The appropriate form must be completed and on file before the medication will be administered.

Prescription medication must be in its original container and be properly labeled with the child’s name, the name of the prescribing physician, date the prescription was filled, dosage, duration (start and stop dates), and expiration date of the medication. Non-prescription medications must be in the manufacturer’s container with a label and have your child’s name written on it. Any unused medication not picked up by the parent or guardian will be properly discarded after the stop date on the consent form.
Medications that are temperature-sensitive must be delivered and taken home by the student/family each day. Families must create a plan with their child’s teacher for this process.

Emergency Medications

Emergency medications prescribed to specific children such as Benadryl, Epinephrine (“Epi-Pens”) and inhalers will be carried with the first aid kit that is always present with the group and will be administered as prescribed. Childcare staff cannot administer medication to children unless they have a prescription. Emergency medications must be given to the teachers in advance, with a completed Medication Authorization Form that is signed by the child’s parent or guardian and physician. If a child has been diagnosed with an allergy, parents/guardians will also be required to provide an Allergy/Intolerance Report that is signed by the child’s caregiver(s) and physician.

Emergency Preparedness

Tiny Trees Preschool has the following procedures in place at all times in preparation for an emergency:

- Fully stocked first aid kits, emergency medical forms and staff with First Aid and CPR certification are always present with students.
- Emergency medical forms include parent and guardian contact information, emergency contacts and authorization for the release of a child to other adults, and health and medical details. In addition, these forms give Tiny Trees staff permission to seek emergency medical care should a child require such treatment.

Response to Injuries and Emergencies

Due to the active nature of preschoolers and our program, minor injuries, bumps and bruises will occur. In the event of a minor injury, the child will be treated with first aid by Tiny Trees staff. An Incident Report Form will be completed and parents/guardians will be notified at the end of class. The severity of the injury or incident will dictate whether or not the parent or guardian will receive an immediate phone call or if additional medical services are needed.

In the event of an emergency, teachers will assess the situation and, if warranted, call 911. Staff will respond as necessary until emergency help arrives. Parents and guardians will be contacted as soon as possible. In the event that we are unable to reach the child’s parent or guardian, we will contact the individual(s) designated as emergency contacts for the child.

Emotional Safety and Behavior Management

Emotional and physical safety is a core value of Tiny Trees Preschool. We create emotionally safe environments for every child that are caring, supportive and healthy. We do this by creating clear expectations for how we treat each other, giving reasons that children understand and holding children accountable for meeting those expectations.

Discipline is focused on seeing the good in all children and helping students navigate difficult situations rather than punishing certain behaviors. We teach respect, hold students accountable and put behavior in the context of a child’s relationship to others. We make sure each child’s voice is heard and personal needs accommodated. We communicate clearly and often with parents and guardians about their child’s needs and behavior.
Mandated Reporting

Washington State Law (WAC 388-150-480) requires childcare professionals to report any or all suspected cases of child abuse, neglect or exploitation to Child Protective Services or to a local law enforcement agency immediately. Tiny Trees Preschool teachers receive training in Child Abuse Prevention and Recognition.

Grievance Policy

If you have any concerns that you don’t feel are adequately addressed by teachers or relates to teacher performance, please contact your classrooms program supervisor.

Non-discrimination Policy

We welcome all children and all families and work every day to create an emotionally and physically safe space for each of our students, our families and our staff. To support this work we follow this non-discrimination policy:

Tiny Trees Preschool recruits and admits students of any sex, gender identity, religion, race, color, physical or developmental ability or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender identity, religion, race, color, physical or developmental ability or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship/loans/fee waivers and educational programs.

In addition, the school is not intended to be an alternative to court or administrative agency ordered, or public school district initiated, desegregation. Tiny Trees Preschool will not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, race, color, physical or developmental ability or ethnic origin in the hiring of its staff.

Pet Policy

Dogs are not permitted in Tiny Trees classrooms. If you choose to bring your pet to the park they should be secured outside the classroom boundaries.

Welcome to Tiny Trees Preschool!