PROGRAM DETAILS

Winter: January - March (10 weeks)
Spring: April - June (12 weeks)
Summer: July (4 weeks) + August (4 weeks)
Fall: September - December (14 weeks)

12 children per group maximum
2 staff facilitators, 1 FortWhyte volunteer

ELIGIBILITY AND READINESS

Forest School is an outdoor, multi-age program for preschoolers that takes place rain or shine in the forests of FortWhyte Alive. Indoor spaces are available for winter warm-up breaks and in the case of extreme weather. During the Winter Session, we balance our indoor and outdoor time according to the weather.

Children entering the program must be:
✓ between the ages of 3.5 and 6 years
✓ able to use the toilet independently
✓ able to verbally communicate their needs
✓ able to understand and follow basic rules and direction
✓ able and willing to respond to their name when called
✓ able to go on nature walks carrying their backpack (for example, a walk to the treehouse and back is approximately 1.5 km roundtrip but we travel at the pace of the group and take breaks when needed)
✓ willing to help dress themselves and manage their own snack items

GOODNESS OF FIT SURVEY

Before enrolling, parents are asked to complete a short Goodness of Fit Survey to see if Forest School is right for their family. To ensure children have the most positive experience possible, it is important that family expectations of the program are in line with what is offered.

The survey is designed to gauge the child’s
✓ independence level
✓ willingness to immerse in nature
✓ ability to follow directions
✓ ability to engage positively with others
✓ ability to verbally communicate their needs

This survey can be done over the phone and should only take approximately 10 minutes of your time. After the survey is completed and Forest School seems like a great fit for your family, you will be eligible to receive the link to our online registration site.

Email us at forestschool@fortwhyte.org to arrange a time to complete the survey.

PREPARE FOR FOREST SCHOOL

Supporting your child’s independence will help them adjust to Forest School. Here are a few things you can do to help prepare your preschooler for Forest School:
✓ Take nature walks with them wearing their backpack (we LOVE to walk at Forest School!)
✓ Practice opening and closing snack containers and lunch kit and putting it in their backpack
✓ Encourage them to help with dressing for the weather
✓ Talk with them about their feelings regarding being left in the care of new caregivers and about meeting new children
✓ Attend a FWFS Open House event or arrange a visit to discuss your child’s readiness with our staff. Contact us to arrange.