



# Eyes of the World Nature Immersion Summer 2025 PARENT HANDBOOK

## INTRODUCTION

Eyes of the World Nature Immersion fully embraces the outdoors and nature! As an environmentally low impact forest program, our locations throughout the South Berwick area and surrounding towns, are our classroom. This approach allows children to become familiar with these beautiful locations throughout our area

## MISSION STATEMENT

More than ever children need the outdoors and nature involved in their lives. Through outdoor play, EOTWNI children develop self-esteem, a sense of purpose, the ability to overcome obstacles and organically develop learning skills. Children are allowed the time and space to learn from their own wonder, guided by a child-led curriculum and place-based education.

## OBJECTIVES

- Children will be educated and nurtured outdoors, organically achieving individually appropriate learning skills.
- Teacher will support the intellectual, artistic, physical and social growth that is necessary for the development of the whole person.
- Children will foster connections that support an awareness of nature and responsibility for the environment through total nature immersion, regardless of the weather or season.
- Teacher will guide exploration of our living environment through observation, interaction, experimentation, inquiry and encourage children's personal work & play agendas.
- Children will observe, identify gain knowledge of local plants, insects, animals as well as the history of the land.

## STATEMENT OF NON DISCRIMINATION

Eyes of the World Nature Immersion does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, citizenship, religion, sex, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation or veteran status.

Due to the outdoor forest environment, a family provided one on one aide may be appropriate for some disabilities.

## **DAWN JENKINS- FOUNDER- NATURE IMMERSION SPECIALIST**

I grew up playing in the forest and along the ocean side. I knew I wanted to be a teacher from a very young age (both of my parents were teachers), so I started early in life babysitting and went on to receive my BA in Elementary Education in 1998. I have taught Kindergarten & preschool age children in public, private and Waldorf settings. I have always worked with children in outdoors, integrating nature throughout my classrooms, curriculum and programs.

I founded a successful forest preschool that embraced a child-led curriculum offering a unique preschool experience based mostly outdoors in a hand crafted outdoor classroom and the surrounding forest.

Eyes Of The World Nature Immersion was launched in 2019 to offer nature-based learning to preschoolers & elementary children as well as educators and schools!

I am happily married with 3 children, living in South Berwick, ME

### **NATURE BASED CHILD-LED CURRICULUM EDUCATION**

**Child-led curriculum** is based on the children's interest and passion at a certain point in time. Children thrive and learn best when their interests are captured. Learning occurs naturally through play. We strive to enhance the natural unfolding of the whole child leading to the development of capable learners.

**Place based education** immerses students in local heritage, cultures, landscapes, opportunities and experiences, using these as a foundation for the study of language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and other subjects across the curriculum.

#### **Specific Examples of Development through Outdoor Exploration & Activities**

**COGNITIVE**~ Literacy/Math/Science- Collecting, labeling, classifying, sorting, pattern recognition, journals, storytelling, singing, building structures (engineering), cause and effect in natural world

**FINE MOTOR**- drawing, cutting, self-help skills, painting, sculpting, small scale construction, digging, breaking up dirt, carving

**GROSS MOTOR**- Hiking, climbing trees, running (on un-even ground), hopping, jumping, swinging, crawling, balancing on logs, circle games, large scale construction (fort building or lifting rocks)

**SOCIAL**- Conflict resolution, circle activities, group games/hikes, spontaneous & uninterrupted free play, group observation, storytelling, fort building, problem solving

**SENSORY** - Water & mud play, digging, sculpting, free exploration, smelling, tasting, nature collecting, weather experiences, music

**EMOTIONAL**- Uninterrupted imagination play, opportunities to problem solve & negotiate, journaling, observation of natural world, exposure to weather, self-help, breathing techniques

As a child many of us, built forts, dug holes, made mud pies, daydreamed in special hiding places, and swung on vines. These activities are all nature play: unstructured childhood play in the outdoors. Nature play is not scheduled, planned, or led by adults. Instead, it is open-ended, free-time exploration and recreation. For many of us, this sort of nature play virtually defined our childhoods. Good outdoor clothes are a must. Children will need to be prepared for the weather that day. If the weather is safe, we will go out and play!

## SUMMER SESSION DATES/TIME & LOCATIONS

### Monday- Friday- 9am-3pm South Berwick, ME

*Put a check next to the week you are enrolling your child and indicate Full or days selected*

Week 1- June 16-20 Vaughan Woods State Park-28 Old Fields Rd, S. Berwick \_\_\_\_\_

Week 2- June 23-27- Orris Falls Conservation Area 100 Thurrell Rd S. Berwick \_\_\_\_\_

### CLOSED- June 30-July 4

Week 3- July 7-11 South Berwick Town Forest 96 Knights Pond Rd, S. Berwick \_\_\_\_\_

Week 4- July 14-18 Brandmoore Farm, 70 Sligo Rd, Rollinsford, NH \_\_\_\_\_

Week 5- July 21-25 Savage Wildlife Preserve 15 Dover Rd, S. Berwick \_\_\_\_\_

Week 6- July 28- Aug 1 Vaughan Woods State Park-28 Old Fields Rd, S. Berwick \_\_\_\_\_

Week 7- August 4-8 South Berwick Town Forest 96 Knights Pond Rd, S. Berwick \_\_\_\_\_

Week 8- August 11-15 Brandmoore Farm, 70 Sligo Rd, Rollinsford, NH \_\_\_\_\_

Week 9- August 18-22 Savage Wildlife Preserve 15 Dover Rd, S. Berwick \_\_\_\_\_

Week 10- August 25-29 Vaughan Woods State Park-28 Old Fields Rd, S. Berwick \_\_\_\_\_

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### CLOSURES

Weather: EOTWNI fully embraces the philosophy of "There is no bad weather, just bad clothing".

Weather conditions are monitored closely. Class will be held rain or shine.

EOTWNI reserves the right to cancel to due health & safety conditions such as lightning, winds above 25 mph or heat advisory. You will receive a text message 2 hours before the start of the class if it will be closed for the day or early or a delayed opening.

\*On the rare occasion that EOTWNI needs to cancel a class, this will not be made up or refunded

### ENROLLMENT

- All enrollment documents must be signed before children can begin the program. These documents include a registration form, waivers & financial agreement.
- Tuition payments are preferred to be paid in full at the time of registration.
- Payment plans are available upon request. Although full payments are preferred, I fully understand that is not always possible. I do not want this to deter your child's enrollment. I will work with you to come up with a plan that suits your family's financial needs!
- Families who choose to withdraw prior to the fulfillment of their enrollment, will not be refunded their tuition.
- No refunds or make-up days offered for call outs

### TUITION

- \$300/week
- \$60/day for part time enrollment

**Payments accepted through:**

**Stripe via website**

**Venmo @Dawn-Jenkins**

**Cash/Check accepted as well**

## **AGE REQUIREMENTS**

Ages 5+ (Acceptations given to 4 yr olds that have been in the school year program)

## **DROP OFF & PICK UP PROCEDURES**

Children will be dropped off at the trail head. **Arriving on time is very important.** We will be heading into the forest no later than 10 mins after the start of the day. Our adventures will vary daily and often will be off the beaten path. If you are running late, please text me to let me know and I will do our best to lead you to where we are.

Children will be picked up at the trail head. Please let Dawn know if someone new will be picking your child up. If someone is picking up your child that is not on the registration form, an email will need to be sent to Dawn to give permission. If you are running late, please text me as soon as you are aware of this. *If you are more than 10 mins late, a late fee will be due in cash/check (or Paypal/Venmo) at the time of pick-up for \$10.00. \$10 will be added for each additional 10 mins.*

## **REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

Maine State Law states that any person who has reason to suspect that a child under the age of eighteen (18) has been abused and/or neglected must make a report to Maine Department of Human Services Maine Child and Family Services Center at 1- 800- 963- 9490, all staff are mandated reporters.

## **INJURED CHILD**

Minor injuries such as scrapes or small cuts are treated by First Aid certified staff.

If a child receives a head injury of any type, the parents or emergency contact person are notified by phone immediately. If a situation arises where immediate outside emergency care is needed, an ambulance will be called. We will then attempt to contact the parent or emergency contact concerning the injury and give information as to where you can meet up with your child.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Discipline is not punishment but rather teaching, guiding, and redirecting. We help children learn to get along with adults and other children, teach them to behave in an acceptable way and help children learn self-control. The purpose of disciplining children is to raise responsible, confident children who grow up to care about others and themselves.

- 1.) Redirection is the basis of our discipline policy. If a child is having a hard time making the right choice, the teacher will get down on their level and speak to them gently and offer them an alternative that will help them make the right decision.
- 2.) Children are encouraged to resolve conflict on their own, as long as they are physically and emotionally safe. Forcing a child to say "sorry" can tie a meaningless emotion to the word. Human beings (for the most part) are naturally compassionate. They will feel empathy and regret for a friend and express that. Children need to be allowed to process a disagreement/conflict on their own. If they are constantly forced into saying the word "sorry" when they don't feel it, then they may learn that saying "sorry" will resolve all conflicts and therefore not properly develop these social skills.
- 3.) If a child is "tattling" or complaining about another child's behavior, as long as the children are safe, the teacher will encourage the child to speak to the other child about the issue. It is important for children to not only find their voice but gain confidence in themselves that they

can handle a confrontation on their own. The teacher will stay within ear shot to assure that the situation is resolved properly.

- 4.) If a child is continuously disruptive, they will be removed from the situation. The teacher will have the child sit with the teacher and offer them a quiet task that will help to settle them down. Once the child has calmed down, the teacher will speak to the child about the choices they need to make to continue playing with their friends.
- 5.) If a child's behavior does not improve throughout the day and is disrupting the other children's experience, safety or personal wellbeing, the parent may be asked pick the child up early. This behavior specifically includes physical aggression.
- 6.) If a child is physically aggressive, they will be given 3 chances in a day and then the parents will be contacted and requested to pick up their child for the remainder of the day.

EOTWNI strives for open trusting communication between parents and staff regarding their child's experiences within the program. If a behavior issue is interfering negatively with the functioning of the program or the safety of the staff or any of the children, we will notify the parent or guardian and schedule a meeting. We will work cooperatively with the family to develop and implement strategies for successful interactions and behaviors. If all suggested strategies have been unsuccessful, EOTWNI reserves the right to dismiss the child from the program to maintain a safe environment for all. There will be no refunds

#### **HEALTH, NUTRITION, SNACKS & LUNCH**

Please let your child's teacher know if your child has any food allergies that we need to take into consideration.

Please provide plenty of healthy snacks and a lunch for your child. Please make sure your child has a full, large water bottle for the day. Because we are in the forest, there is no place for refilling water. I ask that no candy or soda is brought to class.

#### **COMMUNICATION**

Dawn Jenkins' phone number is 207-393-0054 and email info@eotwni.com. Please text or call with immediate questions, information or concerns during the time of camp. Please email outside of camp hours and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

#### ***Facebook Page & Instagram***

Follow Eyes of the World Nature Immersion on Facebook or Instagram (Eyes\_of\_the\_world\_nature) for notes and photos of your child's time at camp!

#### **FOREST PLANT IDENTIFICATION, USE & FORAGING**

As part of our program, the children will be learning about the local plants & trees in our area:

- Some plants will be identified and observed only & not touched (ie: poison ivy, certain mushrooms) due to their safety factor or rarity.
- Some plants will be identified and used for projects (ie: pokeweed berries for painting, marsh grass as paint brushes, sticks for carving)
- Some plants will be closely studied for positive identification and allowed to be foraged & eaten (ie: yellow wood sorel, sea pickles, birch twigs). No mushrooms will be allowed to eat or suggested as edible. I will make families aware of any edible plants discovered.

### **BARE FEET**

One of the wonders of childhood and nature are bare feet! Children will be allowed to take off their shoes as weather & location safely allows.

### **WATER & MUD**

Children will only be allowed to wade in or sit in water or puddles. They will be allowed to play with mud as much or as little as they like, within reason. Children will never be allowed in water above their knees. This policy will be strictly enforced. If your child is not a confident swimmer, please send a life jacket or swimmies for extra support.

### **BATHROOM**

We will have a designated area for the children to go to the bathroom & help with privacy. I will provide toilet paper. Hands will be washed afterwards. Gloves and biohazard bags will be provided.

## **CLOTHING & DAILY SUPPLIES**

*Appropriate outdoor clothing is mandatory*

### **Summer days**

Shorts  
Short sleeved shirt or tank top  
Sun hat  
Sturdy walking shoes/Sneakers or water shoes (no flip flops)  
Long sleeve shirt or sweatshirt (packed in bag)

### **Rainy or wet days**

Rain coat & rain pants, or Tuffo or Oakiwear suits  
Knee high waterproof boots (such as Boggs brand)

### **Back Pack**

Large, full Water bottle  
Bug Spray & Sun Screen (Please have both applied at the beginning of the day, we will reapply during the day)  
1 extra outfit  
1 towel  
Snacks  
Lunch

*\*If you need suggestions or need help with purchasing gear due to any reason, please let me know!  
There are many resources I can reach out to make sure your child is equipped with the gear they need to enjoy this program.*