Natural Beginnings Early Childhood Program

Natural Beginnings Early Childhood Program is Kendall County Forest Preserve District’s year-long program that connects children ages 3-8 to the natural world around them. The program meets from September to May. During class time, students explore various themes related to ecology, seasonal changes, and natural history. These exploration units lead students outdoors to the prairies, woods, and streams of Hoover Forest Preserve. Class time is supplemented with literacy building activities, introduction to phonics, meaningful projects, and authentic learning opportunities. Maximum class size is 12 children with a 1-to-6 teacher-child ratio.

KENDALL COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

110 W. Madison Street
Yorkville, IL 60560

http://www.co.kendall.il.us/forest_preserve/index.htm

Natural Beginnings:
630-553-3939

General Information:
630-553-4025

Study nature,
Love nature,
Stay close to nature.
It will never fail you.
Frank Lloyd Wright

A natural place to make
discoveries and explore the outdoors

2016-2017 School Year

KENDALL COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT

Where Conservation and Education Take Flight!
Registration Information

If Natural Beginnings sounds like a good fit for your family’s needs, and you would like to find out more about registering for the 2016-2017 program year, please call 630-553-3939. We’d be happy to meet with you, answer any questions, and provide a facility tour.

Fees

2016-2017 Program Year

Natural Beginnings school year runs from September to May. We offer a T/Th a.m. class for 3-year-olds as well as a M/W/F a.m. class for 4-year-olds. As an additional option, we offer an afternoon M/W/F class for children ages 3-8. This class will be led by Stefanie Wiencke, a German native who has studied Forest Kindergarten and has worked extensively with mixed age groups. This class will not encompass the academic lessons taught in traditional school, but will be an enrichment program for those children who are homeschooled or in a morning kindergarten class while also allowing those older children to take leadership roles within the class community.

A Day in Class

Although every day promises to be a new adventure for our class, we generally follow this schedule:

- Arrival time
- Opening Activity
- Guided inquiry (outdoors)
- Literacy development
- Snack, bathroom break
- Reinforcing activities
- Prepare for dismissal

Since we are outdoors for much of the class, your child will need to be comfortable with taking nature walks and spending time outdoors. We encourage active exploration which may lead to your child getting dirty. Holding live creatures, digging in the dirt, and splashing in puddles are just a few of the things that make our class time special. We may encounter allergens such as tree nuts, pollen, seeds, and grass during class.

Fees

The program fees for 2 days a week is $1,425 per year and 3 days a week is $1,725.

Educational Philosophy

Our curriculum is designed to meet our mission and goals by putting learning into the child’s hands. We do this by exploring several different inquiry units throughout the year. Students explore themes by taking nature walks, studying natural phenomena, and engaging in reinforcing activities to build physical, emotional, and academic skills.

Mission & Goals

Mission: To nurture whole child development through primary experiences with nature.

Goals:

1. Foster curiosity through inquiry, hands-on projects, and play.
2. Stimulate intellectual and physical development while participating in authentic learning opportunities.
3. Develop respect and appreciation for the natural world by way of meaningful primary nature encounters.

Mission & Goals

Although every day promises to be a new adventure for our class, we generally follow this schedule:

- Arrival time
- Opening Activity
- Guided inquiry (outdoors)
- Literacy development
- Snack, bathroom break
- Reinforcing activities
- Prepare for dismissal

Since we are outdoors for much of the class, your child will need to be comfortable with taking nature walks and spending time outdoors. We encourage active exploration which may lead to your child getting dirty. Holding live creatures, digging in the dirt, and splashing in puddles are just a few of the things that make our class time special. We may encounter allergens such as tree nuts, pollen, seeds, and grass during class.

Fees

The program fees for 2 days a week is $1,425 per year and 3 days a week is $1,725.

Registration Information

If Natural Beginnings sounds like a good fit for your family’s needs, and you would like to find out more about registering for the 2016-2017 program year, please call 630-553-3939. We’d be happy to meet with you, answer any questions, and provide a facility tour.