



4 Elements Earth Education



Coyote Tracks 'Good to Know' Facts

Hazards:

I would like to remind parents that children can be exposed to hazards when engaging in outdoor education. Nature has many plants and critters that can be harmful or irritating to humans. In the Wissahickon Valley we have poison ivy, ticks, hornets and bees, to name a few. We are constantly making the children aware of their surroundings and introducing them to what poison ivy looks like as well as any other possible hazards. Despite the fact that we take many precautions, the children may still have encounters with these hazards.

There are things you can do at home to minimize any impact of these hazards and to ensure that your child's experience remains a pleasant one. Please examine your child for possible stings, rashes, and pests, and **especially look and feel for ticks**. The itchy rash caused by poison ivy is no fun, so to help increase preventative efforts, please remember the following guidelines.

- Make sure your child wears appropriate attire to class, such as closed-toed shoes. If you are very concerned, long pants are suggested.
- Make sure your child bathes with soap in cool water and washes their clothes after each Coyote Tracks class to remove any oils that may cause the rash. Tecnu soap is a great product to remove these oils.
- If your child should get a rash, there is plenty of Plantain in the grassy areas around that a poultice can be made from (also great for bee and wasp stings).

Mud and Moisture:

While at our programs, your child will be in contact with the Earth. Getting dirty is expected and camouflaging with mud and soot is possible. We play outside **rain or shine** so they may also end up wet. Please don't bring anything that can't get dirty or that is easily snagged on brush. If you like a clean car, it is a good idea to have a change of clothes or seat cover ready for pick-up!

Food and Water:

Kids get hungry and need water. At Coyote Tracks we take age-appropriate snack breaks, so please provide snacks for your child(ren). The younger they are, the more often we snack. For the Young Coyote Tracks, multiple easy-to-access snacks that are packaged separately are useful.

Though sharing is a fabulous character trait to inspire in children, at Coyote Tracks the sharing of food is not encouraged. We have a variety of food allergies and food restrictions to honor. Again, this is

especially important to explain to the younger kids. Not all children understand the nature of food allergies and restrictions, and ingredients that families are avoiding may be hidden.

A water bottle is essential to your child's well-being. It helps if they are labeled. 4EEE has quite a collection of left-behind, unlabeled fancy water bottles. We prefer that they make it home to you!

What to Bring:

Children need a sturdy backpack to transport their goods for excursions into the woods. We have found that other styles of bags/baskets can make it difficult for kids to move freely and easily.

Especially with the Young Coyote Tracks who cannot carry much, it has proved useful to have a bag that can be left behind with lunch and other bulky items such as towel/change of clothes, as well as a backpack for carrying snacks, water, and clothing items needed immediately (hat, jacket, etc.).

Please send seasonally appropriate clothing and accessories with your child(ren). In the summer this can include sun block, sunglasses, sun hats. (Please help younger children apply sunblock before you leave so we are not using class time on this task.) In the fall and winter this includes warm hats, gloves/mittens, scarves, warm shoes, wool socks, rain jackets/pants/boots, etc. In wet weather, cotton will not keep your child warm. Wool fabrics are best for insulating when wet. Synthetic fibers will also work to keep moisture from your child's skin and dry faster. Even a 50/50 cotton/poly t-shirt is better than cotton. Labeling your child's clothing can help ensure that it all ends up back at your home!

Your **children are at Coyote Tracks to engage deeply with nature and each other**, not modern technology. The use of technological devices is not permitted during programs.

Please feel free to share your feedback on what has and hasn't worked for your family. Our hope is to provide every child with a happy, healthy, and meaningful experience at Coyote Tracks.

With Gratitude,

Jamie & the 4E Team

4 Elements Earth Education Inc.

Home of Fox Walkers & Coyote Tracks

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