

INTO THE WILD

PARENT & PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

Welcome!

The next few pages will outline the policies, procedures and any other information that is important to share with parents and participants about the Into the Wild program.

Please read through this handbook prior to participation in our programs-including the COVID-19 section at the end. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at 403-762-1251.

General Program Overview

Program Philosophy:

Children's programming is an integral, responsive and necessary part of our community. The purpose of the program is to provide for the social, physical, creative and emotional needs of school age children when they are not in school.

Tracking, learning to cook, crafting and developing outdoor skills will all be elements in fostering and building the child's relationship to the outdoors.

Program goals:

- ☺ Recognize the developmental needs of each child and promote their overall development through a balanced program.
- ☺ Ensure the child's wellbeing and safety at all times.
- ☺ Treat each child with respect and understanding.
- ☺ Foster a sense of self-worth and self-esteem in each child.
- ☺ Encourage autonomy, independence and individuality.
- ☺ Provide optimum opportunities to grow, through experimentation, exploration and discovery.
- ☺ Provide appropriate guidance.

- ☺ Maintain open lines of communication between staff, children and parents.

Program Objectives:

- ☺ We will be aware of the developmental needs of children. Our program plans will focus on all areas of development and we will continually assess the program to ensure that the needs of the children are being met.
- ☺ We have established policies, procedures, rules and guidelines that will be observed on a daily basis so as to ensure maximum safety at all times for the participants. Prevention and risk management are keys to program success.
- ☺ Staff will actively participate in the program so that they may extend and expand the learning of each child.
- ☺ Staff will plan and organize activities where the child can feel successful. Through positive guidance, encouragement and support from staff, each child's self-esteem will be enhanced.
- ☺ We will inform all staff members, children and parents of matters, which impact them and their participation in the program. We will have an open door policy.

Operational Info

Into the Wild is a program led by qualified staff who specialize in outdoor and environmental education. The staff/participant ratio for the programs is 1:12.

The Into the Wild program operates Monday through Thursday from 3 – 6 pm. There is no program on statutory holidays and school breaks; Spring Break, Christmas Break or February Break.

Facility

Program participants will meet at the end of each school day in the Banff Elementary School gymnasium. The large majority of program hours will be spent outside. Pick up will be from the Banff Recreation Grounds between 5:30p.m.-6p.m.

Administrative Overview

Registration

Registration is done on a first come, first serve basis at Banff Town Hall located at 110 Bear St. or via phone at 403-762-1251. A registration form and waiver must be completed for each child prior to their participation in the program.

Please inform administration of any changes to your registration information, so that we may keep accurate and up to date records. Our registration policy contains all up-to-date information regarding registration withdrawals, transfers and associated fees.

Rates, Fees and Billing

Rates for the program are as follows:

Daily drop-in fee \$ 21/day

Payment must be made in advance of participation in the program. Payment is due in full on the first of each month. Payments can be made in cash or by cheque, made payable to the Town of Banff. Any NSF cheques will be subject to an additional \$50 charge.

Absenteeism and Late Fees

Please ensure that any absences from Into the Wild are communicated to program staff at 403-497-4693. It is important that program staff are notified prior to the daily program start if your child will be sick or away. This will prevent unnecessary searching of the school by program staff.

Late fees of \$5.00 per minute apply to parents who fail to pick children up by 6:00pm.

Parent Information

Parent Involvement

If you have a skill, craft talent or ability to share, we welcome your participation. You will be delighted with your child's excitement and pride in your presence as much as the group will enjoy your contribution. Your participation in various field trips is also welcome. Please let us know - we would be happy to have you.

Open Door Policy

Program staffs are always open to hear your concerns and appreciate your feedback. Please feel free to call or stop by anytime. There is no need to make an appointment or call ahead of time. Staff will always welcome your feedback or visit to the program.

Communication

Open communication between parents and staff is what helps us serve you and your child. Staff are here to support your entire family in any way we can. Notices and other pertinent information will be emailed to parents. The cell phone number for programs is 403-497-4693.

Confidentiality

Any information discussed regarding children and parents will be kept confidential, as well as personal information that parents may share with us. Child specific information is shared only with parental consent.

Parent Evaluations

From time to time, staff will send home evaluations on our program for parents to complete and return. All feedback is anonymous and useful in improving our program. An end of the year evaluation will be emailed to parents to be completed.

Attendance and Release of Children

Children will be dismissed only to those adults listed during registration and/or on the emergency contact sheet. If another person is to pick up your child, please contact program staff prior to the daily program start. Staff may ask this person for ID if they are unknown to the staff.

Children who leave the program independently must have this indicated on their registration form. Only children who are in Grade 2 or a higher grade level will be permitted to leave independently.

Parents, other designated adults or the child themselves (if leaving independently) are required and responsible for physically signing the child out on the attendance sheet on site at the program including the time of departure from the program and personal signature.

Emergency Contact Information

Should you need to contact the staff for any reason, please call the program cell phone at 403-497-4693. The Children/Youth Program Supervisor can be reached at 403-762-1126.

Emergency Procedures

Emergency phone numbers and a first aid kit will be carried with program staff at all times.

Health Standards

Sick children are not permitted in the program. Whenever possible, please do not send a sick child to our programs. If a child becomes sick while in care, parents will be notified and asked to remove the child from the program immediately. This attempts to ensure all participants and staff remain healthy.

Accident/Incident Reporting

All incidents and accidents are reported in written format and are reviewed by supervisory staff. Parents are notified of the details regarding all incident/accident report forms.

Distal Supervision

The purpose of distal supervision is to provide school age children with the opportunity to function independently and take responsibility within the program while ensuring their safety and well-being. In this program, on-site distal supervision will be the practice. This means children can be involved in an activity beyond the immediate visual and auditory range of a staff member, but within the program facility. It will be limited to short periods of time, not to exceed 10 minutes.

Example: A child will be allowed to go the washroom on their own, or go to the gym to collect an item, or ride their bike within the confines of the school playground.

Children who are unable to follow the guidelines set out for distal supervision may have their privileges revoked.

Distal supervision permission is a part of the program waiver signed off at the time of registration.

Independent Departure

Children will be allowed to leave the program independently only after parents have indicated so on the registration form.

Parents will indicate that their children may leave the program independently and at a specified time. It will also include special notations to indicate if children are to walk home or to a parent's place of employment.

Staff will sign children out on the attendance sheet in these instances.

Children who are to be picked up from the program by an adult or guardian will have all listed eligible adults listed on their registration form. Only adults listed on the form will have permission to pick up the child unless the program staff have been contacted and told otherwise.

Medication/Self-Administration Policy:

Generally we do not administer medication to children. There may be incidents that may need to be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The program coordinator will review parent requests and make decisions in these instances and inform staff accordingly. Parents are required to sign off on our waivers which include a medication administration section.

Emergency medications will be easily accessible at all times while all other medications will be stored in a near-by cupboard. Parents, children and staff will review all dosage

requirements and all medication information including the usage of appropriate medication forms.

COVID-19

Our Children & Youth Program team is committed to continuing to offer the best care and programming we can, while ensuring health and safety as a priority. We recognize there will be many changes to our regular programs-affecting staff and families. Let's move forward together-with flexibility, patience and the open communication between us for the season ahead.

If you require the COVID-19 information below to be available in another language, please reach out to the Program Coordinator.

For the latest updates from the Town of Banff on COVID-19, please visit www.banff.ca/covid.

Screening, Illness and Response Plan

- Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, with a history of international travel in the last 14 days, or with close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days must remain at home and must not attend the program
- Staff members, parents or guardians and children must not attend the program if they are sick, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold.
- Symptoms to look for include: fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, nasal congestion, headache, and a general feeling of being unwell. Other symptoms can include stuffy nose, painful swallowing, headache, chills, muscle or joint aches, feeling unwell in general, new fatigue or severe exhaustion, gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or unexplained loss of appetite), loss of sense of smell or taste, conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Any child or staff who experiences any of the symptoms mentioned above is legally required to isolate for 10 days, or until their symptoms resolve- whichever is longer

- Staff are required to refuse entry, or request a child be picked up at any time if they have observed signs or symptoms of illness, including those which resemble a mild cold as mentioned above
- Refunds will be issued in the case a child is unable to attend due to symptoms of illness
- Please let staff know if your child has any known pre-existing medical conditions. If a child displays symptoms that could be caused by either COVID-19 or by a known preexisting condition (e.g. allergies), the child must be tested for COVID-19 to confirm that it is not the source of their symptoms before returning to the program and/or provide a letter from their doctor on their first day of program, stating their pre-existing condition and associated symptoms.
- If a child develops symptoms while at the program, the child will be isolated away from other children and the parent or guardian will be notified to come and pick up the child immediately. The child should be tested for COVID-19 to confirm the source of their symptoms.
- If a staff person develops illness while at work, they will immediately remove themselves from any contact with others, notify a coordinator and go home. The staff person must be tested for COVID-19 to confirm that is not the source of their symptoms.
- All items used by an individual while isolated will be cleaned and disinfected as soon as the child has been picked up or staff has departed. Soft-surface items, or other items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected will be isolated for a period of 10 days.
- Any cohort connected to a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19 will be required to close for a minimum of 72 hours to allow contact tracing, and adhere to recommendations from Alberta Health Services. Registration fees will be refunded in this case.

Drop Off & Pick Up

- To reduce contact between families and cohorts, drop off and pick up will be occurring outside. Indoor program spaces will be for staff and participants only.
- While waiting to drop off or pick up your child for the day, please practice physical distancing from others.

- Hand sanitizer will be available at each entrance. We ask all adults to sanitize their hands, before completing any paperwork.

Your Role in Preventing COVID-19

All Albertans must continue taking personal steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- keep at least 2 metres (about the length of a hockey stick) distance from people outside your household or cohort family
- limit the number of times you leave your home for errands; try to limit grocery store visits to once a week
- try to have only one person in the household do the shopping
- try to shop at less busy times
- order online to have groceries or other items delivered if possible
- go for a walk in your neighbourhood or park while maintaining distance from others
- avoid overcrowding in elevators or other enclosed spaces
- follow Alberta's mandatory restrictions on gatherings
- wash or sanitize your hands after touching communal surfaces

To protect yourself and others:

- wear a mask in public when distancing is not possible
- download and use the ABTraceTogether mobile contact tracing app while out in public
- wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- use gloves properly if you choose to wear them (they are not necessary)
- cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow
- avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- avoid travel outside Canada
- watch for COVID-19 symptoms (see the full symptom list)
- take the COVID-19 self-assessment to arrange testing if you have any symptoms
- Follow mandatory isolation requirements:
 - 10 days minimum if you develop any COVID-19 symptoms, or until the symptoms resolve, whichever is longer
 - 14 days if you recently returned from travel

outside of Canada or are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, plus an additional 10 days from the onset of symptoms, should they occur, whichever is longer

Policies and Procedures

Please read the following policies and procedure to ensure that you are familiar with the protocol that the program staff will follow.

CHILD GUIDANCE

Policy:

The Town of Banff Children and Youth Programs will strive to provide positive and age appropriate strategies for children/youth to develop behaviours that encourage positive emotional and physical growth. Positive behaviours will be encouraged through appropriate role modeling, positive interaction, and respect for individual needs.

Guidelines:

- Staff will look for and encourage age appropriate behaviours in all children/youth
- Staff will be certified by such programs as Hi-Five, in order to have a strong understanding of appropriate behaviours and how to support them
- Children/youth will be encouraged to interact with each other in manners that involve respect and positive expression
- Programs will be designed to encourage children/youth's understanding of inclusion and diversity
- Staff will address the needs of all children/youth in the program and the uniqueness of each individual

Procedure:

- Staff will be familiarized with child guidance policies, procedures and guidelines prior to working within any of the programs
- Staff, including program supervisors, will stay up to date on relevant training and resources focusing on children/youth behaviour management
- Staff will have relevant training and/or access to resources on promoting positive behaviour
- Staff will display positive role modelling when interacting with children/youth, staff, parents and general public by being friendly, caring and courteous

- Staff will show interest in children/youth by acknowledging them, responding attentively and using open ended questions to engage in active two-way conversations
- Children/youth will have the opportunity to speak without being interrupted
- Staff will work to create a positive environment for the individual expression of feelings
- Staff will intervene promptly when aggressive or bullying actions occur
- Age and ability appropriate rules and expectations will be posted for children/youth, staff and parents to observe and implement
- Staff will encourage understanding of individual needs, diversity and the greater community
- Children/youth will be involved in program planning and program evaluations

CHILD DISCIPLINE

Policy:

The Town of Banff Children and Youth Programs staff will be trained to use positive behaviour management, but in the case where children's behaviours do not change, or cause safety concerns, staff will follow the 3 strikes rule. In the case where the direct actions of a child result in a severe injury or damage to property, children may be removed from the program immediately. Parents will be asked to meet with a staff member, and if necessary, the Children and Youth Program Supervisors and/or the Manager of Community Services.

Guidelines:

- Child discipline methods utilized in the program will be communicated to all parents via the Parent Handbook, to staff during their orientation and training and to children in person
- At no time will staff inflict or cause to be inflicted any form of physical punishment, verbal or physical degradation or emotional deprivation or use, or permit the use of any form of physical restraint
- Confinement, isolation, denying or threatening to deny a child of a basic necessity will not be tolerated
- At no time should a child be demeaned or embarrassed in front of their peers

Procedure:

- Staff will ensure that the disciplinary action taken is reasonable in the circumstances
- Staff will ensure that expectations and behaviour guidelines are consistently in place and that children/youth have an overall understanding of them

- Staff will use positive behaviour management through logical or creative consequences prior to using the 3 strikes system
- Staff will use redirection, choices, logical consequences, and creative approaches to deal with the outcomes of inappropriate behaviour
- Staff will talk to children/youth at eye level and focus on the behaviour and not the individual
- Staff will assist children/youth in understanding the outcomes of their behaviour
- Staff will use a fair approach when dealing with children/youth
- Staff are required to use appropriate strategies for children/youth development when handling any inconsiderate behaviours
- Staff will document any behaviour issues that cause major disruptions in the on-site Incident Reporting book, on an Incident Report form and/or directly to the Children & Youth Program Supervisors. The following protocol will be used:
 - On the first documentation, parents will be made aware of the situation through a phone call or discussion upon pick-up
 - On the second documentation, parents will be asked to come in for a meeting with the staff member and child/youth and it will be acknowledged that on the next documentation the child/youth will be removed from the program
 - On the third documentation the child/youth will be removed from the program for an amount of time determined by the Children & Youth Program Supervisors

BULLYING POLICY

Policy:

The Town of Banff Children and Youth Programs recognize the negative effects that bullying has on children and youth. Bullying is never justified and we do not excuse this type of behaviour. Bullying incidents will be addressed, and staff will be trained to promote confident communication so bullying can be dealt with. If bullying does occur, all participants should be able to confide in a staff member, and be assured that the incident will be dealt with effectively and in a timely manner.

Guidelines:

Bullying can be, but is not exclusive to, emotional, physical, racial/intolerant, sexual, verbal, cyber and destruction of property.

Procedure:

- Parents, children/youth, staff and administration will all support the bullying policy

Revised August 2020

- Staff will be trained in effective bullying reduction and elimination
- Staff will position themselves accordingly to ensure adequate supervision
- Staff will work proactively to prevent bullying on a daily basis
- All involved parties will be given the opportunity to have their say
- Serious bullying incidents will be documented on an Incident Report form and given to the Program Supervisors for review
- Parents will be contacted when bullying behaviours occur and the use of the three strikes rule is exercised by staff
- Continuous bullying can and will be cause for dismissal from programs
- Bullying may occur away from programs but mat still be investigated by leaders/administration
- Staff will incorporate anti-bullying discussions into staff meetings during the year
- Program staff will maintain open lines communication with school staff to provide consistency and be aware bullying situations which have, or are occurring after school and during school hours

INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

Policy:

All children/youth are welcome and bring value to our programs. Our programs are reflective of the varying needs of our participants, community and stakeholders.

Guidelines:

- Staff, supervisors and managers will maintain strong links with community agencies and members to support participants and their families
- Participants will be included in all of our programs regardless of their limitations or special needs
- Programming will be based around acknowledging and valuing all children/youth's unique and individual differences and will be flexible and adaptable to all needs
- Programs will provide a physically, emotionally and intellectually safe environment
- There is an understanding that fair does not always mean equal
- Off-site activities will be planned to promote a better understanding of the community and to connect participants with cultural experiences

Procedure:

- Programs will be evaluated to ensure that the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms is followed
- Staff will have the opportunity to develop their understanding of inclusion principles and anti-bias through professional development

- At times when a child/youth may need extra support to attend programs, parents and staff will meet prior to the commencement of the program to decide on a mutually agreeable path
- Outside agencies are consulted when needed to include all children/youth in programs
- Open communication between staff, parents and the school is encouraged in order to better facilitate the involvement of individual children/youth
- Parents are encouraged to be involved in programs through communication, volunteering and evaluations
- All children/youth and families will be able to contribute their cultural experience and stories into the program setting
- Programming will reflect full inclusion for families who have a first language other than English
- Staff will plan activities that are inclusive to children/youth with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Staff and children/youth will help to create an environment that promotes mutual respect and tolerance
- Staff will provide children/youth with a variety of experiences from a range of social, cultural, linguistic and ability backgrounds
- All staff will talk to children/youth about differences in a positive way
- Staff will promote equality regardless of race, gender, culture or differences
- Staff provide children/youth with the opportunity to have input, involvement and choice through program planning, evaluation and open ended questions during activities
- Materials and/or posters will be displayed to represent a variety of social, cultural, linguistic and ability backgrounds
- Plans are chosen to reflect the rules and guidelines of living in Banff National Park and the unique opportunity of living in a UNESCO Heritage site
- Outside agencies and community members will be invited to programs to enhance the quality of experiences for the participants
- Supplies are chosen to support multiculturalism and diversity

HEALTH POLICY

Policy:

The Town of Banff Children and Youth Programs consider health a priority and make all efforts to educate participants, parents and staff about health issues. Methods to minimize health risks are integrated into programs and work practices to provide a healthy and safe environment in which to thrive.

Guidelines:

- While outdoors, all children/youth will be required to wear a seasonally appropriate hat

- Staff will make every attempt to seek shade while facilitating outdoor activities during hours of high UV rays
- All program snacks or meals will be prepared using the Canada's Food Guide as a reference
- Staff and children/youth will be encouraged to bring a water bottle to the program
- Staff will be educated to identify the signs and symptoms of dehydration and heat stroke as well as treatment for these conditions
- Children/youth who display signs of illness are encouraged to stay home
- Upon registration, parents will be required to indicate any allergies or medication that the participant may have and describe them on the registration form
- Staff will be informed of and responsible for any participant allergies and medication needs
- Staff will encourage children/youth to ensure they are using proper hand washing techniques
- Programming will include a variety of active living components considering the developmental needs and capabilities of the children/youth
- Staff will encourage physical activity as part of healthy living
- Children/youth will be presented with new skills, opportunities to refine and master past skills and chances to choose which they would prefer to work on
- Children/youth will be encouraged to focus on personal best and cooperation over competition

Procedures:

Sun Protection

- Children/youth will apply sunscreen of at least SPF 15, prior to any outdoor activity unless communicated otherwise to staff
- Staff may assist younger children to ensure proper coverage and application of sunscreen
- Sunscreen will be reapplied every two hours or following activities involving water or heavy perspiration
- Staff and children/youth will wear a t-shirt at all times when at the beach or waterfront, unless they are in the water above waist level

Hydration

- Staff will ensure water is available to children/youth when participating in outdoor activities either on site where an activity is taking place or brought along with the child/youth
- Staff will check to ensure children/youth have enough fluids to maintain a healthy state prior to going on outings where water will not be available (ex. hikes, bus trips)

Illness

- Signs or symptoms of illness exhibited by a child include the following:
 - Vomiting, having a fever, diarrhea or a new or unexplained rash or cough

- Requiring greater care and attention than can be provided without compromising the care of the other children in the program
- Having or displaying any other illness or symptom the staff member know or believes may indicate that the child poses a health risk to persons on the program or premises
- If a child displays signs or symptoms of an illness while at the program, staff will take their temperature and inform the Children & Youth Program Supervisors if it reads above 38 degrees Celsius. The Program Supervisors will then contact the child's parents to request their immediate removal from the program.
- Once a child has been identified as ill, they will be kept as far away as possible from the other participants, but within a safe and observable distance from program staff
- If a parent fails to receive the request for removal of their child, or fails to pick their child up, staff may call the child's emergency contact person to remove the ill child
- All illness requiring the removal of a child from the program will be documented using the current designated incident report forms
- An ill child may return to the program following a period of 24 hours of showing no symptoms of illness or when obtaining a physician's note
- Parents are informed of the management of sick children through information provided in the Parent Handbook
- In the case of a communicable disease, the supervisor will issue a notice that will be sent home to all parents informing them of the outbreak and the appropriate precautions to take

Medicine

- All parents must fill in the medical sections of all registration forms prior to participation in the program
- Staff will not administer medication to children/youth, unless an emergency situation arises or there is an exceptional need which is first approved by the Children & Youth Program Supervisors
- Administration of all medicine will be supervised and documentation will occur by the staff

- Children/youth with life threatening health concerns will carry their own medications with them at all times; all other medications will be stored in a safe location, in their original packaging and labeling indicating dosage instructions

Personal Sanitation

- Children/youth and staff are required to wash their hands after using the washroom, prior to, and following the preparation and eating of snacks and meals and after sneezing or coughing into one's hands
- Staff will notify the Program Supervisors or school administration if washrooms or hand washing stations need supplies or extra cleaning measures following incidents causing unsanitary conditions
- Staff will ensure that proper sanitation supplies are in place in locations where facilities are lacking (ex. hikes, campouts) and maintain the outlined sanitation procedures