forestplay
curiosity inspired learning

Assistant Leader Summer 2026

We are hiring for summer 2026! Forest Play is a leader in providing high-quality nature connection programs for children. Our most popular programs are our summer camps and we are looking for leaders who:

- Thrive being outdoors with children (ages 4-6, 7-11 and 11-14)
- Have a strong personal connection with nature
- Love to share stories, songs and wilderness skills (edible plants, birding, carving, wild crafting)

Curiosity and stories drive the experiences we co-create with the children. Our leaders know that nature is our home and our most powerful mentor.

Our camps run Monday – Fridays 9am-3pm from the end of June to the end of July in addition to two camps at the end of August (see dates on website for specifics).

Qualifications:

- Must have a sincere desire to work with deep nature connection mentoring with youth ages 4-6 in an outdoor setting
- Minimum two years formal training (or equivalent experience) in a related field (Example: Early childhood education, outdoor recreation and leadership, wilderness skills, education, outdoor leadership/guiding)
- Minimum one year experience in a related field (Examples: Wilderness/Forest schools, nature/park interpretation, early childhood education/teaching)
- Must have a valid Standard First Aid & CPR certificate (preference given to those with Wilderness First Aid)
- Must provide a valid Vulnerable Sector check (1 year old or newer)

Personal Traits:

- Passionate about working outdoors in all weather
- Versatile and able to adapt to changes
- Basic proficiency as a storyteller, song leader and making nature crafts

- Ability to safely use and maintain a variety of tools and gear (e.g. carving knives, saws, tarps, etc)
- Physically fit and keen to run and play games with children in the forest
- Commitment to positive communication, inclusiveness, appreciation and integrity
- Versatile and able to adapt to changes
- Self motivated
- Accountable
- Commitment to joyful hard work
- Ability to take directives when needed

Responsibilities

- Attend a training program in Coyote Mentoring (we will offer several in-house training options)
- Mentor children and youth in deep nature connection and wilderness skills based on the 8 Shields and Forest School philosophies
- Serve as a positive role model for children through a true passion for learning
- Help set up and clean up program materials and spaces in a timely fashion
- Assist with the design and facilitation of Forest Play programs
- Support participants' basic physical needs throughout the day
- Attend and positively contribute to high quality planning and debrief sessions
- Report to Lead Instructors and Director of Forest Play
- Identify and manage hazards and maintain a safe environment for children to learn and play
- Set and communicate boundaries for children in a positive way
- Provide equal positive attention to all children in the program and look for ways to help them grow and discover their unique gifts
- When conflict or disagreements arise, commit to following the peacemaker principles and Full Value contract to resolve it in a timely manner
- Keep a clean and orderly environment

Benefits

- Opportunity to deepen your own connection with nature, manage stress and discover your own gifts
- Opportunity to learn more about Forest Play programs through direct exposure and experience
- Opportunity to learn wilderness skills including: aidless navigation, edible and medicinal plants, wildlife tracking, survival skills, naturalist skills and knowledge
- Support and feedback for personal growth as a nature based mentor
- Opportunity to work outdoors, immersed in nature and to receive mentoring in deep nature connection
- Opportunity to work with creative and fun life-long learners who love being outdoors
- Opportunity to build relationships within the outdoor guiding and nature connection movement

Position details:

- summer programs run from 9am-3pm with an additional 45 minutes per day for program set up and clean up. There will also be planning/prep time required at home some days. Daily paid hours: 7.5 hrs/day.
- Pay is $23-$25/hr depending on experience and other variables.
- We prefer to hire 1 or two people for all the camps, but will consider hiring for specific weeks.

To apply:
Send cover letter, resume and three professional references by email to:

Dave Verhulst
Director
Forest Play
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