

Wild Harvest Nature Connection Orientation, Guidelines, & Protocols

Whether you are new or have been with us for years now, Welcome! We look forward to spending time together! We are so grateful for you all for signing yourself and/or your kids up with us, for trusting us, and for believing in what we are doing in some way. Our intention is to support others in deepening their connection to themselves, each other in community, and to nature. Many of you may have realized that we do focus much more broadly than just on learning about nature in our programs. Deepening with nature is a lot of what we do, and we also work on peacemaking, nurturing creativity, curiosity and passions, and collaborative group processes and more. We hope that each of the humans we work with are supported by us and others in their lives to grow into their gifts. Those gifts are then in service to their community. In turn, this serves the health and happiness for themselves, other humans, nature/all life for generations to come.

In this letter you'll find some important information that will help orient you to the programming you've signed up for and/or your kids for. You will learn about safety guidelines, what to bring, what not to bring, some of Wild Harvest Culture, etc. PLEASE READ this and reach out with any concerns, feedback, or questions.

Schedule

Homeschool programs meet once a week from Sept-May with time off for holidays, winter, and spring break. We will list the break schedule on our website program pages.

Summer Camps meet every day for a week (M-F)

Other programs meet for 1 day or an agreed upon set of days.

You'll receive specifics.

Drop off and Pick up times

We utilize a 'soft landing' at pick up and drop off time. We do our best to honor, and ask that you do to, the start and end times of our programs. If we're scheduled to start at 9, but not everyone arrives until 9:10 we'll likely start opening circle at 9:12. We like everyone to have a moment to arrive, for kids to talk with friends, for mentors and parents to chat, and then we get started. This is important connection time, and we know its important for folks to get a chance to 'shake off the road dust'. To shake off the challenge of getting out the door that morning, or the deer that ran in front of the car on the way there, etc. That said, our time together is short, please be on time or early to make the most of it!

A Typical Day

Opening Circle:

Once we get started our opening circle is for everyone : program participants, drivers, whoever else is in the car (usually not your pets, though we're generally happy to meet them once). We encourage you to stay. Opening circle includes gratitude, land acknowledgment, and song. We also include the game in this invitation for parents and others along for the ride to stay and participate. If you do come to opening circle it is important that you participate. We are all role models for each other. The kids are watching! If you come to opening circle and its going later than you can stay, you're totally welcome to get the attention of the facilitator or just do a wave and leave to stay on your timing. Coming for what you can is great, even if its not all of it. We get it! We support that! If you stay we'll let you know when its time to say bye and our programming for participants

only is starting. In the beginning of the year or summer camps or for special days, more might be included.

The Bulk of the Day

What the days look like in between opening and closing circle largely depend on the group and each group. Typically it will include exploring our immediate or further off areas. Our mentors spend time planning each week with each other where they are discussing individuals interests, the group patterns and interests, etc. They take into consideration the weather and time of year to come up with some ideas for that week. That said, if they arrive and its clear the group is needing something else, they are ready to dive into whatever the moment is calling for. The kids typically explore off trail, in the woods, in the prairies, on the trails, off the trails, in the pond, in the marsh, etc. They will work with each individual and the group and meet them where there comfort level is in regards to these explorations. On the way someone might see a big hole in the ground and take interest. The mentor notices this and works to get everyone's attention to explore this hole.....what/who made this?....does someone live in there?.....how big of a creature do you think uses this hole? Maybe some of the kids take interest and others are collecting plants to make bouquets or some are climbing the nearby tree (with the mentor present). This moment isnt the destination, but on the way to the destination, this is what unfolds. We let the natural and spontaneous curiosity take lead while still navigating the group towards some destination, for example their shelter area. This is generally an example of a typical day for Wild Saplings and Wild Explorers and very well could be for Wild Tenders too. The difference with Wild Tenders is that we will bring in more focused projects, challenges, and even some talking circles depending on the group and what the mentors see as supporting the learning and growing edges of the individuals and the group as whole.

Closing Circle:

At pick up time we do another circle. We call it closing circle and its an opportunity to come hear about our day. It usually starts about 15 minutes before the end time of your program. Anyone along for pickup is invited/encouraged to attend! You may also choose or need to get there right at pick-up time and not participate in closing circle. If we know you or your kid needs to get going right at the end time we can accommodate that, and generally we'll plan to all be done. Occasionally we go over time by a few minutes in our efforts to tell the story of the day, include everyone in the circle, and/or when particularly epic adventures have been had. We're doing a dance of the spacious/timeless experience of being (in nature, with each other); and honoring the timeliness needed by all of us coordinating all kinds of schedules and needs in the world. Let us know what you need. If the circle isn't over and you need to go, please graciously excuse yourself and your kid(s). Typically, closing circles will include some form of relaying what we did that day and/or some moment of reflection.

Communication

Cancellations/Running Late

If the group is being cancelled due to weather or any other reason and is within 24 hours of the group start time, you will be notified via text and email. We ask that you reply to let us know you received the communication.

If you or your child can not make it, please let mentors know via email or if its last minute (within 24 hours) please also text the mentors. If your child needs to be picked up early or dropped off late, we request that you let the mentors know by the day before and again at drop off.

If you are running more than 10 minutes late, please text the mentors with your eta. This is really helpful when facilitating a group of people.

If you are running more than 10 min late in picking up your child(ren), no worries, and please text the mentors to let them know.

If you need to get ahold of the mentors during group time, please know that they do keep their phones on but at times are running around with the kids (often) and typically keep their phones (ringers on) in their backpacks. Keeping their phones on their body is a risk of losing it (falling out while they are jumping, running, cart wheeling around) or it falling in water or mud. We've learned from experience! Please allow up to 30-60 min to reach the mentors (unless you have a pre-existing plan with them). This is the nature of being outside and engaging with the kids and landscape in the way that we do. Also please know that Wild Harvest does not have a 9-5 office person. Heather and Alex are the program directors, admins, etc and will have their phones on during program days, whether they are present or not, but may not be reachable right away.

Heather - 608-286-9087

Alex - 608-213-9980

We do assure you, if your child is in need of reaching you, that can happen asap, whether that's an emotional need or an emergency of any other sort. In the end your child with us, is safe. We do understand, as parents ourselves, it can feel unnerving to not be able to reach your child or the adult in care of your child asap.

Who To Communicate What to:

Running Late - Text Mentors

Absences - Mentors (if its within 24 hours, send text)

Covid stuff - whnc.info@gmail.com & Mentors

Payments - whnc.info@gmail.com

Anything related to logistics of your child's group - Mentors

Medical Concerns/allergies - Mentors

Registration Stuff - whnc.info@gmail.com

Concerns - whnc.info@gmail.com and mentors

Programmatic Questions (why we do what we do) - whnc.info@gmail.com
Admin/Program Director type stuff - whnc.info@gmail.com

Concerns:

We strive to have good and clear communication. In many ways we do and we also acknowledge that we have shortcomings. We are not perfect at this and we ask for your respectful feedback around this.

We request that anyone with a concern (big or small) talk to us right away. We realize that sometimes it can be good to sit with something or talk to someone to help yourself get clear and we encourage that if that's what is needed. However, we have found it to be crucial that we hear about concerns on the early side so we know that they exist and we can support in resolving the situation before it gets trickier and bigger. If a concern is in regard to a particular group, you can include the mentors, the grandparent and whnc.info@gmail.com in your email. All concerns should include wild harvest Co-Founders (Heather & Alex) at the whnc.info@gmail.com email.

Its really really important for the smooth workings of our programs and for you and/or your child's experience that we hear about and are able to address any concerns right away. We have found that the sooner we hear about a concern the easier it is to resolve.

Changes in Schedule/Location

For the most part we will meet at the same place and same time/day week after week except scheduled breaks. There is much learning in being at the same place over and over again. That said, opportunities may arise where we might see if we can shift the time one day or day of the week (this one has actually never happened), or location. Perhaps we get invited to be part of a prairie burn at Donald Park or to do a bird count at Indian Lake. These are great opportunities and although they are not predicted to happen for this coming year we ask for flexibility around opportunities that may arise.

Covid Protocols Updated for Fall 2023 forward

These are subject to change. These will be in place for Fall 2023 forward. These guidelines are not a one size fits all circumstances. Our policies reflect what we are willing to uphold to support those who have medical vulnerabilities re Covid, to the degree that we feel we can. There are circumstances where we will reach out to the entire camp or group to see if families are ok with a given child attending based on their individual circumstance. For example they are day 9 of Covid, but still have a cough. We will ask families if they are ok with this child attending. It seems silly to have a child stay home based on a set of guidelines when everyone present is actually ok with them attending. Our guidelines are a guide they are not rigid absolutes. (more in # 8 below).

1. **Communication** - Please be in communication with us (Mentors) as soon as your child has been exposed to Covid or has Covid, has a fever (regardless of covid test), or has had vomiting.
2. **Masks** - We will have a baseline of no masks. We no longer require each child to have a mask unless they have been exposed to Covid or have active symptoms of any illness....depending on groups needs. We may ask a child who has been exposed to Covid to wear a mask.
3. **Physical Distance** - We will not enforce any distancing practices. The exception may be when a child/mentor has had a known exposure to covid or something like that and based on group needs.
4. **Hand Washing** - If you have been around sickness (covid or otherwise) please consider washing/sanitizing your child's hands upon arrival and let the mentors know so they can assist with hand washing throughout the day.
5. **Items from Home** - please only bring necessary items to group....no toys (this is for other reasons too).
6. **Illness Policy**

- a. Any child/mentor/grandparent who has Covid will stay home with active symptoms and for 24 hrs from onset of fever and contact whnc.info@gmail.com and mentors. The person needs to be symptom free to return and testing negative.
- b. Any child/mentor/grandparent who has a fever or vomiting will stay home until they are free of those 2 symptoms for 24 hours.
- c. Any child/mentor/grandparent/adult participating, who has any Covid/cold/flu symptoms needs to test Covid negative before coming to group. Check in with mentors, just to inform of whats going on. For some groups we may request a mask based on any medical vulnerabilities.
- d. Any person attending must feel fairly well to attend, if they are lethargic, “run down”, or not at their usual self, please stay home and rest.

**With all of this, it may be that with some groups who have families with a household member who has a medical vulnerability, that we take different precautions. This will be communicated with you.

7. Exposure to Covid - If a child/mentor/grandparent has been exposed to Covid, we ask that you communicate this to your mentors and be mindful of your interactions. They must be symptom free and have a negative test, the morning of.
8. Communication - Good communication is key. We believe each person has the right to make their own choice based on the information they have. We take a community minded approach and are transparent regarding Covid and exposures. Given we have some families who have members who are more vulnerable to covid complications and other viral infections, it is important we have open and transparent communication from all involved in our programs. If we are informed of an exposure, we will let the entire group know and can keep anonymous. Please first inform whnc.info@gmail.com and/or 608-213-9980 (Alex) AND your mentors. We will then contact the group once we have all the information needed.

9. Group decisions - We will leave some decisions to the group (mentors, elder/group grandparent, families). An example is that someone has tested negative for Covid, is on day 7 of their illness and still is slightly congested, we will reach out to the group to see if all are ok with that child attending. Again all in the group need to be ok with this, it is not majority rules. This approach recognizes each family being responsible for the health of their family.

Other notes on how we handle Covid:

We work to make our programs available to those who feel/are more vulnerable to complications due to Covid, which means that we take extra precautions at times. We know that not everyone agrees with this and therefore we won't make everyone happy.

We will do our best to keep each group informed of any changes in makeup (adding a person, a visitor, etc).

Please keep in good communication with us about any concerns regarding Covid and the kids' interactions or otherwise. We ask for understanding and to know that the mentors are human and will do their best to uphold mask wearing and being mindful around distance.

What to Bring

*Snacks & Lunch (if applicable).

- Trail lunches, those lunches that don't need any preparing or much to eat them are best. At times we will cook over fire and will try to let you know beforehand. Please NO SUGARY things. The exception to this is bringing treats to share for bday celebrations and for Ancestor Potluck. Warm hearty soups/foods in a thermos in colder months are helpful for staying warm!

*Water

*Backpack

- *1 Bandana - we use these in games (as tails, as blindfolds)
- *Extra clothes when needed. Extra socks and gloves in colder weather are really helpful
- *Rain gear when needed
- *Knife (this is optional) (Our mentors must know if a kid plans to bring a knife)

OPTIONAL:

- *Journal & Pen
- *Fire Kit Pieces
- *Hand crafts (that aren't distracting)
- *Binoculars
- *Field guides
- *Sunscreen and Sunhat (please take care of your skin how you need to)
- *Bug Spray – herbal is preferred and regardless of what kind please ask about an appropriate place to go to spray.....away from the group and so that the wind isn't blowing from you to the group.

Other toys/objects from home

We ask that objects such as toys and other things from home stay at home. If an item is needed for comfort and it's a big deal for you and/or your kid, then please talk to us about this and we will work something out.

Cell Phones

We request that cell phones stay turned off and in the backpacks. The mentors will all have cell phones on them in case of emergency. We request adults keep their phones on airplane or silent mode. Please do not check your phones, text, or be on calls during program time. In some work or family related situations you may need to access your phone, we understand that and ask that it is not regular use and that it is done out of ear shot and sight of the group. Using phones to take photos, record songs

or workshops is fine. Using phones to look up identification information in non-emergency situations should be left until later. Mystery is ok. :) Mentors may check phones to communicate with each other out in the field and to check time, so please know that they might be using their phones from time to time for program purposes.

Birthday Treats/Celebration

We love to celebrate birthdays! If your child or you want to bring treats to share, we welcome this. If it's really sugary we may ask you to wait until closing circle to share this.

Clothing

Clothing is our first layer of shelter and makes a big difference in our outdoor experience.

Wet/Cold: During cooler and cold days please no cotton, it gets wet, stays wet, and feels cold. Wool and synthetics which wick moisture are best and when wet will keep you warm. Some great places to check out are: ibex, icebreaker, weewoolies, first lite and woolino. We often find some great wool and wool/synthetic blend clearance items at these online stores. Good footwear is a must for the cold/wet months when we're out for hours. Make sure your feet have room to breath. Cold feet sap our energy and desire to engage.

Hot/Buggy: We suggest light colored, lite weight clothing. Cotton is great. When its hot we often try to get to a cool place or a wet place to maintain some comfort. So we might get wet. If your child has a harder time with bugs, consider loose long baggy lightweight clothing. Bugs have a harder time biting through loose baggy clothing item than tight fitting ones.

Rain/Getting Wet: We're often out in rain, so a way to stay dry is important. A garbage bag can be a great raincoat/rainpant combo. :) When picking out

a raincoat consider sturdiness as we're often off trail and may snag on a branch or berry plant from time to time. Some raincoats don't hold up.

Other thoughts: Many folks have found that an extra set of packable dry clothes makes a big difference if we end up wet at some point in our day. Consider sending yourself or your kid(s) in old shoes that can get wet (or are easy to be wet in), muddy, etc or footwear that has that utility in mind.

Hazards

Each place we meet at has its unique hazards and there are general ones you will find at many places. We like to hold hazards as awareness enhancers. It's good to inform ourselves about them, work to overcome fear of them or avoidance, and interact with them respectfully. Here is a general but not at all exhaustive list of some things to be aware of. These tend to be the big concerns for most people.

Ticks: Ticks can carry disease, the most commonly known one is Lyme disease, carried by Black Legged Ticks also known as Deer Ticks. We have found the best prevention of disease is to do regular tick checks when in places that ticks may live. Our family does them every night and in the mornings (just like brushing teeth) during tick season. Ticks can be out from early March thru Nov/Dec (depending on weather). Generally above freezing. However they are times where they are more prevalent and that tends to be spring (April/May) and fall (Sept/Oct). Check all surfaces, cracks, crevices. Ticks can be carried in on clothing or backpacks so its good to wash the clothes and do tick checks for a couple days after being out in a potential tick area. Handheld mirrors or tick check buddies (or parents) can be really helpful. There are other measures that some people take like wearing light colored clothing so that you can easily see a tick, tucking in their pant legs into socks, wearing bug spray made for ticks, taking their clothes off and washing them or sticking them in the dryer, taking showers right away. We trust you to find the right ways for you. My family (Heather)

personally typically just do really good consistent (daily during above freezing months) tick checks.

Wild Parsnip: This plant has an edible root and it also has juices in the aerial parts that can produce a chemical like burn on your skin. How this happens: the plant is broken in some way and the juice of the inside of the plant gets on the skin (you may not notice this), this reacts with sun hitting your skin and produces a boil type burn. Getting a little bit of this is not a big deal. Weed wacking or trampling through it with shorts is a much bigger and more painful ordeal. Don't let this steer you away from its yummy edible root! Just learn how and when to harvest it. We will point this plant out to any group we are with if we see it. Cow Parsnip has the same substance but tends to be less so.

Poison Ivy: Sometimes known as Protector Ivy, protecting places from human trampling. Poison ivy is contracted through an oil that resides on the surface of the plant. So unlike Wild Parsnip, where you can touch it but just don't want to break/crush it, Poison Ivy you can touch and get the oil on you and if you are someone who reacts to this you will get some degree of itchy rash that can spread if you itch it. If you think you got poison ivy on you, wash it with as warm as you can tolerate water and dish soap (a degreaser) or if out without access to washing, rub the area with dirt to soak up the oil and rinse off. Think about how oil is on your skin and how it spreads and how it washes off and what soaks up oil. We will point this plant out if we see it.

Other: Bees/Wasps and especially those with ground nests; Stinging Nettle (also a great edible); broken glass, metal; barbed wire fences; dehydration; pesticides/insecticides (at city/county parks)

Human Trash: This includes glass, metal, and other trash. We will ask kids to wear shoes into water that you cannot easily see the bottom. Mentors will check waters before kids enter.

Severe Weather

If we experience severe weather while out with the kids we will seek appropriate shelter as best we can. Some thunderstorms are not that bad or close and others can be very intense and dangerous. We will seek appropriate shelter. At Lake Farm there are overhang structures that we can seek shelter in and enclosed bathrooms at the boat launch (and during warmer seasons at all of the shelters. It depends on where we are and how fast we can get to these locations. We will not immediately seek shelter in all thunderstorm situations. All mentors have access to internet and weather reports during group time. This is something they are paying attention to if there is potentially dangerous weather predicted. If we have enough warning from officials of needing to seek shelter we will call parents to come pick up the kids immediately. We also teach kids what to do in a thunderstorm (where to go and where not to go).

During very cold days, we typically involve parents in conversation whether they and their kids want to still come. So far the answer is usually yes, with an occasional kid choosing to stay at home. During these days we are watching all kids carefully and asking them how they are feeling and how their fingers/toes are doing. We keep ourselves on the move to keep our bodies warm and we may also use fire. Parents can help their kids stay warm by bringing them with warm food and drinks in thermoses and making sure they have appropriate clothes and gear. If a child is refusing to wear or do the things that are going to keep them safe, we will contact parents for them to be picked up. We also will use our cars as a space to warm kids up when necessary (when all other means: good dry gear, moving, fire) haven't worked. This is rare and typically we will call parents in this case. Another scenario we might call parents in is if a child gets really wet and has not extra clothes and its cold enough that hypothermia or frostbite is a concern.

Emergency & Injury Protocols

Injury and Accident Protocols

We first recognize that we can't predict all scenarios that might happen in this area. What we can do here is give general and basic guidelines that all mentors follow.

All mentors carry a very basic first aid kit with them. At least one mentor of every group is first aid certified.

If any injury occurs that is more than a typical bruise or minor cut, we will fill out an accident report and share that with the parent. Those reports will also be shared with Alex and Heather.

If the injury is a typical band aid type cut or minor bruises we will treat it and **will not** contact parents or emergency contacts. If the child is asking us to call the parent and continues to do this, we will contact the parent for some emotional support. In most of these cases an injury/accident report **will not** be filled out and parents will not be notified (although often our mentors might make mention of it to you at the end of the day depending on how the child reacted and their age).

If the injury is beyond a typical band aid type cut or typical bruise **and is not** deemed as a medical or life threatening emergency, we will first attempt to contact the parents, then the emergency contact and possibly the Dr. listed on the med form. Things like potential broken bones, head bumps that seemed hard but not loss of consciousness, deeper cuts, anything that is causing persistent discomfort, etc. Mentors will fill out an injury/accident report and share with parents. Mentors are asked to notify Heather and Alex in this case that same day.

If the injury is deemed as a life threatening or medical emergency we will first call 911 and then contact parents and emergency contacts on med form. Mentors are asked to notify Heather and Alex as soon as makes sense in this case (after making sure the kids are taken care of).

Other Unforeseeable Emergencies

We will contact parents and appropriate people including 911 if needed.

Activities that Involve Risk

We encounter what we consider healthy risks in Wild Harvest Nature Connection. We believe this helps kids develop a good sense of their own limits. In some cases we have some clear guidelines and in others we might work to ask questions to support a kid in finding their own limits. If you have any concern regarding anything in this area or want to make sure your kid is not partaking in a particular activity like carving, you need to reach out to both the mentors of your child's group and Heather and Alex. Below are some of the activities we do that involve some risk. WHNC has guidelines for mentors to follow in terms of determining a child's readiness for any particular risk taking behavior (those mentioned below) and readiness for the next level of skill.

Tree Climbing - all kids are instructed on safe tree climbing. If a mentor is unsure of the kid's ability they will be asked to go no higher than the mentors head until the mentor has a clearer sense of their ability. Kids are asked to keep 3 points of contact at all times. They are mentored and asked questions about whether they feel safe to keep climbing. When a child is climbing a tree a mentor will be present to this or the kids will be asked to

wait until a mentor can be present. Kids who are not following guidelines of safe tree climbing will be asked to come down.

Working with Fire - We do fire by friction in every group and we and the kids love it! We cook with the fire, we craft using the fire, and the fire can keep us warm. For Saplings and Wild Explorers there will be one mentor as a fire tender. They can support kids in learning how to safely tend a fire and kids must ask a mentor before putting anything in the fire. Kids are not allowed to put sticks in the fire and take them back out with burning tips. For Wild Tenders, who are older and more proficient at fire tending, we appoint 1-2 fire tenders at a time and all others must ask them about putting anything into the fire. A mentor is always within sight of the fire.

Using Knives & Other Sharp Tools

Kids often love to carve and some feel very proud of the fact that they have their very own knife. We encourage this when a kid is showing they are ready to handle the responsibility of having a knife. For Saplings, if children want to bring their own knife, the mentor must carry the knife for them. For Wild Explorers, depending on the child's ability and responsibility they may be able to carry their own knife and a mentor must know about this. It needs to be a one time mention that they will be bringing a knife every time or might bring their knife from time to time. Mentors will determine if they need to carry the knife for the child or not. Wild Tenders are able to bring a knife and carry them in their backpacks and we ask to know about this. Again it can be a one time mention. We teach kids knife safety. This includes "blood bubble" a phrase that refers to the space around a kid using a knife. People must be at least the knife user's arm reach away. This is the responsibility of both the knife user and others. People using knives are instructed to stop carving if someone comes into their "blood bubble." (The same goes for using a hand saw or hatchet, the bigger the tool the more space is given). Knives must be sheathed when not in use. Kids cannot walk around with an unsheathed knife. Carving

must always be done away from one's own body. Kids may lose their knife privileges if they are not following knife safety guidelines. Mentors will have extra knives for kids on days when we are planning to do carving.

As kids are ready they may also use hand saws, hatchets, and eventually an ax (typically not until Wild Tenders).

Going Barefoot

We love being barefoot and encourage others to get some barefoot time too! Kids are allowed to be barefoot in wild harvest when appropriate. Kids must have shoes with them at all times. Kids need to wear shoes in mucky, murky places and where there are clear signs of barbed wire or glass. This also might vary by age. A 16 year old can typically make a good decision or even take a risk in being barefoot and they are responsible enough to make this decision for themselves. A 7 year old is likely different and we might ask them to put on footwear in certain circumstances. All kids will need to protect feet in cold weather by wearing footwear.

Walking on Ice that is on greater than 1ft depth of water

We've been teaching our groups what the DNR has to say about ice safety & thickness and have only been out on the ice when reports or obvious signs show it is safe (like someone has a car out there and is ice fishing). Additionally we watch for changes in the ice especially nearer shore that might indicate water flows that can affect ice thickness and avoid areas that feel suspect. Mentors will check any ice before allowing kids to go on it. We also check local ice reports.

Wading in Water

We do not swim in WHNC. There are some very rare exceptions with older groups and parents will be notified before hand. We do however explore in the water. Here are our guidelines:

Saplings (ages 4-7) - don't go in water deeper than knee/thigh high.

Wild Explorers (ages 7-11) - don't go in water deeper than waist high
Wild Tenders (ages 12-16) - don't go in water over their head and if they
cant swim don't go in water deeper than their chest.

Behavior/Conduct

All groups set up group agreements and processes for when those agreements are broken. This supports mentors in talking to kids about any behavior challenges. Our basic guideline that we ask all kids and wild harvest participants to agree to is: **Treat yourself, each other, and the land with kindness and respect.**

If a behavior is dangerous to others or themselves and we are unable to calm the child down or they are not discontinuing the behavior, we will call parents to support this and it may mean picking the child up. We will, however, work to engage the child in different strategies before calling a parent. If behavior continues to be dangerous or create an emotionally or physically unsafe environment we will involve parents in the conversation and creative solution finding. If it continues we may ask the child to come with a personal support person. If it still continues we may ask the child to take a break from coming. If it still continues they will be asked to take the rest of the year off. It all is a matter of sense of group safety and making sure 1 child is not needing consistent 1 on 1 attention from a mentor a lot of the time. This is disruptive to the functioning of the group. We unfortunately, are not equipped with the resources to accommodate a child who needs more 1 on 1 assistance.

Rough housing is something we allow and each group is a bit different with this. In the past we had a group who needed very clear and specific guidelines around this and our Wild Tenders (ages 12-16) have not need anything like this. Mentors, when needed, will set guidelines to support a sense of safety in the group.

Stick fighting or any weapon fighting is not allowed during wild harvest group time or in the arrival time.

Thank you for reading all of this. We hope it supports you and your child in feeling ready to participate in our groups. Please reach out about any questions or concerns.

WHNC Program Events

Predictable events outside of the week to week norm that will happen:
Ancestor Potluck - This happens during group time typically sometime between late Oct to mid Nov. We usually invite families and have a potluck during the group time. More will be explained about what this is as it gets closer.

Maple Syrup Week - Each year during Maple Syrup season each group will go to the Sugar Bush for one their week and learn the process of making Maple Syrup from start to finish. This is usually in March. Nature determines the exact dates but we usually know a couple weeks in advance and provide a back up date. Each group meets at their usual time and day but at the Sugar Bush (location TBD).

Spring Campout - Wild Tenders will have a campout that will be Thur night. Drop off on Thur is typical and pickup will be Fri by 8 or 9, TBD by mentors and communicated with you before hand.

Wild Explorers have been doing an extended day, where the mentors will announce the date (typically in May), and we will have a later pickup time and often invite parents and family to join for a potluck or byo dinner.

Parent/Family Day - This is new and may not happen this year, but is something we hope to have. Parents get to join for the day and have fun! We hope to offer one in the Fall and one in the Spring.

Special Roles at Wild Harvest

At Wild Harvest we are working to create a programmatic Village setting. A village has a number of role players.

Mentors - Mentors are the backbone of WHNC. Mentors will facilitate day to day activities with youth groups, keeping time, transitioning the group, communicating over e-mail and other.

Grandparents - supportive volunteer roleplayers who move at their own pace. Grandparents have gifts of love, listening, story, and more to share. We encourage you to develop relationship with these special people and consider how you can show them your respect, care, and support for their ongoing listening, storytelling, and deep role modeling for your kids. Ideas: cards, gifts, meals, rides. :):)

Elders - These are Grandparents who've been with Wild Harvest longer, who've developed deeper longer relationships with all the village, with the land, and with themselves.

Village Day Guests - These are specialty mentors who bring new voices with new skills or new perspectives on things we do and show up only occasionally to share. Examples are: Flintknapper, Herbalist/Healer, Natural Artist, Song Leader, Fiber specialist, Bird Language Specialist,

Village Day Village Helpers: Former mentors or former graduates of Wild Harvest's Mentoring Through the Season's program returning to help out and 'put meat on the community bones' bringing their skills, love and support as we come together to learn and celebrate.