

# Blueberry Cove School Programs Family Handbook

Our family handbook outlines our program's policies and procedures. We encourage families to read our policies thoroughly and ask questions as needed. We require all families to sign a statement that they have read and agree to follow all policies and procedures.

Questions can be directed to us at [extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu](mailto:extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu) or (207) 491-6527.

## 4-H Camp and Learning Centers at Tanglewood and Blueberry Cove

At the 4-H Camps and Learning Centers, our mission is to teach Maine youth and adults to be effective and caring citizens of the earth through affordable environmental education and nature-based experiences. Reaching over 3,500 youth and adults each year, our programming is year-round, providing affordable nature-based experiences for all ages from two locations.

We believe that youth who explore and experience nature in a way that engages their whole being will become adults who want to care for and protect our natural world. Blueberry Cove runs day camp, overnight camp, a trips program, an after-school program, and an early childhood enrichment program.

The University of Maine Cooperative Extension is a publicly funded educational network comprising the United States Department of Agriculture Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, the more than 100 colleges and universities that comprise the nation's Land-Grant University System and 3,150 counties. UMaine Cooperative Extension's Mission is "to help Maine people improve their lives through an educational process that uses research-based knowledge focused on issues and needs". Our programs help to fulfill this mission.

4-H is the youth development side of Cooperative Extension, which has grown into an international organization. There are over 6.5M members aged 5–19, together with thousands of staff and hundreds of thousands of volunteers. 4-H embodies practical "hands-on" learning, backed by the knowledge within Cooperative Extension. The name "4-H" refers to four dimensions: Head, Hands, Heart, and Health. These represent aspects that are consistent throughout 4-H programs. Thus we are the UMaine 4-H Learning Centers at Tanglewood and Blueberry Cove.

## Property Information and Land Acknowledgement

Blueberry Cove is nestled on twenty-five acres overlooking Tenants Harbor and consists of 1,400 feet of protected ocean frontage, a mature spruce forest, meadows, gardens, and a mix of updated and original building spaces. There is abundant exploration - swimming beaches, tide flats, forests, meadows, gardens, and farm animals make for endless learning opportunities.

The 4-H Camps and Learning Centers, as part of the Cooperative Extension of the University of Maine, recognize that we are located around the state in the homeland of the Wabanaki people, where issues of water and territorial rights, and encroachment upon sacred sites are ongoing. We recognize that Wabanaki (Maliseet, Micmac, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot) Tribal Nations are distinct, sovereign, legal, and political entities with their own powers of self-governance and self-determination. We respect the Wabanaki People as the original stewards of this land. We thank them for their strength and resilience in caring for this land for hundreds of years. We recognize that we are responsible for working to change the systems that allow injustice and inequality to exist. We are committed to listening, learning, and building relationships while serving as stewards of this land.

## Services Offered and Age Ranges

Blueberry Cove operates both school year and summer programming. Below are the general programs, ages served, and maximum group sizes for school-year programming. Groups always have at least two staff members present. For questions about our summer programs, please visit our website at [extension.umaine.edu/tanglewood](http://extension.umaine.edu/tanglewood).

### School Year Programming

	Ages	Max Group Size
<b>St. George After School</b>	4 - 10 years old (Preschool - 5th)	12 students
<b>Wild Learners</b>	3 - 5 years old	12 students
<b>Vacation Camps*</b>	4 - 8	12 students

\*Subject to staffing

## Holidays/Vacation

Our offices and programs are closed for all federal holidays. We take a two-week recess over winter break and offer no programming. Holidays that fall on weekdays are included in the cost of programming. We follow the St. George MSU school calendar, including their early release and teacher workshop days. For complete details, please see our yearly calendar or dates below.

## Dates of Notice 2024-2025\*

**5/25, 8/28 & 9/9 & 9/10:** Open House

**9/16:** First Day of Programs

**9/18:** Early Dismissal

**10/11:** Educator Workshop

**10/14:** Indigenous Peoples' Day

**10/23:** Early Dismissal

**11/11:** Veterans' Day

**11/21:** Early Dismissal

**11/22:** Early Dismissal

**11/27:** Educator Workshop

**11/28 - 11/29:** Thanksgiving Break

**12/23 - 1/3/25:** Winter Break & Educator Workshops

**1/20:** Martin Luther King Jr Day

**1/29:** Early Dismissal

**2/17:** Presidents' Day

**2/18 - 2/21:** February Break

**3/20:** Early Dismissal

**3/21:** Early Dismissal

**4/9:** Early Dismissal

**4/21:** Patriots Day

**4/22 - 4/25:** April Break

**5/14:** Early Dismissal

**5/26:** Memorial Day

## 6/6: Last Day of Programming

\* Early Dismissal days - Wild Learners ends at 12:30 pm and After School ends at 3:30 pm.

### Late Fees and Snow Day Policies

- Late pick-up fee - \$5 per family for every minute after 5 minutes late
- Snow Days - We follow both St. George MSU and UMA Rockland Center's weather gauges. We reserve 5 days at the end of the school year for make-up days if programs are canceled due to inclement weather.

### Hours of Operation and Daily Schedule

Our administrative offices are open from 8 am to 4:30 pm for phone or email inquiries. Programming schedules are detailed below.

	<b>Hours</b>
<b>After School</b>	Monday - Thursday, 2:30 pm - 5:30 pm
<b>Wild Learners</b>	Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 3 pm
<b>Vacation Camps</b>	8:30 am - 3 pm

## Admission and Registration

### Admission

We are an open enrollment program. We encourage families to read through our program policies and website to make sure that we are a good fit for your child. As outdoor-based programs, we spend a great deal of time outside, rain or shine. We focus on play and nature to guide participants' learning and incorporate environmental education into our program designs.

For Wild Learners, we have an online "application" that we ask that you fill out before registering to make sure that the program is a good fit for your child. We hold three pre-program open house days - one in May and the others in August. We ask that you attend at least one of these days. We hold several more open house days throughout the school year that provide an opportunity to see what we do more in-depth.

### Opportunities for Parent/Guardian Involvement

Volunteers are welcome and should reach out to us at [extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu](mailto:extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu) for more information. Volunteers are required to participate in an online orientation, complete online training, and authorize a background check.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to get involved with programming! This could look like weekly or monthly volunteering in programs (reading, teaching a skill, playing an instrument) or providing a healthy snack. If there is a way that you are excited about getting involved, please let us know!

### **Required Forms**

The forms required to complete prior to beginning programming are all necessary to protect your child and to help make their experience the best possible. Remember when completing the medical form that your answers will not affect their status as a participant. The more complete the information we have about a child, the better we may be able to meet their needs.

Please complete the online forms at least 3 weeks prior to the start of the program. You only need to complete these forms once per year, even if you attend multiple programs.

- Scholarship/Assistance Form
- Primary, Alternate, and Emergency Contact Information
- Authorized Pick Ups
- Policies and Commitments
- Health History
- Vaccinations
- Photo Release
- Release and Assumption of Risk

### **Cancellations and Payments**

A deposit is required upon registration. Annual tuition can be paid in full at enrollment or in 9 monthly installments. The first installment is due three weeks before registration. Credit or debit card payments can be made online through our registration portal. Checks can be mailed to the main office at 1 Tanglewood Road, Lincolnville, ME 04849.

Deposits are non-refundable. The balance of tuition may be refunded providing the cancellation is made at least one month in advance of the program.

## **Emergencies**

### **Notification of Emergency or Closing**

Families will be notified of emergencies or closings via email and/or phone. In the event of closing due to inclement weather or emergency, families will be notified by 8 am via email.

Social media will also be updated to reflect any closings. Please be prepared to have a backup care plan in case of sudden or emergency closings.

### **Emergency Plans**

We conduct fire drills once a month and evacuation drills twice a year. In the event of a true emergency, you will be contacted immediately after the safety of the children has been secured. EMS will be called first for perceived life-threatening injuries and parents will be contacted immediately afterward. All staff are trained in American Red Cross First Aid, and Infant, Child, and Adult CPR.

If we need to evacuate the premises due to an emergency or safety concern, we would evacuate to the St. George Town Office.

### **Emergency Camp Closing**

In the event of an emergency camp closing we will follow similar procedures to the weather-related closures. We will post on our social media page and send out a mass email. If the closure happens during the school day, we will email and call families and arrange pick-up as usual.

### **Serious Injury and Death Reporting**

As required by licensing rules, any injury to a child while in the care of Blueberry Cove will be reported to their parent/guardian. A written copy of a completed Accident/Illness/Injury Report will be kept in the participant's file. Where necessary under law the report will be forwarded to the appropriate governing agency. Guardians and state licensing staff know children are active and no amount of childproofing and supervision can prevent all injuries. However, reporting injuries can help prevent them in the future by identifying injury patterns specific to the child care's environment, and/or with a child who may need help with difficulties associated with balance, vision, or foot positioning. Serious injuries will be reported to the Child Care Licensing Unit at 287-9300 within 24 hours.

### **Weapons Policy**

No guns or weapons of any sort are permitted on the premises by staff or visitors unless carried by those engaged in official duties of law enforcement, security, or the military. Possession of a valid concealed weapons permit authorized by the state of Maine is not an exemption under this policy.

## **Licensing**

### **Licensing**

We follow all rules and regulations required by the state of Maine for child care centers (our license is currently pending approval). A copy of the licensing rules is available should you

request to review it. Alternatively, licensing rules are available to read online at:  
[maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/provider-resources/child-care-licensing/becoming-a-childcare-provider](http://maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/provider-resources/child-care-licensing/becoming-a-childcare-provider)

## **Rights of Children**

Children receiving Child care from Child Care Facilities have the following rights.

1. Children must be free from emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
2. Each Child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to the Child's welfare, and to practices that are potentially harmful to the Child.
3. Each Child has a right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in this rule.
4. Each Child must be provided child care services without discrimination to race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex, or family composition.
5. Children must be treated with dignity, consideration, and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of developmentally appropriate practices by the Child Care Facility.
6. Each Child has the right to the implementation of any plan of service that has been developed for that Child in conjunction with community or state agencies by the Child Care Facility.
7. Each Child has the right to Developmentally Appropriate activities, materials, and equipment.
8. Children with disabilities have the right to reasonable modifications to Child Care Facility policies and practices.

To report concerns about a child care provider, including licensing violations or concerns regarding suspected abuse or neglect in a child care setting call 1-800-452-1999 (deaf and hard of hearing individuals should dial 711 for the Maine Relay). Intake caseworkers are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including weekends and holidays. Reports of concerns with child care providers can be made confidentially or anonymously.

Our Child Care Licensing Specialist is Christine Clayton. Christine is available at [Christine.Clayton@maine.gov](mailto:Christine.Clayton@maine.gov) or (207) 615-4533. You have the right to view our most recent licensing inspection.

## **Systems for Preventing Abuse and Neglect**

Every effort is made to prevent abuse against the children under our care. Staff go through extensive background checks, training, and ongoing mentorship. Our policies prohibit staff from being one-on-one with a child. Staff work in pairs to provide accountability to one another, and leadership staff are present on-site to provide another layer of supervision.

## **Mandated Reporting**

Our staff are all required to complete a certification in child protection awareness, instructing them on the recognition of suspected abuse and neglect. In accordance with the State of Maine's Child Care Licensing Rules: Any Child Care Staff Member suspecting abuse and/or neglect must immediately report this information to Child Protective Intake, 1-800-452-1999, TTY 1-800-963-9490 which is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

When an employee suspects that a child is being abused or neglected, they must follow the outlined procedure:

1. Employees must report suspicions to management, the Director, and the Owner.
2. Documentation is made of suspected abuse/neglect on a mandated reporter worksheet.
3. If there is no question about the situation, it is reported to the DHHS Child Protective Hotline at 1-800-452-1999 by the employee suspecting the abuse. Management will assist as needed. Should the staff person and management disagree on the need to call, the report shall still always be made.
4. If there is any question about whether the abuse/neglect is reportable, the owner or designee will consult their state licensing worker for advice about what procedure to follow.
5. Parents/guardians are notified immediately by the owner or designee if deemed appropriate by the DHHS Representative.
6. Blueberry Cove will follow any of the mandated guidelines and procedures laid out by DHHS and the required mandated reporter training.

Below is a list of behaviors by parents and/or caregivers that should be reported to Intake. Keep in mind this is not an exhaustive list. We encourage anyone with concerns to make a report:

- Physically harming a child (beyond spanking in a reasonable manner)
- Sexually abusing a child
- Exposing a child to substance use, domestic violence, or other unsafe conditions
- Failing to provide adequate food, shelter, clothing, or medical care
- Exposing a child to unsafe or unsanitary living conditions
- Threatening to harm a child
- Chronically calling a child names or putting them down

When an employee is suspected or accused of abuse/neglect of a child at our center, the plan of action is as follows:

1. Documentation of the accusation is made.
2. The employee is notified of the accusation and asked to give a written account of the situation in question.
3. Our DHHS licensing worker is notified of the situation.
4. The parent/guardian of the child/children involved will be notified.



5. The child care will follow the procedure outlined by DHHS for this type of situation.
6. The employee may be placed on either paid or unpaid leave pending the outcome of the Investigation.
7. If the allegations are found to be valid, disciplinary action will be taken. These actions may include but are not limited to suspension or termination depending on the severity of the offense.
8. All appropriate measures will be taken to prevent potential allegations by having all staff pass the Maine Roads to Quality Health and Safety Class, by learning, understanding, and practicing positive child guidance methods as outlined in our Handbook, and by having the constant support of peers and management alike.

### **Nondiscrimination and ADA Law**

The University of Maine is committed to working with all students/campers and participants to meet their needs in a community that values diversity and promotes dignity of all. In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and pursuing its own goals of diversity, the University of Maine System does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship status, familial status, ancestry, age, disability physical or mental, genetic information, or veterans or military status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities.

The University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Director of Equal Opportunity, 5713 Chadbourne Hall, Room 412, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5713, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

Recognizing all individual needs are varied, our sincere desire is to have a comfortable and welcoming space for all our participants. For more information or a reasonable accommodation, please contact us at [extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu](mailto:extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu).

## **Health and Safety**

### **Immunizations**

We require that all children are vaccinated following the Maine DOE vaccination schedule. Up-to-date records of these immunizations must be entered into our registration portal or emailed to [extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu](mailto:extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu)

### **Exemptions**

Exemptions are on a case-by-case basis. Please fill out this form to request an exemption: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/sites/maine.gov.dhhs/files/inline-files/Maine-AAP-Childcare-Med-Exempt-Form-5.30.23.pdf>

## **Illness**

If your child is ill, please do not send them to our programs. Illness may look like a fever greater than 100.4 and/or vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours. If your child is experiencing cold or flu-like symptoms not relieved by rest or over-the-counter medication, please consider having your child tested for the flu, COVID, strep, or other illnesses prior to returning to Blueberry Cove. If your child becomes ill while at camp, they will be separated from the group with a staff attending to their comfort and you will be notified to arrange for a pick up. We seek the counsel of parents/guardians whenever a student is ill, abnormally homesick, or whenever something extraordinary occurs; please do not be alarmed if you receive a call from us. Depending on the illness, other parents may need to be notified. Certain illnesses have to be reported to the Center for Disease Control and a physician's note may be needed to verify when the child is cleared to return to school.

### **Common illnesses require the following precautions:**

- Fever- Child may return after being fever free without meds for 24 hours
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea - Child may return after free of symptoms without meds for 24 hours.
- Chicken pox - Child may return to care after all the chicken pox have scabbed over.
- Conjunctivitis - Can return after treatment has begun and there is no evidence of discharge.
- Lice - A child may return after treatment has been administered and are free from all signs of nits and lice. The child will be inspected for lice by staff before they can return.
- Strep Throat - A child may return after being on antibiotics for at least 24 hours
- Impetigo - A child may return after being on antibiotics for at least 24 hours
- Rashes – Please check with your pediatrician before sending them to school
- RSV – Child may return after being fever free without meds for 24 hours

## **Injury**

In case of injury, staff will take necessary measures to ensure proper care, which may include: treatment by staff for minor injuries, phoning you as the parent for your instructions, or calling local emergency care providers.

You will be notified as soon as possible regarding any communicable diseases affecting children in the program. We report outbreaks of disease to local health authorities. Children absent due to contagious diseases can return when accompanied by a signed physician's statement indicating they are no longer contagious.

You must provide us with complete emergency contact information (other than yourself). In the case of any injury that requires medical attention, we make every attempt to contact you before treatment.

### **Allergies**

Staff are trained to recognize symptoms of allergic reactions and respond appropriately. We have both epinephrine autoinjectors and diphenhydramine on site in case of emergencies.

Part of our required forms includes providing information about any allergies your child may have. If your child has a severe, life-threatening allergy, please be sure to send them with any needed medication.

### **Medication Administration**

Parents/guardians are required to fill out a medication form and to supply all medications in their original containers. These must be labeled with the child's name and physician. Medications that are expired will not be dispensed. All participant medicines are checked in by parents/guardians and are kept in our health center at all times (exceptions can be made for inhalers and Epi-pens). Staff are trained to administer medication and to properly document administration.

### **Ticks & Tick-Borne Infections**

Children in our program spend lots of time outdoors - which has ample benefits for physical and emotional health. However, increased time outside does increase the likelihood of being exposed to ticks—and tick-borne infections like Lyme disease.

Children between the ages of 5 and 14 have a heightened risk of contracting Lyme disease in the first place. With this awareness in mind, we have policies in place to prevent tick-borne infections and help educate our participants and families about what we can do to be preventive. Below you will find what we do as well as what you can do. Ticks are not going away - so the best thing we can do is be educated and prepared, not scared!

### **How we prevent tick-borne infections:**

- Help participants apply family-approved or supplied insect repellent before going outside.
- Teach participants to perform self-checks after being outside - this includes checking clothes, hairline, behind the ears, etc. We will remind families to perform full checks once participants go home.
- Train staff on processes for removing ticks using a tick spoon or tweezers.
- We will keep any ticks in plastic bags labeled with the participant's name and offer to families to send the ticks for testing.
- Provide mirrors in bathrooms to assist with self-checks.

- Educating participants and families on ticks and prevention!

### **How you can help prevent tick-borne infections:**

- Spray your child's clothes and shoes with permethrin, an insecticide that can repel and kill ticks. Clothing and gear that has been properly treated with permethrin can last through multiple washings and offers your child extra protection. You can purchase permethrin sprays as well as pre-treated clothing and gear from companies like our friends at Insect Shield.
- Leave an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellent—such as DEET or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE) at camp, labeled with your child's name.
- Pack light-colored clothing. Long pants and long sleeves are ideal but not always practical. Lighter colors make ticks easier to spot, especially if you have taken the precaution of spraying them with permethrin.
- Encourage your child to shower or bathe as soon as possible after spending time in nature. The hot water may help wash away unattached ticks. Children may also find that a shower provides the perfect opportunity to thoroughly check for ticks.
- Teach your child how to perform a tick check after being outside. Remind them that ticks like to hide in places that are difficult to reach, including in their hair, ears, underarms, belly buttons, waist, between the legs, and behind the knees.

### **Sunscreen and Insect Repellent**

We have sunscreen and insect repellent available at camp - you will be asked to sign a form about whether or not you allow your child to use camp sunscreen and insect repellent. We encourage families to leave sunscreen and insect repellent at camp, labeled with the child's name. We will help remind participants to apply protection from the elements, as appropriate.

### **Communication To and From Home**

For questions about billing or registration, please call or email our main office at 207.789.5868 or email [extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu](mailto:extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu). For questions directed to programming staff or to relay attendance information, please call or text 207.491.6537.

We send out a weekly newsletter that describes our schedule for the upcoming week. We also post photos and weekly recaps on our Facebook page!

## **Program Policies - After School Program**

### **Program Description**

Our After School programs help develop a connection to the outdoors, create new friendships and build new skills that last a lifetime! Each day there will be plenty of time to simply play, explore and discover the wonders of nature!

Activities will vary and may include playing large inclusive group games, building shelters, creative arts, STEM lessons, making ice cream, and building fairy houses. We may also visit Blueberry Cove's animals and harvest fruits and vegetables from the garden or spend the afternoon at the beach searching for treasures, crabbing, and lots more!

### **Schedule**

The After School Program follows the St. George School Calendar. If the St. George School is closed for any reason (teacher workshop, snow day, etc.), there will not be an After School Program that day. There will not be an After School program if students are released early due to inclement weather (snow days). If the school cancels its after-school activities, these after-school programs will also be canceled.

The After School Program will happen at Blueberry Cove from:

- End of school to 5:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday on regular full school days.
- On scheduled early release days programs run from 12:00 – 3:30 p.m. There will not be any extended aftercare.

Please let us know in advance if you plan to pick up your student before 4:30 p.m. There is no After School on Fridays.

If you have any questions about the After School Program or need to notify us of other changes to your student's schedule, please call 207-491-6537 or the main office at 207-789-5868.

### **Typical Afternoon**

- 2:45 pm – Arrive at Blueberry Cove
- 2:45-3:15 pm – Recess/Free play
- 3:15-3:30 pm – Snack
- 3:30-4:30 pm – Activity / Enrichment (including off-site field trips)
- 4:30-5:30 pm – Pickup Window and wind down time until student is picked up (board games, reading, drawing, homework)

### **Fees**

Annual tuition can be paid in full at enrollment or in 9 monthly installments. The first installment is due at registration.

- 4-Day option: Monday-Thursday | \$4,050/school year (\$450/month)
- 2-Day option: Any two days in the week | \$2,250/school year (\$250/month)
  - Please let us know when your child will be attending at least 2 days in advance.

## Program Policies - Wild Learners, Nature-Based, Early Childhood Education

### Program Description

Wild Learners is a nature-based, early childhood education program based at Blueberry Cove 4-H Camp and Learning Center. We focus on building confidence in the outdoors, play, and social development. The program spends as much time outdoors as possible - come prepared for fun, adventure, and learning!

### Curriculum

We follow Maine's Early Learning and Developmental Standards, which represent the latest research and practice in the field of early childhood education. MELDS guide us in supporting our students in the development of skills and knowledge for their preschool years.

We also utilize curriculum from several frameworks focused on place/nature-based programming and an embodied, experiential pedagogy including *Lens on Outdoor Learning*, *Coyote Mentoring*, *Project WILD*, *WILD Math*, and the *6 Forest School Principles*:

These six principles are:

1. Forest School is a long-term process of regular sessions, rather than one-off or infrequent visits; the cycle of planning, observation, adaptation and review links each session.
2. Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a lifelong relationship between the learner and the natural world.
3. Forest School uses a range of learner-centered processes to create a community for being, development and learning.
4. Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
5. Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.
6. Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners, who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.

### Schedule

We follow the St. George School Calendar. If the St. George School is closed for any reason (teacher workshop, snow day, etc.), there will not be Wild Learners that day. If a Wild Learners student also participates in the After School program, there will not be an After School program if students are released early due to inclement weather (snow days). If the school cancels its after-school activities, these after-school programs will also be canceled.

Wild Learners will happen at Blueberry Cove from:

- 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday – Friday on regular full school days.
- On scheduled early dismissal days, Early Childhood Education programs runs from 8:30 – 12:30 p.m. There is no aftercare option on these days, unless you have already signed up for the after school program, in which case after school will run to 3:30 pm.

If you have any questions about Wild Learners or need to notify us of other changes to your student's schedule including absences or early pick-up, please call 207-491-6537 or the main office at 207-789-5868. You can also email us at [extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu](mailto:extension.tanglewood4h@maine.edu).

### Typical Day

- 8:30-8:45 - Drop-Off at Blueberry Cove, Field Games
- 8:45-9:00 am - Morning Circle
- 9:00-10:00 am – Child-Led Group Exploration
- 10:00-10:30 am – Snack (**Family provides**)
- 10:30-11:15 am - Individual Free-Time
- 11:15-12:00 pm - Lunch (**Family provides**)
- 12:00-1:00 Rest Time
  - Pre-Nap/Proprioceptive Activity
  - Storytime
  - Siesta
- 1:00-2:00 - Facilitator-led activity
- 2:00-2:30 - Snack (**Blueberry Cove provides**)
- 2:30-2:45 - Closing Circle
- 2:45-3:00 pm – \*Pickup Window

\*Families with students 4 years or older wishing to participate in after school programming will be led to the after school group at this time.

### Rest Time

Per child care licensing requirements, we offer a rest hour every day for the Early Childhood Education Program. Students do not have to sleep but are encouraged to lie down, read, and have

quiet time. Rest hour will either be held inside on cots or outside in hammocks. Feel free to send your child with a blanket and/or pillow which can remain at camp in their cubby.

## **Fees**

There is a one-time \$100 registration fee, which will only be refundable in the event that our child care licensing application does not go through.

Annual tuition can be paid in full at enrollment or in 9 monthly installments. Please contact us to make alternative arrangements. The first installment is due two weeks before the program begins. The program runs from 8:30 am - 3 pm for 35 weeks. 4 - 5-year-olds have the option to continue to 5:30 pm Monday through Thursday with our After School Program (see program details above). Fees are based on 34 weeks of programming (September 9, 2024 - June 6, 2025, excluding four weeks for vacation).

- 3 Days: Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday | \$6,480/school year (\$720/month)
- 5 Days: Monday-Friday | \$10,215/school year (\$1,135/month)

## **General Policies**

### **Outdoor Play and Seasonal Changes**

We strive to spend as much time outdoors as possible, in the winter months we have to adjust a bit based on the cold. We use the Child Care Weather Watch chart to ensure conditions are safe to spend time outside. Sometimes we will snack/lunch/rest time inside and have some indoor time.

We do not send children outdoors in:

- Wooded areas when wind speeds are over 20 mph
- Thunder or lightning
- Danger zone on the Child Care Weather Watch chart



# Child Care Weather Watch

Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)										
		Wind Speed in mph								
		Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40
Air Temperature	40	40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27
	30	30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13
	20	20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1
	10	10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15
	0	0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29
	-10	-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43

Comfortable for out door play
  Caution
  Danger

Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit %)														
		Relative Humidity (Percent)												
		40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
Air Temperature (F)	80	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	86	87
	84	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100	103
	90	91	93	95	97	100	103	105	109	113	117	122	127	132
	94	97	100	103	106	110	114	119	124	129	135			
	100	109	114	118	124	129	130							
	104	119	124	131	137									

## Risky Play

Our educators are trained in monitoring risky play, teaching children to be aware of their body and what is happening around them, and guiding them through risky situations such as climbing on logs, boulders, trees, and navigating rough terrain.

Resources for learning about the benefits of risky play:

- <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/spring2023/risk-taking-outdoor-play>
- <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1180021.pdf>
- <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7102/12/10/677>

## Gender Inclusive Practices

Tanglewood and Blueberry Cove strive to be places where all children and staff feel safe and welcome to be their genuine selves. It is important to us that we include all people, including the LGBTQ+ community.

What this looks like for our school year programs: using participants' preferred pronouns and names and allowing age-appropriate discussions on gender identity.

## **Transportation**

Transportation is provided for after school only from St. George School to Blueberry Cove. Staff are trained to drive 10-passenger vans and have been background checked by the University of Maine. Any students in Pre-K are required to sit in a booster seat.

## **Toilet Training**

We require that all children are toilet trained to attend our programs. We will assist your child with gentle reminders and create positive routines. When students are in the forest and far from indoor toilets, they will be guided to outdoor bathrooms and/or taught Leave No Trace bathroom principles.

Accidents happen: If your child does have an accident, we will utilize your child's extra clothes and help them change.

## **Field Trips**

The After School program takes occasional field trips. We will notify families the week prior about any upcoming trips. On field trip days, we will not return to camp until 4:30 pm. Please make pick-up arrangements accordingly.

## **Pets**

Any pet visitors are required to have vaccination records on file.

## **Swimming**

As a program that has access to the ocean, we do have the opportunity to swim when the weather is fine! Swimming only happens in the presence of a trained lifeguard and an additional staff observer.

All participants who want to swim past knee level must be able to pass a swim test. We follow a buddy system while swimming and require participants to comply with all lifeguard instructions. Any participants who cannot pass the swim test are required to wear a PFD while in the water.

## **Photos**

As part of our required forms, families have the option to sign or refuse a photo release. We aim to post photos of our programs at least once a week on Facebook.

## **Food**

For Wild Learners, please pack a nutritious lunch for your child, with plenty of food to fuel them through the day. It is a good idea to send a couple extra snacks - we are active throughout the day! **Please do not bring nut products to camp.**

We provide an afternoon snack for Wild Learners and After School students. Snack is often tied into daily or weekly themes or is something healthy & yummy. We try to offer alternative options for students who don't like the snack option.

### **Our Staff**

Our staff are chosen for their passion for working with youth, experience in leading outdoor experiences, and their backgrounds in education. All staff are certified in Infant, Child, and Adult CPR/First Aid and often have additional certifications such as Lifeguarding or Wilderness First Aid.

Our staff attend an in-house, week-long training every year and are provided with ongoing professional development opportunities. All staff are required to attend yearly training as part of the University of Maine as well as through DHHS. All school-year staff are registered in Maine Roads to Quality.

## **Behavior Management and Positive Guidance**

We believe in the importance of establishing mutual trust and respect between staff, participants, and families. We also believe in the importance of providing clear expectations to participants, establishing boundaries, and having growth mindsets.

As much as possible, we aim to provide positive reinforcement for participants through affirmations, check-ins, and regular encouragement. We find this helps participants feel supported and cared for, which helps a lot when it comes to promoting positive behavior.

We NEVER use corporal punishment, shame, or belittle participants when distracting or negative behavior occurs. Instead, we guide participants toward resolutions through redirection, coaching, and gentle reminders. Below you will find more details on our expectations and processes for resolving situations.

### **Developmental Support**

Redirection and positive language are at the forefront of our developmental support strategy. If staff members witness unsafe/unkind behavior, they will redirect that child to make a different choice. This involves teachers getting down on their level and speaking directly to the child in a gentle way offering suggestions for an alternate choice.

If the situation involves another child, staff will help guide a conversation directly between the two children using a method called W.O.W. This starts with asking the children to both have a turn in sharing "What happened?", then Own their part in it (I.E. I hit my friend with a stick), and end the conversation with "What do we do next time?" so they have a plan for what to do the

next time a situation like that arises. We also ask that kids check on each other if one was hurt in the incident, but do not require them to say sorry. If children are forced to say sorry when they don't feel it, they may learn that saying sorry will resolve all conflicts instead of developing critical conflict management skills. The goal is to set kids up with the skills they need so they can resolve conflicts on their own in time.

If a child is struggling with regaining self-control and self-regulation, staff will work with that child to problem-solve and find out what the child needs at that moment which could include taking a break. Each child is different, some may need to get some space from friends and talk about the situation, others may need a quiet space to look at books, or a space of their own to get some energy out climbing, running, or other physical excursion. Staff and children will always work together to do our best to meet that child's needs before continuing with regular programming.

### **Participant Code of Responsibility**

This Code of Responsibility is intended to create an atmosphere where all participants have the opportunity to reach their greatest potential. The core concepts are safety and respect.

We will discuss these concepts with participants at the start of the program but encourage you to discuss them beforehand as well.

We will not tolerate unsafe or disrespectful behavior from any participants. If a participant is sent home due to unsafe or disrespectful behavior, you will not be entitled to a refund and may be asked not to return.

### **Examples of appropriate, safe, and respectful behaviors include:**

- Including all program participants in activities.
- Resolving conflicts peacefully with negotiation and/or staff support

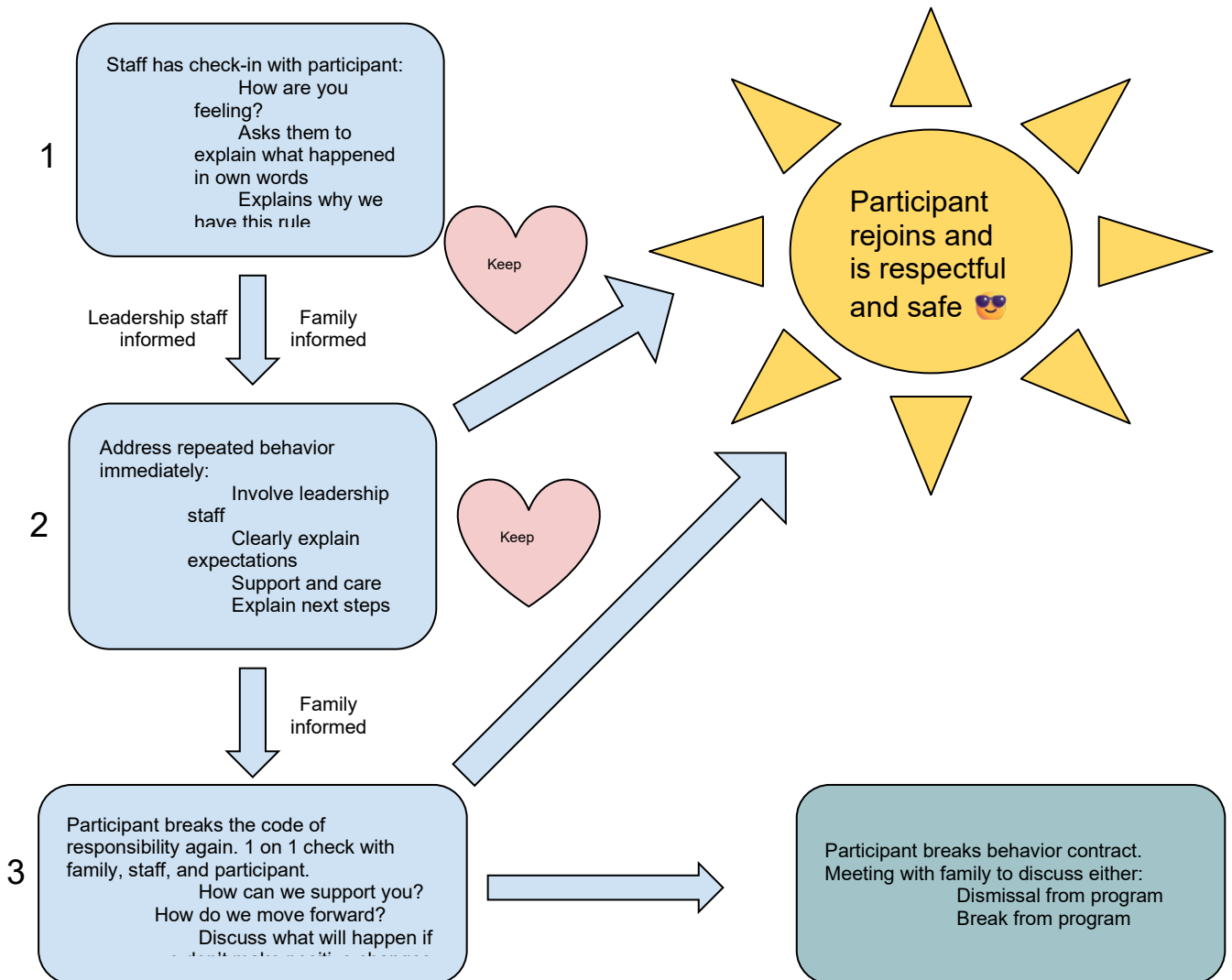
### **Examples of unacceptable, unsafe, and disrespectful behaviors include:**

- **Acts of Violence** - any act that threatens the safety of another participant or one's self, including but not limited to hitting, pushing, or using anything as a weapon, will not be tolerated.
- **Invasion of personal space/privacy** - each participant is entitled not to have their personal space or belongings violated. Our staff reserves the right to search participant's belongings in their presence if they deem it necessary to protect the health, well-being, or safety of the participant or others.

- **Offensive or threatening language** - swearing, name-calling, put-downs, bullying, and the use of offensive or threatening words or language will not be tolerated. This includes threats to the safety of one's self, including suicide threats.
- **Destruction of property** - whether it belongs to Blueberry Cove, the school or another participant, destroying property is unacceptable.
- **Public displays of intimacy** - kissing, holding hands, sexual touching and excessive physical contact is offensive to some, intimidating to many and exclusive to all. Such actions do not promote open communication and friendship building and are not considered respectful.
- **Ignoring or disregarding staff requests** - our staff must be listened to and respected at all times. If a participant refuses to listen to or follow directions, they are not showing respect.
- **Leaving the group** - running away or leaving the group without permission is a safety risk. Participants will be supervised at all times and leaving that supervision is not considered safe.

Participants who break the code are responsibility will either go through the process in our behavior management flowchart or be dismissed from the program. Consequences vary based on the severity of the situation. For more details on offenses that could lead to immediate termination, see Termination Policy.

## Behavior Management Flow Chart



*Above is our process when the code of responsibility is broken. We aim to involve participants and families in behavior management discussions as much as possible. Together we can learn and grow!*

### Accessibility and Resources Available

The University of Maine complies with all standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Children with special needs will not be excluded from participation in any activities or programs as long as it does not fundamentally alter the program for the other children.

When this becomes a concern, then every effort will be made to accommodate the child with special needs by utilizing additional support staff available through [Child Development Services \(https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/cds\)](https://www.maine.gov/doe/learning/cds).

The Child Development Services system is also available for consultations and evaluations whenever there are questions or concerns about development. CDS operates under the supervision of the Maine Department of Education.

Screenings and evaluations are provided to identify children who are eligible for services. Regional CDS sites arrange for local services that include early intervention and special education and related services for eligible children from birth to age five and their families.

Referrals can be submitted by:

- Online: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/cds/referrals>
- By phone 877-770-8883
- By fax to 207-624-6661. You must include the Child Find Intake Form, PDF available online.

### **Termination Policy**

We make every effort to support children and families to be successful in our programs. If we determine the need to dismiss a participant from the program, we will provide one week's notice, unless there is a situation in which the participant remaining would be dangerous to themselves or the group's safety.

While we try our best to support every child and provide reasonable accommodations, we cannot provide one-on-one support (unless provided through CDS referral) and not every child is successful in our programs.

University of Maine 4-H Centers reserve the right to dismiss participants for the following reasons:

- Lack of parental cooperation in regards to behavior and safety concerns
- Failure of child to adjust to the program after a reasonable amount of time
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- Physical abuse or verbal threats or harassment by a parent/guardian toward staff
- Failure to comply with the policies set forth in the Family Guide
- If a child's behavior threatens the well-being of anyone, including fellow participants, staff or volunteers
- Possession or use of weapons on the premises
- If a situation arises where parental expectations and the child's needs cannot reasonably be met by our staff after a period of negotiation.
- Any other reason as deemed necessary by the University of Maine 4-H Centers

## Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policies

Drop-off and pick-up are great times for us to set the tone for the day. These are also good times for you or us to share concerns or ask questions. Please let us know if there is anything we should know to best support your child!

Please drive slowly when dropping off or picking up your child. You may either park in the lot and walk up the path or pull up to the circular driveway.

### Drop Off

- For Wild Learners, please walk your child in and check in with a staff member before departing.
- It is natural to feel nervous or sad at drop off - for both students and families! We find that drawing out that time is not helpful for either party. A hug, reassurance, and some encouraging parting words are helpful.
- Please be sure your child has all their gear, lunch, and any other needed items before departing.

### Pick Up

- You must sign out your students when you pick them up and notify a staff member that you are leaving. Do not send in another child to pick up your student.
- Students will only be released to people specified as alternate pick-ups in the registration system. Any changes must be in writing or made in the registration system.
- Anyone other than the parent or guardian will need to provide photo identification to sign out a student.
- Students must be picked up promptly. If you are late, you will be charged a \$5 late fee for each 5-minute interval. After 10 minutes, staff will call people from emergency contact or authorized pick-up lists to come and pick up your student.
- If a student is not picked up within 30 minutes of the program's end time and attempts to contact parents, guardians, or emergency contacts have been unsuccessful, the police will be notified.

### Releasing Students to Visibly Impaired People

- The safety of the students in our program is our number one concern. We feel this extends through the release of the student to their parent/guardian at the end of each day.
- If a parent/guardian or other approved pick-up person arrives to pick up a student and exhibits behavior such as slurred or incoherent speech, difficulty walking or other unusual behaviors that may indicate the use of drugs and/or alcohol, staff will take the following actions:
  - The staff member will inform the person of their concerns and discuss those concerns.



- The staff member will inquire about the person's means of transportation for the student.
- The staff member will notify their supervisor of the situation.
- The staff member will call emergency contacts to provide an alternative pick-up for the student.
- If the person insists on driving in an impaired condition, the staff will inform them that they will call the police and give the name of the driver and passengers, vehicle information, home address, and their concern that the student is in danger.
- A call will also be made to the Department of Health and Human Services.
- The Director will telephone the parent/guardian the next day to arrange a meeting which will include the staff member, to discuss the incident and review the policy.
- A second incident will result in the ending of the after-school services for that family

### **Child Custody**

Child care centers do not have a legal right to refuse pick-up unless there is a court order. If that is the case, please contact us.

## **Clothing, Footwear, and Other Gear**

This is an outdoor-based program. Your child must be dressed in proper clothing to ensure that they are protected from the elements. We spend at least half our time outside, rain or shine, except in the case of extreme cold, extreme heat, or lightning. If your child is comfortable, they will be happy and able to participate in the fun! We believe there is no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing.

Please dress your child in appropriate clothing for being outdoors in the weather. **Flip-flops, Crocs, and ballet flats are not appropriate footwear.** Children must wear socks with their shoes. Your child will get muddy and dirty. Your child will need to bring rain gear when it is rainy or has been raining, and a hat and mittens when the months grow cold. We are always available to help with gear questions.

### **The following list of clothing is required (please let us know if you need a lender):**

- Rain pants
- Rain jacket with a hood (or with a rain hat)
- Long underwear bottoms and tops (wool, wool/silk or synthetic, never cotton)
- Wool sweater or fleece top
- Snow pants
- Winter jacket
- Socks (wool or wool/silk blend)

- Rain boots and Bogs, Dri-Shod or Muck style boots
- Hat (wool or fleece) plus buff, or a balaclava, please no scarves
- Mittens (waterproof shell plus wool mittens work well) 2 pair
- Slippers or socks for indoor time

### **Other required items**

- Water Bottle
- Small backpack
- Bag of spare clothes to leave at camp (underwear, socks, pants, shirt)

**Please do not bring toys from home.** Students may bring a stuffed animal for rest hour. We cannot guarantee the safety of any personal items at camp. Personal toys can often be a distraction, and we have plenty of engaging activities and spaces to explore!

### **What to Wear Early Fall/Late Spring**

Check the weather forecast for the day and dress accordingly. We prefer long pants to protect from scrapes and bug bites. Waterproof pants are useful over a lighter pair. We like layers on top that can be shed or added as needed. Wool or silk blend socks are preferred over cotton. These paired with rain boots work well. On the hottest days, water shoes without socks are fine. A waterproof rain jacket should be sent in the backpack, it makes a good windbreaker. A sun hat is a good idea.

### **What to Wear Winter/Early Spring**

- Base layer: Silk/wool, polyester, or wool long underwear, wool socks.
- Bulk layer: Wool or fleece pants and shirt.
- Waterproof Layer: Either waterproof pants/jacket, or winter jacket/snow pants.
- Waterproof mittens
- Bogs, Dri-Shod, or Muck boots
- Hat/buff combo or balaclava

**LAYERING is the key**, as your child will be very active outdoors and, at times, sitting. Whatever a child is not wearing, will be stored in their cubby. Long underwear (i.e.; polypropylene or Capilene, wool, or silk/wool blends) is essential as it wicks moisture off of the body. Merino wool underlayers are soft, not scratchy and most kids accept them. Hats are required in cold weather. We suggest getting a pair of boots that is one size larger than your child's foot. This will create "dead-air space" to assist in insulating the foot. The best insulation for the feet is one or two pairs of wool socks with water-proof boots that have wiggle room.

To ensure a positive experience for everyone involved, all children are required to wear the proper clothing. If you need help with some of the above items, please ask. We have extras or can help you locate others.

### **Finding Good Gear**

Finding good gear takes some care, but it is critical to your child's enjoyment of nature. LL Bean carries a good set of rain gear, as does Polarn O. Pyret and Grundens. Make sure it really is waterproof by looking at the seams (they should be sealed). These brands also have good winter coats. Columbia carries an excellent winter jacket. Gordini mittens are unstoppable. Polarn O. Pyret sells a rain mitten that is perfect for our climate when paired with a woolen mitten.

We recommend utilizing thrift shops as well as Craigslist and Poshmark. Joining an email listserv for homeschoolers can yield good gear (as well as educational books and toys. We encourage families to sell or swap outgrown gear with each other or donate it to us so we can outfit a new family who might be having trouble acquiring gear. If you are having trouble finding or affording the gear your child needs, we have lending items. Please don't hesitate to ask!

I have read and understand the program and policies listed in the Blueberry Cove School Programs Family Handbook and agree to them in their entirety.

**Name of Student** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Parent/Guardian** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sign** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_