



## **Pathways to Nature Preschool**

### **Our Classrooms**

Pathways to Nature Preschool currently offers four classrooms, grouped by age. In addition to our thematic units above, read our other documents to find out what developmental skills you can expect each classroom to be scaffolding.

#### **Busy Bees (ages 3-4yrs)**

The Busy Bees are our youngest learners. During this year, there is an instrumental focus on teaching foundational social and emotional skills. These skills include (but are certainly not limited to) separating from a caregiver, turn taking, raising a hand to speak, managing big feelings, putting on a jacket, dressing themselves, following multi-step directions, and advocating for one's own needs. Our youngest learners are exploring the sounds in language through nursery songs, fingerplays, and rhymes. They are learning how to ask questions and use their five senses to explore the world around them. They are building an emergent understanding of counting and cardinality, and are working towards developing one to one correspondence. They are developing an awareness of print and a love of books through a print rich environment and interactive read alouds. They delight in filling a bird feeder, wielding a stick, and splashing in puddles. They are insatiable in their curiosity and will not hesitate to ask the one question that is always on their minds: "why?".

#### **Curious Crickets (ages older 3's and 4yrs)**

The Curious Crickets continue to reinforce and build upon those critical social and emotional skills. Their perspective taking skills continue to grow and increasingly complex prosocial behavior is encouraged (sharing, helping, cooperating, empathizing). Four-year olds are becoming increasingly logical in their thinking, and their play reflects this. They may assign multiple roles and create fairly complex rules that govern their play scenarios. They are working on writing their name, holding a pair of scissors correctly, and identifying/generating their own rhymes. They may speak in more complex sentences and will start to recognize common words in environmental print (i.e. the word "stop" on a stop sign). They may be working towards counting more than ten objects, recalling the main characters and events in their favorite stories, and taking care of their personal needs with little to no help from teachers. They are becoming increasingly curious about the natural world, and are starting to notice patterns of changes in the environment. They can voice their own opinions with confidence, and work together to answer their questions about the natural world.

### **Daring Dragonflies (ages 4-5yrs)**

The Dragonflies are our oldest group, and comprise our Forest Kindergarten class. At this age, the Dragonflies are typically able to play cooperatively, take turns, and can offer help when they see a friend in distress. They are beginning to understand that their actions have consequences, and are starting to be able to recognize and label unfairness in the world around them. Five-year olds have a greater command of language, can recognize rhyming words, use descriptive vocabulary, and voice their opinions soundly. They are working on developing/strengthening their phonemic awareness skills (awareness of the smallest units of sounds). They may start to recognize letters and words more frequently in the environmental print around them. They can write their name, and will experiment with letter strings and inventive spelling. They participate in weekly writing workshops, guided literacy groups, and math workshops in addition to outdoor exploration. They are excited to collect and organize data, and can draw basic conclusions based on their findings. As the progress through the school year, they are starting to understand how their own actions, and the actions of all people, can affect the environment around them.