

PARENT PACKAGE 2027

Program Information

Everything you need to know for a season in Cedarvale Ravine

ROOTS 2 RISE OUTDOORS · TORONTO

WELCOME

Welcome to Roots 2 Rise Outdoors

Children don't need us to fill every moment. In a childhood shaped by screens and constant pressure, we offer grounded, supportive outdoor programs where children can lead their own learning, reconnect with the natural world and each other, and take the time to slow down.

OUR MISSION

Roots 2 Rise Outdoors is dedicated to fostering confident, caring, and empathetic future leaders who are connected to their environment and communities.

OUR VALUES

COMPASSION · CURIOSITY · AWARENESS · GRATITUDE

Our programs: Small, child-led nature programs in Cedarvale Ravine, Toronto, for children ages 4 to 10, plus Seeds for ages 2 to 4 with a caregiver. We're 100% outdoors, in almost all weather.

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HOW WE WORK

Our approach: the five elements

With nature as our third teacher, we are guided by the weather, the seasons, and what the children notice along the way.

Earth CONNECTION AND STABILITY

Everything starts with connection. When children feel safe and steady, they're free to explore.

Water WAIT, WATCH, WONDER

We wait, watch and wonder, valuing play and the whole child.

Fire CONNECTION TO SELF

We tend to their sparks to help expand their ideas.

Air CONNECTION WITH OTHERS

Room to connect with each other: communicating, thinking critically and solving problems together, without rushing.

Ether CONNECTION THAT GROWS

A natural connection, with the land, with each other and with themselves, that grows with time and consistency.

We also share this approach with educators through **Grounded, our facilitator training**.

When we step back, they step in.

Why mixed ages

Older kids lead. They model, help and show the way, and grow into leaders without being asked to.

Younger kids stretch. They watch, join in and try things they might not try on their own.

Everyone connects. Care, patience and kindness grow naturally, the way they do in a family or community.



1 Payment and cancellation

1.1 Payment

- A $50 non-refundable deposit (administration fee) is due at registration. It secures your child's space and reserves early bird rates.
- An invoice for the remainder is sent 1 month before the program starts.
- Pay by e-transfer to info@roots2riseoutdoors.com, or by credit card (4% service charge).
- Thank you for understanding the time and care that goes into planning each program.

1.2 Participant cancellation

- A month or more before the start date: full refund, minus the $50 non-refundable deposit.
- Between 15 days and a month before the start date: 50% refund of the full session cost.
- Within 15 days of the start date: no refunds. There are also no refunds once the program begins, or if a participant misses a day. If we have space, your child is always welcome to drop into another program to make up a missed day.

1.3 Program cancellation

- Roots 2 Rise Outdoors reserves the right to cancel a program or change its duration, price, or location. A full refund is provided in this case, and also if a program is cancelled for low enrollment.
- If a day is cancelled due to weather, no refund is issued. We'll make every effort to offer a make-up day, although this isn't always possible.

1.4 Government or public health cancellations

If we need to cancel because of a government mandate or public health recommendation, we'll refund the remaining days we can't run, minus the $50 non-refundable fee. Individual cancellation requests aren't refunded.

Compassionate circumstances

We know life happens. For medical or other compassionate reasons, please email info@roots2riseoutdoors.com.

Financial assistance

We don't want finances to be a barrier. Please contact us and we'll be happy to discuss a payment plan that works for you.

2 Privacy

When you register, you share personal information with Roots 2 Rise Outdoors. We use it to communicate with parents and guardians and to support your child's health and safety during programs. It's only used for the purposes you've consented to, and we don't share it with third parties without your permission, except where required by law. Essential information (allergies, medical conditions, emergency contacts) is shared with the staff to ensure we can provide necessary supports.

3 Communication

- We communicate mainly by email.
- If a program is cancelled for any reason, we'll email the evening before or at least 2 hours before the start.
- If your child will be away or late, please email info@roots2riseoutdoors.com as soon as you can.
- Before the program begins, you'll receive the Lead Educator's phone number for urgent, unexpected, or emergency needs.

4 Weather

"There is no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing."

We value being outdoors in all weather. Exploring the changing seasons, cycles, and the natural world is part of how children learn here. Programs run in almost all conditions: rain, snow, and sunshine!

Safety comes first. Weather decisions are made closer to the time, and we try to let families know by email at least 2 hours before the program if we need to cancel.



Weather that may require cancellation:

- Lightning and thunderstorms
- Hail or strong windstorms
- Temperatures below -20°C, with or without windchill

We'll always have some kind of shelter or covered space set up, so groups have a dry place for snacks. Please make sure your child is ready to get muddy!

5 What to bring

- A small backpack your child can carry
- A full reusable water bottle
- Nut-free snacks in waste-free containers, a few of them. We encourage kids to eat when they're hungry, and in colder weather snacks and water help keep them warm.
- A nut-free lunch for full-day programs
- Extra clothes, in case they get wet or muddy: socks and pants (in winter, extra wool socks and a spare pair of mitts)



We are a nut-free/nut-aware program, however we are in a public space and cannot guarantee that the area is completely nut free.

Please leave at home

electronics, toys, umbrellas (hands free to explore!), and anything special they wouldn't want to lose.

6 What to wear, season by season

Check the weather before you head out, and dress them in clothes you don't mind getting muddy. Layers work best, so they can add or take off a layer as they warm up or cool down. Wool is best for base layers, socks and hats. Avoid cotton in the colder months.

Fall

- Warm wool hat
- Non-cotton long sleeve shirt
- Fleece or warm mid-layer
- Waterproof rain jacket (puffy jackets are not waterproof)
- Non-cotton warm pants
- Waterproof rain pants
- Wool socks
- Rain boots or waterproof boots
- Gloves (recommended)

Winter

- Warm wool hat
- Neck warmer or balaclava (no scarves)
- Non-cotton base layer (top and bottom)
- Fleece or warm mid-layer
- Waterproof winter jacket
- Waterproof snow pants
- Wool socks
- Waterproof winter boots
- Waterproof gloves or mitts (2 pairs: one to wear, one to bring)

Spring

- Sun hat or thin wool hat
- Bug spray
- Non-cotton long sleeve shirt
- Fleece or sweater (for colder days)
- Waterproof rain jacket
- Non-cotton pants
- Waterproof rain pants
- Wool socks
- Rain boots or waterproof boots

Summer

- Sun hat
- Sunscreen and bug spray
- T-shirt or lightweight long sleeve (light colours recommended)
- Pants or shorts (long pants help prevent tick and bug bites)
- Running shoes or hiking shoes
- Lightweight rain jacket

In every season: closed-toe shoes or boots, no sandals or Crocs. If they resist a layer, pack it in their bag so it's there when they need it.

Seeds (ages 2 to 4 with a caregiver): Caregivers are outside with us the whole time, so please dress yourself for the weather too. It's just as important that you're comfortable and warm.

7 Drop off and pick up

- We meet in Cedarvale Ravine. We'll send you the exact meeting spot before your program starts, and it stays the same for the whole season. We'll let you know ahead of time if it changes.
- In an emergency, pick-up is at the same spot as drop-off, unless we tell you otherwise.
- Children are only released to adults approved on the registration form.
- If your child will be late, please email info@roots2riseoutdoors.com ahead of time. The educators head into the park at the start of the program and can tell you where to meet the group.



8 Risky play

Risk is an inherent and valued part of outdoor play!

We give children space to explore their interests and test their limits, learning to assess and understand the risks at hand. It's important that all families understand the intention behind risky play in natural environments.

To learn more, read the Canadian Paediatric Society's position on outdoor risky play.



9 Emergency protocols

9.1 Injuries

- All educators have up-to-date CPR and First Aid, and carry a first aid kit (including an EpiPen) for minor injuries like cuts, scrapes, and bruises.
- Our groups are small, with a minimum ratio of 2 educators to 12 children.
- If an injury needs immediate medical attention, we contact emergency services and the parent or guardian right away, and complete the appropriate documentation.
- **Head injuries:** If any head injury occurs, the parent or guardian is notified immediately. The child is monitored closely for any signs of concussion or need for emergency services.

9.2 Exposure to the elements

- Some common plants in Ontario can cause a reaction on contact. The Lead Educator inspects the site before each program to identify any harmful plants.
- **Allergies:** If a child with no known allergy shows signs of an anaphylactic reaction, an EpiPen is given immediately and emergency services and the parent or guardian are contacted. If your child has a known allergy, please make sure their EpiPen is in a pouch that stays on them.

9.3 Animals

- Children are encouraged to watch wildlife from a safe distance and to respect animals without touching. The animals we see, and any risks, vary by season. All groups learn how to respond safely to wildlife.
- In the park, we may meet dogs off leash. Children are guided on how to stay calm and safe around them.

9.4 Inclusion

We are working toward a welcoming environment for all children, staff, and families. If your child may benefit from additional guidance or accommodations, please complete our Additional Needs Form. It helps our team understand your child's strengths and needs and plan appropriate support.

- We'll work with you to see if the supports we can provide are right for your child's needs and safety.
- If needed, we'll create an individualized support plan together and share it with staff.
- If an immediate safety concern arises beyond what staff can manage, parents or guardians, and/or emergency services, may be contacted for immediate pick-up.

ADDITIONAL NEEDS FORM

9.5 Unforeseen weather

If the weather changes suddenly during a program, staff have an emergency plan in place. In extreme circumstances, parents, guardians, or alternative contacts may be contacted for early pick-up. Please check the weather ahead of time and pack for the day. See the Weather section for cancellations.

10 Washroom and hygiene

- Children should be fully toilet trained and are encouraged to use the washroom before the program. Washrooms are available for full-day programs. At other times, depending on the spot, we use public washrooms or porta-potties.
- If no facility is close by, children go outside for a "tree pee." **Please prepare your child for this.**
- Children wash or sanitize their hands after every washroom use and before eating.

Seeds (ages 2 to 4 with a caregiver): Caregivers stay with us and help with washroom use and diaper changes.



11 The benefits of outdoor play

Research increasingly highlights the benefits of outdoor, exploratory play. With children spending more time indoors and on screens, outdoor play offers a powerful antidote. It helps children build confidence, curiosity, physical skills, social abilities, and a deeper connection with the natural world.



From the Child and Nature Alliance of Canada (childnature.ca):

- Improved confidence, social skills, communication, motivation, and concentration
- Improved physical stamina, and fine and gross motor skills
- Positive identity formation for individuals and communities
- Environmentally sustainable behaviours and ecological literacy
- Healthy and safe risk-taking
- Improved creativity and resilience
- Improved academic achievement and self-regulation
- Reduced stress, and increased patience, self-discipline, attention, and recovery from mental fatigue
- Improved higher-level cognitive skills

Learn more: childnature.ca · outsideplay.org · evergreen.ca · naturalstart.org · 1000hoursoutside.com

Welcome to the Roots 2 Rise Outdoors community!

REGISTER

Seasonal Programs

roots2riseoutdoors.com/toronto-cedarvale-ravine

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