



On-Demand Nature Workshops Menu

For parents, community members, and teachers curious about
Earthworks Programming

Who We Are:

EarthWorks is a youth development program offered by The Center for Youth that focuses on 21st Century Skills, experiential learning, STEAM and environmental enrichment, and personal wellness. By partnering with community leaders and educators we develop programs that build healthy, lasting, bonds between land and community.

Environmental science, forestry, and education are at the heart of what we do. Earthworks offer the skills and experience to facilitate safe, nature-based programs among diverse groups while helping them to develop skills and experiences that connect youth with their world and each other.

Earthworks staff is comprised of highly trained, diversely practiced, individuals with over 20 years of combined experience developing environmental and educational programs. They guide students through the natural world to educate, inspire, and empower youth by allowing them to develop connections with themselves and their world through meaningful experiences.

Our Approach

Earthworks used a combined approach to education that includes ideas and methods from *Coyote's Guide to Connecting With Nature*, Project WET, and Project WILD along with many other resources to develop our unique Nature-Based Workshops.

While the purpose of our workshops are to immerse youth in the natural world and teach valuable survival skills, we are sure to incorporate some nature-based game-play. This is because we understand that curiosity and play are oftentimes the main driving force behind a child's learning process. More importantly, we do not expect our students to sit still for long! That being said, we incorporate movement, purposeful game-play, and unstructured free play time into the plans for each workshop.



About Our Workshops

Alongside one of our experienced Learning Guides, our on-demand workshops serve as an opportunity for individuals and groups to get together and explore a specific topic aimed at deepening our relationship with nature. EarthWorks workshops will empower individuals to seek vision, and experience, and develop a deeper sense of self.

We see our workshops as an opportunity to hone in on specific skill sets with more focus on the needs of the individual student and/or group. The location, day, length and time of these workshops is determined alongside the community partner in order to best suit the needs of their group. We have done these workshops in local parks, school yards, and even in the classroom! The possibilities are endless and we encourage an outside-the-box approach when planning each and every one of these activities.

If you are a teacher, community partner, local parks department or just an outdoor enthusiast and you are looking to get a group of students outside, keep reading to learn more about the different workshops we offer! While this list is meant to be as all-encompassing as possible, we are always happy to discuss other ideas in order to best suit the needs of your group.

Young Nature Explorers Workshop

Ages 5+
5-15 students

This workshop is designed to target the needs of young minds. We use children's natural curiosity to drive the path of the workshop. Curiosity-driven exploration is the main motive behind this workshop.

As we play and explore, so much fun lies in store. Perhaps we will learn the secrets of plants that can keep warm as the snow falls, or stalk silently through the woods while learning the stories hidden in animal tracks. We can also listen for the sound of a forest alarm, called from the nearest Blue Jay, or make a forest home with a primitive debris hut.

Warmth by the fire, roaming into the "unknown", storytelling, and games are the key focus of this adventure. Yet another great reason to take it outside no matter what the weather! The goal of nature explorers is to spark a critical connection with the natural world thereby activating each child's curiosity, knowledge, and wisdom to build bonds that last a lifetime.

Intro to Wilderness Survival

Ages 9+
10-20 kids

In 'Intro to Wilderness Survival' our experienced Learning Guides teach students all about the basics of leave-no-trace survival. In addition to covering basic survival, students will learn concepts including the science of heat and friction, how to keep warm in the cold and snow, where to look for food, engineering shelters, and finding your way home.

Expect a few challenges to up the excitement factor because this class will take place entirely outdoors and will be sure to rekindle your wild spirit!

Jedi Awareness Training

Ages 7+
8-15 students

Press the edges of your awareness, through wilderness skills, activities, puzzles, and obstacles that challenge your mind as well as body. With our Learning Guides, or if you prefer “Jedi Masters,” you will learn and use the time-honored techniques of our ancestors to stalk, track and hone your special skills. Discover the power of developing awareness of the world around you and tap into your senses.

Through gameplay, we will challenge our ability to focus and become more aware of the parts of nature that often get overlooked. We will practice being sly like a fox, sensitive like a raccoon, and have the listening skills of a bat in the dead of night all the while playing games and having fun! Students are encouraged to bring their positive attitudes, and teamwork skills and to heighten all of their senses!

Fire Masters
Ages 7+
5-15 students

Have you ever made fire without matches? In this class, we will practice using flint and steel; learning the basics of building a fire structure, proper lighting techniques, and sustaining a fire safely and purposefully. Students will have the opportunity to collect natural materials, and build the structure and one lucky student will create the spark that ignites our fire. Students are asked to bring their positive attitudes, teamwork skills, and a can-do approach to this class!

Primitive Tools and Natural Crafts

Ages 9+
5-15 students

This workshop is all about using the gifts of nature to get creative with survival. We offer the basics of carving tools, learn how to use plants for baskets, rope, and utensils, and be creative with the resources that nature provides us. We will start by looking closely at tree ID and plant ID to give us the background in choosing our crafting media. From there, we will see what natural crafts and wilderness survival tools we can create using only the limited resources available to us. The only tool required is a willingness to try!

Forest Forage and Feast

Ages 9+
5-15 students

Slow down from the rushed pace of the modern world and step into timelessness. Learn about the joy of food in a way that few people today ever will- with the ancient practice and knowledge of gathering wild edibles. Join us for a delicious and unique experience that connects you to your world in a very powerful way.

Developing relationships with wild edible plants brings great meaning to life, and brings health to the body, mind, heart, and spirit. There are so many reasons why people love edible wild plants beside the fact that they're free. They have a higher nutritional content than store-bought foods and are gathered freshly by season- it doesn't get any better! Join us for a delicious and unique experience in which we will find and feast on some of the best wild food NY offers!

Primitive Forest Games

Ages 7+
10-20 students

In this program, we will explore the world through ancient games. From a primitive game of weasel tree to an exhilarating non-stop game of Foxtail, Capture the Flag, and much more!

Young coyotes will be howling for more. Our games are designed to teach about the relationships in nature while making sure the excitement never stops. They'll play hard in the forest and live in the spirit of camaraderie!

Primitive Shelter Building

Age 7+
8-20 students

Protection from the elements is very important. Shelter not only protects you from adverse weather but also gives you the mental security that could make or break a survival situation. Like fire, a shelter can give us hope and a sense of accomplishment. In the wilderness, the shelter itself becomes a sanctuary for humans.

This introductory workshop will offer the skills and knowledge that can help you not only become more familiar with yourself and the natural world but also increase your chances of surviving the elements.

Guided Nature Walk

Ages 4+
5-15 students

During this workshop, students will discover the joys of nature through the eyes of a survivalist. Led by an EarthWorks Learning Guide, students will explore ecology through zombie slugs, fungi, strange connections between humans and animals, observing the changing seasons, tuning their senses to nature, playing forest games, and more! Once you've walked through the wilderness like a survivalist, you'll never see things the same. Join us as we connect to and explore nature with new eyes.

Use It & Lose It

Ages 10+

10-15 Students

Not everything lasts forever, but how often do we think about that in our daily lives? This program focuses on sustainability, nonrenewable resource use, and scarcity to help people think more critically about what resources we use and how to conserve them. More than just a discussion, teams are challenged to a treasure hunt that simulates resource use and imparts a very real understanding of our use of precious metals, organic materials and more, to find that things are not as easy as we think! We finish with a relay race that gets you thinking about waste and where it goes. Throw in a unique game of BINGO to bring it all together and discover how truly dependent humans are on these precious commodities!

Aidless Navigation

Ages 9+

15-30 students

Consider a journey without a compass or a true map. Imagine traveling alone or in groups, but with no knowledge of your destination or if you will arrive safely.

This was a journey that so many of our ancestors made, some seeking a new beginning and some even seeking their own freedom. Without the ability to purchase or read a map the key to survival is understanding natural navigation or reading signs in nature to determine cardinal direction. In this program, students are challenged to consider more than just using the North Star to help them navigate.

This workshop covers lots of fun and hands-on lessons including; how to establish cardinal directions (where is north? how do we know? what big geographical features are north in this region?), creating and practicing use of hand-drawn maps, “story trails”, scavenger hunts, and real-life journey through a forest to navigate our way back home.

Additional Workshop Ideas

Guided Wilderness Hikes

Guided by the smells, sounds, and sights, our guided nature hike will focus on the senses as crucial to experiencing this class in a magical way. We believe that simply being present in nature, begins to allow children and adults to experience mindfulness. Nature will be our guide as we embark on a journey that is unique with each step we take.

Classroom Collaboration

Alongside educators and students, we develop the most beneficial workshop for their needs. Our hope is to guide classrooms through wilderness expeditions, aimed at providing hands-on skill practice and collaborative team-building opportunities.

Gardening and Planting

Community gardens provide access to traditional produce and nutritionally rich foods that may otherwise be unavailable in urban food deserts. This is why Earthworks Learning Guides are committed to helping you establish a garden at your school or in your community. With our expertise in gardening and garden planning, we will guide you and your group how to establish, plan and most importantly grow delicious produce for years to come!