

HARD BARGAIN FARM
AT THE ALICE FERGUSON FOUNDATION
PRESENTS

NATURE NUTS

*Join us for outdoor adventures,
laughter and learning*



Welcome to Nature Nuts

Parents, we are so excited that your child will be joining us for our Nature Nuts Outdoor Environmental Program.

During this time of COVID-19, we will be following the guidelines established by the State of Maryland Health Department and CDC. We all want to do all we can to keep parents, participants, and our staff safe and healthy.

This is an outdoor enrichment program for early childhood and elementary-age students, filled with outdoor adventures, laughter, and learning. Featuring five-week sessions in the morning or afternoon. Each session will be led by experienced educators.

Students will enjoy outdoor activities focused on being in nature while learning, and engaging in physical activity. Activities will include discovering the farm, meeting our cows, goats, sheep and other barnyard animals, diving into scavenger hunts and hiking, becoming a nature detective, exploring plants and pollinators in the children's garden, exploring the wet meadow and much more.

Nature Nuts Check-List:

For Parents:

- Please read this entire packet.
- Submit payment by clicking on the registration link at <https://fergusonfoundation.org/virtual-programs/> and selecting your sessions.
- Once payment has been submitted, you will receive an email with an information form and a COVID-19 & Liability waiver. Please complete this form and submit online.

Children should bring a backpack with the following:

- Reusable water bottle
- Snack
- Extra clothes
- Facemask
- Extra Facemask

Daily Schedule:

- Arrival. Staff meets families at drop off point, staff member takes child's temperature, child goes to waiting area.
- All children walk up to the barn classroom space and drop off their backpacks.
- Short Welcome/Bathroom Break/Hand sanitizer
- Main Activity
- Arrive back at barn
- Wrap-up. 15 minutes before the end of day, children return to the barn classroom area to gather their belongings.
- Children walk back to the pick up area.

Depending on the day, weather and activity, we may be back at the barn classroom space earlier to do an additional activity or craft.

Kiss and Ride (Drop off and Pick Up)

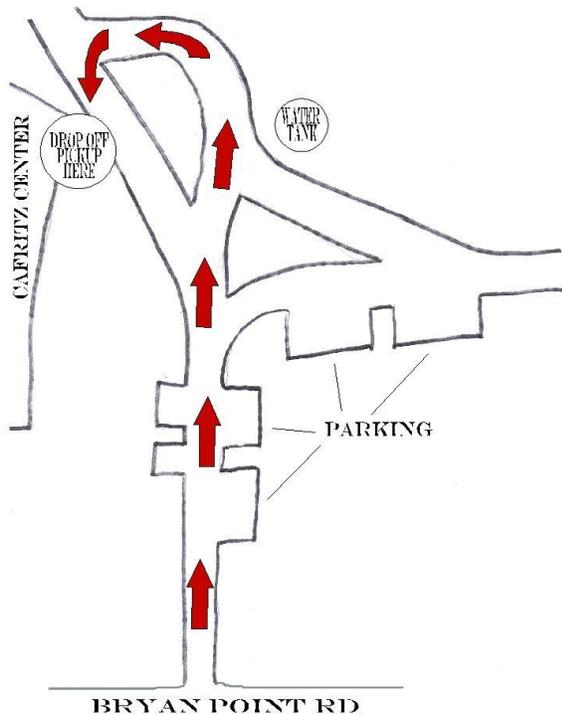
Drop off, when you arrive please, follow signs to the drop off area (see map on page below).

Once you arrive at the drop off area, please remain in your car until requested to exit by a staff member. Parents should be masked while dropping off your child. A staff member will scan your child's temperature. Once temperature is checked, you may assist your child if needed to get out of their car seat.

Your child will be directed to the initial meetup area while waiting for all participants to arrive. If you are planning on staying on-site you can park in front of the Cafritz building (see map below). Parents may use the black picnic tables in front of the building or on the Cafritz breezeway during the duration of the program. The WiFi password will be located near the fireplace for use.

If you are not staying, please follow the exit signs back out to Bryan Point Road.

Pick Up, this will be the same area as the drop off area and your child will be ready to go with all their belongings, so please be prompt. If you decide to stay on the property, please wait until the designated pick up time and pick them up in your vehicle.



Health Protocols: Staying Safe

The Friday before every session, you will receive an email explaining any special information you may need to know for the upcoming week.

It is very important for you to observe and check your child's health before bringing them to Alice Ferguson Foundation's Hard Bargain Farm.

If you notice anything that might indicate they are not feeling well please contact us and keep your child at home. Here is the Maryland State Health department [decision aid](#) for when to keep a child home.

When your child arrives, we will be taking their temperature, if the reading is above 100.4 F they will not be able to stay.

All participants will be required to wear a facemask while indoors. While outdoors, as long as social distancing can be maintained, facemasks will not be required of younger children. It is your responsibility to supply a facemask for your child. We ask that an extra facemask remain in your child's backpack.

Face Mask Guidelines

Wearing a facemask will be mandatory for all adults during pick up and drop off and whenever physical distancing is not possible. This includes staff, parents, caregivers, and anyone using the trails and public spaces.

Nature Nut participants will not be required to wear a face mask while playing and hiking outdoors as the chance of them mishandling or discarding the masks while they play increases, rather than decreases, the risk of spreading illness. CDC guidelines do not recommend the use of facemasks with this age group while they are being physically active outdoors.

In the case of inclement weather, all children will need to wear a facemask while sheltering indoors. Children are required to come to camp with a facemask (regardless of the weather which will be stored in their personal bag or backpack until needed).

Please have a conversation with your child regarding this policy of "indoor" facemask policy.

- You can tell them that your teachers will be wearing masks and they may not get to see their faces during drop off.
- Have their sunscreen and bug repellent ON before kiss and ride.
- Be reassuring about the whole process. They are going to be so excited to be participating in Nature Nuts.

If someone (staff and students) is confirmed sick with COVID-19:

- The sick person should be isolated at home for 14 days and may return to the program after being cleared by a medical professional with documentation of the clearance

- Nature Nuts will conduct a deep cleaning of the barn and public spaces used by the infected person.
- Close contacts of the infected person will remain home for 14 days after their last interaction with the infected person.
- Per CDC guidance a close contact is defined as someone who was within six feet of an infected person (laboratory confirmed or probable) for at least 15 minutes.

If a participant or staff member is exposed to someone with COVID-19 outside of school:

- If a participant or staff member has close contact with a person who is diagnosed or presumed sick with COVID-19, that student or staff member shall remain home in quarantine for 14 days from the date of exposure.

Additionally, we are keeping cleaning and sanitizing logs and rosters by group with staff and participants daily temperatures and health checks. One positive test would require the group to have to quarantine and if there were two positives in different groups it would be called an outbreak and the entire site would be shut down.

Cleaning Protocols

After each session of Nature Nuts the barnyard/bathrooms/cubbies/yoga mats will be cleaned using disinfectant which has been approved by the CDC for COVID-19. Sanitization logs will be kept for each area cleaned by Alice Ferguson Foundation staff on a clipboard near the cleaned area.

Bathrooms

There are separate bathrooms that students will use that are near the location that the Nature Nuts program will take place. The bathrooms will be cleaned daily after each session of the program and the cleaning log will be kept up-to-date by Alice Ferguson Foundation staff members.

Nature Nuts: What Should Your Child Bring?

Your child will have an assigned personal cubby space that they will use every time they come to the farm. We ask that you send a backpack with a small snack they can independently open and eat, a reusable water bottle, and an extra set of clothes, just in case we have too much fun in the mud, or if there are any accidents.

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS AN OUTDOOR PLAY POD?

An outdoor play pod is our way to keep your children safe and engaged in outdoor activities. This pod will stay together for the duration of the session and will not intermix with other children. We have 330-acres and a barnyard to explore!

HOW DO OUTDOOR PLAY PODS WORK?

1. Parents will drop their children off using our “kiss and ride” contactless procedures.
2. Children will be outside.
3. We have 330-acres to play on! Some of our outdoor activities include: hiking, gardening, tending to the barnyard animals, walking through the wetlands, bird watching...

WHAT KEEPS MY CHILD SAFE?

1. Small groups
2. Being outdoors where **air is fresh and not re-circulated.**
3. All children and staff will have their temperature checked at the start of each day.
4. All families signing a liability waiver and committing to social distancing practices and procedures as outlined in our protocols.
5. Use of hand sanitizer, wipes, twice daily cleaning and specific bathrooms only for the pod. Cleaning procedures will be tracked and recorded daily.
6. Having staff wear masks at all times. (Staff do need to take drinks of water, eat, and keep adjusting masks to stay comfortable.) Children will wear masks if indoor time is required due inclement weather.

WHAT HAPPENS ON RAINY OR INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS?

We are an Outdoor Environmental Center and we plan all of our programs outside. Please make sure your child is dressed for the weather. If the weather is threatening, we have a wonderful barn where our Nature Nuts will be based. This barn allows for free-flowing natural air and will be exclusively used by our Nature Nut pod.

WHAT AGES CAN ATTEND?

PlayPods serve children ages 4 and up. Children should be 4 years at the beginning of the program’s start date. We have found that mixing ages works very well to create a sense of community. Older kids get to demonstrate responsibility, and younger kids enjoy looking up to older friends.

WHAT IS YOUR REFUND POLICY?

We do not offer refunds. Once a family commits to a pod, the space is secured and cannot be substituted. If the program has to shut down or go on hold because of an outbreak, we will provide credit.

ARE YOU CERTIFIED AND DO YOU HAVE INSURANCE?

Yes to both. Hard Bargain Farm - the Alice Ferguson Foundation - has been operating for more than 60 years. We are a nonprofit organization located in a national park and provide programs to more than 8,000 children annually throughout the DMV region. We are a Maryland State Aided Institution and work with the school systems throughout the region including the District of Columbia, Prince George's County, Charles County, Montgomery County plus numerous independent and Catholic schools. All of our educators are CPR certified and trained, fingerprinted and have the appropriate Maryland state clearance checks to work with children.