

# Cedar Saplings

Outdoor, Experiential Preschool



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## MISSION STATEMENT

Cedar City Saplings is an all-outdoors preschool, supporting children’s physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth. By nurturing children in an outdoor environment, their natural curiosity, resilience, creativity, empathy, wonder, and connection can sprout and grow. Through active play, children learn to experience the world and develop the skills to thrive in it.

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## Curriculum Themes

Physical: I am aware of my body and my personal space. I take care of it, and I have joy in movement.

Emotional and Social: I can recognize emotions in myself and others. I am learning to express my emotions and empathetically recognize the needs of others.

Cognitive: I am curious and organized. I can count, find patterns, and ask questions. I find joy in learning.

Natural: I am connected with nature through the food I eat, the ground I walk on, and the air I breathe.

Artistic: I am creative. I share joy by making.

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## Daily Schedule

A typical day looks something like this:

- Morning circle: Time to greet one another and engage in fine motor activity (warm weather) or large motor warm-up (cold weather)
- Short lesson focused on the natural world through objects, pictures, or books
- Learn a song
- Exploration in nature, which sometimes includes walking to nearby parks
- Story time
- Whole food snack
- Mindful practice of movement or yoga
- Social-emotional learning lesson or practice
- Open play time
- Fine motor craft or activity
- Closing circle: Review what we did today and sing a song.

While we do have this basic structure, we also make adjustments according to students’ needs and interests. If they are deeply engaged in an activity right before our scheduled story time, for example, we

save the book for another time. Likewise, if a child needs time to emotionally regulate at the beginning of class, we might take time to explore the textures of sand together instead of pushing our own agenda.

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## About the Teachers

Rachel Cox is a mother and professional educator. She has a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Utah State University, and a M.Ed. in Advanced Teaching from University of the People. With five years of teaching experience in public schools and experience teaching outdoors, Rachel has worked extensively with children of all ages. She is trained in CPR and first aid. She is also a certified yoga teacher.

## Communication

Open communication is very important to children's success. Parents can expect weekly emails regarding the previous week's activities and upcoming plans. Cedar Saplings may also communicate with parents through:

- Written notes sent home with your child
- Verbal communication before or after class
- Text messages
- Facebook @cedarsaplingspreschool

If you need to contact Rachel for an emergency during school hours, please call 435-414-1625. For less urgent matters, you may also text or email her at [rachel.saplings@protonmail.com](mailto:rachel.saplings@protonmail.com). Rachel is also available to chat after class.

## Assistant Teachers

Alicia Baca and Tarah Scott are our experienced teaching assistants. We are happy to have these kind, aware, and knowledgeable assistants present to help teach your children and keep them safe.

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## Packing List

**Every day**, wear or bring:

- Good adventure shoes
- Comfortable clothing that allows for movement
- A hat for sun or cold weather
- Reusable water bottle** labeled with their name
- For our youngest adventurers: Extra pants and underwear or training underwear\* in a plastic bag with their name on it

On Sunny Days:

- Wear sunscreen (optional)

On Cool or Cold Days:

- A jacket, coat, mittens, and extra layers

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## Policies and Procedures

Please review these policies and procedures before the first day of class.

### First Aid

While playing in the outdoors, there is inherent risk. Knees may get skinned, elbows bumped, and toes stubbed. We'll provide supervision to mitigate these situations, but be aware that they are still likely to happen on occasion. If your child is injured while with us, you consent to the administration of necessary first aid. All minor injuries or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented and reported to parents when the child is picked up at the end of the day.

In the case of a medical injury or illness requiring, the staff will call 911, giving location and nature of emergency. As appropriate, the staff will administer CPR or first aid measures. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified. All children must have an emergency medical release form on file in case of such an emergency. If a child ingests or comes in contact with a poisonous substance the staff will contact the Poison Control Center.

Clothing is part of first aid. Please send your child in appropriate outdoor clothing. We invite you to use your parental discretion, but you may consider close-toed, flexible-soled shoes, long pants (to protect knees if your child stumbles), and clothing that is not so loose or tight that it interferes with movement. Also consider hats, sweatshirts, and/or sunscreen, depending on the weather and the needs of your child. We echo the Swedish philosophy that there is no "bad weather," only inappropriate preparation for it.

Please read and sign the Liability Policy, which is sent separately.

### Hazardous Conditions

In the case of extreme weather conditions, such as floods, tornadoes, lightning storms, hail storms, etc. class will be canceled, and parents will be notified via text message. Please respond to the message so we know that you saw it.

Other unexpected hazardous conditions include fire, chemical spill, terrorist threat, flood, earthquake, or presence of a person of malicious intent. If any of these conditions are identified, class will immediately be canceled, and parents will be notified via group text message to come pick up their children. We seek shelter (in the bathroom, under the pavilion, or in teachers' cars as appropriate) or evacuate the park as appropriate, so the message will include details about where we will be located.

Your child's safety is our first priority.

### Illness and Exclusion Policy

If your child is coughing, feverish, lethargic, has a runny nose (unless it's running clear), or is otherwise symptomatic, please make arrangements for them to *stay home*. We'd love for them to come everyday, but the health of all our students is important. Let's teach them to share things besides germs. Please send a message to Rachel (435-414-1625) if your child will not be attending class that morning.

If your child becomes sick while in our care, we will call you immediately to pick the child up. If we cannot reach you, we will contact the emergency contact listed on your registration form. In the case of symptoms of severe illness (uncontrollable vomiting, diarrhea, abnormal breathing, etc) , if the parent or

other emergency contact does not respond, Cedar Saplings may call for an ambulance, at the parent's expense.

## Medication

Cedar Saplings is not authorized to administer prescription or non-prescription medication at this time, including sunscreen. If necessary, please make arrangements with your physician to administer necessary medication before or after class, or visit our class personally to administer medication.

## Snack and Water

Please send a reusable water bottle with your child's name on it each day. Running around in nature can leave kids parched, even on cooler days, so hydration is critical to keeping up energy and mood.

Each day, we will have a break to enjoy a whole food snack. Note that if you'd like your child to try the snack, they're much more likely to do so if you don't send them with other options from home. If a student brings something in a familiar package, they aren't often willing to try an unfamiliar vegetable or fruit.

Our daily snack helps fuel your child for exploration and expose them to new foods, but they are not a replacement for a nutritious breakfast. Please make sure that your son or daughter does not come to class hungry. Likewise, we invite you to consider alternatives to sugary cereals, as these will cause a spike in blood sugars that are difficult for a child to regulate. High-protein and healthy-fat breakfasts will provide them with more sustained energy.

Please notify us immediately if your child has any sensitivities or allergies.

## Toilet Training

Given that Cedar Saplings is an outdoor program, we are not equipped with changing tables. We prefer children to be toilet-trained prior to enrolling, but understand each child develops at their own pace. We are willing to make reasonable accommodations.

There are public restrooms in East Canyon Park. We encourage you to take some time to introduce your child to them prior to their first class so they have a chance to use them with someone with whom they are comfortable. Our daily explorations frequently take us up or down the train to West Canyon Park and Veteran's Memorial Park, where there are also restrooms. However, there is a distance between each restroom which requires some planning. We will invite children to use the restroom before we leave our basecamp and at regular intervals throughout the day.

We are happy and willing to support children in the process of infrequent accidents/changes, as long as they are sent in pull-up training underwear. We prefer that children be able to communicate when wet or soiled. Soiled clothing will be tightly bagged (parents are to supply) and sent home for laundering.

We also recommend that if your child is still new to toilet-training to be dressed in "user-friendly" clothing such as pants/dresses with elastic waists so this avoids added difficulty for children trying to remove clothing with snaps, zippers, overalls and buttons. We prefer that children be able to dress/undress fairly independently.

*\*Please discuss with Rachel* if this is a barrier to your child attending. We understand each child develops at their own pace, so we are flexible on this policy. Because class is only three-hours long, we can discuss other accommodations on an as-needed basis.

## **Tips for Saying Goodbye**

If your child is nervous, you're welcome to stay for a while to help them get settled. One way to help them have a healthy transition is to let them know a couple of things you'll stay for, and then tell them that after that you'll leave. Remind them as the time gets closer, and then stick with it. Let them know that you'll be back. Sometimes being hesitant about leaving can increase their anxiety. They look to you to know if a new situation is safe, and if you're reluctant to leave, they may take that to mean that they should be nervous. If you're confident, it will help them be confident too. If they cry when you leave, it's okay. We'll help them regulate their emotions. If they are inconsolable for a significant amount of time, we'll let you know; we won't leave them to cry it out for the entire class.

That being said, especially if your child is only two years old, you're welcome to contact me about staying with them the entire time. We've had parents tag along from a distance, and parents volunteer to be hands-on and help out. We want you and your child to be comfortable.

## **Physical Contact**

We will play games that involve holding hands. We may give occasional piggy back rides, lift, or otherwise carry your child. In our public space, lifting or carrying a child is sometimes necessary to keep them safe.

Hugs are offered when children are upset. We will respect your child's right to say "no" when invited to give a hug or make similar personal contact.

In all circumstances, we will use professional and caring judgment to keep your child safe while respecting their autonomy.

## **Discipline and Guidance Policy**

Cedar Saplings values teaching children in ways that encourage self-esteem, awareness, and self-regulation. Teachers use praise and encouragement to reinforce behavior that promotes a positive learning environment. We believe that most children "misbehave" when there is a need being unmet, and teachers work together to address these needs, including teaching appropriate alternative behavior, helping students to understand and respond to big emotions, and finding stimulating learning activities. Many times, children are just exploring without meaning to be "naughty," and in these instances, teachers will help them understand the consequences of their actions and find a way to help them explore safely. Cedar Saplings does not use "time out" as a form of managing behavior, though a teacher may take a break with a child, separate from the other children, to help them regulate. Cedar Saplings staff will never use corporal punishment or discipline that may hurt, shame, or humiliate a child.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Cedar Saplings does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, color, or national origin in the process of admission, education, or other administrative policies. All rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally are made available to all students at the school.

## **Release of Children**

Parents have a right to access their child at any time. In the event that a parent is unable to pick up their child, they may authorize another legal adult to pick them up. This needs to be arranged with a teacher

prior to pick-up, and the adult may be required to present a picture ID. Children will not be released to a minor or unknown adult.

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## Tuition and Attendance

Each quarter is ten weeks long, with two three-hours classes each week.

- Regular tuition is \$295 per quarter, plus \$25 registration fee.
- The registration fee is due upon registration to reserve your spot and is non-refundable. It is non-recurring for continual enrollment, but if a student is not enrolled for a session, the registration fee will be needed to re-enroll.
- Tuition may be paid in full upon registration, and is refundable until the first day of class.
- If tuition is not paid upon registration, it is due the first day of each quarter or half-quarter.

Students may also register for half-quarters, which are five weeks long.

- Tuition for half-quarters is \$155, plus \$25 registration fee.

Sibling Discount:

- \$30 off tuition for each additional sibling for the quarter.

We have done our best to balance the costs of running a financially sustainable preschool with keeping our program accessible. If costs are prohibitive, please contact Rachel regarding scholarship or volunteer opportunities with associated discounts.

## Absences

Please text Rachel at 435-414-1625 if your child is going to be unexpectedly absent. For planned absences, email is also acceptable. Please note that tuition is not pro-rated or refunded if a child is absent, because their spot is still being held in the class. If a child is sick or absent for a family emergency for more than 10 of the 20 class days, 50% of tuition may be credited toward the next session.

Tuition is transferable if a child needs to drop out of the class due to illness, moving, or other circumstances.



## School Calendar

# 2022

**JANUARY**

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30	31					

**FEBRUARY**

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**MARCH**

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**APRIL**

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**MAY**

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**JUNE**

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**JULY**

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**AUGUST**

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**SEPTEMBER**

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**OCTOBER**

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**NOVEMBER**

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**DECEMBER**

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### Winter Quarter 9:30-12:30

**A:** February 1-March 3

**B:** March 8-April 7

**Spring Break:** April 11-15

### Spring Quarter 9:00-12:00

**A:** April 18-May 19

**B:** May 23-June 23

**Summer Break:** June 27-July 4

### Summer Quarter 8:30-11:30

**A:** July 5-August 4

**B:** August 8-September 9

This quarter includes Independence Day and Labor Day. Both of these Monday classes will be held the following Friday.

**Fall Break 1:** October 24-28

### Fall Quarter 9:00-12:00

**A:** September 20-October 20

**Fall Break 2:** October 24-24

**B:** November 1-December 6

This quarter includes an extra fall break, in alignment with ICSD scheduling, as well as a break for Thanksgiving.