



TAKE ROOT

PARENT & TOTS PROGRAM

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Website: willowgrove.ca/take-root-parent-tots

Email: takeroot@willowgrove.ca

Phone: (905) 640-2127

Address: 11737 McCowan Road, Stouffville, ON, L4A 4C3



GENERAL INFO

ABOUT WILLOWGROVE

Willowgrove is a registered charity that has been serving this community since 1968 with various recreational and educational programming. Some of these programs include: Willowgrove Day Camp, Fraser Lake Camp, Willowgrove's Outdoor Education Centre, and Take Root Nature School.

One of Willowgrove's guiding values is "Honouring Land." Here at Willowgrove, we believe that the best way to develop an appreciation for the land is to have formative, hands-on experiences in nature. This was the catalyst for the Take Root program, and why we continue to integrate nature-based learning into all that we do.

By joining Take Root's Parent and Tots program, you and your family are directly supporting the ongoing charitable work of Willowgrove in this community.

SESSION DATES & RATES

PARENTS & TOTS

WINTER | Jan. 9 - Feb. 29

SPRING | Mar. 19 – May 9

FALL | Sept. 10- Oct 31

Tuesdays + Thursdays

9:15am to 11:15am

\$220/Season (8 Weeks)*

Registration includes:

1 Adult and 1 Tot (ages 1-4)

\$80/Additional child

Additional Information: Infants under the age of 1 are free when accompanying a registered adult. Ratios per registration must not exceed 1 adult to 2 children (Infants not included), adding more children to a registration will require an additional adult. Registration pricing is based on households, therefore the option to add additional children at discounted rates is limited to siblings of the registered participant.

Please note: Although this program uses the term "Parent," Willowgrove acknowledges that there are many different and diverse ways to be a family. All guardians are welcome!



REGISTRATION

In order to register in Take Root's Parent and Tots, full payments are required at the time of enrollment. Credit Card charges will appear on your statement under the name WILLOWGROVE.

Registration for the program is through our secure online portal, however the majority of communication will be done via e-mail. You will receive a confirmation email following the completion of your registration form and submitting your deposit. Please contact the office if you have not received an email confirming your registration.

Any and all changes to your registration information must be communicated to the office in writing as soon as possible. This includes any personal information on file for you or your child such as address, phone number, email, changes in health, and emergency contacts.

REFUND POLICY

If your plans change, and you are no longer able to attend the program, refunds will be provided if the cancellation notice is received by our office at least one month prior to the program's start date. Refunds are not provided missed sessions.

EXPECTATIONS OF CONDUCT

Here at Willowgrove, we believe that everyone has the right to feel safe, both physically and emotionally. We expect all participants, employees, and volunteers to be treated with dignity and respect. As such, Willowgrove is committed to treating everyone equitably, honouring the diversity of race/colour, religion/creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, or economic background.

Willowgrove is a non-smoking facility. Please note that pets are also not permitted on Willowgrove property.

Like any community, from time to time, we may intentionally or mistakenly hurt one another. At Willowgrove, we encourage our community members to think of our actions as having ripples. This means that, if someone is harmed, we will aim to listen and understand all sides of the story in order to ask, "Who is responsible for making things right here?" as opposed to, "What is the punishment for doing things wrong?"

Although we work closely with staff and program participants alike to take a restorative approach to resolving conflicts, Willowgrove does reserve the right to dismiss anyone who, in our opinion, is a hazard to the safety or rights of others, or who appears to have rejected the reasonable expectations of the organization. No refund will be given for participants who are removed from programming due to inappropriate behaviour.



WHAT TO EXPECT

CELL PHONES

We know that while you are at the farm with your tot you may want to capture the memories you are making with photos or videos. Out of respect for the group, we ask that you please ensure these images do not include other children or families without their direct consent.

In general, please be mindful of your cell phone use at the farm. Active phone use (photos, texts, calls, messaging) can hinder this experience for yourself and others, while increasing the chances of your device being damaged or lost.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Willowgrove's communications staff often take photos of our programming for social media and general promotion. If you and your child/children should not appear in these images, please email to let us know at takeroot@willowgrove.ca. If you want to follow Willowgrove Farm or tag the program on social media, you can do so at:

Instagram: @Willowgrove1968

Facebook: /Willowgrove1968

Hashtags: #ParentAndTots

#TakeRootFarmProject

PARTICIPATION

Take Root's Parent & Tots program is designed for both adults and children, providing opportunities for you to connect together with nature on our 100-acre farm. In addition, it's our hope that by the end of each season, you will also feel more connected with your community as a whole - meeting other likeminded parents, who may share similar values, and have children the same age as your Tot!

Due to the hands-on nature of our programming, we expect all parents to actively participate in the program. Because our instructors need to be focused on facilitating programming, it is up to each guardian to guide their own child's involvement, encouraging each family to play and learn at their own pace. All participating adults are responsible for their own children. This is why we set ratios per family. Families are required to have 1 adult for up to 2 tots; any additional children will require an additional adult.



SEASONS/SESSIONS

Take Root's Parent and Tot program runs three times a year - Winter, Spring and Fall - in rhythm with the seasons. The winter program runs from early January to the end of February; the spring season program runs from early May to the end of June; the fall program runs from early September to the end of October. Each season offers different programming as Take Root is designed to work in rhythm with the seasons. Participants may get to smell an apple blossom in May but pick a fresh apple in September.

Each Parent and Tots season is comprised of 8 sessions. A session happens once a week on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, and runs for two-hours from 9:15am until 11:15am. Although each session follows the same general breakdown, the activities are always changing in order for the participants to be able to engage with whatever is happening in nature, or on the farm that day.

PROGRAMMING

Each session will begin with a hands-on, sensory-focused, "Welcome Activity" while families arrive. Next, the group will go out on a "Farm Walk," meeting friendly animals, and exploring the different areas around the farm, such as: the Orchard, Woodlot, Market Gardens, Hayloft, Trails, and Music Garden. The group will then find a cozy spot for a "Story-Time and Snack," this location will change as we explore different areas of the property. Then, our last activity will be a hands-on, creative "Nature Craft/Activity," before heading into "Free Play" at the playground. Although each session will explore different themes, connecting to the stories, crafts, and activities, the flow will more or less be the same:

9:15am Welcome activity

9:30am Farm walk

10:00am Storytime & Snack

10:15 am Activity/Craft

11:00 am Free Play

11:15 am Goodbyes

Pro-tip: Although sessions end at 11:15am, you are welcome to stick around to play at the playground and connect with other families. We'd simply ask that you give space to the other programs, and vacate the property by noon.

RAIN OR SHINE

As an outdoor-based program, Take Root runs rain or shine; there may occasionally be bugs, mud, smells, and rain - all part of being in nature. Programming will be moved inside if the weather turns severe, and - in the rare event of a cancellation due to unsafe weather - the session will be re-booked. If school busses are cancelled in York Region due to inclement weather, programming for that session will be cancelled for the affected day(s).

Pro-tip: There's a saying at Willowgrove: "There is no bad weather, just bad clothing!" Be sure to read through the packing list on page 6 so you and your tot can be dressed for success!



ACCESSIBILITY

Willowgrove is a working farm, which means that there are many portions of the property with uneven, or slippery terrain. It does require a certain level of physicality in order to participate in Take Root, as well as a general willingness to get your hands dirty at times.

If you have concerns about this, or require additional supports, please contact us. Willowgrove aims to be as accessible as possible, and we will do our best to make accommodations for various abilities and needs where possible.

LOGISTICS

PACKING LISTS

As an outdoor-based program, we will be spending as much time as possible exploring our beautiful 100- acre farm. When heading out for a Parent and Tots adventure at Willowgrove Farm, we highly recommend bringing the following:

- a hat and/or mittens
- a light jacket or sweater
- sunscreen (minimum of SPF 30)
- a blanket to sit on (Story-time)
- Winter Wear/Gear
- comfortable hiking boots
- a refillable water bottle
- all-terrain stroller/wagon or carrier
- rain jacket and splash pants

Please reconsider if you are planning to wear nice clothing that you wouldn't want to get dirty, or expensive jewelry. We'd also ask that you refrain from wearing any clothing that promotes nicotine, alcohol, crude language, or anything that may be offensive to other families.

Pro-tip: Consider packing a bag for your vehicle that contains a second pair of socks/shoes, extra dry clothes, and some plastic bags. That way if you get muddy or wet, you can deal with it at the farm.

ARRIVAL

Willowgrove is located at 11737 McCowan Road (South of Stouffville Road, and North of 19th Ave.) across from Lionel's Pony Farm. When you arrive, you'll travel down a long laneway. Please follow the signs for "Office" and park in the main parking area near the portables. Be sure to keep your vehicles north of the Main Office building as the round-about serves as our fire route.



Once parked, please head over to the Hare Hollow Outdoor Classroom to sign in. If you arrive late and the group is not at the Hare Hollow Outdoor Classroom, please go to the office and our staff will be happy to help you locate the rest of the group.

Pro-tip: Please use the washrooms before settling into our programs. Although there are kaibos (outhouses) located throughout the farm property, the only proper washroom facility (with running water, toilets, etc.) is located beside the office.

SNACKS

There are often individuals at Willowgrove with life-threatening food allergies. Please help us keep our community safe by reading labels and NOT bringing any foods which contain peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pecans, cashews, and pistachios), or any bulk food items that do not come pre-sealed. If you would like to bring a pre-packaged snack or treat for the group to celebrate a special occasion, please contact the Instructor in advance.

HEALTH

You and your child's health and safety are very important to us. Willowgrove regularly inspects our grounds for health and safety risks, and also ensures that each Instructor is First-Aid certified. Always provide us with up-to-date medical information for your family, and be sure to alert us in writing if anything changes.

LOST & FOUND

When dealing with Tots and a 100-acre farm, misplacing items is somewhat inevitable. Our staff regularly comb the property and bring back any found items to our main office. So, to help us reunite you with any lost belongings, please consider labeling clothing items, and be sure to contact the office if you notice something missing.

However, despite our best efforts to return lost articles to their owners, there are always a few items that do disappear. Please remember that Willowgrove is not responsible for any lost clothing and/or equipment, or items that are broken or stolen while on property. Any unclaimed lost and found items will be donated to the Care and Share Thrift Shop, a partnering charity located here in Stouffville.

**Thanks for being a part of
Take Root's Parent and Tots Program.**