



# Preschool Summer Camp Educator

**Department:** Education

**Supervisor:** Youth Programs Manager

**Dates of Employment:** May 21-July 25, 2025

**Hours:** Monday-Friday, Variable 8:00am-4:00pm, or 8:15am-5:00pm, or 8:00am-3:30pm

## Program

Ijams Nature Center is a 318-acre nonprofit learning center and preserve on the southern banks of the Tennessee River near Knoxville's urban center. Ijams is seeking seasonal Preschool Summer Camp Educators to teach 8 weeks of onsite day camp for ages 3-5. Ijams summer camps provide children with opportunities to use their senses, collaborate with their peers, and explore natural communities that support human health. Each week, Summer Camp Educators will lead a small group of campers on daylong adventures around the property. A key component of this position is possessing an ability and comfort level to work with young children, outside in all weather, for up to 7-9 hours a day.

## Summary

The Preschool Summer Camp Educator position is responsible for delivering exceptional camp programs and ensuring the general safety, growth, and skill development of children ages 3-5. Preschool Summer Camp Educators are dedicated to connecting children with the natural world, and collaborate with other staff members to plan, lead, and implement high-quality outdoor educational programs and experiences for campers.

## Preschool Summer Camp Educator Essential Duties Responsibilities

- **Deliver Engaging and Age-Appropriate Programming:** Co-teach sensory-based activities such as nature exploration, storytelling, songs, arts and crafts, games, and imaginative play. Design activities that nurture curiosity, creativity, and a connection to nature while promoting developmental skills like outdoor safety, handwashing, and patience.
- **Ensure Safety and Well-Being:** Follow and enforce all emergency procedures and safety guidelines, accounting for campers during transitions and activities. Monitor physical and emotional health, adapting to the needs of preschoolers in real time to ensure their comfort and well-being.
- **Facilitate Restroom Routines:** Assist campers with restroom routines, including escorting them to facilities, supervising outdoor bathroom breaks, and providing support with accidents in a discreet and respectful manner. Encourage independence while offering reassurance and help as needed.

- **Manage Camper Behavior:** Address behavioral challenges such as separation anxiety, sharing conflicts, and meltdowns using positive reinforcement and problem-solving techniques. Collaborate with camp directors and parents to address ongoing concerns effectively.
- **Maintain a Hygienic and Safe Environment:** Perform daily camp setup, cleanup, and sanitization of materials and play areas. Ensure all supplies are safe, age-appropriate, and conducive to a clean and organized learning space.
- **Collaborate with Staff:** Participate fully in training and weekly staff meetings to adapt and plan activities. Offer input on curriculum development, share observations, and work as a team to address any challenges. Support co-workers with constructive feedback and encouragement.
- **Supervise Pick-up and After Care:** Provide a calm and structured environment for preschoolers at the end of the day. Offer quiet, engaging activities such as reading, drawing, or sensory play to help children transition smoothly from camp to pickup.
- **Adapt to Dynamic Situations:** Demonstrate flexibility and patience in managing unexpected changes in schedules, weather, or camper needs. Approach challenges with a positive attitude to maintain a fun and safe experience for campers.
- **Inspire Exploration and Imagination:** Encourage curiosity and creativity by supporting campers' natural desire to explore. Use teachable moments to spark a love of learning and a deep connection to the natural world.
- **Additional Responsibilities:** Perform other duties as assigned, ensuring that all tasks contribute to creating a safe, fun, and educational experience tailored to preschool-aged campers.

## Qualifications / Requirements

- Must be First Aid and CPR certified by the first day of employment.
- Upon being offered a position, all potential hires must successfully complete a pre-employment, post-offer background screening and motor vehicle record screen (MVR).
- Teaching, coaching, or mentoring experience with children outside. Ideal candidates have experience in summer camps, classroom teaching, environmental or outdoor education, or natural ecosystems.
- Strong group management skills and ability to communicate effectively with learners with different physical, mental, and emotional needs.
- Positive attitude and a willingness to be a contributing member of a team while remaining flexible to changing schedules or program needs.
- Willingness to receive feedback, grow personally and professionally, and develop new skills.

## Work Conditions

**Physical Condition:** Candidates must be in good physical condition to actively lead and participate in all camp activities, as well as perform safety and emergency procedures as required.

**Activity Requirements:** Candidates should be comfortable engaging in all activities typically performed by preschoolers, including running, climbing, crawling, and exploring outdoor

environments. This includes crouching or kneeling frequently to assist children at their level, walking on uneven terrain, engaging in water play, and participating in hands-on nature activities. The role also involves lifting and carrying preschool-age children when necessary and modeling active participation in outdoor exploration.

**Outdoor Work Conditions:** This position involves working outdoors in all weather conditions, with potential exposure to dust, temperature extremes, inclement weather, noise, pollen, allergens, and fumes.

**Physical Capabilities:**

- Lift, carry, and move 15-60 pounds for distances up to 300 feet.
- Perform physical movements such as bending, reaching overhead, typing, writing, walking, or standing for extended periods.
- Engage in physical tasks like crouching, stooping, kneeling, climbing stairs, shoveling, and working in narrow or confining spaces at various heights.
- Perform twisting movements at the waist, shoulders, and legs, and occasionally lie on your stomach or back during tasks.

**Compensation and Benefits**

- Pay ranges from \$15-\$17 per hour, commensurate with experience
- Discounts on Ijams Nature Center merchandise and programs
- Free Navitat Canopy Adventure experiences

**Equal Opportunity Employment**

Ijams Nature Center is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against employees or job applicants on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, mental or physical disability, veteran status, or any other status or condition protected by applicable state or federal laws. These anti-discrimination policies also apply to volunteers and program recipients. Ijams Nature Center provides reasonable accommodations to all applicants and employees. Applicants with disabilities may request reasonable accommodation at any point in the employment process.

**To Apply**

Complete and submit your application [Here](#). This is also where you'll submit a resume, and 3 professional references (will not be contacted without notice). Applicants are encouraged to include all professional and personal experience that is relevant to this position. **Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis, or until all positions are filled.**

If you have any questions about the position or trouble with the form, please email Kylie Preston, Youth Programs Manager, at [kpreston@ijams.org](mailto:kpreston@ijams.org).