

What to Bring to Fresh Air Learning

Your children are registered for forest school. What should you get to make sure they are warm and dry?

Children must come with gear that is appropriate to the weather that day. Children who are not adequately dressed will not be able to attend that day. From the toes up, here's what to wear to Fresh Air Learning. Craigslist is a good source for many of these items, and in the past parents have arranged bulk orders as well. You can also join Fresh Air Learning's Facebook Gear Swap:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/156901604517453/>

Sanitization:

- Hand sanitizer containing at least 70% alcohol attached to the outside of the child's backpack, or in an easily accessible pouch for the child to reach
- Handwashing kit and towels (parents will assist children with washing their hands upon entry/exit of camp, and children will be washing their hands pre and post snack/lunch). We recommend a water bottle with warm soapy water and a clean dry washcloth

Waterproof Boots:

- Children will wear their rain boots almost all year round.
- If possible, buy new boots. Children use them a lot and the soles wear through.
- The taller the boots, the better! This prevents puddles from getting into the boots.
- Bogs and Kamik both make warm neoprene boots for children.
- Kamik also sells rain boots with liners for extra warmth.
- If you go for normal rain boots, wear wool socks.

When it is rainy, we recommend:

- **Layers:** We recommend wearing layers of clothing so children can make adjustments as needed according to changes in weather/microclimate and activity levels.
- Inner layer of fleece (or polypropylene) or natural fabrics such as wool or silk. The fabric should wick moisture away from the skin and provide a warm, breathable layer.
- Middle layer of insulation made of wool or fleece.
- Avoid jeans in wet weather, since they tend to soak up the water.
- **Rain Jacket:** Outer shell jacket of waterproof, windproof clothing. Be sure to get a jacket in a larger size to allow for layers of clothing under the jacket.
- **Rain Pants:** Pants should stop at the waist so that children can use the "forest toilet". MEC, Abeko, and Wet Skins all make good rain pants. (Parent tip: to keep gear waterproof, spray it with silicone every 3-4 months).
- **Warm socks:** Wool or other thick socks keep your feet warm. Tuck an extra pair into your backpack.

- **Hat:** Warm, waterproof hat that covers the ears.
- **Gloves:** We like Abeko/Puddlegear gloves. These are waterproof and lined. (Sometimes a parent will organize a group buy of these mittens. If interested, contact: info@freshairlearning.org). If your child is not wearing waterproof gloves, bring an extra pair or two.

When it is cold, please add:

- Warm and waterproof gloves or mittens that slip on and off easily.
- Long underwear, Wool or MEC long underwear keeps children warm with less bulk.
- An extra pair of warm gloves and warm socks in your child's bag.
- Optional: reusable hand warmers.

When it is warm, please wear:

- **A long-sleeved shirt** (we recommend light cotton, silk or hemp).
- Durable pants.
- A sun hat.
- Running or hiking shoes (note that children may still play in water and mud, footwear should be waterproof wherever possible!).
- Sun protection.

Everyone requires:

- **A whistle**, attached to the child's jacket.
- **Backpack:** A child-sized waterproof backpack. The backpack should be small enough for your child to carry comfortably with a good chest strap. (Please put a name tag or some other distinguishing mark on the pack).
- **Water bottle:** Water in a spill-proof bottle. Stainless steel Klean Kanteens are very durable.
- **Snack:** A healthy, high-energy snack in a reusable container **that is easy to open for the child independently!** Metal tiffins, lunchbots, and other compartmentalized boxes work well for snacks. For "plastic wrap," we like reusable Abeego Wraps or cloth snack bags.
- **Mug:** A small unbreakable cup for warm drinks (optional as teachers will no longer bring tea to share).
- **An emergency blanket** (such as <https://www.mec.ca/en/product/0199-034/Emergency-Blanket>)
- **Extra socks, gloves, and hat.**
- **Extra layers:** It's good to keep an extra layer or two and a pair of underwear in your child's backpack in case of accidents.
- **Bread bags.** These go over feet if they get wet, so that children can slip their feet into their boots again. Please place a few bags into your child's backpack.

The child's backpack should have their name on it and the Fresh Air Learning phone number (**604-802-7539**) on a tag on the outside.

