



Tamarack Nature Center

Backyard Bunch 2019 Newsletter

Welcome to Tamarack...

Communication

We want *Backyard Bunch* to be a great experience for everyone. Please make sure we have your current email addresses and phone numbers (cell, work, home) so we can reach you in case of emergency. Let us know if your child:

- Has a severe allergy. Remember to download and submit the ***Epinephrine and Benadryl Medication Order & Consent Form*** from our website before the first day of camp. [This form needs to be signed by a physician.](#)
- Has any particular fears, allergies or physical limitations that would affect his/her experience.
- Will be carpooling with another family.
- Is taking any medication we should know about or has stopped taking medication that could affect behavior.
- Is struggling to be bathroom independent.

We will make every effort to inform you of your child's activities in *Backyard Bunch*. Please do not hesitate to come to us with any concerns or questions along the way.

Drop-Off & Pick-Up

Sign-In/Out: As a safety measure, parents are required to sign-in and sign-out each child every day. *Backyard Bunch* officially starts at 9:30 a.m. and ends at Noon. Sign-In/Out is located outside, to the right (north side) of the building, in the fenced-in *My Nature Preschool Play Area*.

Drop-Off & Pick-Up Times: Staff cannot accommodate children arriving early or being picked up late. Please be courteous and drop-off/pick-up your child according to the scheduled hours of the program. For busy families, we offer semi-flexible drop-off and pick-up times:

- Drop off your child between 9:30 a.m. and 10:15 a.m.
- Snack is at 10:30 a.m. Please pack your child a healthy snack each day, so they have sustained energy throughout the morning.
- Pick-up takes place between 11:15 a.m. and Noon.

Parking: Park in the front parking lot, nearest the building. Walk to the designated sign-in location in the *My Nature Preschool Play Area* to the north the building (look for signs). Please do not park in the circle drive in front of the building.

Behavior Guidelines

Our goal is for every child to have a positive experience in *Backyard Bunch*. Tamarack Nature Center staff will identify and enforce clear, reasonable limits for child behavior. Our staff reinforces positive behavior, while attempting to redirect negative behavior. Staff will remove a child from any activity where the child's behavior is harmful to him/herself or others. For more information about behavior guidelines, please see the *Backyard Bunch* page of our website or let us know your questions.

Nature Play Activities

All Backyard Bunch activities are child-centered, child-led, unstructured play. What does that mean? The concept of nature play encourages knowledge of the natural world, development of the child's sense of wonder and appreciation for the beauty and mystery of the natural world through experiences that get children physically close to nature. As naturalists, we set the stage with loose parts and a play space that will enhance the theme of the day. The kids do the rest! Along the way, they build important developmental skills, including cognitive thinking, social development, fine & gross motor skills. Plus, they just get to be kids having fun in the outdoors!



Snacks

Snack break begins at 10:30 a.m. each morning. Please pack a healthy snack for your child so they can have energy all morning. Due to the increasing frequency and potential severity of nut allergies, **please avoid sending any peanut or nut-related food items.** We ask that you send food and beverages in a travel-safe, insulated container marked with your child's name. Supervision during snack is provided. Refrigerated storage space is not available.

Insect Repellent/Sunscreen

Please apply insect repellent and sunscreen to your child each day before Backyard Bunch. Please bring wipes or lotion (no spray) marked with your child's name, so we can help him/her reapply them if necessary. As an extra precaution, we recommend you check your child for ticks each day after the program.

Camp T-shirts Available

Tamarack Nature Center Summer Camp T-Shirts are available in youth and adult sizes and in multiple colors throughout the summer season. Show your Tamarack spirit by purchasing a shirt from the reception desk for only \$15.

Weather

Nature never stops, so during light rain or wind, outdoor activities will continue. During severe weather, children will be moved to a safe location. Children should be dressed in appropriate gear for outdoor fun regardless of the weather!

On days when the heat and humidity are high, we bring out the sprinklers, hoses and the slip-n-slide for some old-fashioned summertime fun. We watch the weather forecast and let you know when to send along a towel, swimsuit or extra clothes.

What to Bring Each Day

Please mark all belongings with your child's full name and send them along in a backpack or bag each day.

- Healthy snack and beverage
- Refillable water bottle (filled with water)
- Hat to protect from sun and insects
- Light jacket or sweatshirt for cool mornings
- Extra set of clothing and closed-toe shoes (no flip-flops)
- Rain gear, as necessary
- Sunscreen wipes or lotion (no spray)
- Insect repellent wipes or lotion (no spray)

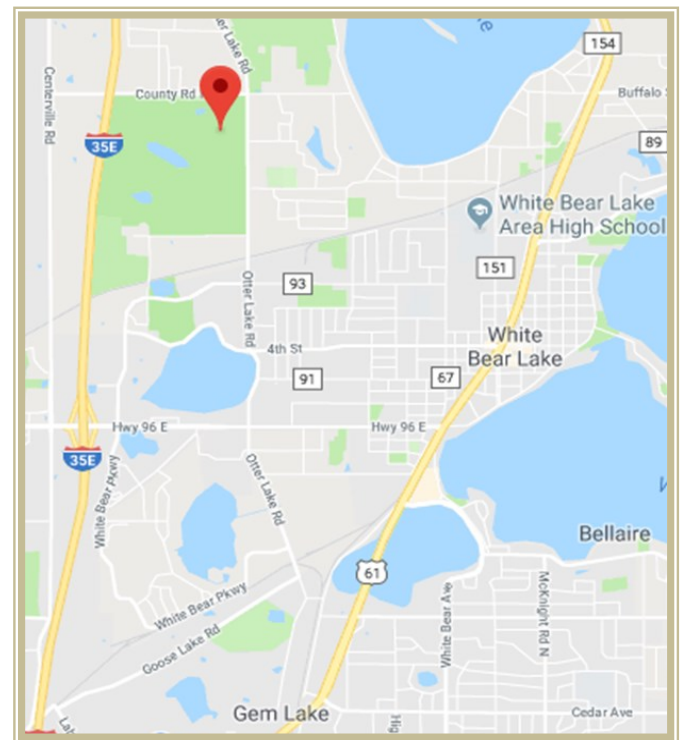
Please leave all items of sentimental or monetary value (including toys) at home.



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A Facility of
RAMSEY COUNTY



**“Play is training for
the unexpected.”**