

Skills Day Camp Instructor

Job Title:

Skills Day Camp Instructor

Summary:

Skills Camp Instructors work at one of several WAS Skill Day Camps depending on their experience and expertise in specific skill areas. Skill Camp Instructors are responsible for supervising and instructing a group of 9 campers for each camp week they are scheduled. Instructors work with their camp Directors and each other to keep campers safe and engaged using a blend of Wilderness Awareness School general curriculum, (nature connection routines, games, songs, and stories; the art of questioning; plant and animal identification and tracking; community and ecology; wandering; sensory awareness, basic survival skills; etc.), curriculum specific to the skill camp, and their passions to facilitate camper connection with nature, community, and self.

Skill Camps and their requisite skills include:

- Ranger Skills: (Ages 9 - 13) movement, scouting, sneaking, hiding, protecting, physical challenges, camouflage, animal forms, core routines of awareness, stealth, imagination
- Knife and Knot Skills: (Ages 9 - 13) knife safety, carving techniques, bushcraft projects, knot-tying, traps, natural shelters, tarp shelters, aidless navigation, mapping, challenges
- Survival Skills: (Ages 10 - 13) fire making, matches, tending fire, knife safety, identifying and harvesting wild edible plants, campfire cooking, shelter-building, cordage, bushcraft
- Fishing Skills: (Ages 10-13) how to cast and bait, catch-and-release vs. catch-and-eat fish ethics, searching for wild bait and turtles, aquatic species list, watershed ecology

This position reports to:

- Program Coordinators and Program Manager for the duration of the summer
- Skill Camp Director weekly in the field

Pay:

- First Year Staff - \$820 per week (equivalent to \$20.50 per hour)
- Second Year Staff - \$840 per week (equivalent to \$21.00 per hour)
- Third+ Year Staff - \$860 per week (equivalent to \$21.50 per hour)

Work Hours:

- This is a seasonal position, working Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm daily

- Summer Camps run from June 24th - August 23rd. Preference will be given to instructors who can work at least 5 of the 9 weeks of camp.
- Planning Week: June 10th - 14th (At least 10 hours of paid online training for new staff, other training hours determined by positions worked. Additional curriculum and training necessary for Skill Camps.)
- Staff Training Week: June 17th - June 21st (Mandatory for all staff. Training will be held at our Duvall campus. Camping overnight is not mandatory, but HIGHLY encouraged.)

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Supervise up to 9 campers ages 9-13 at a time in a public park with minimal support from a team member or supervisor
- Communicate with the camp Director and parents/guardians promptly about accidents, injuries, illness, DEI incidents, and the emotional well-being of campers
- Mentor a volunteer age 15+ in WAS curriculum and leadership development, and provide written and verbal feedback
- Use a combination of Wilderness Awareness School curriculum and activities, and your talents to spark camper passion, curiosity, and gifts, and create connections for campers with nature, self, and community.
- Work with a team of instructors and directors to lead activities such as songs, games, and stories for up to 45 campers
- Work with your camp directors and mentors to monitor and develop your own instructing and mentoring abilities in a culture of feedback
- Uphold Wilderness Awareness School's mission and policies

Physical Requirements:

- This is a physically demanding job and instructors must be able to be on their feet for 6+ hours at a time, walk long distances, move over uneven terrain, carry their gear (water bottle, lunch, snack, clothing layers, first aid kit, radio, bandana ball, additional activity supplies), and be out in the elements without shelter all day.
- Instructors should be extremely aware of their own physical needs as well as the physical needs of their campers, and be able to make adjustments to their day based on this information. This includes but is not limited to checking water consumption, adjusting lunch/snack times, taking shade breaks, and adjusting hike distances and activity types.
- Caring for the physical, emotional, and mental needs of oneself and a group of young people can be taxing. Successful instructors protect themselves against burnout by tending to their own physical, emotional, and mental health both

inside AND outside of camp hours. At camp, this includes asking for help, taking breaks when given, practicing emotional regulation, cultivating grit and resilience, and modeling this for campers. At home, this can look like many things but often involves a healthy amount of rest.

Qualifications and Expectations:

- Experience working with children in a professional capacity, and a desire to build upon this experience
- Demonstrable time developing the skills appropriate to the skill camp one is hired to
- Current Wilderness First Aid and CPR certifications (or able to acquire before the first day of camp). We will host two WFA/CPR trainings at our Linne Doran campus in Duvall, on March 23-24, 2024, and June 8-9, 2024. These trainings will be presented by Remote Medical Training and offered to staff at cost (\$250).
- Minimum age of 18* by June 10th, 2024. (*We will consider 17-year-old applicants who are highly skilled and have experience working with youth.)
- Able to reliably arrive early/on time to various camp locations in the Seattle area, many of which aren't accessible by public transportation. (Staff will be able to state location preferences on their application, and may apply for travel stipends for commuting to camp locations 20+ miles away from home.)
- Able to work at least 5 of the 9 weeks of camps, in addition to a week of Staff Training.
- Able to reliably receive email, phone calls, and text messages from supervisors and teammates, and access and make use of online camp resources
- Must demonstrate good judgment and risk assessment
- Be a professional adult: operate with responsibility and integrity
- Creativity and passion for mentoring youth in a natural flow learning environment with an open and flexible structure
- A commitment to developing your capacity with conversations around justice and equity as well as cultivating a welcoming and inclusive space for all.
- Strong ability to work as a contributing member of a team, able to bring your unique voice, gifts, and contributions to a relational work setting
- Willing to participate in a healthy feedback culture, providing and receiving feedback from volunteers, peers, and leadership
- Empathy, compassion, and an open mind

Preference will be given to applicants who have:

- Volunteered for a Skill camp in the past, completed a related WAS program in that skill, or demonstrable outside experience in the skill they are meant to teach

- Experience as a naturalist instructor working with youth ages 6-18 in the outdoors
- Experience with the 8 Shields Model and Coyote Mentoring method
- Knowledge of Pacific Northwest hazards, mammals, tracking, edible/medicinal plants, navigation with and without map/compass, field ecology, trees, survival techniques, birds/birdsong, and history of local Indigenous Nations and right relations.
- Knowledge and/or training in justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion work
- Completed one or more Wilderness Awareness School programs

Sick Time and Backup Instructors:

- Seasonal Instructors accrue sick time hours at a rate of 1 PSSL hour per 40 hours worked. These hours are not paid out at the end of the summer but can be rolled over from one summer to another.
- In practice, this means that new Instructors may earn up to 10 paid hours of sick time by the end of the summer and that returning Instructors may have up to 10 paid hours available to use on day 1. Sick days outside of this, unfortunately, can not be compensated.
- If you fall ill over the weekend before your shift or are otherwise unavailable in the morning, contact your Director and Program Coordinator as soon as possible. A Backup Instructor, an Instructor from another camp, your Director, or a combination thereof may need to take your place, depending on who is sufficiently skilled. If you recover mid-week, you may recover your original group, or you may be given the option to become a Backup Instructor and replace someone else, which may involve traveling to a different park for the remainder of the week.

Benefits:

- Paid training and mentoring in the Coyote Mentoring method and the 8 Shields Model by leaders in the field
- Discounts on Wilderness Awareness School bookstore items
- The option to apply for employee housing on our land in Duvall, WA, at significantly reduced rates for the area
- Weekly verbal and written feedback on your growth as a Nature Instructor, contributing to a potential professional reference at the end of the season
- Be a part of an amazing team of passionate people doing important work!