

Lead Camp Preschool Counselor (Ages 4-5)

About the New Canaan Nature Center and Summer Camp

The New Canaan Nature Center (NCNC) is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit environmental education center and sanctuary dedicated to helping people of all ages better understand, appreciate and care for the world of nature. Located a short distance north of New York City, NCNC encompasses a 40-acre preserve in the heart of New Canaan, CT that features diverse habitats including wet and dry meadows and woodlands, two ponds, dense thickets, an old orchard and a cattail marsh. Two miles of trails meander across the site. Through a diverse range of programs for schools, youth, adults, and families, the NCNC strives to create a deeper understanding and concern for the natural world through programs and exhibits that stress enjoyable and active, hands-on learning. It is our belief that personal awareness and involvement will enable citizens to make intelligent decisions relating to the future of our environment.

Our Summer Camp program aims to get children “unplugged” from electronics and other indoor activities by creating and strengthening the connection of children to nature through sustainable, exciting, hands-on interactions in the out-of-doors. It is our goal to “Leave No Child Inside” over the summer as there exists an entire world of adventure just waiting outside the door. Our Summer Camp serves approximately 1,000 children, ages 3-15, through half-day, full-day, and overnight adventure programs. The goal of camp is to provide quality environmental education experiences, which meet the mission and sustainability policy of the NCNC, within a fun and exciting camp atmosphere.

Visit www.NewCanaanNature.org for more information.

Position

Lead Camp Preschool Counselor - full-time, seasonal position. Based on this classification, you are a temporary, part-time and non-exempt employee.

Lead Camp Preschool Counselors are the primary facilitators and group managers for our various groups of campers ages 4-5. Working with and mentoring our Assistant Camp Counselors, these positions are responsible for implementing and developing education curricula and camp activities that support our yearly camp themes and meet the NCNC’s mission and sustainability policy. Lead Camp Preschool Counselors will assist in managing Teacher-Naturalists-in-Training (TNT) high-school volunteers during camp sessions.

Note: A number of part-time positions and limited full day positions will be available for Lead Camp Counselors working with Ages 4-5 camp groups.

Working Hours

Monday through Friday, although some weekend work may be required. Typical operation hours of NCNC are from 8:30am to 4:30pm. Summer Camp schedule may require additional time beyond typical operation hours. Summer Camp season runs from approximately the start of June to mid August, including staff training the last week of May. Please check website for details on camp session schedule for this year.



Qualifications/Requirements

The Lead Camp Preschool Counselor must:

- A. Possess (or have at least two years working towards) a B.S./B.A. in Early Childhood Education, Environmental Education, Education, Outdoor Recreation or other related field.
- B. Have at least two years prior experience in early childhood education, child daycare, environmental education, formal and/or informal teaching, camps or similar experience working with children in a responsible and professional setting (*Prior preschool/summer camp experience a plus*).
- C. Be able to work well as part of a team and interact well with camper parents.
- D. Possess the physical ability to work actively throughout the property in a variety of weather conditions.
- E. Hold and maintain throughout the duration of camp valid certification in the following: First Aid/CPR and Epi-pen/Medical Administration. If not current, must be willing to obtain valid certification prior to the start of the camp season.
- F. Possess a valid driver's license and a clean driving record (*Copy of driving record(s) required*)
- G. Possess a valid health/vaccination record (*required*).
- H. Possess enthusiasm for working with young children and a sense of humor
- I. Be 21 years of age or older.

I. Program

Duties Include:

- A. Quality Programming
 - i. Maintaining CT state standards for summer camp operation, assisting with camper forms and other paperwork as needed.
 - ii. Ensuring that programs and activities meet camp goals and curriculum standards, as well as the Nature Center mission and sustainability policy.
 - iii. Working with other Camp Counselors, Instructors, Resident EE Staff, Camp Directors, and other NCNC staff to provide high quality nature-based education experiences to all NCNC Summer Camp participants and TNT volunteers.
- B. Camp Curricula & Activities
 - i. Design, plan and teach interactive and interdisciplinary nature camp programming for preschool aged children that maximizes use of our NCNC outdoor classroom space.
 - ii. Provide enthusiastic and innovative instruction - teaching through hands-on and inquiry-based methods that encourage exploration, awareness, appreciation, and stewardship of the natural environment.
 - iii. Support education lessons provided by Resident EE specialists.
 - iv. Safely lead groups of up to 16 children in an outdoor setting while enacting solid group/behavior management protocols (handle camper adjustments in a caring and age-appropriate manner)
 - v. Oversee accurate check-in/check-out of campers, greet parents.
 - vi. Assist during snack and lunch breaks, preparing food as necessary.
 - vii. Lead the entire camp in games, songs and activities by own volition and as assigned by the Camp Director or Field Director
 - viii. Handle/teach with captive wildlife as your training allows



C. Teacher-Naturalist in Training (TNT) Program

- i. Supervise & coordinate all TNT volunteers assigned to your camp group

D. Coordination & Logistics

- i. Coordinate with the Camp Director and Field Director for the implementation of logistical plans, curriculum development and transportation schedules.
- ii. Help to increase sustainable and eco-friendly components of camp programs.

II. Camper Health and Safety

Duties Include:

- A. Recognizing and appropriately responding to hazards and emergencies.
- B. Maintaining CT state youth camp standards for instructor to camper ratios.
- C. Encouraging the personal and social development of children.
- D. Observing children and reporting all accidents, significant illnesses, and/or signs of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse to the Camp Director.
- E. Supervising participants and ensuring the safety of all staff and campers.

III. Records

Maintain accurate records:

- A. Update health and attendance records on a daily basis.
- B. Protect the confidentiality of participant records.
- C. Ensure proper records and storage for any camper medications within Medication protocol of camp.

IV. Supervision and Support

Lead Camp Preschool Counselors report to the Camp Director and/or Field Director.

- A. Work with and mentor Assistant Camp Preschool Counselors and TNT's.
- B. Supervise high-school TNT volunteers assigned to your camp group.

V. Attendance

The Lead Camp Preschool Counselor must:

- A. Attend staff training & orientation prior to the start of camp.
- B. Attend all morning staff check-ins & afternoon staff debriefs
- C. Attend all staff meetings (Friday mornings) and any other scheduled meetings.
- D. Complete the entire length of the summer as agreed upon in his/her contract.
- E. Realize this position is exempt from overtime unless approved in advance by Camp Director.

VI. Miscellaneous

The Lead Camp Preschool Counselor must be willing and prepared to assume other appropriate duties as assigned by the Camp Director or Field Director.



New Canaan Nature Center

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www.NewCanaanNature.org

Lead Camp Preschool Counselor Essential Functions

It is essential that the staff member be able to:

- Work the hours needed to fulfill duties (can go beyond typical 40 hour work week as needed and with approval of Camp Director).
- Assist campers in an emergency (fire, evacuation, illness, injury).
- Communicate effectively and positively with campers, parents, camp staff, NCNC staff and Camp Directors.
- Work with a diverse clientele and establish positive relations.
- Provide supervision and support to staff.
- Possess strength and endurance required to maintain constant supervision of staff & campers.
- Appropriately respond to environmental, wildlife and other environmental hazards.
- Actively lead and participate in group activities (large and small).
- Be energized, enthusiastic and positive with good humor.
- Assist with and actively participate in everyday camp duties (i.e. Song circle, opening/closing ceremonies, all group games, snack/lunch)
- Be prepared to substitute for any other camp staff on short notice as needed.

Compensation: \$14-18/hour commensurate with experience

Closing Date: April 15 of each year or until filled.

To apply, go to www.NewCanaanNature.org and fill out online application. Cover letter and resume may be included along with application if desired. When completed, submit via e-mail or print out and mail to:

Summer Camp Director
New Canaan Nature Center
144 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan, CT 06840
Email: camp@NewCanaanNature.org