



Dear Families - Welcome to FEAT & Forest Explorers 2025/26 @ Great Moose Adventures!

## 1. Forest Explorers & Adventure Team (FEAT) - The Program

Our goal with FEAT is to provide a unique Forest School experience that combines inquiry-based forest exploration with adventure-based recreational sports and Science learning opportunities for kids aged 9-14 for 1 or 2 days a week (Wednesdays and / or Thursdays) from 8:30am - 3:30pm

Here is what it will look like:

- Classic Forest School Activities = hiking, exploring, games, arts & crafts, drama, building projects & team building initiatives
- Adventure = canoe tripping in the Fall, including canoe instruction, portaging, campfire cooking & backcountry cross-country skiing in the Winter including ski instruction for beginners to advanced
- Science = Utilizing our amazing landscape the participants will take place in activities & lessons that focus on ['The Land Between'](#), allowing the students the opportunity to learn about this amazing ecosystem and the species within it
- Physical Education = field games, hiking, skiing and so much more

## 2. Forest Explorers - The Program

Forest Explorers is for kids aged 4 - 8 who want to play outside, all day! Through outdoor play, our educators guide and nurture their natural curiosities and inspire them to be confident, independent, and kind humans. We facilitate long stretches of child-led, purposeful play mixed with directed inquiry-based activities utilizing stories, games, drama, Rainbow Kids Yoga, music and nature - all with a goal to encourage imaginative, creative and educational learning opportunities. Plus - we begin the kids on their path to outdoor sports and adventure as a JR-FEAT program with opportunities to ski, canoe, swim, hike and much more. This is a 1 day or 2 day program - running on Wednesdays & Thursdays throughout the school year (8:30am-3:30pm).

Examples of our unique Forest Explorers & FEAT Outdoor Education projects and activities include:

- Nocturnal Tunnel - journey through the tunnel to learn about diurnal, crepuscular and nocturnal creatures in Ontario
- Pollinators - making habitats and planting gardens, creating mini greenhouses, bee dancing
- Nature's Language - animal tracks and their stories, travelling the migration path of North American birds, scat identification and recreation
- Pond dipping - finding the minibeasts in the creek, learning about animal life cycles
- Safe mushroom exploration and spore printing
- Journey to the Wishing Tree
- Tree Identification - find a special tree, maple tree tapping and sap boiling
- Forest Art - dead wood monsters
- Spring flowers - dancing, seeding, art
- Scientist for a day
- Music in the forest - woodland marching band
- Seasonal celebrations - Thanksgiving mud kitchen feast, broom and scarecrow making, potions and teas

### **3. Dates - you can choose 1 or 2 days a week (8:30am-3:30pm)**

Fall Sessions (10 sessions) -

- Wednesdays - Sept 3, 10, 17, 24, Oct 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 & Nov 5
- Thursdays - Sept 4, 11, 18, 25, Oct 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 & Nov 6

Winter Sessions (10 sessions) -

- Wednesdays - Jan 7, 14, 21, 28, Feb 4, 11, 18, 25, March 4, 11
- Thursdays - Jan 8, 15, 22, 29, Feb 5, 12, 19, 26, March 5, 12

Spring Sessions (7 sessions) -

- Wednesdays - March 25, April 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 & May 6
- Thursdays - March 26, April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, May 7

\*Please note, we do not facilitate programs from mid May - end of June, due to blackflies & mosquitoes that can make forest life uncomfortable

#### 4. Snacks & Lunch

- Children will bring their own meals from home. No food sharing will be allowed
- We are a nut-free environment, so please pack lunches accordingly
- Water - please bring a water bottle, we have refill stations
- Boomerang lunches only - we kindly ask that all participants take home everything that they bring, including garbage
- Fridges, microwaves, dishware and cutlery will not be available - please keep this in mind when packing daily lunches
- Outdoor life is super active, so please provide lots of tasty, good food

#### 5. Communication

- An email will be sent out 1 week prior to the first day of the program with all the relevant information that you might need. All other information is found in the Parent Handbook
- Day-to-day communication will take place through a SeeSaw App, including pictures of our adventures - details to access this will be provided in the email sent before the start of the program
- Parents will have an opportunity for a quick chat during the morning drop-off & afternoon pick-up
- We have a [Facebook Group](#) called *GMA Forest Class Families* which can be used for potential carpooling, gear swapping and communication between families.
- If you have any questions or would like to set up a meeting with a Director, please send an email to [oe@greatmooseadventures](mailto:oe@greatmooseadventures) or call us at 705-687-3903 to book a time

## 6. Procedures

### Drop-off/Pick-up:

-The day starts at 8:30am and ends at 3:30pm.

-Early drops are available from 7:45 onwards for \$5 a day

-Late pick ups are available until 4:30pm for \$5 a day.

Parents & participants will meet our Teachers at the beginning and end of day at the Green House. If you have not arranged for an early drop off or late pick-up - please be on time. If you are dropping early or picking up late - please collect at the Outdoor Ed shed (we will highlight locations on the first day).

For parents with younger children or children who have not been to Great Moose Adventures (or other programs) before, please prepare them for a happy good-bye, as parents are not allowed to accompany the kids to class. We will have staff available to escort the kids to their classrooms, but if you think this is going to be an issue - please consider whether your child is ready for this program.

### Transportation Shuttle Service:

Fall & Winter session = \$200 per season (\$20/day for 10 sessions - no HST)

Spring session = \$140 (\$20/day for 7 sessions - no HST)

### **Wednesdays - Orillia/Washago/Gravenhurst:**

Orillia - Pick up/drop off - 8am & 4pm (Canadian Tire parking lot - 1029 Brodie Dr.)

Washago - Pick up/drop off - 8:20am & 3:40pm (Washago Car Pool - across from LCBO)

Gravenhurst - Pick up/drop off - 8:40am & 4:30 (Independent parking lot -290 First St N)

### **Thursdays - Bracebridge/Gravenhurst:**

Bracebridge - Pick up/drop off - 8:25am & 3:40pm (Rotary Club - 131 Wellington St)

Gravenhurst - Pick up/drop off - 8:00am & 4pm (Independent parking lot -290 First St N)

\*Locations are subject to change, pending interest - with a minimum requirement of 2 participants per stop

## **7. Illness & Outbreak Guidelines**

GMA's outbreak policies and procedures for our programs are based on the operational guidance given by the Ontario government and have been created following the advice and guidance of the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.

If a participant demonstrates an illness while attending a program, we will isolate the individual, and contact the families for pick up as soon as possible.

### Handwashing & Hygiene

Regular reminders to wash hands and visual checks by teachers will be made to ensure that all children are maintaining good hygiene.

## **8. Sun Care**

Children must wear sunscreen and ball caps throughout the day. Please apply sunscreen at home with your children before the program everyday. We will ask the children to reapply throughout the day. All participants will be encouraged to apply their own sunscreen, so it might be best to look for easy to apply sprays for the body and sticks for the face. If you do not want your child to wear sunscreen, please let us know.

## **9. Tick Checks**

Tick checks will be done upon returning from an outdoor program. If a tick is found embedded in a child, our teachers will safely remove the tick. The tick will be kept on site and can be sent home if needed. We suggest carrying out tick checks on your child when they get home too.

## **10. Code of Conduct**

- All participants must follow the above described guidelines to the best of their ability
- Self-screening - if any participant is feeling unwell during programming or at home, they must let an adult know asap.
- Participants are expected to adhere to the GMA Rules of Respect - Respect Nature, Staff, Yourself, Other Participants and GMA Property

## 11. Gear - what to bring?

### Summer Clothing, Gear & Equipment

Please follow the list to the best of your abilities. Teachers will encourage participants to look after their belongings, hang-up any wet/damp gear and take home dirty or soiled belongings. Please label everything:

- ☐ water bottle (s)
- ☐ hat
- ☐ sunscreen
- ☐ bathing suit & towel
- ☐ indoor shoes - flip flops are ok
- ☐ shoes with closed toes
- ☐ rain jacket & pants
- ☐ long sleeved t-shirt & pants (lightweight and light colour for bug protection)
- ☐ extra shorts, socks and t-shirt
- ☐ extra underwear
- ☐ sweater/hoodie
- ☐ plastic bag for wet clothes

### Fall Clothing, Gear & Equipment

- ☐ Rainsuit (top and bottoms)
- ☐ Rain boots (and a spare pair if possible)
- ☐ Hiking boots/running shoes (for outdoor use)
- ☐ Cap (& toque once the colder weather arrives)
- ☐ T-shirt and shorts
- ☐ Spare set of clothing
- ☐ Extra socks
- ☐ Warm sweater/fleece
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ water bottle (s)
- ☐ Plastic bags (for wet/dirty gear)

## Winter Clothing, Gear & Equipment

- ☐ Winter jacket
- ☐ Snow pants (if possible a spare pair too)
- ☐ Winter boots (if possible spare pair too)
- ☐ Toque
- ☐ Buff/balaclava/neck warmer x 2
- ☐ Warm Mitts/Gloves x 2 pairs at minimum
- ☐ Warm sweater/fleece
- ☐ Warm socks (and spare pair too - **please no ankle socks**)
- ☐ Spare set of regular clothing
- ☐ Sunscreen (optional)
- ☐ water bottle(s)
- ☐ Plastic bags (for wet/dirty gear)

**\*Layering is the most important part to keeping warm and having a successful day.**

**Base layer** -*The layer next to your skin. Best to avoid cotton and use synthetic or wool fabrics*

**Mid layer** -*Warm sweater and pants - fleece works great*   **Outer layer** - *Waterproof and warm*

**Winter Inclement weather information** - if the weather is looking extremely stormy or very cold (below 20 degrees including the wind chill), we will need to cancel the day - we will try our best to reschedule the day to another time. **We will send you an email by 7:00am on the day if we need to cancel a day.** Otherwise, we will be open and ready for adventure - regardless of what the public buses are doing. Please exercise caution on our backroads, which can be snowy and icy.

## Spring Clothing, Gear & Equipment

For colder days:

- ☐ Winter jacket and/or rain jacket (with warm layers underneath)
- ☐ Snow pants and/or rain pants (with warm layers underneath)
- ☐ Winter boots (waterproof if possible - e.g. insulated rubber boots) + a spare pair if possible
- ☐ Toque
- ☐ Buff/neck warmer
- ☐ Mitts/Gloves x 2 pairs at minimum (waterproof is best)
- ☐ Warm sweater/fleece
- ☐ Warm socks (and 2 x spare pair - please no ankle socks)
- ☐ Spare set of clothing (including outerwear)
- ☐ Plastic bags for wet gear

As the weather warms up:

- ☐ Rain suit (top and bottom)
- ☐ Rain boots
- ☐ Cap

Here is a list of items that you do not need: cell phones, cameras, video games, junk food or candy, new or good clothing



## **12. Payments & Cancellations**

- Full payment must be received to confirm your booking - however, payment plans can be available on special requests (with a deposit)
- \$70/per day x number of days in the session (no HST)
- Fall Session - 10 Sessions = \$700
- Winter Session - 10 Sessions = \$700
- Spring Session - 7 Sessions = \$490
- 10% discount if you sign up for all 3 Seasons of FEAT or Forest Explorers - from the beginning!
- No family discounts for multiple children
- All gear is included, except for cross-country ski sets - which can be rented for \$40 for the winter session

### **Cancellations & Refunds**

At GMA, we provide refunds on any fees up to 14 days prior to the start of a program, with a 10% administration fee kept back. Within 14 days from the program start date, we do not provide refunds for any of the following reasons: vacations, illness, or choosing to keep a child home from a program for any reason. Thank you for respecting our refund/cancellation policy.

### **Payment Options**

- Interac email transfers to [oe@greatmooseadventures.com](mailto:oe@greatmooseadventures.com)
- Credit Card with a 2.9% administration fee - contact us if you prefer this option
- Send a cheque to 'Great Moose Adventures Inc' (1368 Housey's Rapids Road, Gravenhurst, P1P 1R3)

### 13. Overnight Trips - Optional

To create a strong team dynamic and to 'big up' the adventure - we will be offering optional overnight camping trips:

#### Fall =

- 3 night / 4 day Canoe Trip (Date TBD)
- **3 Mile Lake** - this amazing lake situated only 4 km from our lodge is accessed by paddling Kahshe River, portaging Teopolis bridge, paddling through the enchanted river to Bass Lake, up the creek to Kahshe Lake and by the cottages to Blueberry Island, and finally a short portage to 3 Mile Lake (all in - a 4/5 hour day trip)
- **Super Safe Trip** - while the trip is a full day canoe away, we can access the lake by car within 10 minutes from Great Moose Adventures, so if anything happens we are close by
- **Menu** - campfire cooking! We will design a menu as a group (adhering to all dietary needs) , and everyone will be involved with the meal process. "Food always tastes better on trip"
- **Introductory canoe trip** - as this may be new to some participants, the trip is easy going. We are camping in the same spot for all 3 nights, and filling the days with games, challenges, science and all the good stuff that comes with a canoe trip (team building, self-confidence, physical activity, friendship, plus much more!). We will practice canoe tripping skills (paddling, portaging, packing etc prior to the trip in the first 3 weeks of FEAT
- **Costs** - \$300, includes all gear (except sleeping bags & camp mats), food and instruction

#### Winter =

- 2 night Winter Camping Trip (Date TBD)
- @ Great Moose Adventures - this introductory winter camping trip includes backcountry skiing, campfire cooking, star gazing, and team building activities & games
- Super Safe Trip - experience winter camping in a wilderness setting - within sight of Great Moose Adventures lodge. Participants will be outside (as much as possible), but we will have the advantage of drying our clothes, having access to bathrooms and an emergency shelter if needed.
- Cozy Sleep Set-up - campers will sleep in tents with proper, 5 inch camp cot mattresses to keep everybody warm and cozy throughout the night
- Menu - campfire cooking! We will design a menu as a group (adhering to all dietary needs) , and everyone will be involved with the meal process. "Food always tastes better on trip"
- Costs - 2 nights = \$200, includes all gear (except sleeping bags), food and instruction, 1 night = \$150
- Schedule = Friday night starts at 4pm, Saturday starts at 9am & Sunday ends at 3pm

**Spring =**

- Spring Overnight Campout - we will be hosting a campout for our FEAT plus any Forest Explorers (ages 6+) who are keen to try a campout! Here are the details:
- When: Date TBD - you can stay for 1 or 2 nights. Friday night starts at 4pm, Saturday starts at 9am & Sunday ends at 3pm
- Where: Great Moose Adventures - Place du Soleil / Echo Point (very close to our OE programming zone)....minutes walk from the Lodge / Washrooms
- Menu - campfire cooking! We will design a menu as a group (adhering to all dietary needs) , and everyone will be involved with the meal process. "Food always tastes better on trip"
- Costs - 2 nights = \$200, includes all gear (except sleeping bags and camp mats), food and instruction, 1 night = \$150
- Why: After an amazing 3 seasons of Forest Class the kids have connected and made friends...so what better way to finish off the year with an exciting sleepover camp!
- Who: FEAT participants and any Forest Explorers (ages 6+) who want to try out a campout with lots of support

**Summer = Opportunities for Day Camp (ages 4-16) and / or 5 day Canoe Trip (ages 8-16)**

- all gear provided, except sleeping bags & camp mats
- Click [here](#) for details

If you have any questions about the information provided in the handbook please don't hesitate to contact us:

[oe@greatmooseadventures.com](mailto:oe@greatmooseadventures.com)

Kind regards.

Becki and Brad