



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Ijams Nature Center Hosts Nature Preschool/Play Club In-Person and Virtual Open Houses in February and March

Ijams Nature Center will host in-person and virtual open houses for families interested in learning more about the full-time Ijams Nature Preschool and the new part-time Ijams Nature Play Club.

In-person open houses are Saturday, Feb. 27, and Saturday March 6, from 2-5 p.m. at the Ijams Miller Education Building, 2915 Island Home Ave. In-person events will follow COVID-19 safety protocols to ensure everyone stays safe.

Virtual open houses are Thursday, Feb. 25, and Thursday, March 11, from 6-7 p.m. All events are listed on the Ijams Calendar of Events at ijams.org/calendar-of-events.

Classes start Monday, Aug. 9. The Ijams Nature Preschool meets Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and focuses on child-led, age-appropriate, experiential learning. Children ages 3-5 spend more than 50% of their time outdoors.

The new Ijams Nature Play Club follows the same model for ages 3-5, but is 100% outdoors. Classes meet Monday and Wednesday from 9:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Both programs blend traditional education standards with the opportunity to learn about and explore the natural world. Children spend the majority of their time outdoors, where they learn through play, discovery and inquiry. Activities focus on sensory experiences with live animals, natural objects, artifacts and art materials.

The programs encourage curiosity, cognitive growth and motor skills through unstructured, child-led outdoor adventures. Children build problem-solving, math and engineering skills through hands-on experiences, and cultivate social skills through group play and opportunities for cooperative learning.

For more information about the Ijams Nature Preschool and Ijams Nature Play Club, visit ijams.org/nature-preschool or ijams.org/nature-play-club. Additional questions may be directed to Administrator Leslee Moore at 865-679-5491 or email preschool@ijams.org.

Ijams also is offering eight consecutive weeks of Nature Preschool Day Camp starting June 7. Camps run from 9 a.m. to noon and feature a new theme each week. To register for Nature Preschool Day Camp, visit ijams.org/preschool-summer-camp.

Ijams Nature Center is a nonprofit, 315-acre educational nature center for all ages, abilities and walks of life. Ijams' mission is to encourage stewardship of the natural world by providing an urban greenspace for people to learn about and enjoy the outdoors through engaging

experiences. Located just three miles from downtown Knoxville, Ijams features 12 miles of hiking and mixed-use trails, a public access river dock, swimming, boating, biking and more. The center offers hundreds of educational programs annually for all ages. The Ijams grounds and trails are open every day from 8 a.m. until dusk. The Visitor Center is open daily from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. For more information, visit Ijams.org.

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