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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Ijams Nature Center Hosts Nature Preschool/Play Club In-Person and Virtual Open Houses**

Ijams Nature Center will host in-person and virtual open houses for families interested in fall 2022 enrollment for the full-time Ijams Nature Preschool and part-time Ijams Nature Play Club.

Virtual open houses are Feb. 22 and 24, March 17, and April 28 from 6-7 p.m. Virtual events will take place via Zoom.

In-person open houses are Feb. 27, March 20, and May 1 from 1-3 p.m. at the Ijams Miller Education Building, 2915 Island Home Ave. In-person events will follow COVID-19 safety protocols, including wearing masks inside the building, to ensure everyone stays safe.

More information and registration is available on the Ijams Calendar of Events at [Ijams.org/calendar-of-events](https://ijams.org/calendar-of-events).

Fall classes start Monday, Aug. 8. 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 Ijams Nature Play Club follows the same model, but is 100% outdoors. There are two, two-day sessions, Monday/Wednesday and Tuesday/Thursday. Both sessions meet from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

The Ijams Nature Preschool and Play Club 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](https://ijams.org/nature-preschool) or [Ijams.org/nature-play-club](https://ijams.org/nature-play-club). Additional questions may be directed to Abby Branstetter at 865-679-5491, or via email at [preschool@ijams.org](mailto:preschool@ijams.org) or [playclub@ijams.org](mailto:playclub@ijams.org).

Ijams also is offering eight consecutive weeks of Preschool Summer Camp starting June 6. Camps run from 9 a.m. to noon and feature a new theme each week. To learn more about Preschool Summer Camp, visit [Ijams.org/preschool-summer-camp](https://ijams.org/preschool-summer-camp).

Ijams Nature Center is a nonprofit, 318-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](https://ijams.org).

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