**LandPaths 2020 Environmental Education Programs**

**COVID-19 Policies and Procedures**

**All policies are subject to change at LandPaths discretion and in response to updated guidelines from Public Agencies**

Dear LandPaths’ Community,

We are incredibly grateful to offer our outdoor Education Programs this year where youth can be immersed in nature and community with other students. Although the decision to send your child is not an easy one with the current covid-19 pandemic, we know the need for healthy stimulation and joyful learning experiences outside are more important than ever. We have been working hard to adapt our programs to make them as safe as possible. We successfully hosted over 275 youth this past summer, completely outdoors and in small pods spread throughout our properties. While the risk of exposure to Covid -19 cannot be completely eliminated, we are confident in the procedures we are implementing. We also need **YOUR** help to keep our programs safe. We are sure that all participating families, staff, and volunteers are dedicated to the safety of our youth and community and will follow the recommendations laid out below.

We are complying with all California and local health orders, following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the American Camp Association and Association of Camp Nurses as we continue to adjust and improve on the protocols implemented over the summer.

We are dedicated to doing everything we can to keep our participants, volunteers, and staff safe, but there are inherent risks involved in any activity where people from separate households are gathering. The following information outlines the theory and protocols behind providing in person outdoor environmental education programs with the lowest risk of spread of COVID19.

A key element of keeping our participants and the greater community safe directly relates to how individuals and families behave, not only while our programs are in session, but also outside of and prior to joining us at our education sites. We ask that all participant families, staff and volunteers adhere to local health guidelines outside of LandPaths’ programs, to limit contact in other areas of life, to practice sanitation and to wear a mask when in public. **How your family behaves outside of our program directly affects every student and their family that you and your child come into contact with.** We expect that all families will take this shared risk seriously. IF YOU, YOUR CHILD, OR ANYONE YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH SHOWS SYMPTOMS OF COVID19, YOUR CHILD MUST REFRAIN FROM ATTENDING OUR PROGRAM, NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY, AND SEEK TESTING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Please read on below for additional details on how our programs have adapted to limit the risk of COVID-19 spread. We are working to make sure our programs are safe, educational and fun for all!

By permitting your child to participate in a LandPaths’ Program, ***you acknowledge that there is a risk of contracting COVID19 and you assume this risk voluntarily.*** With this also comes the possibility of program closure if a case were detected within our programs population.

**Stable Small Groups**

The most fundamental aspect of creating a safe environment is stable groups limited to 12 or less students (the county now allows up to 16 youth in a group). With stable small groups, if a person were to contract COVID19, they would likely have only exposed the people in their group instead of every group and person at the site. By strictly maintaining the integrity of these small groups (no changing in and out of group members and limited exposure to people outside the group) the people in the group can interact in close proximity, without masks or social distancing. However, we are going further and **all activities will include physical distancing and masks where physical distancing is not possible**.

Our rules are:

* Groups will have a maximum of 12 youth;
* Any study pods, family groups, siblings, carpool groups will be kept together, meaning all youth in a single household or pod will be in same group
* If carpooling, youth must be in the same group (if taking a bus they will be seated based on their group assignments)
* Groups will have different assigned home bases throughout the properties;
* Each home base has assigned seats that are 6’ distant, thus masks may be off when at your assigned seat
* Arrival and departure locations will be spaced throughout the properties where possible, where not possible drop-off/pick-up times will be staggered;
* Group members, staff and volunteers will not rotate or move between groups;
* Group members must maintain minimum 6 ft physical distance between themselves and anyone NOT in their group;
* 6’ Physical distancing within the group will be maintained whenever possible and masks will be provided (or can be brought from home) and worn when a 6’ separation is not feasible; It is understood that some students may not be able to wear a mask for medical reasons or due to their disability.
* When staff members and volunteers need to interact, they will do so with 6’ physical distance and wear masks.

Steps Taken to Ensure Group Integrity: (eliminating situations where one person comes into contact with people from multiple different groups)

* Only one group will be in any given activity area at a time
* When physical contact is required between staff and a participant, only the educators in the group can assist camper, unless staff with a higher medical training is needed, in which case masks and CDC recommended hygiene practices will be used by the staff member.

Other Steps to Stop the Spread:

* All Families, staff and volunteers will monitor their health for 14 days prior to the program start and fill out a pre-screening health form.
* Staff, volunteers and participants’ temperatures will be checked daily with a no-touch thermometer and recorded. Parents will be asked to remain until their child(ren)’s temperature(s) have been taken. Any child with an elevated temperature or fever will be isolated and/or not permitted to join for the day.
* All activity areas and equipment will be thoroughly sanitized between each group’s use. Shared areas like bathrooms, will be sanitized by staff and volunteers between each use.
* Each group site, bathroom and main activity area will have a hands-free hand washing station and soap, hand sanitizer will always be available as well
* Adults will have their masks accessible at all times for when the need to wear arises. Youth will be asked to wear masks when 6’ physical distancing is not possible. We will provide cloth masks or youth can bring one from home.
* If adults need to speak to LandPaths’ staff they must maintain 6’ distance between themselves and other people around them. All adults must wear a mask or face shield and as much as possible please opt for phone or email communication to reduce in person contact.
* Avoid bringing extra persons during pick up and drop off. Only one adult should bring a child to the program site. Other family members should stay home if possible.

# Additional Changes and Information You Need To Know

* We will not be able to cook communally from our gardens this year, but we will still find fun ways to integrate the amazing bounty of the seasons.
* Absolutely no group changes will be allowed once a child has been in a group. You will receive your assigned group information the week before the fieldtrip or program.
* Drop-offs – Youth may be dropped off directly at the LandPaths’ program site or at their school for the bus where provided (specially color coded drop off instructions will be given with group assignments if there is more than one group onsite)

This is not an exhaustive list but covers the most important elements of the new policies and procedures. If you have any concerns please contact Jamie Nakama, jamie@landpaths.org or Jessica Holloway, jessica@landpaths.org. We are more than happy to answer questions and address individual concerns.

**LandPaths Environmental Education Programs will be different this year but the magic of learning and exploring in our amazing outdoor landscapes will be as fun as ever!**