

Brave Nature Collaborative

Call for Playworkers - Nests and Sun Gardens Camp

Brave Nature Collaborative (BNC) is an outdoor education nonprofit in the Greater New Haven, Connecticut area, practicing children's liberation. We're building a liberated learning ecosystem rooted in reciprocity, play, and radical care for children, families, and the land we share.

BNC is recruiting playworkers and facilitators on a rolling basis. This is a deeply relational opportunity to join a community-driven learning commons in New Haven, CT that is growing intentionally and collaboratively.

Our programs currently serve children ages 0–12 and their families through child-led, community-rooted outdoor education. As we expand, we continue building a diverse, relational learning ecosystem grounded in playwork, consent-centered learning, and liberation for children and the planet.

BNC is currently home to 40+ students and their families, representing over 20 cultures and ethnicities. Small class sizes, intergenerational learning, and a commitment to community well-being shape our work together.

Our Learning Environment

Brave Nature Collab offers outdoor, mixed-age learning across three sites. Each location provides rich opportunities for place-based play, exploration, and connection. Spaces have included libraries, rivers, museums, farms, forests, markets, parks.

Our current spaces:

Edgerton Park (New Haven)

A blend of gardens, open lawns, and woodland edges, great for babies, toddlers, and big kids who love wandering, collecting, climbing, and exploring seasonal change.

Sleeping Giant State Park (Hamden)

Expansive forest trails, ridgelines, and sensory-rich terrain. A great fit for families seeking deeper woodland exploration while still offering gentle paths for little ones.

Alice Newton Trails (Woodbridge)

Quiet woodland paths, gentle slopes, and accessible terrain where children ages 0–9 can track animals, dig, build, identify plants, and play at their own pace.

Our Educational Philosophy & Values

We're looking for playworkers who feel connected to our values and want to grow alongside children and families. Because our learning commons is built on relationships, community care, and shared responsibility, it's important that applicants are genuinely aligned with our child-led, consent-based, anti-bias approach.

Learn more about our approach on our website: [HERE](#)

Please familiarize yourself with our Family Welcome Packet: [HERE](#)

Nests Program (Birth - 9)

Playworkers

Starting pay: \$17–22/hour (based on experience & qualifications)

Position Overview

Nests is an 8-week caregiver & child class that runs Sunday–Thursday mornings, with each class day forming its own consistent cohort of 10–12 families. This is a relationship-centered role.

Lead Playworkers may lead 1–4 class days per season, with each class day becoming a cohort you plan for and hold over the full session.

You will design simple invitations and seasonal rhythms with fellow playworkers based on the children in your cohorts, the land you're on, and the season you're moving through.

Schedule & Logistics

Each session runs from 9:00–11:00 AM

Lead Playworkers arrive at 8:00 AM for setup and typically finish by 12:00 PM.

Additional Weekly Commitments:

- 1 hour for documentation and the family newsletter (via Substack)
- 1 hour for the weekly playworker meeting

Monthly Commitment:

- 1 hour as needed for All Team monthly meeting

Seasonal Commitments:

- Additional hours for a season-based playworker workshop to discuss next season, refine playwork skills, etc.

Current Seasonal Availability:

- **Edgerton Park:** *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter*
- **Sleeping Giant State Park:** *Paused for Summer*
- **Alice Newton Trails:** *Coming Soon*

Playworkers may also opt into **extra paid hours** throughout the year during:

- Seasonal pop-ups
- School break camps
- Community events

These additional hours are optional and offered based on staffing capacity, interest, and program needs.

Required Skills & Experience

We seek individuals who:

- Have 3+ years working with children in supportive, meaningful ways
- Have experience in outdoor learning, nature-based programs, camps, early childhood settings, or play-based environments
- Can offer simple, open-ended activities based on children's interests and the natural environment
- Feel comfortable guiding groups of children outdoors and supporting positive group dynamics
- Are aligned with anti-bias, anti-racist, and consent-centered practice
- Value teamwork, reflection, and community learning
- Use restorative approaches for conflict and repair
- Can work comfortably outdoors in all weather (rain, heat, cold, snow, mud)
- Communicate clearly and kindly with children and caregivers
- Can stay patient, flexible, curious, and calm in mixed-age groups
- Enjoy learning about the land, local ecology, and seasonal change
- Can create welcoming, inclusive spaces for families from diverse backgrounds
- Are legally authorized to work in the U.S.

Preferred

- Bilingual (Spanish/English, Haitian Creole or French/English or other strongly desired)
- Experience leading outdoor activities, environmental education, or playwork
- Familiarity with forest school, playwork, Reggio Emilia, or emergent approaches
- We value diverse lived experiences and strongly encourage applications from BIPOC and LGBTQ+ educators

Camp Programs (Ages 2.8-7)

Lead and Assistant Playworkers

Starting pay: \$17–22/hour (based on experience & qualifications)

Position Overview

Brave Nature Collab's Seasonal Camps are immersive outdoor learning experiences for mixed-age groups of young children (primarily ages 3–10) rooted in storytelling, nature connection, process art, and child-led exploration. Camps take place during three seasonal sessions, *February Recess*, *Spring Recess*, and *Summer*, and offer rich opportunities for creative leadership, emergent learning, and community-building.

As a Camp Playworker, you will:

- Facilitate child-led exploration through story, imagination, curiosity, and nature play
- Guide process-based art, collaborative making, puppetry, and open-ended creative projects
- Lead seasonal storytelling and folklore explorations that invite children into local, cultural, and ecological narratives
- Support wilderness identification such as plant ID, track observation, and sensory mapping
- Protect the play space and support healthy risk-taking
- Co-create a culture of care through shared agreements and collaborative relationships
- Welcome caregivers at sign-in/out and strengthen the supportive circle around each child
- Collaborate with other playworkers to build a consistent, joyful, inclusive environment
- Share reflections with families as time allows

Camps also serve as a talent pathway at BNS:

- Individuals interested in facilitating Kid's Only may use Camps as a paid trial period, building familiarity with emergent learning, community partnerships, and outdoor routines.
- Qualified Nests Playworkers are welcomed and encouraged to take on Camp roles as an additional seasonal opportunity.

Schedule & Logistics

- Seasonal work during Summer 2026, February, April 2027
- 8-4 PM, days vary by camp

Camp Sessions (2026)

Summer Break Camp

Wednesdays – July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, & August 5

Fridays – July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 & August 7

Full-day outdoor camps offered across six consecutive weeks, with multi-day creative arcs, process art, and seasonal storytelling. Camp Playworkers must be available for **both days**.

Camp Sessions (2027)

February Recess Camp *(Dates TBD)*

Spring Recess Camp *(Dates TBD)*

Camp Playworkers may support one, multiple, or all camp sessions based on interest and availability.

- Additional paid time available for planning, set-up, documentation, and debrief
- Mixed-age cohorts of ~10–14 children, supported by a Camp Lead and Playworker team (1-2)

Playworkers may also opt into **extra paid hours** throughout the year if qualified. These additional hours are optional and offered based on staffing capacity, interest, and program needs.

Required Skills & Experience

We seek individuals who:

- Experience working with young children (ages 3–7) in settings such as outdoor programs, summer camps, emergent learning environments, early childhood classrooms, or creative arts contexts
- Comfort facilitating process art, nature crafts, handwork, or open-ended creative invitations
- Interest in guiding storytelling, folklore, and imaginative play
- Basic knowledge of (or willingness to learn) simple wilderness identification such as plants, tracks, or patterns in the natural world
- Ability to support mixed-age, child-led learning through curiosity, flexibility, and relational care
- Strong communication and collaboration skills with caregivers and co-playworkers

- Physical ability and willingness to work outdoors in all weather
- Alignment with anti-bias, anti-racist, and consent-centered approaches to learning
- Legal authorization to work in the U.S.

Preferred

- Experience in environmental education, forest school, outdoor camps, or community arts
- Background in storytelling, puppetry, folklore, movement, or nature-based creative work
- Bilingual (Spanish/English, Haitian Creole, French/English or other languages welcome)
- We value diverse lived experiences and strongly encourage applications from BIPOC and LGBTQ+ educators

What We Offer

Brave Nature Collaborative (BNC) is an outdoor education nonprofit in the Greater New Haven, Connecticut area, practicing children's liberation. Joining our team means stepping into a growing organization rooted in reciprocity, justice, and relationship.

A Four-Season Outdoor Teaching Experience

- Teach outdoors **year-round** in gardens, meadows, forests, and wetlands
- Seasonal learning rooted in weather, land, rhythm, and place
- Naturalist awareness, sensory learning, and ecological attunement that deepen each year
- Opportunities to co-create seasonal arcs, rituals, invitations, and celebrations

A Strong, Supportive Community

- A warm, relational environment where children, caregivers, and educators know one another well
- Families who actively practice **mutual aid**, bringing food, gear, care, and time into the community
- Seasonal gatherings, and shared rituals that strengthen belonging
- Collaboration with local partners and nonprofits who extend our community network

Leadership in a Growing Nonprofit

- A **founding role** in building programs that will grow over the next several years
- Real influence over the culture, systems, and flow of a young learning commons
- Decision-making power in shaping rhythms, invitations, seasonal arcs, and program development
- Opportunities to co-create community events, partnerships, and new offerings
- A place where all voices truly matter and shape the future

Professional Growth & Learning

- Ongoing professional development supported by the nonprofit and external partners
- Regular collaboration, mentorship, and reflection with the Director, Storyteller and playwork team

Creative Freedom

- Daily opportunities to design simple, child-led invitations based on the land and your interests
- Space to integrate your gifts such as storytelling, music, art, movement, craftsmanship, naturalist skills, cultural traditions
- A culture that trusts playworkers to follow children's lead and respond to their needs with flexibility and joy

Work That Matters

- Be part of a nonprofit committed to **justice, belonging, and ecological connection**
 - Teach in a place that centers relationships, joy, and community care . No testing, pacing guides, or academic pressure
 - Contribute to building a model of outdoor education for families across New Haven
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How to Apply

Please complete our [application questionnaire](#) and send a brief email to bravenatureschool@gmail.com with:

- A brief note about why you're interested and what makes you a good fit
- Your resume
- Your hourly rate expectations and availability

Brave Nature Collab is an equal opportunity employer and committed to child safety. Background checks required.

Applications reviewed on a rolling basis. Position open until filled.

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Brave Nature Collab is committed to building an inclusive team that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. We encourage applications from BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and individuals from historically marginalized communities.