

# Oaks & Acorns

Outdoor School 2024/25



Pine Project



# Welcome to the Pine Project!

The Pine Project fosters confidence, competence, resilience and connection to nature through transformative outdoor experiences for people of all ages in Toronto and beyond.

Our work inspires a vital re-connection between people and nature, community and oneself. We work primarily with children and families in the urban context, delivering innovative year-round outdoor programming.



Our goal is to inspire nature connection in childhood, supporting children to grow into healthy, active, and resilient people.



We extend our deep gratitude to the generations of People – past and present – who have tended this land, the Dish with One Spoon Territory. We acknowledge the abiding wisdom of the Dish with One Spoon treaty between the Anishnabeg and Haudenosaunee that bound them to share the territory and protect the land. The ‘Dish’ represents what is now known as southern Ontario; we all eat out of the dish with only one spoon, ensuring that our dish is never empty. This symbolizes our ongoing roles and responsibilities of sustaining the land and treating each other and all living things with equity and respect.

The Pine Project operates on the land we now call Toronto, which has been a site of human activity for thousands of years. ‘Toronto’ or ‘Tkaronto’, a Mohawk word meaning “where the trees stand in the water,”\* is part of the traditional territory of many Nations, including the Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Haudenosaunee, and most recently the Mississaugas of the Credit (of the Anishnabeg Peoples).

We are so fortunate to learn and play in two historically significant Valleys of the city:

- The Lower Don also known as ‘Wonscotonach’, translating to “burning bright point” or “black burnt country”, may refer to the practice of torchlight salmon spearing on the river, or to the impact of fire on the landscape.\* The Mississaugas of the Credit had a seasonal settlement here and fished and hunted the marshlands for muskrat, duck and deer.
- The Humber, also known as ‘Niwa’ah Onega’gaih’ih’ or “little thundering waters.”\* For at least 12,000 years an Indigenous trail followed the edge of the bluffs along this section of the Humber River valley. Just up river from where we gather weekly is Baby’s Point, a neighbourhood built on the same spot as ‘Teiaiagon,’ once a village of the Seneca and later the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Today, Toronto is home to many First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples from across Turtle Island. We acknowledge the history and ongoing process of colonization, and recognize that in order to realize the promise and challenge of reconciliation, acknowledgement must be coupled with action. We seek to move forward with humility, respect, gratitude and meaningful relationship building.

\*We respectfully acknowledge the many histories and several translations associated with the history of this land.



# A Place to Belong

We are deeply committed to creating a community where everyone belongs. As is true in nature, we believe that diversity is essential for a strong and vibrant community. We aim to include and celebrate the many facets that contribute to our human identity, including gender identity, race, ability, and sexual orientation. Our goal is to craft a culture where people are seen and acknowledged for their shared humanity as well as their unique individuality. Our approach is grounded in acknowledgement of the long-standing and ongoing systems of racism, inequity, and injustice that prevent many from accessing and feeling welcome in the outdoors. We strive to promote inclusive policies and practices, including providing accommodations that promote equity and removing barriers to access wherever possible. Out at programs you will see us living these values by acknowledging the original stewards of this land, inviting participants to share their pronouns and other affirming practices, using child-centred approaches to create space for all voices, and addressing any oppressive behaviours that arise.



# Contents

This package contains information on the following topics:

Program Overview

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Health & Safety

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Checklist

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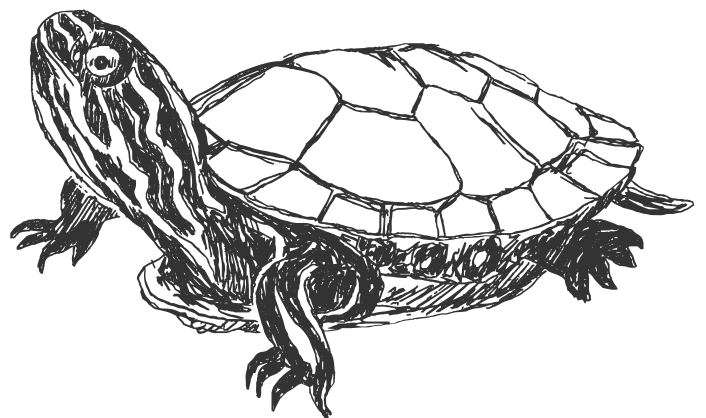
Communication

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Directions

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All communications and information about our organization can be provided in accessible formats or with communication supports upon request.



# Program Overview

## Oaks & Acorns

### Location

Stan Wadlow (East) OR  
King's Mill (West)

### Timing

9:30am - 11:30am

### Program Dates

Sessions occur on a weekly or monthly basis between:

**Fall Season:** September 30 - December 6, 2024

**Winter Season:** January 6 - February 28, 2025

**Spring Season:** March 24 - June 6, 2025

Please note that programs do not run on Statutory Holidays.

In Oaks and Acorns, we help caregivers integrate nature into their family's everyday life. As a group, we take short wanders in nature, share stories and songs, and get to know the plants and animals in our area. We actively teach caregivers mentoring techniques and naturalist knowledge, while children learn experientially. It's also a great chance to connect with a like-minded community, share experiences and advice, and build new friendships.

### Program Content Highlights:

- Creating nature connection in your home and day to day life
- Storytelling and songs
- Adventures, wandering and tracking wildlife
- Wild edibles, medicinals, and hazard plants (identification and uses)
- Stewardship and taking care of the land
- Nature-based crafting

## Flow of the day!

As the program is guided by natural curiosity and the changing needs of the group, a schedule is rarely followed exactly, but the below gives you a good idea of an average day at program.

9:30am	Sign-in & Opening Circle
9:45am - 11:15am	Nature Activities*
11:15am - 11:30pm	Closing Circle

\*The group will stop for snacks at any time during this period depending on group needs.



# Health & Safety

## Additional Support

We do our very best to provide a positive environment for all of our participants. If a child requires additional support beyond what was described upon registration, please reach out to our team. Elaborating as much as possible allows us to understand how best to support a youth's diverse needs.

While we may not be able to meet every participant's needs, we try our best to provide a wonderful experience for all.

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## Behaviour & Expectations

At Pine, we're committed to living our values of diversity, equity, inclusion and justice. It's important that all people at programs feel included, safe and free from discrimination. Any language or behaviour intended to make participants or staff feel unwelcome or uncomfortable based on identity or ability will not be tolerated, and may lead to the participant being asked to leave programs.

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## Washrooms

The parks are not equipped with washrooms or running water. There will be a private portable toilet available for the exclusive use of Pine Project participants and staff. Hand sanitizer will be used when soap and water is not available.



## Ticks

Ticks exist in Toronto city parks. We do our best to teach tick awareness in a positive and clear way. We recommend that kids change out of their clothes when they get home each day and conduct tick checks each night. If we find a tick embedded into your child's skin, we will phone home immediately. We do not remove the tick.

To inform yourself on ticks, how to prevent and check for them, and options for their removal, please see: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/lyme-disease>.

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## Weather

Programs will run each day, in all weather conditions.

We have comprehensive emergency plans for all types of weather while at program, and our staff are trained in how to assess and manage risk. Please reach out to our office team if you're concerned and would like to know more.

We do not typically cancel programs due to weather. In the event that extreme weather jeopardizes the health and safety of participants and staff, the Pine Project may choose to cancel the session.

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## Air Quality

We consistently monitor the air quality and follow public health recommendations from Environment Canada and Public Health to dictate the level of activity for our groups. As our programs operate entirely outdoors, we will adapt and modify our programs when air quality deteriorates to avoid physical activity and strenuous activities, support participants to wear masks if desired, and monitor for symptoms. The health of our community is of primary importance to us, and we understand that some families may decide not to participate in programs on days with poor air quality.

# Checklist

## Clothing

- Weather Appropriate Clothing**  
Make sure to dress for the weather. We are outdoors in all weather (rain, shine, cold and snow!)

**Cold Weather:** Insulated and waterproof boots, snowsuits, warm gloves or mitts, scarves, and hats.

**Rainy Days:** Rain boots and rain jackets.

**Hot & Sunny Days:** Sunhat and sunscreen.

Please ensure that your child arrives at program with sunscreen applied!

- Extra Clothing**  
Please send an extra set of clothes in your child's backpack (labelled with their name). They'll need these in case of a puddle encounter!

## Optional

- Hand Sanitizer**
- Nature Journal/ Notebook & Pencil / Pencil Crayons**
- A favourite field guide**

## Food & Drink

- Food**  
We will stop for snacks each program day. Please pack litter-free and nut-free food.
- Water**  
Please come with all the drinking water you and your child will require for the duration of program. We will not be able to refill water on site.

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## Lost & Found

If an item is misplaced, you can contact our team at [info@pineproject.org](mailto:info@pineproject.org) or ask your instructors at your next program day.

The Pine Project does not take responsibility for any lost or damaged items.



### **Please DO NOT bring:**

Anything valuable or electronic, or distracting toys.

## Supplemental Forms

In order to ensure a happy, healthy program culture we need to collect some important information from all families. Caregivers, please ensure that you fill out the following supplemental forms as they apply to your child.

Please note that there will be no hardcopy forms available for you to complete at the program.

- Oaks & Acorns CHILD Additional Info, Medical Form & Guardian 1 Waivers (Mandatory)
- Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan (Mandatory for any participant with a known anaphylactic allergy)





# Communication



If you're running early or late, or in case of emergency, you can contact the field staff (during program hours) at:

**WEST Field Phone:**  
**(437) 771 1176**

**EAST Field Phone:**  
**(437) 771 3225**

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For all inquiries, please contact our administrative team:

Contact us by phone:

**(416) 792 2772**

Contact us by email:

**[info@pineproject.org](mailto:info@pineproject.org)**

## Providing Feedback

At the Pine Project, we believe that transparent communication is the best way to work through a problem. We are committed to gathering feedback and hearing all voices. If something comes up that makes you or your child uncomfortable, please let us know by taking the following steps:

1. Talk to a lead instructor in your program. Let them know you have some feedback you'd like to share, and ask when a good time would be to share it. They will bring the feedback to their team for discussion.
2. Ask lots of questions and be curious about the issue. Find out as much as you can before forming a conclusion or judgment.
3. If you feel as though your concern has not been addressed, contact our office team.



# Directions - EAST END

## Stan Wadlow Park

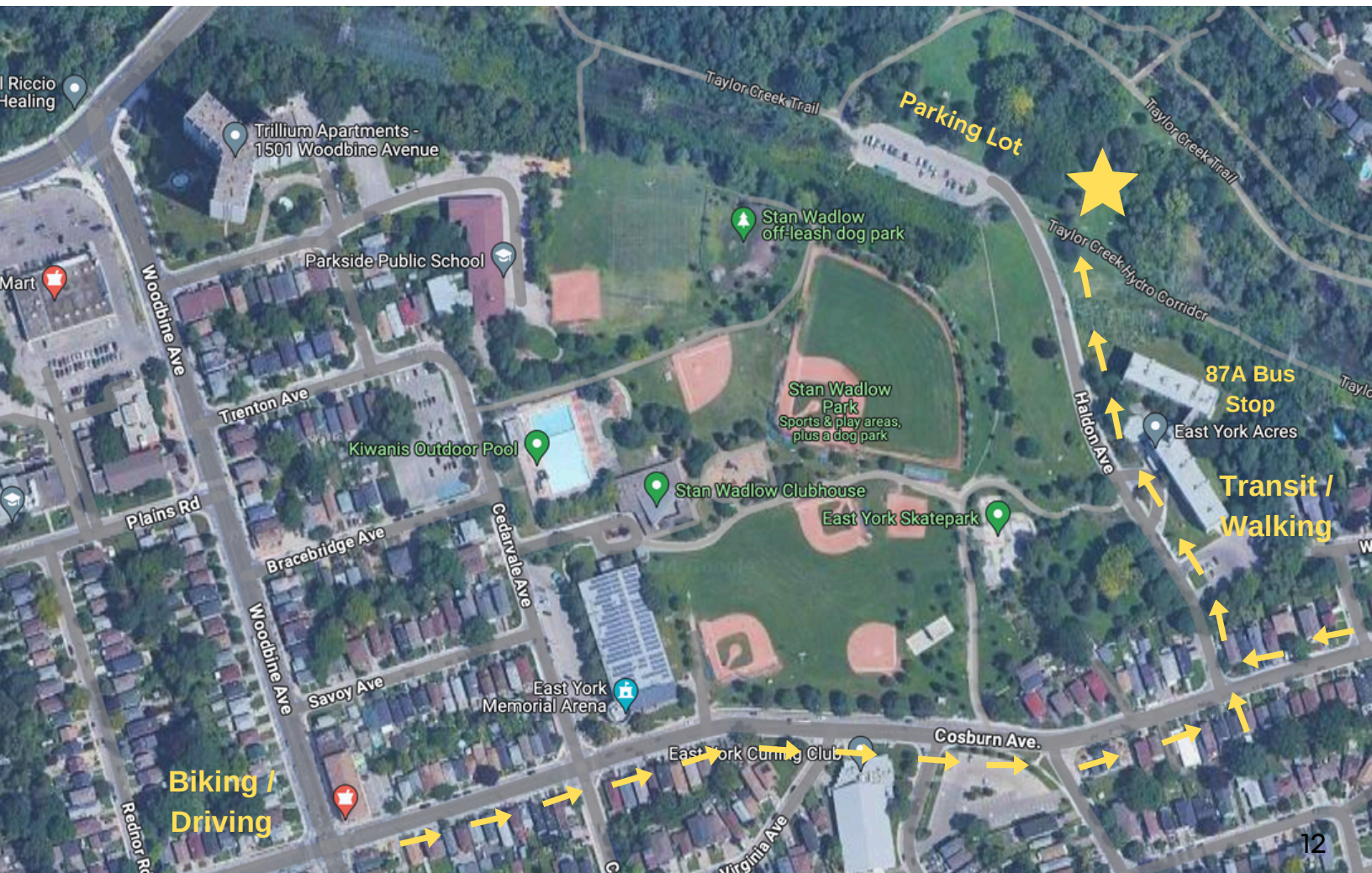
43°41'58.4"N 79°18'43.5"W

### Transit/Walking Instructions

- Take the Line 2 (Bloor-Danforth) Subway to Main Street Station.
- At Main Street Station take either 87A or 87:
  - 87A Cosburn bus towards Broadview Station Via East York Acres for 10 stops.
  - Get off the bus at East York Acres and continue down Haldon Ave to the meeting location.
- 87 Cosburn bus towards Broadview Station for 9 stops.
- Get off the bus at Westlake Ave and walk one block west, then turn right onto Haldon ave and continue towards the meeting location.

### Biking/Driving Instructions

- Heading East on Danforth, turn left onto Woodbine Avenue.
- Continue North and turn right onto Cosburn Avenue.
- Continue East and turn left onto Haldon Ave
- Continue until the designated parking lot.



# Directions - WEST END

## King's Mill Park

43.64958, -79.49202

### Transit/Walking Instructions

- Take the subway to Old Mill Station.
- When you exit, turn left out of the station.
- Turn left again onto Bloor St. Stay on the North side as you walk East.
- When you approach the bridge you will see a set of stairs on your left side. If you cross over the Humber River you have gone too far.
- Take the stairs down and turn Left, walking Northeast, past the parking lot until you see us in the nearby field.

### Biking/Driving Instructions

- Heading West on Bloor St, turn right on Old Mill Trail (where the subway station is) and then another right on Old Mill Rd. Off of Old Mill Rd. you will see an entrance to King's Mill Park on the right.
- Turn right into the park and follow this paved road, past the first parking lot on your right. You will see us in the big field to your left (just before the second parking lot).

