

## Assistant Nature Preschool Educator

*The ICG team is deeply committed to the mission, vision, and values of our nonprofit organization. Please become familiar with ICG's mission, vision, and values - they drive everything we do.*

### About Ithaca Children's Garden

The mission of Ithaca Children's Garden (ICG) is to connect children to nature to create a more beautiful, resilient, and just world. Our vision is that every child has the basic human right to play, learn, grow outdoors, and develop a life-long relationship with the living world. Ithaca Children's Garden is committed to providing inclusive programming where all children feel welcomed and a sense of belonging.

### Position Summary

Ithaca Children's Garden seeks a part-time, permanent, Assistant Educator for Playful Nature Explorers, ICG's garden-based, outdoor preschool program. The Assistant Educator works alongside the Playful Nature Lead Educator and directly with preschool children, supporting their curiosity, play, development, and independence.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the supervision and well-being of children in the program. They will work alongside the Lead Educator to cultivate a developmentally responsive, play-based, nature-focused experience for children ages 2-5. The program utilizes an emergent curriculum centered on children's interests and outdoor play.

This is a part time, 20-hours per week, academic year position (Sept-June). Must be available Monday-Thursday 8:30am-12:30pm. Occasional additional hours may be required for planning, training, meetings, and special events with sufficient notice. The option for year-round employment is available with ICG's summer camp program, with increased hours per week in July and August. This position reports to ICG's Education Director.

Compensation for this part-time, 20-25 hours per week, non-exempt position is \$18.45/hour. Benefits include paid time off, health care, a retirement plan, and other limited benefits. Candidates with diverse backgrounds and identities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Anticipated start date is September 3, 2025. Please do still apply if this date has passed.

### Job Functions & Responsibilities

- Support child-led, nature-based play, primarily outdoors.
- Maintain the health, safety, and welfare of all children in the group.
- Create a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environment for all children.
- Meet children where they are developmentally and support their individual needs and growth.
- Assist children with daily living activities including transitions, dressing for the outdoors, snack time, and using the bathroom.
- Prepare and clean up indoor program spaces.

- Effectively communicate with parents and families individually and in groups about program details and their child's experience and participation.
- Engage in reflective practice with Lead Educator and ICG's education team in order to problem-solve, share successes, and evaluate the program.
- Help assure compliance with program policies, state regulations, and best practices of early childhood education.
- Take part in professional development as appropriate.
- Participate in other programs such as subbing for ICG's After School Program or staffing seasonal community events when need and availability coincide.
- Other duties as assigned.

### **Experience & Skills**

- Experience working with children ages 2.5-6.
- Experience and comfort in supporting and supervising children outdoors, engaged in the natural environment in all weather.
- Experience and comfort in assisting children in daily life activities and transitions.
- Ability to engage with children and families with empathy.
- Commitment to child-led, play-based nature programming.
- Active interest in the natural world.
- Ability to communicate clearly, positively, and professionally with children, families, and co-workers.
- Ability to work collaboratively and independently.
- Commitment to punctuality, reliability, and providing consistency for program participants.
- Passionate about ICG's mission, vision, and values.

### **A Plus**

- Current certification in First Aid and CPR, or willingness to pursue certification
- Familiarity and/or training in Playwork Philosophy
- Basic knowledge and experience in ecology, plants, animals, gardening, music, art, or other related topics.
- Educational background in early childhood education or a related field.

### **To Apply**

Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Please email your resume and cover letter to [kelsey@ithacachildrengarden.org](mailto:kelsey@ithacachildrengarden.org) with "Assistant Educator" in the subject line. Cover letters can be addressed to Kelsey Brewster, Education Director.

In your cover letter, please briefly describe any relevant experience you have, and your interest in working with Ithaca Children's Garden, including experience and commitment related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

If you require any assistance or accommodations to submit your application, please contact us as soon as possible so we can assist you.

Ithaca Children's Garden respects, values and embraces the characteristics and attributes that make each individual unique. We strive to provide an environment that attracts, retains,

and celebrates people from the rich cultures and walks of life within the communities we serve. ICG is an equal-opportunity employer.

**What to expect once you apply**

Our team is ICG's greatest asset; we want to find the candidate who best fits organizational goals and complements our existing team. Once we receive your cover letter and resume, they will be filed for the search committee to review. You will be thanked for your application. If you are selected for an interview, you will be notified, an interview will be scheduled, and the interview questions will be shared with you ahead of time. The first interview will be conducted, either in person or remotely, by the Education Director. There will be a second round of in-person interviews with the top few candidates, including the Education Director and a member of ICG's Education Team.

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Once there is a recommendation for hiring, references will be checked. Employment will be contingent upon clearance of a required background check. Applicants who are not selected for an interview or were not advanced to second interviews will be notified once the position is filled.

We appreciate when candidates become familiar with ICG's mission, vision, values, programs, and ethos. Learn more at [www.ithacachildrensgarden.org](http://www.ithacachildrensgarden.org).