



# Early Childhood Afterschool Lead

## 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 candidates for a lead educator for Garden Sprouts, ICG's garden-based, outdoor after school program for Pre-K and Kindergarten students. Following the rhythm of the seasons, Garden Sprouts is a place where children can explore nature and build relationships with each other and the earth.

Based at Ithaca Children's Garden, Garden Sprouts spend most of their time outdoors. The Garden Sprouts lead will work directly with young children supporting their curiosity, play, development, and independence. The curriculum is emergent and play-based with educators following children's lead, supporting their interests, explorations, and independence. They will be responsible for supervision and well-being of children in the program.

This is a part-time, academic year position (Sept-June) at 32 hours/week. Must be available Monday-Friday 12PM-5:30PM. Occasional additional hours may be required for planning, training, meetings, and special events with ample notice. The compensation rate for this position is \$19.50/hour. The option for year-round employment is available with ICG's summer camp program, with increased hours per week in July and August.

The position will start August 3, 2026 as on the ground training during summer camp. There is optional additional training June 22-25 with summer camp training.

## Position Term

This is a permanent, part time position. September - June, 32 hours/week. Applications will be accepted through July 1st or until the position is filled. *\*If year-round employment is desired, summer employment is possible with ICG's summer camp program at 30-40 hours/week in July and August.*

## Compensation & Benefits

The hourly rate is \$19.50/hour. The position is a permanent position and provides access to benefits as set forth in the ICG Benefits Policy, including paid time off and health insurance.. Short term disability and paid family leave are provided as mandated by NYS.

## Responsibilities

- Support child-led, nature-based play, primarily outdoors.
- Responsible for the health, safety, and welfare of all children in the group.
- Create a welcoming family environment for all children, and effectively communicate with parents and families individually and in groups.
- Track the development of individual children, assess needs, and plan based on those needs in cooperation with the education team.
- Engage in reflective practice with 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.
- Communicate with program families regularly about program details and their child's participation.
- Support recruitment and communication for prospective families.
- Manage program enrollment tasks under the direction of the Education Director
- Take part in professional development as appropriate
- Other duties as assigned

## Qualifications & Experience

- An unwavering commitment to providing the highest quality outdoor, nature-based program to preschool aged children
- Experience supporting children ages 3-6 in a child-centered, developmentally appropriate program
- Experience and comfort supporting children outdoors, engaged in the natural environment in all weather
- Experience assisting children in daily life activities and transitions
- Active interest in the natural world and a commitment to its use as a central learning topic and context for play and discovery
- Ability to communicate clearly, positively, professionally, and in a timely manner with children, families, and co-workers, both verbally and in writing
- Ability to work both collaboratively and independently and to creatively problem solve.
- Commitment to punctuality, reliability, and providing consistency for program participants
- An understanding of the concepts of institutional and structural racism and bias and their impact on underserved and underrepresented communities.

### 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

## Education and Experience Required

- High school diploma and at least two years related experience
- Or Associate's or Bachelor's Degree in a related field plus at least one full year of related experience

## How to Apply

Please email your resume and cover letter to [kelsey@ithacachildrengarden.org](mailto:kelsey@ithacachildrengarden.org) with "Garden Sprouts Educator" in the subject line. Cover letters may be addressed to Kelsey Brewster, Education Director. Successful finalists must complete and pass the required NYS background checks.

In your letter, please speak directly to your experience, your interest in working with Ithaca Children's Garden, and your experience serving and working with diverse audiences. ICG is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under federal, state, or local law, where applicable.

If you require any assistance or special accommodations to successfully submit your application, please contact us so that we may have the opportunity to assist you.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Two interviews will be conducted: one virtual interview and one in-person interview during program hours. For the virtual interview, the hiring team will send a list of planned questions ahead of the interview. If invited to the second interview, questions will be asked during the interview that are dependent on the first interview.

## What to expect once you apply

Our team is ICG's greatest asset; we want to find the candidate who is the best fit for organizational goals and is a complement to our existing team. We know interviews can be awkward interactions that don't always help candidates shine; we also know that the skills for a successful interview are not necessarily congruent with the skills needed to shine in the job. So, we share with you here what to expect so all applicants have an opportunity to prepare themselves for the most successful interview possible. We hope having this outline will help put you at ease through the selection process.

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Application & Interview process

*We appreciate when candidates become familiar with ICG's mission, vision, values, programs, and ethos. Learn more at <https://www.ithacachildrengarden.org/about-icg/#meet-icg>.*