



Tool Safety and Release Form – 2018 Earth Path Programs (Ages 4-5)

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Welcome to Earth Path! Over the course of the program, we will spend our days outside exploring, playing, and working on various projects. As we get to know the animals and plants of the woods, we may develop a number of skills for engaging with these creatures, including tracking, harvesting wild foods, shelter building, using tools and making fire. Many of these skills offer elements that, even if done correctly, have the potential for danger. Participants will be closely supervised by lead mentors and/or trained volunteers that have been practicing outdoor survival skills and are well-trained in engaging the wild in a safe and respectful way. Below are some of the elements that can be potentially dangerous.

Knives - There is always real danger in using a knife. As is often the case, prevention is the best medicine. In our pre-school programs, most whittling will be done with vegetable peelers; however, in an exceptional case, a child who is ready may be shown, through one-on-one instruction, how to safely use a small knife for whittling. One-on-one instruction will cover these 5 main safety rules:

- 1) ask permission from one of the adult mentors;
- 2) find a quiet space where there are no people and sit down, ensuring a safety circle (keep a safe distance of at least one arm's length from other people); tell others you are using a knife;
- 4) sit properly, ensuring that no part of your body is below your knife and carving project;
- 5) always carve slowly, down toward the ground and away from yourself;
- 5) when done or distracted, put the knife back in its sheath. With proper care and attentiveness knives are safe and an incredibly rewarding tool.

Fire - Fire will be a central tenet of our community. We will be making fires regularly, and we will be teaching how to tend a fire in a way that leaves minimal impact. Participants will be learning how a fire is safely managed, and each child will have the opportunity to help build a fire. Earth Path mentors will be the Fire Keeper for our pre-school camps.

Other Tools - At other points throughout the program, we may be using saws and other tools, such as hammers and nails. For each tool, we will talk about the potential dangers and always review and practice safe techniques for using each. We keep a low ratio of children to adult mentors to ensure each child is given proper attention when using potentially dangerous tools.

I, _____ hereby give permission for my child and/or ward, _____ to use a knife and other tools listed above under the supervision of an Earth Path program mentor or other trained volunteer/partner when an Earth Path mentor deems my child ready. I have read the above on Knives, Fire, and Other Tools Safety, and understand both the risks involved and that reasonable care will be taken to ensure my child's safety.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Today's Date: _____