



NATURE'S WAY DAY CAMP FOR CHILDREN W/ AUTISM

Nature's Way Day Camp - Championing Children with Autism

Nature's Way Day Camp uses gardening and exploring nature to help children with self-discovery and personal growth. Having fun while working with plants or enjoying plant based activities builds skills, confidence and friendships!

The camp will be held Tuesday – Friday, June 20-23 and June 27-30 at Truly Living Well's (TLW) Collegetown Farm.

ABOUT THE CAMP

The camp will give children ages 6-12 the opportunity to experience an urban farm where they will learn and play within small groups and socialize (in a larger group up to 9 children) while engaging in such activities as:

- Gardening- TLW Garden Educators will lead children in cultivating, planting, watering and harvesting natural and organic flowers, herbs and vegetables.
- Cares for Chickens- For children on the autism spectrum, chickens have been registered as emotional support animals for their soothing effect. Not only that, they have been shown to increase social and play skills.
- Simple Cooking- Children are more likely to eat healthy vegetables they help to grow. Professional Chef Asata Reid will create a delectable farm to table experience with children and their families on the last day of camp!
- Music-Fun sing-along's help start the day and set the tone for fun.
- Art/Crafts-The campers will be using materials found in nature to create beautiful pieces of arts and crafts to encourage creativity and environmental stewardship.

The activities will be led in partnership with TLW garden educators and an occupational therapist who will utilize the farm environment to target areas such as receptive and expressive language, social skills, and fine and gross motor skills. Therapeutic activities include sensory motor development, sensory integration, and social skills development.

Other things to consider:

What to Bring

- Parents please prepare a lunch for your child on Tuesday through Thursday.
- A filled water bottle (at least 16 oz.) is a necessity.

- *Truly Living Well* is a *pesticide free* urban farm. If you choose, please bring natural insect repellent. (Natural insect repellent can be found at camping supply stores and most health food stores.)

Attire, please send your child in appropriate clothing and footwear.

Items might include:

- A separate, lightweight, long-sleeved shirt to pull on over regular clothes
- Brimmed hat or visor
- Closed toe shoes, sturdy footwear, sneakers or hiking boots/shoes preferred.
- Socks!
- Inappropriate footwear includes: sandals, flip-flops, crocs and "jellies."

ABOUT THE NATURE'S WALK STUDY

Building Human Health Through Urban and Community Forestry Study

The U.S. Forestry has commissioned a national study "Building Human Health Through Urban and Community Forestry" to address the effect of exposure to managed natural environments (MNE). The study will be held in Arizona, Colorado, Georgia and Nebraska. Researchers from Georgia State University are collaborating with community partners, Truly Living Well (Atlanta) and YMCA and Wild Intelligence (Athens) to conduct research in nature settings typical of urban and community forests. This research will be used to help nature groups provide services to and develop effective programs for children with autism. It's important work because currently, no research addresses the effects of MNE on autism symptoms, nor is there any literature aimed at helping nature groups provide services to these children.

During TLW's Nature's Way Camp, researchers will observe each child during a 20-minute walk under TLW's urban canopy of trees. Researchers will collect data on children with autism's repetitive behaviors (stereotypy), cortisol changes, and executive functioning. For both correlation and experimental studies, MNE exposure is expected to be related to lower symptom expression.

TLW will waive the fee of the camp for families who wish to support this important research. For more information, please contact the principal researcher:

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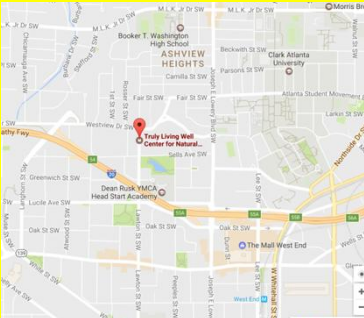
ABOUT TRULY LIVING WELL CENTER FOR NATURAL URBAN AGRICULTURE

Founded in 2006, TLW has become one of the regions largest and most experienced urban farming organizations. TLW grows healthier, more self-sufficient and economically sustainable

communities by connecting people to the land through education, outreach and farming. Nature’s Way Camp is a joint project of TLW’s education and horticultural therapy departments. The programming is designed to use gardening, plants and connecting with nature to improve health, wellness and quality of life for children with autism.

LOCATION

Collegetown Farm is a beautiful oasis near the Historic West End of downtown Atlanta. TLW is celebrating its first year at this site! Located less than 7 minutes from I-20 and the I-75/85 Connector, the farm is easily accessible by car or Marta. Parking is free.



Truly Living Well Collegetown Location (Westside Atlanta)
324 Lawton St SW, Atlanta, GA, Atlanta, GA 30310