



**Connolly Ranch Education  
Center  
Parent Handbook  
2023/24**

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## **Mission**

Connolly Ranch Education Center instills children of all ages with a deep respect for the environment; a strong understanding of farming and sustainable agriculture; and a love for the natural world.

## **Vision**

A world where children of all ages have a deep respect for the land and a connection to nature.

## **History of Connolly Ranch**

In 1915 the Connolly Family moved to Napa County and acquired the property in which the present-day Connolly Ranch Education Center operates. They cultivated a small homestead on the land, which stayed in their family until the early 1990's when Peggy Connolly generously donated the property to the Land Trust of Napa County. The Ranch hosted its first field trip in 1993. In 2009, Connolly Ranch Education Center formerly became a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Today our programs serve over 10,000 community members each year.

## **Connolly Ranch Office**

The Ranch office, located in the historic farmhouse, is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday with a reduced schedule during scheduled Ranch closures and breaks. The office staff is here to help you – if you have a question or concern see the section below for guidance. During programs, please utilize this number (707) 266-3046.

## Whom to Talk to About What

It is normal for questions to arise during your child's time at the Ranch and we are committed to helping you understand our unique programs. Questions that arise are best addressed at the point of origin, through direct and clear communication, and it is important that you are guided to the proper source for answers.

Please connect first with the Lead Educator, Manager or Director for your program. If your question or concern does not seem to be addressed below, please do not hesitate to contact the office for further direction.

## Parking

Connolly Ranch is located at 3141 Browns Valley Road with our parking lot located on Thompson Avenue. This parking lot is utilized for pickup and drop off. Outside these hours, please use the gravel driveway on Browns Valley Road. There is a large green well and a black mailbox that has our address, 3141, on it. Once you reach the top, please check in at the office or call (707) 266-3046.

Please be mindful when parking, saving space for other community members and be sure to lock your vehicle.

## What To Wear

"There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing." – Swedish proverb Please note that camp is held 100% outdoors. To ensure the health and safety of your child, please read below.

**Being a program that runs rain or shine and is held 100% outdoors, we take appropriate attire seriously. If your child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, you will be contacted to bring a change of clothing.**

SPRING and SUMMER: Please make sure your child is wearing long pants or shorts, sturdy close-toed shoes, socks and clothing that can get dirty!

FALL AND WINTER (pending weather) **have additional required attire** - please see below

**TOP:** Dress in layers

- Wool or silk long underwear tops (keeps core warm)
- Additional layer over the base layer (long sleeve, vest, hoodie, etc.)
- Warm jacket
- Rain jacket (even if it isn't raining, it's good to have with the mud!)

## **BOTTOM:**

- Wool or silk long underwear
- Regular pants or shorts
- Waterproof pants -These are important even if it's not raining out
- Rain boots or sturdy/warm outdoor shoes

## **ACCESSORIES:**

- **Hat-In the summer and winter, these are important!**
- Gloves

## **NOTES:**

- Even on warm days, it can be chilly in certain areas of the Ranch!
- Rainsuits can be found on AMAZON ("Playshoes" rain gear is wonderful and affordable!)

## **WHAT TO BRING**

We ask that every child bring an appropriately sized backpack with the **REQUIRED** following items:

- **Lunch/snack and labeled water bottle**

We ask that you please send your child a substantial lunch/snack and water every day. We kindly ask that you limit non-compostable items in their lunches and try to use reusable containers when possible.

- **Change of Clothing** ○ Pants, shirts, socks, shoes and underwear in a labeled plastic bag. This applies to children of all ages .

## **Can we bring toys from home?**

We ask that you leave all toys/"lovies" at home. That being said, we are aware that transitions can be tough so we are always open to communication and working with you and your child. Please speak to your child's educator.

**Please label everything! All items found around the Ranch will be returned to owners if they have a name clearly labeled.**

## **Lunch and Snacks**

Please make sure your child has an adequate meal at home to provide energy for the day. Snacks and lunch should be nutritious and well-balanced, avoiding gum, candy, and sugary foods.

Due to the possibility of severe allergic reactions and a variety of other considerations, we request that children not share food or bring items for other students in the programs. Therefore, for special occasions and birthdays, if you wish, we will acknowledge and celebrate your child in our special Connolly Ranch way. Please relay any special allergy concerns to your child's educator and ensure that you include this on their information form as well. While we are not technically a "nut-free" facility, we take allergies very seriously. Your cooperation is appreciated and will help ensure the safety of all children.

### **Medications**

If your child has medication that needs to be administered while at Connolly Ranch, please contact our Education Director prior to the start of each program so that arrangements can be made. In addition, please include this on your child's information sheet.

First Aid may be provided by Staff of Connolly Ranch for the following:

- Cleaning and bandaging minor cuts, scrapes, burns and bruises
- CPR in the case of an emergency

### **Note:**

- **Sunscreen application needs to occur before a student arrives because we are unable to assist with this.**
- **We cannot remove splinters.**
- **Ticks can be removed with parent permission.**
- **If a head injury occurs, even if it is minor, a parent will be contacted.**

In the event of an incident requiring further care than the actions named above, a parent/guardian and/or emergency medical personnel will be notified and, if necessary, engaged to perform the needed services.

### **Behavioral Policies**

Connolly Ranch does not typically allow adults to attend camp/and or programs with children. If your child requires special consideration, please speak with the Lead Teacher, Program Manager or Director before the program's start date.

**Behavior Issues:** It is our goal to create a fun, safe, and positive environment for all children at Connolly Ranch. If a child's actions are unsafe or disruptive (requires 1:1 supervision) staff will speak with the parent or caregiver about the behavioral incident.

If a student needs to be taken out of program and is sent home, they will be put on a behavior plan. The behavior plan involves the instructor, student, and parent and will address the specific behavior that caused them to be sent home. The behavior plan is set as follows:

- 1st Send Home - Behavior plan enacted, parents are informed.
- 2nd Send Home - Student will be asked to take a break from Connolly Ranch. They can return after at least one day away from the program.
- 3rd Send Home - Student will be asked to take a break for 5 days from Connolly Ranch.
- 4th Send Home - Student will be asked not to return to Connolly Ranch as they are a safety concern for both staff and other students.
- If a child's actions are more serious or threatening in nature to oneself, others, animals, or staff (biting, hitting, scratching) we will require immediate pick up.

Note: Connolly Ranch Education Center reserves the right to act on any of these issues regardless of the above order should the behavior present a serious threat to other children, educators, or animals. Should a child be asked to leave the program due to serious behavior issues, our cancellation and refund policy will apply.

### **Bathroom Policies**

Children MUST be potty trained, does not wear pull ups, and able to use toilet paper effectively. Staff cannot assist with this. No diapers or pull ups are allowed. Teachers can help with buttons/zippers, but we ask that your child is independent in the bathroom.

If a child has recurring accidents, Connolly Ranch reserves the right to ask the family to take a break from the program and return once the child is more confident and comfortable using the potty independently at Connolly Ranch.

### **Health and Safety Policies**

Please keep your child home if you notice any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature of 99 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Nausea/Vomiting
- Please keep your child at home during the time frames set by the CDC, regarding exposure/contagious periods for all viruses

**If your child exhibits any of these signs while at Connolly Ranch, you will be contacted and required to pick up your child immediately. Please ensure all parent/guardian and emergency contacts are up to date, all phone numbers are listed and functioning. This is essential to your child's safety. Your child may return when there is no fever for three full days without the use of medicine, or they are symptom free for at least 72 hours.**

Connolly Ranch reserves the right to send a child home for illness even in the absence of fever and regardless of a note from a physician.

### **Parent Sign in and Sign out**

In alignment with NVUSD policies, it is a requirement that each child must be signed in and out by a parent/guardian or authorized adult parent/guardian representative every day on the Sign In and Out sheets. A full signature is required. Children will be released only to those authorized persons (at least 18 years old) designated on the child's release form. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify Connolly Ranch staff of any changes in writing. Once the child is released from our program, we are no longer responsible. Please let us know if you live in the neighborhood and your child will be biking or walking to and from the Ranch.

### **Make-up days**

Due to the nature of our classes and camps, Connolly Ranch does not offer make-up days in the event that your child misses a part of their program.



### **Air Quality Policy**

Our policy is to cancel programs if the AQI exceeds 150 (3 point variable) and deemed "unhealthy". Between 101-149, we monitor the forecast and levels to make a call as early as possible; we also modify programs to take advantage of the indoor spaces and reduce prolonged physical exertion to limit exposure to poor air quality.

### **Lost and Found**

All unlabeled items left behind at the Ranch will be placed in the Lost and Found bin located at the Big Barn. Unclaimed items will be donated at the end of each session. By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the contents of the Parent Handbook and agree to Connolly Ranch's outlined policies.