



The Job Title	Lead Early Childhood Educator
Reports to	Early Childhood Manager
FLSA Status	Full-Time / Non- Exempt
Last Revision Date	July 2024

About Connolly Ranch Education Center:

Our mission as a 501 c3 nonprofit is to instill 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.

Connolly Ranch Education Center’s (CREC) unique nature and discovery-based pedagogy is centered around cultivating social, emotional, gross and fine motor and ecological intelligence as children of all ages explore and interact with our animals, garden and wild spaces. Our natural and ever-changing educational environment provides spontaneous opportunities to explore and learn from “what just happened.” We lead with inquiry to encourage children to become dynamic learners, mindful leaders, and divergent thinkers.

CREC’s educational pedagogy draws from [Reggio Emilia Approach](#), [Waldorf Education](#), and operates much like a [Forest School](#) as all programs take place in our dynamic and ever changing outdoor classrooms that includes our edible garden, farm with over 30 animals, and wildspaces. In addition, CREC’s early childhood programs incorporate the [Rainbow Action Networks’](#) DEI curriculum.

Position Overview:

CREC Lead Early Childhood Educator works closely with fellow educators and children to facilitate thoughtful outdoor classes. Tasks include creation and delivery of weekly lesson plans designed within the In-With-For Relationship model of learning that is based on children’s emergent interests, seasonal learning within the outdoor classrooms, on-going reflection about and assessment of children, and the CREC Playschool programs, in collaboration with other teachers and/or volunteers. CREC lead educators set the tone for learning as engaged, thoughtful and patient role models of nature-based education while maintaining a safe, positive atmosphere.

The Lead ECE Educator program position is part of a passionate and collaborative group committed to connecting children to nature and the joy of learning through discovery-based education.

Distinguishing Features

Lead educators are responsible for:

- Enriching program experience through co-developing and executing activities, weekly flow plans, curriculum, rituals, etc.
- Supporting operations of the program, ie. registration, parent communication, materials, sharing organizational information to families (upcoming events, important dates, etc.).
- Guide fellow educators by setting the tone and structure of the day and delegating necessary tasks.
- Bring the joy and curiosity of learning into the program.

All Connolly Ranch educators are:

- Committed to each student, individually, throughout their growth and development
- Adept in creating and delivering creative, engaging, interactive lesson plans
- Growing and constantly evaluating teaching methods
- Comfortable pushing beyond their comfort zones in education and nature
- Able to think outside the box
- Inspiring to their students
- Empathetic and caring
- Patient and kind
- Enthusiastic about learning
- Passionate and idealistic
- Qualified to teach early childhood education with the proper certificates and degrees

Major Tasks, Duties and Responsibilities

The Lead Early Childhood is responsible for the delivery of high-quality discovery-based curriculum and experiences for children between the ages of 3 and 6 years old.

Year-Round Educational Programs and Camps (75%)

- Lead educator for Playschool and seasonal Junior Farmers camps.
- Along with the ECE Manager, design and implement a nature - based and dual - language curriculum for Playschool program, but are accessible to all educational programs.
- Create a welcoming family environment and effectively communicate with parents and caregivers about their children specifically and the program in general.
- Ensure the physical and emotional health, safety, and welfare of all children.

- Create, execute and lead weekly lesson plans and curriculum that aligns with CREC's discovery-based pedagogy, follows the In/With/For Model of Learning and Relationships, and nature-based learning.
- Support ECE Manager with Connolly Ranch child assessment.
- Stay abreast of ECE and nature-based education curriculum and standards.
- Help develop and implement long-term goals and objectives to achieve the successful outcomes of the Playschool program.
- Help to facilitate weekly ECE educator meetings.
- Guide and support the professional development of ECE educators.
- Participate in staff meetings and special events as appropriate to ensure connection with the rest of the staff and the CREC community.
- Other duties as assigned.

Administrative (25%)

- Correspond with current and prospective ECE parents and families.
- Understanding of our program registration platform, as it relates to registration and rosters.
- Responsible for sharing organizational information to parents.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- Ability to lead a team to deliver high quality nature and discovery-based education experiences.
- Report observations and evaluation findings to the ECE Manager and recommend changes to enhance the program, as appropriate. Identify and evaluate the risks associated with program activities and take appropriate action to control the risks.
- Ability to engage children to cultivate critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity and to engage in, with and for nature.
- Ability to effectively and professionally communicate with parents, teachers and community members.
- Effective time management – prepares in advance and ready to deliver weekly lesson plans.
- Adaptability as conditions change (number of students, weather, etc.).
- Effective collaborator in team environments and commitment to contributing talents to achieving the organizational mission.
- Ability to receive and give constructive feedback.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- 2+ years of working with preschool age children in an education setting and delivering team-based programming (outdoor experience preferred).
- Fluent in Spanish, verbal and written communication.
- ECE basic certification/ at least 12 units, and ongoing professional development in ECE and nature based education is a plus.
- Bachelor's degree in a related field preferred.
- Able to pass a LIVEScan check.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Able to work outside in varying weather conditions.
- Able to sit and work at a computer keyboard for extended periods of time.
- Able to stoop, kneel, bend at the waist and reach on a daily basis.
- Able to perform general office administrative activities: copying, filing, and keeping electronic records.
- Able to lift and move up to 50 pounds occasionally.

NOTE: To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed above are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required and is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all duties, responsibilities or qualifications associated with this job.

COMPENSATION

Based on experience.

Connolly Ranch Education Center does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.

To apply, email cover letter and resume to Nora Dondero, Early Childhood Manager - nora@connollyranch.org.