

FAQS FOR SPRING 2025 HATCHLINGS

ABOUT THIS CLASS

Hatchlings will engage in outdoor nature play in this unique opportunity to interact, explore, and bond with their caregivers in the natural world. This program will include loose parts and messy play with natural objects and sensory elements such as sand, mud, grass, leaves, and water.

Hatchlings is best for infants and toddlers who are creepers, crawlers, or new walkers up to 24 months old, but even newborns benefit from outdoor sensory experiences. Classes are accessible to children and caregivers of all abilities.

Class will be held in various locations outdoors rain or shine and may include a short walk to different areas of the Arboretum. Young children benefit most from time out of strollers and carriers, enhancing sensory experiences and challenging muscles. Please plan to wear or carry Hatchlings who are not yet walking for short hikes and let us know if you need assistance with caregiver accessibility.

Hatchlings is a dedicated learning and bonding opportunity for caregivers and their children birth to 24 months old only. Please plan ahead for older siblings who will need care during this time.

CLASS FORMAT

The one-hour class will generally follow this format:

- Arrival, sign-in, and introductions at location
- Information for caregivers on benefits of the day's activity
- Story and guided sensory-based activity
- Free play with natural materials
- Farewells

CLASS LOCATION

Hatchlings is 100% outside in all seasons, with cancellation only in case of severe weather, unsafe trail conditions, or power disruption at the Arboretum buildings. As the location may change each week, an email detailing the location Hatchlings will meet will be sent the day prior to the class. Sign-in will be at the class location.

CLASS THEMES

Themes for each class are subject to change. Attending classes that repeat provides additional opportunities for unstructured play and social engagement for both children and caregivers.

“Ice and Fire series” series

- January 8, 22, 29 (no class January 15)

“Color my World” series

- March 5, 19, 26 (no class March 12)

“Sun, Sand, and Me” series

- May 7, 14, 21 (no class May 28)

WHAT TO BRING/WEAR

We will get dirty, sandy, and muddy, if not wet, most days!

- **Seating:** A blanket, tarp, towel, or mat to sit on during circle time, if desired. Foams squares will be available for use during class.
- **Clothing/Accessories:** Dress for the weather! Hatchlings follows the Scandinavian phrase, *“There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothes.”* Sun-protective clothing, hats, sunglasses, waterproof outerwear and waterproof/resistant footwear for rainy days, and a change of clothing are recommended.
- **Water/Hydration:** Please bring a refillable water bottle for yourself and your child. There are water refilling stations on the Arboretum grounds. You may nurse or feed your child as necessary.
- **Extras:** sunscreen, lightweight muslin for infants under 6 months, extra clothing, towels, insect repellent (the Arboretum provides 25% DEET repellent for use during class)

HEAT SAFETY

Naturalists and all teaching staff are informed about heat safety and how to identify any signs of distress. We will stick to mostly shaded areas when possible and monitor conditions throughout the class.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND BLOG

Photos are sometimes taken during our classes. Occasionally, photos are used by local TV stations, newspapers, and magazines. Photos are also used on the Houston Arboretum's social media pages. If you would not like your child photographed or videoed, please inform Christina Spade, our Registrar, at cspade@houstonarboretum.org

CANCELLATION/REFUND POLICY

All sales are considered final. In case of class cancellation due to significant weather impact, contact Melissa Kyle at mkyle@houstonarboretum.org to request attendance at a future date.

For questions about registrations, refunds, and waitlists, please refer to our [cancellation policy](#) or contact Christina Spade at cspade@houstonarboretum.org

MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT HATCHLINGS?

Please email Melissa Kyle for more information, mkyle@houstonarboretum.org