



FAQs

Seeds of Stewardship - After School on the AZT Winter 2021

Who can participate?

This program is for Flagstaff youth in grades 5-7. Participants should be prepared to hike, snowshoe, and cross country ski up to 5 miles on uneven terrain in varying weather conditions.

What is the schedule like?

We'll meet once a week for 6 consecutive weeks, starting January 13 and ending February 17. February 24 will be a weather make-up day. Participants are highly encouraged to attend all 6 outings, but we understand that everyone's lives are very full; please keep us informed if your child can't make it to an outing, so we know to skip the gear rental for them and not to wait up at the trailhead.

[Check out the calendar with meeting times and locations.](#)

What will participants do and learn?

Outings will typically consist of an introductory activity, snowshoeing/hiking/cross country skiing, a snack break, games/initiatives/mindful moments, learning opportunities along the trail, and more snowshoeing/hiking/cross country skiing!

Participants will gain outdoor skills and knowledge essential for a lifetime of winter adventures, including Leave No Trace principles, winter ecology, and survival techniques. We will use the process of learning to travel effectively as a group to illustrate concepts like planning ahead, self care, self confidence, and being part of a thoughtful community.

The program's capstone experience will be a group challenge hike. The group will have collaborated over several outings to choose a location and create a trip plan. Youth will be given the chance to self-lead the hike, demonstrating their refined abilities to navigate, communicate, identify potential risks, and guide others with compassion.

Winter trail conditions typically aren't conducive to trail work, so we won't be hosting a trail maintenance project this season. However, we'll have a couple youth volunteer opportunities around Flagstaff this spring. Check the Seeds of Stewardship [calendar](#) to stay tuned!

What measures are being taken in response to the coronavirus?

The Arizona Trail Association's Seeds of Stewardship (SoS) is implementing vigilant COVID-19 epidemic protocols. Detailed information about the virus and our safety strategies can be found in our [comprehensive document](#).

In addition to the requirements stated in the [ATA Epidemic Protocol](#), SoS participants will be required to:

- Wear a mask at all times unless they are eating, drinking, or are directed that it's safe to remove it.
- Possess and utilize disinfectants (provided by SoS).
- Refrain from sharing any gear, supplies, and food.

We ask that youth kindly refrain from participation if they have COVID-19 symptoms, believe they may have COVID-19, or have had any exposure to someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days.

But my child doesn't have cross country skis or snowshoes?

We will provide cross country skis and snowshoes for anyone wishing to participate who doesn't have the necessary equipment. We will need advance notice of this request, and please let us know if your child will be missing any sessions, so that we can skip the rental for those days.

What else is needed for outings?

We have bins of loaner clothing and boots! Please don't let the clothing list prevent participation. We will make sure everyone has what they need!

For each outing, please bring...

- A comfortable backpack with space for extra clothing layers.
- Wear a mask and bring an extra one just in case.

- Minimum 2 liters of water. Warm water is nice for colder weather.
 - Snacks. Pack extra snacks just in case the trail hunger sets in!
 - Comfy weather-appropriate clothing (layers) meant for moving.
- *Winter adventuring requires the right clothing for sure! See below for our suggested approach to layering:
- 1) Each week participants should be wearing a base layer of long johns. Polar fleece pajamas work great as long johns! So does a combo of non-cotton yoga pants and a long sleeve polyester athletic shirt, both of which are inexpensive at Target and Walmart.
 - 2) Mid layers - a fleece jacket or light to mid weight puffy.
 - 3) Outer layers - a waterproof shell or snow jacket, snow pants or a combo of warm fleece pants with waterproof pants and gaiters.

**No clothing for winter adventuring should be cotton. Cotton, when wet, retains no insulative value and will transfer heat away from the body rather than keeping it in!

- Insulated waterproof gloves
- Wool or fleece socks
- Insulated waterproof boots
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Reusable insulated mug
- Cell phones should stay in backpacks on silent.
- Any children who require an epi pen, inhaler, or other life saving medications must have those medications available for every outing.
- Optional: binoculars, hand/foot warmers

What if there is inclement weather?

Please ensure your child is always prepared with weather-appropriate clothing; be sure to check the weather the day before our outing and then pack accordingly. With the proper clothing and attitudes, rain, snow, and cold are awesome opportunities to experience the trail in new ways, awaken the senses, and embark on memorable adventures. That being said, our instructors know when to call it off; when inclement weather is forecasted (beyond what we hope for in order to ski and snowshoe), we'll be in touch to give you a heads up to pack extra items or that we'll be cancelling/postponing that week's outing. February 24 will be a weather make-up day. Again, if there is any item you need to borrow, we've got you covered!

Is there a fee?

Nope! Our program is funded by grants and private donations. We hope to remove the barriers to entry as much as possible and don't want cost to be an issue. We do however accept donations from anyone who wants to support Seeds of Stewardship; you are welcome to donate here: <http://www.aztrail.org/donate.html>.

Who is leading the outings?

Julie Polovitch, Arizona Trail Association's Youth Outreach & Education Coordinator, will be your friendly neighborhood outdoor educator. Julie, a Flagstaff resident, holds a B.A. in Environmental Education and a Wilderness First Responder certification. She has extensive experience leading groups in wilderness settings, a background in ecology and conservation, and an excitement for enlivening new curiosities for the natural world. A perfect outing in Julie's mind is one that a) excites youth to explore more and ask more questions, b) challenges participants to try something new, and c) leaves a little extra dirt on our shoes, hands, and—yes, sometimes—faces.

Each outing will also be accompanied by a qualified Seeds of Stewardship co-leader or parent chaperone.

More questions?

Please reach out to Julie at julie@aztrail.org.