



# EPIC Learning Community

## The EPIC Learning Community is hiring Forest Mentors!

EPIC Learning Community is a nature-based alternative to the classroom and works in collaboration with a provincial online learning school to offer enriching learning opportunities in nature alongside BC-certified teachers. We are located on south Vancouver Island and gather at the Power to Be site on Prospect Lake, on the traditional land of the Songhees, Esquimalt, Malahat and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. As a hybrid learning community, we create opportunities for students to be led by a dynamic team of teachers, forest mentors and practicum students - our Learning Team (LT). We are whole child-focused and strongly believe in an approach based on connection to build relationships with children, our community and the land we play on.

### **Role:** Forest Mentor for EPIC Learning Community

Number of Positions: 3

Commitment: September 2024 to June 2025

Primary Location: Prospect Lake (Power to Be) and Beaver Lake (Girl Guides Site), Greater Victoria

Compensation: \$150 to \$180 per day, range based on experience and qualifications. Paid preparation time, paid professional development and paid sick leave are some of the benefits included in the position.

Work Schedule: Work onsite 3 days per week; approximately 5.5 - 6 hours per day (Tuesday – Thursday).

### **Overview:**

EPIC Learning Community is looking for a passionate individual with an understanding of attachment-based practice and ideally wilderness training to co-lead a group of up to eighteen Kindergarten to Grade 5 learners in our innovative nature-based program. The Forest Mentor is an individual experienced in stewarding groups of kids in outdoor education and a naturalist with ecological and botanical knowledge. The Forest Mentor will have a toolbox of activities rooted in

supporting children as they learn and discover their relationship with the land, themselves and one another.

EPIC Learning Community's programming operates three days per week with learners spending each day outdoors in the woods and fields of Power to Be at Prospect Lake. We also go on field trips within the Greater Victoria area. One to two hours of exploration and discovery may occasionally happen indoors depending on the site and activity. The mentor works alongside our BC-certified teachers as a member of the EPIC Learning Team.

We are looking for someone who embodies caring leadership and who desires to build emotional safety within the group by building connected relationships with each student and responding to challenging behaviours in ways that support children's emotional health.

Are you dedicated to changing the way education traditionally happens? Do you love to get muddy from head to toe, pause to see a slug in action, encourage connection and build community? We seek those with creative ideas about how to spark learning in a nature-rich environment.

#### **Primary Duties and Responsibilities:**

- Collaboratively plan and implement activities with the other members of the Learning Team.
- Adapt activities to meet the needs of a diverse group of learners.
- Support the unfolding of children's learning through inquiry.
- Meet with our BC-certified teachers weekly to plan activities prior to on-site time and debrief at the end of the day.
- Actively participate in the EPIC community including off-site meetings and training with the EPIC Learning Team and/or EPIC Board of Directors.
- Communicate clearly and effectively with learners, parents/guardians, Learning Team, program coordinator and board of directors, both in-person and electronically.
- Work alongside and mentor practicum students.
- Commit to EPIC's mission and vision.

#### **Qualifications/Previous Experience:**

- Outdoor experience or training as a wilderness/forest practitioner such as Coyote Mentoring, 8 Shields model training, or land-based learning practices.
- Experience holding a group of elementary age children for hours in an outdoor setting.
- Experience facilitating activities designed to foster a deep connection to the natural world.
- Familiarity with, or curiosity and commitment to, learning about Gordon Neufeld's attachment-based methods in order to keep a child's heart soft and create a culture of connection.
- Experience with inquiry-based learning and adapting activities to suit the capabilities of various children.

#### **The Ideal Candidate:**

- Has wilderness or forest practitioner training as mentioned above.
- Has 3 years experience with educating children in and about the natural world.
- Has experience developing and facilitating engaging activities for elementary-aged children.
- Lived or educational experience with First Nations, Métis, or Indigenous ways of knowing and being.
- Exhibits emotional self-awareness.
- Is highly adaptable and able to take initiative.
- Is able to work independently as well as collaboratively with other educators and can lead a group or support the one leading.
- Practices an attachment-based, developmental approach (e.g., collecting before directing) and is confident in their ability to create a culture of connection.
- Uses clear, compassionate, respectful communication skills.
- Has knowledge of West Coast botany and of history of the area.

- Is comfortable and experienced with being outdoors in all kinds of weather for extended periods of time.
- Has wilderness or remote first aid and CPR level C certificates.
- Is willing to develop a practice of self-reflection to investigate how learning/teaching goals align with those of learners, as well as with EPIC's values.
- Is a life-long learner who is interested in receiving specialised professional development training, either independently or in a team setting.
- Has cultivated a deep relationship with the land and has a desire to share it with future generations.

Uncertain about the skills and experience or whether or not you're a good fit? We want to hear from dedicated, passionate individuals looking to serve (and open to learning new skills).

### **Onboarding scheduling:**

Training and Orientation: September 3, 4 & 5 (3 paid days)

Team Connection: Tuesday, September 17 (1 paid day)

Program Start: Wednesday, September 18th 2024

### **To Apply:**

Please submit a cover letter, resume and two references to EPIC Learning Community by email at [info@epiclearningcommunity.ca](mailto:info@epiclearningcommunity.ca). Please title the subject line "EPIC Mentor Position 2023/2024". Send any questions to the same email address.

*EPIC wants: more tree climbing, more gardens, more ritual, more Mother Earth warriors, more "wild in the child", more respect, more bird song, more "I want to go to school today", more soft hearts, more curiosity, more free play, more reflective time, more foraging, more no-trace lunches, more risk takers, more hide and seek, more tide pooling, more skill sharing, more respect for sacred spaces, more mud kitchen, more hugs, more public art, more science experiments, more laughter, more owl pellet dissection, more empathy, more critical thinking, more ways of knowing, more dance, more intergenerational learning, more gratitude, more connection-based practices, more safe spaces to be your true wild self.*