

Blazing Trails' Childcare Fact sheet

(Revised May 2018)

BT Vision: Children are empowered to discover their worth.

“Our mission is to provide families and staff a safe, diverse childcare environment dedicated to respectful communication, creative learning, problem solving and the freedom to play!”

- Blazing Trails opened in the summer of 1995 after receiving a start-up grant from Seattle's Families and Education Levy. Your tax dollars in action!
- Blazing Trails is creating its own non-profit. We have our own Board of Directors made up of parents, staff and community members.
- We provide drop-in, part-time (for days/time slots families choose) and full-time care during summer and the school year for around 200 children each year.
- We serve children from Pathfinder K-8 and five more area public schools. About 20% of our enrollment comes from schools other than Pathfinder. NOTE: Make sure you clarify any busing issues to/from your child's school before you register with us.
- We have a comprehensive summer enrichment program for ages 5 to 12 which includes field trips, and explorations in the arts, culture, crafts and science.
- We offer a special summer program for incoming Kindergarteners designed to familiarize them with facilities and expectations they might find in a Kindergarten classroom. They will start their Kindergarten year with confidence!
- We meet or exceed licensing requirements which allow us to accept children on the city and state subsidy programs.
- We provide scholarship opportunities for families who need tuition support as our budget allows. Last year, this amounted to \$13,600 worth of help to our families who were most in need.
- We maintain healthy relationships with school teachers, support staff and Pathfinder's principal with the goal of supporting individual student/family needs to the best of our ability.
- The King Co. Health Department nurse and psychologist are available to work with us, helping with children's health concerns or special medical/emotional needs.
- Our program meets or exceeds Seattle Public Schools Alignment Initiative requirements for cooperation between our program and our host school, curriculum standards and support for the 40 Developmental Assets.
- Seattle Public Schools provides our space rent free for meeting Alignment goals. This allows us to keep tuition as low as possible and invest more in the quality of our program.

- Blazing Trails Director serves on Pathfinder's Building Leadership Team (BLT). BT's Asst. Director is on the building's Safety Committee.
- Our "CoR" groups provide age appropriate activities and give children a sense of belonging. **Raccoon CoR** is K through 1st, **Badger CoR** is 2nd and up and the **Lynx CoR** 5th and up. NOTE: Lynx membership is optional and depends on meeting the criteria for participation.
- Our curriculum supports elementary school learning standards for Reading, Writing, Math, Science and Communication. Teachers document this support for each activity.
- Blazing Trails supports three full-time staff positions and nine part-time positions, including 1-2 assistant positions for teens. We also have a few more staff members who join us during our summer enrichment program. Jobs for our community!
- We offer medical, dental and vision insurance benefits to all our employees.
- Many of our staff members have worked for Pathfinder as tutors. Most are or were parents of Pathfinder students.
- We have very low staff turn-over. Except for our four newest, every staff member has been with us for at least 10 years, some for all 23+ years!
- We encourage staff members (by providing additional paid hours) to volunteer in Pathfinder classrooms and at school events such as Culture Nights.
- We participate in Pathfinder's many activities, attend various meetings and school functions. This provides a positive Blazing Trails' presence in the school community and strengthens our relationships with all Pathfinder children and families.
- Blazing Trails' teachers meet or exceed the state's initial 30 hour requirement of specialized childcare training (MERIT-STARS). Staff members choose training that meets their own goals and interests for at least 10 hours each year.
- As a group, our staff chooses training on a wide range of relevant topics including at least 4 hours per year of multi-cultural anti-bias training.
- All Blazing Trails' staff members attend the School's Out "Bridge Conference" every October. This is an international conference focusing on after-school childcare issues bringing together government policy makers, schools, providers and higher education/research. We close for these 2 days.
- Blazing Trails' staff members have current food handler's permits, First Aid/CPR and BBP certifications.
- We have weekly staff meetings where we share information from teachers, parents and children, train, brainstorm and problem-solve.
- Pathfinder Auction – We contribute by providing "kid art" and the donation of at least one week full-time summer care.
- On an individual basis, we provide the opportunity to earn community service hours for high school students.