

Wild Roots – Parent Insights

What did Collaboration look like in the Wild Roots Program?

I found the whole process of the program, even from our first orientation session to be collaborative. From the beginning, our thoughts, opinions, suggestions, concerns and questions were all welcomed and addressed. While using the Six touchstones of Wild Pedagogies and the Four Foundations of Learning as our anchors, the course of the program changed frequently as we adapted to the needs of the children, the facilitators and the natural space.

Collaboration among facilitators happened in different ways. It could be seen in a simple email to the program lead, in a conversation facilitators had while facilitating, in one-on-one reflections with the Early Childhood Educator or as a topic brought up at our monthly meetings. Any sharing that occurred was appreciated, respected and considered.

Parent facilitators also had the chance to collaborate with the children. They often let the children take the lead in how they were going to engage in the natural space but were also there as supports to help them with their goals. There were many joint projects in observation of life in nature, setting up and checking play spaces, creating and expressing through journaling, transient art or imaginative creations.

Children also collaborated with each other through play, investigation and problem solving, using nature's tools and resources. The freedom and independence Wild Roots encourages allowed the children to embrace their curiosity and go out and explore together. It was refreshing to witness them relying on each other rather than relying on an adult nearby.

In addition to the collaboration that occurred among the adults and children, a key collaboration that took place was that with the natural world. There was a mutual listening and learning that occurred in our interactions with nature. We became aware of each other's presence and adapted in our response to one another. There were exchanges of gifts and knowledge, negotiations when faced with challenges and compromising as a strategy to gain mutual benefits. Despite coming from two different worlds of language, there was a flow of communication in our relationship with the natural world. This communication was collaborative as we became partners in the Wild Roots Program.

~ Wild Roots parent