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Frost Valley YMCA

Frost Valley YMCA Opens Outdoor & Virtual Learning Center For Children to Safely Learn During the Pandemic

CLARYVILLE — Acknowledging the many challenges and concerns families have about the school year as well as the high percentage of children in the surrounding rural communities without high-speed internet access, Frost Valley YMCA is embracing an opportunity to serve children in a new way. As a leader in youth development for over 135 years, Frost Valley YMCA is especially well equipped to address these obstacles, given its more than 5,000-acre property that allows for social distancing, its professional staff who are experienced in youth development, and a mission to serve all. During a time when so much uncertainty exists, Frost Valley has now completed the licensing process that allows for the opening of its new

"Outdoor & Virtual Learning Center" (OVLC), which will be available for schoolchildren beginning Monday October 19, 2020.

This new program will offer:

- Expert childcare from 8:30am-5:30pm Monday through Friday for children in Kindergarten through Sixth Grade (partial week and full week options available)
- Ample space for children to safely conduct their virtual school programs
- Experienced youth development facilitators who can offer support as needed while children learn from their school teachers
- Outdoor, experience-based programs once students' virtual schoolwork has been completed (activities include nature hikes, visits to Frost Valley's raptor center, archery, pond exploration, and more)
- Peace of mind for families that their child is receiving an enriching and safe learning experience this school year, allowing them to continue to work during the day

"We're so pleased that we received the proper licensing to be able to offer this much-needed service for families," says Jessie Emmons, Director of Youth Development and Innovation at Frost Valley. "We offered a small day camp at the end of summer 2020, during which we went to great lengths to implement arrival-time temperature and health checks, social distancing and small group sizes, mask-wearing when social distancing wasn't possible, and the highest standard of disinfecting practices. We knew we had the capability to replicate these practices

and address the challenges families are facing this school year. Now, we're excited to see it come to fruition. Frost Valley is designed for children – it will be great to have them here once again!"

In order to ensure proper social distancing, capacity for this program is limited, and registration has already begun, although several spots are still open. Transportation is available for students in the Tri-Valley School District; however, the program is open to all children in kindergarten through sixth grade. Frost Valley also has its onsite "Little Rainbows Daycare" for younger children and infants, which is also an ideal option for children attending virtual preschool, and accommodations will be made for them to complete their online learning at daycare.

If your family is interested in pursuing this unique opportunity, please visit www.frostvalley.org/ovlc to learn more. Families can directly contact Frost Valley by emailing Jessie Emmons at ovlc@frostvalley.org or calling 845-985-2291 ext. 410.

About Frost Valley YMCA: Frost Valley YMCA is a values-driven organization that fosters youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility through outdoor educational and recreational programs for all. Located in the heart of the Catskill Mountains, Frost Valley provides year-round access to nature and fun through programs such as summer camp, adventure trips, farm camp, equestrian programs, group and family retreats, family weekends, school trips, teambuilding and more. Frost Valley, a not-for-profit organization chartered through the YMCA of the USA, is guided in this pursuit by its core values which serve as pathways for guests as they bond with nature and each other: Caring, Community, Diversity, Honesty, Inclusiveness, Respect, Responsibility, and Stewardship.

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Photo: apple science lesson

Caption: Toward the end of summer 2020, Frost Valley was able to host a small day camp. Pictured here, two day campers engage in a science lesson at the camp's apple orchard. **FOR**

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Additional photos and interviews are available upon request. Please contact Chief Brand Experience Officer Amanda Hinski at ahinski@frostvalley.org