

2026-2027 Bloom Willow Guidelines

Who We Are

Bloom Willow is a Waldorf-centered and inspired cooperative. Our co-op is run by two co-leaders, Makenzie and Nina. It is NOT run by consensus. Makenzie and Nina carry the primary responsibility for planning, teaching, and guiding the rhythm and offerings of the co-op. Families participate by supporting co-op activities and helping with small tasks throughout the day. The co-op thrives when everyone works together to ensure that children have a meaningful, Waldorf-centered experience.

As leaders, Makenzie and Nina arrange location, set up field trips, manage accounting, interview new members, oversee lesson plans and festival preparation, and guide the daily operations and administration of the co-op. All final decisions regarding lessons, festivals, new members, finances, and policies lie with Makenzie and Nina.

Volunteering in the group involves staying with your children and helping with small tasks throughout the day. Your presence and support help the co-op run smoothly and create a warm, cooperative environment for all of our children. It is okay if you are new and haven't mastered Waldorf — we are all learning together. Attending the Mom Gatherings are helpful so you can gain skills and ideas to bring to your children or our group. It is also strongly recommended that you continue your own Waldorf education at home.

Fees

The co-op fee is based on family size and is due by the first co-op day of each month:

- 1 child: \$120/month
- Each additional child: \$20/month

All families are required to pay a \$100 registration fee when enrolling in the co-op. This fee covers administrative costs, initial supplies, and ensures your child's spot in the program.

The registration fee is non-refundable. Registration confirms your commitment and helps us plan a high-quality, well-prepared experience for all children.

You will also need to set up a family membership with Tree Hill Nature Center during your first visit. The family membership is \$45 and is good for one year. You will need to show your membership card at check in each Friday morning before co-op.

Co-op fees include: quality supplies, birthday gifts for all the children and mothers, festivals, reimbursement of most field trip fees.

This does NOT include handwork supplies. Handwork tends to run between \$10-\$20 per child per semester. We work to order in bulk to get the best prices. When there is an opportunity to bring your own supplies, it will be welcome, those times will be mentioned in our group chat. Unless otherwise stated, please plan to use the supplies we provide.

Once accepted into the co-op, monthly dues are expected by the first co-op day each month. If you find yourself unable to pay the full amount please see Makenzie or Nina to make arrangements. If you are in a position to donate extra for another family, please see Makenzie or Nina.

Payments can be made through the online portal.

If you have any finance questions, please speak directly to Makenzie or Nina. If you should have trouble paying your fees, please speak directly to Makenzie or Nina. Do not engage in financial discussions in our Facebook group or Online Portal.

Interview Process

You must attend a meeting with Makenzie and Nina before being asked to attend our co-op for your trial weeks. The meetings happen about once a month and are a requirement. At the meeting, we get to know each other and discuss the co-op, our core values, and go over any questions that arise. Not all meeting attendees will be invited to join our co-op for a trial. We keep the overall health of the group in mind when asking families to join us. Makenzie and Nina work to keep the classes/ages balanced as well as the boy/girl ratio balanced. Once you have been invited to join us for a trial period, you must attend at least two co-op days. It is possible that you will not be invited to two consecutive days if we have a field trip or special gathering planned. We will let you know in advance so you can properly plan. Once you have been twice Makenzie and Nina will together make a decision.

We have a wait list and so we ask that if you are invited to join in, you make your decision within a week's time. If you turn down a spot in our group and later change your mind, you will have to be placed back on the waitlist.

If you are invited to join and you accept, be advised that we have an online portal for members. Participating in the online portal is mandatory as we will be posting our monthly plans and festival information there.

COMMUNICATION IS MANDATORY. YOU MUST BE WILLING TO TEXT AND USE THE ONLINE PORTAL.

Exiting

Occasionally there will be a family that begins with our group that for one reason or another needs to be released from the group. As hard and sad as that can be, Makenzie and Nina reserve the right to ask a family to leave if they feel participation is lacking or the child or parent brings too much conflict to the group dynamic. When a family is asked to leave, they are welcome to join our waiting list again after one year.

General Instructions

Our co-op meets on Fridays from 10am to 1pm. We invite families to come early if their children want to play before co-op. That being said, it is important that you arrive at least TEN minutes early to get centered and ready for the day.

If you will be late, please text Makenzie or Nina and let them know. If you will miss a day, let them know.

Remember this is a community and communicating is very important. Intending to only come a few times a month is not supportive of the community we are building. We need active, supportive families. This is NOT a drop-in park day.

At each gathering (unless otherwise specified) you can expect to bring a potluck dish to share and lunch foundations for your family. We generally do NOT have potluck on field trip days. Bringing your lunch foundations ensures that if there are food intolerances it is still easy to have something for our own children to eat. Potluck contributions need not be big, they should be something that can be used during our snack/lunch time.

In the event of a canceled co-op day (weather, leader illness, or unforeseen circumstances), makeup days will be held on Saturday mornings. We will communicate dates through the online portal and group text.

Guidelines

We intend for the co-op to be a safe place for everyone, parents and children alike. **This means that parents must hold the space with their children.** We need loving kindness to prevail if this co-op is to be successful. While strong friendships are the goal of gathering, we also want everyone to feel loved and included. If a strong bond has formed within the group, please nurture it with additional play time for them outside of co-op and that during co-op your children are inclusive of all the children.

****Co-op is not an individual play date. We are all friends. Being inclusive is foundational to a strong community.****

Rough play is to be expected but we still need to hold the space so it doesn't get out of hand.

We understand that this group might not be a fit for all of your children, in those cases please arrange for care outside for those that are not participating. **ALL co-op children must regularly participate in their lesson and handwork groups.** Our leaders and teachers put a lot of work into making co-op fun for everyone and participation fosters community. Of course we understand that children have bad days from time to time and that the very young may be hesitant. We allow grace for those days.

We understand special needs and want any children with autism spectrum issues to feel welcome. In order for that to work well for the families, we need to be open and honest with each other. Open communication about your child's needs will help things run smoothly.

We need to have moms holding the space with their children. Holding the space means that we are present with our children. We are not on our phones or engaged in deep adult conversation with another mom. It means we know our children, **we communicate struggles and issues with the other parents.** In the end we want everyone to have fun and we want this to be a good supplement for your child's school year. If you don't understand what it means to hold the space, please see some of the resources at waldorfessentials.com.

Many Waldorf families are very health conscious and choose alternative health and no vaccination or altered vaccination schedules. Please be aware that with vaccine shedding, recently vaccinated children can pass along live viruses to non-vaccinated children. We ask that you respect all group members and choose to sit out two weeks of co-op after vaccinating your child.

COMMUNICATION IS MANDATORY. YOU MUST BE WILLING TO TEXT AND USE THE ONLINE PORTAL.

Location

We meet at Tree Hill Nature Center - 7152 Lone Star Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32211. Each member will be need to purchase a family membership which is valid for one year. You will need to present your membership card at the check in desk each morning before meeting up with the group.