

Blazing Trails' Childcare Fact sheet

(Revised 2008-2009)

- Blazing Trails opened in the summer of 1995 after receiving a \$20,000 start-up grant from the City's Families and Education Levy. Your tax dollars in action!
- Blazing Trails operates under Pathfinder's PTSA as a non-profit with our own governing council (B.T. Council) made up of parents, staff and Pathfinder's principal.
- We provide drop-in, part-time (for days/times families choose) and full-time care for 170+ children each year (approximately one third of Pathfinder's K-7 population).
- Our enrollment is generally full. We've started each year with a wait list since the fall of 2000.
- We expanded our licensed rooms (the rooms we can use) to accommodate more children during early release days and summer. This expansion also allows us to be more flexible for our regularly scheduled students, too.
- Families often choose to keep their children at Blazing Trails even if they move from Pathfinder to other schools. We serve children from 8 other area public and private schools.
- We have a comprehensive summer enrichment program for ages 5 to 12 which includes field trips, community service opportunities and explorations in the arts, music, culture, crafts and science.
- We meet or exceed licensing requirements which allow us to accept children on the city and state low income subsidy programs.
- We provide scholarships and work-trade opportunities for families who need tuition support.
- We maintain healthy relationships with school teachers, support staff and principal with the goal of supporting individual student/family needs to the best of our ability.
- The state Health Department nurse and psychologist work with us to help with children's health concerns or special 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.
- Our three "Clans" provide age appropriate activities and gives children a sense of belonging. Raccoon Clan is K through 2nd, Gecko Clan is 3rd through 5th and the Bison Clan 6th and 7th.

- Our curriculum supports elementary school learning standards for Reading, Writing, Math, Science and Communication. Teachers maintain a detailed log of this support for each activity.
- Blazing Trails supports three full-time staff positions and 5 part-time positions. Jobs for our community!
- We offer medical, dental and vision insurance benefits to all our employees.
- Many of our employees either have worked for Pathfinder as tutors or work currently as tutors. Most are or were parents of Pathfinder students.
- We have very low staff turn-over. Except for our newest hire in July 2005, every staff member has been with us for at least 6 years.
- We encourage staff members (by providing additional paid hours) to volunteer in Pathfinder classrooms and at school events such as Culture Nights.
- Blazing Trails' staff members supervise breakfast and the playground before school every day. In this way we build recognition and relationships with all Pathfinder students.
- We participate in Pathfinder's many activities, attend various meetings and go to 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 20 hour requirement of specialized childcare training (STARS). Staff members choose training that meets their own goals and interests, 10 hours or more for each year thereafter.
- As a group, our staff chooses training on a wide range of relevant topics provided by our city trainer from School's Out Washington.
- All Blazing Trails' staff attends the School's Out "Bridge Conference" in 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 First Aid/CPR cards and food handler's permits.
- We have weekly staff meetings where we share information from teachers, parents and children, brain-storm and problem-solve.
- Pathfinder Auction – We contribute by providing "kid art", childcare and the donation of one week full-time summer care.
- We donate towards the Culture House program and Pathfinder Powwows.
- On an individual basis, we provide the opportunity to earn community service hours for high school students.