

# About our Programs



**To:** Directors and Teachers

**From:** Creature Teacher

**Date:** 11/19/2014

**Re:** The "Creature Teacher" programs 336-253-3733 [www.CreatureTeacher.org](http://www.CreatureTeacher.org)

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Thank you for choosing to incorporate the "Creature Teacher" programs into your schedule and allowing us to become a part of the children's lives! Please feel free to call Karen Finch, our director of programs, if you have any questions, comments, suggestions or concerns. Below is a list of general policies we have regarding our program scheduling. We welcome any of your thoughts on ways to improve our system. These are just some guidelines to help you better understand our scheduling and lessons.

## ➤ INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY / SCHOOL HOLIDAY

- If **either** the Winston-Salem / Forsyth County schools **OR** the Guilford County schools are closed due to inclement weather, we will not be operating. Even if your county is open and the other is not. This is because we are traveling with tropical and exotic species that cannot be exposed to extreme weather conditions should there be an unfortunate accident. It is also because our educators have excessive travel time as they move from school to school each day.
- If the school systems are on a delay we will also not be operating unless you are an elementary school with an afternoon program scheduled. This is because most of our preschools are paired with another school and so a delay means we cannot visit both schools in the limited timeframe. Unfortunately, school delays mean we will need to reschedule.
- If you are a daycare or preschool that does not follow your county school schedule and the public schools in your county are closed for a teacher workday or holiday, we may not be operating either. Most of the time, if your establishment is open and wants us to come, we will still come. However, some of our educators have children in the public school system who may be home for a teacher workday and, therefore, this may require that they stay home with their children. But, please feel free to ask us as we can most often accommodate you in these cases!

## ➤ RESCHEDULING MISSED PROGRAMS

Did you know that our facility completely relies on the income generated from providing programs to establishments like yours? If a program is missed, it is very important for us to reschedule so that we can meet our 8 scheduled sessions for the year. We rarely have to reschedule for something other than weather. If Creature Teacher needs to reschedule and no date works for both, we will not charge for the program. However, because we work with so many schools with so many needs, we will have to charge for any programs that cannot be rescheduled if your facility needs to change the date. Please be aware that our routes dictate that we pair certain schools together and must visit them on the same day, therefore sometimes rescheduling can be difficult. We ask that you do not attempt to reschedule unless it is absolutely necessary. Thank you for your cooperation! We do not have contracts, we want to stay personal, and we are always willing to work together to build a relationship with your school that will hopefully benefit us all!

➤ **HELPING THE CHILDREN GET THE MOST FROM OUR PROGRAMS**

- Please respectfully ask your teachers to remember that it is very difficult for us to perform if they are carrying on background conversations. We ask the children to be “good listeners” and it is unfair to expect this of them when their teachers are talking. There have been times we have been at schools and our Creature Teacher literally has to shout over the teachers to continue her lesson. It is very distracting; the children do not get as much out of the lesson and because of the volume of programs we are now doing it is hard on our Creature Teacher’s voice! Thankfully, this has not been a tremendous problem for us because the teachers are generally just as enthralled with our lessons as the children! But we do ask the directors to politely remind their teachers of our request.
- If your school has a location for us to set up so that the children can come to us, it is very helpful. Particularly because traveling from room to room cuts down on our time with the kids. We do several schools that simply do not have this kind of space and we are more than willing to change rooms; however, if a central location can be arranged, it does make it a more smooth and enjoyable experience for the kids.

➤ **MONTHLY PROGRAMS**

- Most of our schools participate in our monthly visit format. We reserve mornings for those schools. Our agreement with participation in this manner is 8 visits in a school year. Although repetition is essential for children in a learning environment, we want to expose them to a different animal every month and will not repeat an animal within the school year. We do have enough animals to maintain this cycle, however, as the next school year comes along at some point we will start the cycle again. Generally, it takes us approximately 1 ½ years to get through all the animals we have in our menagerie.

➤ **BILLING / PRICING**

- We charge on an hourly basis. Our charge is \$75 per half-hour program with a two-program minimum. (\$150 minimum charge unless your facility only needs one program which we can book in conjunction with another school in your area on the same day.) This charge generally breaks down to anywhere from \$2 to \$4 per child. We have not increased our charges in 8 years! After reviewing the charges of other child enrichment programs in the area (tumbling, computers, dance), we have found that we are still well below the average per child rate. Most of these other programs cost about \$5 to \$6 per visit per child. The money that comes in from our programs goes into providing the animals with top notch veterinary care, feed, habitats, insurance, licensing and to compensate our Creature Teachers.
- In order to keep our liability insurance costs as low as possible, which is difficult when working with children and animals, we hold a policy that only allows a maximum number of children in each lesson. Here are those guidelines... 25 max for a two year old program. 33 max for a three to five year old program. 50 max for elementary age programs. This rule is very important for us to stick to. Please help us comply! If your numbers seem to be getting too low or too high for a group, just call Karen and she will help you work it out!

Thank you for taking the time to review these guidelines and the additional information about our services. The “Creature Teacher” programs are an important part of our community and offer children and adults a great way to experience incredible animals from all over the world in a safe, positive way! Therefore, we want to have a close alliance with all of our teachers, children and directors. We look forward to a long and positive relationship with your school!

Sincerely,

Karen Finch, Owner / Operator