New England Aquarium
Youth Programs

We aim to empower youth with an understanding of their connections to the ocean so they can participate as members of a community of informed citizens who are inspired to change the world. Participants in any of our Youth Programs will:

• Gain an understanding of ocean life and systems
• Recognize human connections to the ocean
• Practice ocean stewardship behaviors
• Build friendships with peers and mentors
• Explore aquatic habitats like beaches, rivers, salt marshes, and islands
• Become environmental leaders

Find a program to match your interest, age, and availability.

**Harbor Discoveries Camps (grades 4 to 10)**
One- and two-week summer programs

**Marine Biologist in Training Class (grades 9 to 11)**
One day a week for six weeks; application required

**live blue™ Ambassadors (ages 15 to 18)**
Episodic events, sign up for one or many.

**Summer Teen Internships (ages 15 to 18)**
Seven weeks, 20 to 25 hours a week; application and interview required

**ClimaTeens (ages 14 to 18)**
Two meetings a month during school year; application required

**Visitor Education Volunteer (ages 16 and older)**
One day a week for six months; application and interview required

Teen interns are exposed to marine science in a variety of ways, such as field trips on the water.

Contact the Youth Development team at teens@neaq.org if you have questions. Visit us online to see programs listed by age, find specific dates, and apply or sign up for programs. www.neaq.org/teens
In Depth: Programs for Youth and Teens

**live blue™ Ambassadors***
**Ages 15 to 18**
Volunteer and work alongside scientists and educators at these outdoor events focused on habitat conservation and restoration. To join, sign up for the LBA email list (URL below) and start receiving weekly updates about orientation and event dates. All new participants must attend an orientation at the Aquarium before their first event. There is no fee, and this program runs year-round, with event schedules varying by season. Orientation required. Sign up online. There is no fee for this program. www.neaq.org/lba

**Harbor Discoveries Camps***
**Youth entering grades 4 to 10**
These one- and two-week summer camps focus on different aspects of marine life, from hands-on encounters with Aquarium animals to immersion in marine conservation to peeks behind the scenes at the Aquarium. Each program includes an overnight camping experience. Program fee varies depending on the session, and some scholarships are available. Registration is required. www.neaq.org/camps

**Program Timeline**
**January:** Registration opens for Aquarium members.  
**February:** Registration opens for non-members.  
  Scholarship applications are due.  
**July:** Harbor Discoveries Camps begin.  
**August:** Camps conclude.

**ClimaTeens**
**Ages 14 to 18**
ClimaTeens meet twice monthly after school. Teens in the program arrive with various levels of knowledge about climate change, but they are united by a desire to learn more and are committed to adopting ways to engage public audiences on this issue, particularly their peers. This program is by invitation only; there is no fee for accepted applicants. www.neaq.org/teens

**Program Timeline**
**August:** Application is available by invitation.  
**September:** Application is due.  
**October:** Meetings begin (twice monthly through June).  
**June – August:** Occasional meetings and activities

**Marine Biologist in Training Class***
**Grades 9 to 11**
A challenging course for students interested in learning about marine science while building skills for problem solving, leadership, and environmental stewardship with like-minded teens. This course is offered on Sundays in the fall and spring for six weeks each session. Application is required. Financial aid is available. Visit us online for exact dates and application. www.neaq.org/mbit

**Program Timeline**
**February:** Applications are due for spring session.  
**March:** Spring session begins.  
**September:** Applications are due for fall session.  
**October:** Fall program begins.

**Summer Teen Internship***
**Ages 15 to 18**
Apply for a volunteer or paid teen internship for seven weeks in June, July, and August. Interns work in various departments throughout the Aquarium, including education, visitor service, and camps. We hire 70 teen interns from an application pool of nearly 400 after a competitive application and interview process. Academic-year internships are available after completion of the summer program. Application required. www.neaq.org/teens

**Program Timeline**
**February:** Applications are available online.  
**March:** Applications are due. Interviews take place.  
**April:** Internship positions are announced.  
**June:** Summer Teen Internships begin (seven weeks).  
**August:** Summer Teen Internships conclude.

**Visitor Education Volunteer**
**Ages 16 and older**
Teens who can commit to volunteering for one day each week for at least six months can apply online to be an Aquarium volunteer. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. www.neaq.org/teens

---

*Please note that most programs have limited involvement with animals.  
* These programs include an outdoor field experience.
How many people apply to Aquarium youth programs?

We typically get three times more applications than we have spots, so we hope these tips will help you make your introduction stand out.

You don’t need to be studying marine biology or have special training to apply. We are looking for youth who:

- Care about the oceans and aquatic habitats
- Want to be active in the community
- Encourage and inspire others to act as environmental stewards
- Can commit to the program requirements
- Seek to engage and communicate with others

Can I work with animals?

Due to health and safety concerns, there are limited opportunities for those younger than 18 to interact with live animals. However, the Aquarium strives to provide equally rich learning opportunities through exhibits and biofacts, such as shark jaws.

Participants in Harbor Discoveries Camps, Marine Biologist in Training, Summer Teen Internship and Visitor Education volunteers may engage with small animals such as tidepool invertebrates, small reptiles, and fish.

If you are interested in working with animals, remember that their care is hard work. Responsible animal care involves maintaining an animal’s health and habitat, including cleaning the enclosure, preparing food, exercising, grooming, and careful observation.

Here are a few tips to get some experience with animals:

- Volunteer at an animal shelter or nature center.
- Take care of a neighbor’s pet.
- Keep a fish tank
- Research pets that you think you can care for.
- Become a pet-sitter to get real experience.

Can I do a job shadow, school internship, or project at the Aquarium?

Job shadows:

Due to the amount of training required to experience Aquarium careers or jobs, we are not able to offer traditional one-day or week-long job shadows. Instead of a job shadow experience we encourage you to attend the Aquarium’s free lecture series and ocean-themed festivals, where you can speak directly to experts in the field.

School internship and school projects:

We regret that we cannot offer school internships or projects onsite at the Aquarium. We are happy to advise you of partner programs or locations where you can do stewardship work in your own community.

How do I meet my community service requirement for school?

We are committed to helping you help your community. Volunteer hours with the following programs can be used to fulfill community service hours for school: live blue™ Ambassadors, Teen Internship (volunteer), Visitor Education Volunteer. We can also advise you of partner programs or locations where you can do stewardship work in your own community.

Frequently Asked Questions

Harbor Discoveries campers explore the Ipswich River.

When in doubt, get in touch with us via email! teens@neaq.org
**Tips for Success**

Many Aquarium programs are quite competitive. If you’re interested in being part of the Aquarium’s community, follow these tips for a strong application.

---

**Step 1**

**Recognize your strengths.**

*Are you a good communicator?* Consider joining ClimaTeens.

*Do you like to work outside?* Consider volunteering with live blue™ Ambassadors.

*Are you a fan of public speaking?* Consider applying for a Teen Internship.

*Do you love exploring?* Consider registering for a Harbor Discoveries Camps.

*Are you a hands-on learner?* Consider applying for a Marine Biologists in Training class.

*Do you have interest but limited availability?* To speak directly with ocean experts, consider attending the Aquarium’s weekly lecture series during the school year and ocean themed summer festivals.

---

**Step 2**

Please consider the following BEFORE applying or registering for a program:

**Age**

We have programs for youth in grades 4 through 12.

**Commitment**

Are you looking for programming on weekends? A summer-only experience? Please read program descriptions carefully.

**What do you want to do?**

We have options: volunteer, take a class, summer camps, paid and unpaid internships.

**Getting to and from the Aquarium**

We are very accessible to the Blue Line MBTA stop and many teens travel on their own. Some of our programs offer carpooling such as live blue™ Ambassadors and Harbor Discoveries Camps. Please inquire about carpooling options.

---

**Step 3**

Apply or register for a program.

All of our programs require the applicant to tell us something about why they want to be involved with the Aquarium. We are interested in how the applicant (not parents, not teachers) answers this question. We encourage each applicant to invest the energy to represent themselves strongly.

Please keep the following in mind:

**Aquarium applications require:**

- Two non-family adult references who can speak well of the applicant
- The applicant to answer one or two short-answer essay questions; for the online Teen Internship application, it is helpful to write the essays out in advance
- Proofreading, then, proofreading, again; incomplete applications are not considered

**Helpful tips:**

- A resume is highly encouraged for Teen Internship applicants.
- Most of our communication is by email. Set up a professional email address such as myname@gmail.com. Check the email address often after applying for a program and respond promptly and professionally.

---

When in doubt, get in touch with us via email! teens@neaq.org