



Potawatomi Zoo Summer Camp Frequently Asked Questions

- ***What time can I drop-off/pick-up my child from camp?***

Full-day camps start at 9 AM and end at 3 PM. Half-day (Discovery) camps are from 9 AM to 12 PM. We will have the check-in table ready by 8:45 AM. Arriving a little early on the first day of camp is always a good idea to ensure a swift check-in process.

We will begin check-out promptly at the end of the camp day. Pick-up will be held in a car line on the west side of the Zoo, off Greenlawn Ave. (Please see map on page 4). At the Camp Open House OR at check-in on the first day, each parent/guardian will be given 2 car passes designated for the pick-up of their child. **The pass must be displayed on the passenger side dashboard of the vehicle.** This will allow us to see the child's name before walking them to the vehicle. Please distribute these passes only to the individuals you have listed on the registration section for approved pick-up list. The car line will begin on the east side of the road nearest the Zoo. Cars must be lined up facing North/the train tracks, meaning children must enter through passenger side door. Please be patient with us as we work through the car line. We want to make sure the appropriate person is picking up each child. Your child's safety is our top priority during camp.

After-care pick-up will be in the Learning Center Classroom. Please park in the Zoo's parking lot and walk inside for after-care pick-up. **When picking-up from after-care, every person that picks up a child MUST show their ID,** whether that person is the camper's parent, grandparent, baby sitter, etc. We require the person picking up the child to present their ID and be listed as an approved guardian on the camper's registration section for approved pick-up list. If a guardian does not have their ID, they may be asked to verify the child's personal information or asked to retrieve the ID before the camper is released into their care.

If for any reason your child needs to be picked-up early or dropped-off late, please let us know. You may call the Education Office if it is an emergency or last-minute change. If you know in advance that your child will be missing part of camp, please provide us with a signed note.

- ***What should my child wear to Zoo Camp?***

Summer campers will be provided a camp t-shirt at the Camp Open House OR upon arrival at their first day of camp. We ask campers to wear this shirt every day of camp; it will help us easily identify campers and keep them together as we explore the Zoo. You may purchase a second t-shirt for \$10 upon registration or at the Zoo. Spring and winter campers are not required to wear a camp t-shirt.

Due to the nature of camp activities, all campers should wear close-toed shoes each day of camp. Please do not send your child to camp in flip-flops or sandals. Please be aware that your child may participate in game and/or crafts throughout the day that may dirty their clothing.

- ***What should my child bring to Zoo Camp?***

We ask that campers bring with them a water bottle and any weather-appropriate (raincoat, sweater, boots, etc.) clothing they may need for the day. If the camper is a picky-eater or has dietary restrictions, you may also pack an alternative snack for them. Full day campers (ages 7 and

up) will need to bring a sack lunch. You are welcome to also send your child to camp with sunscreen, but they will need to be able to apply it themselves.

Please do not send your child to camp with electronics, toys, and other items of monetary or sentimental value. The Zoo is not responsible if these items become lost, stolen, or broken. If your child needs to contact you for any reason, we ask that they use an office phone with the assistance of staff. Cell phones should not be out during camp.

- ***Is lunch and/or snack provided at Zoo Camp?***

Snack is provided for all camps. Example of snacks include items such as goldfish crackers, pretzel sticks, popcorn, granola bars, or fruit snacks. Each camper is offered our snacks but may also bring their own if needed.

Lunch is not provided. We ask that full-day campers bring their own sack lunch. Please do not send your child with money to purchase lunch at the Zoo. We have a designated amount of time for the lunch break and need to keep all the campers together during that time, so taking them to the Congo Café can be difficult. We also have limited access to a fridge and microwave, so sack lunches are best. Half-day campers should eat lunch after camp; we do not have a designated time for lunch during half-day camps. Please provide breakfast to your camper before arriving at the Zoo; hungry tummies can be very distracting!

- ***What will my child be doing in Zoo Camp?***

Camp activities include educational animal encounters, games, crafts, science experiments, and other activities. We try to ride the train and carousel once with each summer and spring camp but cannot guarantee the rides will operate during inclement weather. Each camp will also meet a variety of animal ambassadors throughout the week, such as small birds, reptiles, mammals, amphibians, and insects.

Campers may be given the opportunity to safely touch some of these animals. Campers may also be given the opportunity to feed some animals, such as our bison, goats, okapi, anteaters, or tortoises. In this instance, the campers will be separated from the animals by a barrier. Some camps may also tour our vet hospital, diet kitchen, or other behind-the-scenes areas of the Zoo. Campers will not be able to go behind the scenes with any large carnivore.

- ***Who is caring for my child during Zoo Camp?***

Zoo camp staff is comprised of 4 Camp Counselors and 1 Education Intern. All camp staff is managed by the Education Programs Manager and Education Curator. Each instructor has been trained to deliver the camp's educational objectives while caring for the campers. Every camp staff member also has a background check on file with the zoo and prior experience in childcare/education.

- ***Can I stay in camp with my child?***

Because we ensure that all camp staff has a background check on file with the Zoo, we typically do not allow parents/guardians to remain in camp with their child. The only exception to this rule is for children with special needs that require an aid.

- ***What will my child be doing during before or after-care?***

Before-care and after-care is a free-play time supervised by camp staff. Campers may choose between games, toys, books, coloring sheets, and movies inside the camp classroom. We will not leave the classroom during this time.

- ***If my child has special needs, limitations, medications, and/or dietary restrictions, how can I ensure the camp staff is aware?***

The Potawatomi Zoo Camp is inclusive and provides extra support to individual campers when needed. If your child has any special need or limitation, please list it on the child's medical release form and camp registration (online). You may also confirm the information with camp instructors upon check-in for the first day of camp. If your child needs to take medications during the camp day, or is bringing EpiPens or inhalers to camp, the parent/guardian must fill out a Medicine Administration Form, located on our website at: www.potawatomizoo.org/edzoocation/zoo-camp-information/

- ***Didn't find the answer to your question?***

Contact the Education Department at (574) 235-9801/ (574) 235-7621 or education@potawatomizoo.org

Zoo Camp Drop-off and Pick-up Map

Potawatomi Zoo's Address: 500 S Greenlawn, South Bend, IN 46615

Afternoon Car-Line Pick-up:

Car-line pick-up is at 3:00 PM for full-day camps (12:00 PM for half-day camps). A pass with the camper's name must be displayed on the car dash passenger side. Please park vehicle on Southwood Ave or facing railroad tracks with passenger side closest to Zoo on Greenlawn Ave.

Morning Drop-Off and After-Care Pick-up*:

Drop-off is always in the classroom. Please park in Zoo parking lot and walk camper inside through the Learning Center gate.

*If your child is in after-care, pick-up will be in the Learning Center classroom until 4:00 PM. Please park in the Zoo parking lot and walk into the Zoo through the Learning Center gate and into the classroom. Don't forget your ID!

