



# Summer Day Camp

## Frequently Asked Questions:

- **What documents do I need to submit in order for my child to attend camp?**

Completing online registration or sending in a registration packet with payment will reserve your child's spot in an available camp week. *Registration is not complete until we have received a signed Medical Treatment Release form and a copy of Immunization records.* Completed registrations must be received no later than 7 days prior to the camp start date. Paperwork will not be accepted at the camp, incomplete registrations will be cancelled without refund.
- **What if the online registration doesn't work?**

Please download the registration packet by clicking on the "Register by Mail" option and return with payment and immunization records by mail. Phone registrations are not accepted, but you may call us if you have questions.
- **How many campers do you have space for each week?**

Each week has 48 spaces for pre-registered campers entering grades 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>. We will group campers into two age appropriate learning environments, typically 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>. We cannot guarantee placement of campers in a particular group. All ages report to the same location for drop off/pick up and will share certain activities during the week. Camp weeks not meeting the minimum enrollment requirements will be cancelled at least one week in advance. *\*See Cancellation Policy below*
- **What are the age requirements for camp?**

Campers must be at least 6 years old at the time of camp or entering 1<sup>st</sup> grade in the fall. Once a child reaches 13 years, we refer them to the Zoo Teen program. The level of activity and social environments experienced at camp can be difficult to maneuver for children younger than 6 or older than 12 years.
- **Who supervises my child during Summer Day Camps?**

We staff up to four experienced adults per week who will have extra help as needed. Our child to adult ratio is 12:1. Our staff are all background checked, CPR/First Aid certified, and trained to deliver educational programming at the zoo. Additionally, the camp manager will monitor all camp activity.
- **Will campers be grouped by age?**

Each week of camp has 48 spaces for pre-registered campers entering grades 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>. We will separate campers into two age appropriate learning environments during each week of camp. We cannot guarantee the placement of a camper in a certain group. All ages will report to the same location for drop off and pick up.
- **What will my child do at camp?**

We strive to offer unique activities from week to week as we reflect on our mission of connecting campers to nature and inspiring their participation in conservation efforts. Each camp week has a different topic, though some things can be expected each week such as; meeting live animals; group activities; craft time; feeding giraffes; learning new things and having fun experiences; before the week is out we'll explore every inch of the zoo and spend a lot of time outdoors hiking in a natural setting!
- **What time should we arrive for the program?**

Your child's camp will begin promptly at 9:00am and end at 4:00pm. Drop off begins no earlier than 8:50 am and Pick up begins no earlier than 3:50 pm. Please help us by remaining in your vehicle if you are early to either; we will be working hard to prepare for you while keeping everyone safe. *\*Please note: Required paperwork will not be accepted at the camp*

- Where do we meet for the program?**  
 All camps will meet at a designated area for both drop off and pick up. Once registered, please check your email for important camp details including directions to the meeting area.
- What if I am running late for camp?**  
Drop off ends at 9:00am and pick up ends at 4:00pm. If you will be arriving late for drop off or pick up, please call the zoo at (269) 979-1351 and the receptionist can let the camp staff know. Campers who consistently arrive or depart late may be dismissed from the program.
- Can I pick up early?**  
 Please try to avoid late drop-offs and early pick-ups. Your child may miss tours, animal lessons, and other activities. If you have late drop off or early pick up needs during the week, please communicate them to us at least 48 hours in advance so we may evaluate the possibilities. Any notice given less than 48 hours in advance makes it extremely difficult for staff to ensure your child is near a drop off or pick up location when requested. If you must pick up without advanced notice please call the zoo. There may be a delay in meeting you depending on the area we're in that day.
- Can someone else pick up my child?**  
 Yes, when the person signing the child in will not also be picking them up, please let us know in advance the names of those authorized to pick up your child. We will only release campers to adults authorized ahead of time by the parent or guardian. We may ask for identification.
- Are there extended care hours?**  
 We are not able to offer extended care hours during the 2023 camp season.
- What if the weather is bad?**  
 We run camp programs rain or shine. Please dress your child for the weather. We will not remain outside in severe weather and may need to use designated storm shelters within zoo.
- What is the COVID-19 policy this year?**  
**COVID-19 Precautions:**  
 Camps will take place both in and out of doors. Campers will be asked to wear a mask during times of close contact with Zookeepers and animals. *\*Our animal policy currently requires that everyone briefly wear a mask during behind the scenes tours.* We ask that each camper bring a mask for this reason, or one can be provided if needed. Binder Park Zoo respects everyone's choice to wear a mask outside of this policy. We will be diligent in monitoring each camper and ask that you help your child understand the importance of safety precautions for those outside of the group. Campers are not required to have a COVID-19 vaccine to attend but should be free of all symptoms of illness at camp. For the safety of all, please inform us if your child becomes ill or tests positive for COVID-19 at any time prior to or during camp.
- How do I cancel a week of camp?**  
 Please call or email the zoo to cancel as soon as possible. **Cancellation Policy:**
  - Cancellations received at least 5 business days prior will be refunded or transferred ONLY if the cancelled space has been filled before the camp, less a \$25 processing fee.
  - Cancellations received 0-4 business days prior will not be refunded or transferred.
  - Full refunds or transfers will only be issued if Binder Park Zoo cancels a camp due to extenuating circumstances or low enrollment.
  - We reserve the right to dismiss campers at any time, without refund, from one or more scheduled camp weeks if stated policies are not followed.
  - There are no refunds for incomplete registrations or missed days due to illness, appointments, family emergencies, dismissals, or other reasons.
- Are there price discounts available?**  
 There are no discounts offered during registration for the 2023 camp season, the price is \$220 per camper, per week.

- **What should my child bring to camp?**

- **Hand sanitizer and face mask**

- Campers should bring their own hand sanitizer and will be required to wear a mask as instructed in certain areas of the zoo.

- **Sunscreen and Bug Spray**

- If necessary please apply or send sunscreen and bug spray for your child. We will be outside most of the day. If sending these items to camp, they should be packed in a backpack and only used outside as instructed.

- **Appropriate Clothing**

- Please dress your child for the weather with comfortable shoes for walking - **no flip-flops.**

- Sending a small jacket, hat, and a change of clothing is recommended. *\*Some mornings are chilly and campers may get dirty or wet throughout the day.*

- **Re-usable Water Bottle**

- Please send a reusable water bottle each day, we will be encouraging campers to stay hydrated while using ecofriendly options.

- **Medications**

- When sending OTC or other medications and Epi-pens to camp with your child, please list them on the medical treatment release form with instructions for use.

- **Lunches and snacks**

- Please send a sack lunch with your child Monday - Thursday. Included in the cost, we will provide cheese & pepperoni pizza for lunch on Fridays and two daily snacks to campers. We may serve granola bars, rice krispie treats, fruit snacks, chips, goldfish, buttered popcorn, etc. Please feel free to send different snack items as you see fit and inform us of food allergies on the Medical treatment release form.

- **Who helps my child with an allergic reaction?**

- We do our best to accommodate the needs of campers with allergies. Sharing food at camp is not allowed, if your child has any allergies please communicate them to us and feel free to send different food/snacks as you see fit. Campers carrying an Epi Pen must also be communicated so we can alert Camp staff. Staff are trained to administer medication if an emergency arises.

- **May my child bring personal electronics and toys to camp?**

- We strongly recommend that all items of value stay at home. The zoo is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items. We understand the desire to take pictures or send a phone for emergencies; however, electronic devices can be extremely disruptive during camp. We ask that you encourage your child to communicate all issues and emergencies directly to the Camp Staff so they may handle situations appropriately and inform parents and guardians. In addition, we ask that campers do not bring any toys from home; we plan specific course content with activities that are appropriate for all campers to participate. If a camper does bring an item of value to camp, their instructors will ask them to put it away. No skate-shoes are allowed at camp.

- **Are T-shirts included with the camp fee?**

- T-shirts are \$15 each in addition to the camp fee. We also offer a Gear Package for \$35 that includes a drawstring backpack, T-shirt, collapsible water bottle, bug repellent wipes, and a select animal plush. It is recommended that you pre-order during registration, though items may be purchased at any time during camp as well. Campers will receive their pre-ordered items on the first day of camp. *\*Campers are not required to wear a camp T-shirt.*

- **May I visit the zoo while my child is in camp?**

- Parents and guardians may visit the zoo during normal hours, Monday through Friday between 9:00 am – 5:00 pm. Up-to-date pricing is listed on our website. While visiting the zoo, we ask that you please remain on your own away from the campers to avoid distractions and allow the time for campers to bond with their peers and the Camp Staff.

- **Will campers visit the gift shop during camp?**

- Please do not send money to camp, as it is easily lost and loose coins are a danger to our animals. Our gift shop near the Zoo Exit is open until 5:00 pm, Monday – Friday, if you'd like to visit the gift shop with your child after camp.

- **Do you offer Special accommodations?**  
Summer Day Camp is inclusive and affirming; our lessons and activities are age-appropriate and designed for multiple learning styles. We are able to modify some of the activities as needed. Binder Park Zoo is wheelchair accessible and provides tools and resources to those with environmental sensitivities. Please communicate the needs of your child to us prior to camp so we may assist you. If one-on-one assistance is needed, you will be asked to secure an adult aide to attend free of charge. Please contact us with the aide's information prior to camp.
- **What is your policy on behavior?**  
We are concerned for the safety and wellbeing of every camper and expect they will follow rules similar to attending school while at camp.

#### **Posted Camp Rules & Expectations:**

- Show respect and kindness to everyone; humans, animals, and plants
- Stay with your camp group at all times and use the buddy system
- Keep hands and feet to yourself, even if playing with a friend
- Use quiet voices inside and outside, especially when you are near animals
- Keep track of your belongings and place trash in the right place *\*No food sharing*
- Quiet down to zero volume when adults are speaking, listen for directions, and raise hands to talk

#### **Individual Camper Requirements:**

- Be able to eat, toilet, dress, carry belongings
- Be able to communicate needs or concerns
- Participate in camp activities peacefully with other children close in age
- Follow directions and make good choices

#### **Bathroom Policy:**

All campers must be fully toilet-trained and completely independent when using the restroom or come to camp with an aide. Bathroom and water breaks are taken frequently throughout the day. Our policy is to guide the campers to the bathrooms and wait for them outside, keeping vocal contact with the

camper. Many of our bathrooms are public and we cannot empty them out for our groups. If your child has a bathroom accident, we will ask if they have a change of clothes or call you to provide one.

#### **Behavior Policy:**

- Each day that rules are followed we will offer positive reinforcement rewards at pick up, this helps encourage good behavior and gives parents/guardians a front row seat to their child's overall camp experience.
- In the event disruptive behaviors occur, (i.e. running, yelling, throwing things, not listening, etc.) Camp Staff may use the following methods and inform the parent or guardian at pick up: verbal reminder of rules and expectations or a supervised break from activity with camp management.
- Repeat disruptions without improvement will require guidance from the parent or guardian in order to find a solution to the problem. Camp management will contact you by phone or at pick up to discuss the appropriate method. You may also be asked to send an aide who can supervise your child for the remainder of the week.
- Campers who exhibit inappropriate behavior, unsafe actions, or repeatedly disrupt the camp will be dismissed. We have a zero tolerance policy when situations like hitting, kicking, bullying, violent outbursts, or disagreements pose a threat towards oneself, other campers, zoo staff, or resident animals. Binder Park Zoo reserves the right to refuse enrollment to anyone, or dismiss without refund, any camper for behavior related issues. *\*Please review the Rules and Expectations with your child prior to attending camp*

#### **How are campers rewarded for behavior?**

Every Friday campers will have the chance to choose a prize based on how many good behavior points they earned during the week. Daily points will be rewarded at pick up to those exhibiting good behavior during the day. Those not attending on Friday will not get to pick their prize on other days of the week.

- **What are your emergency procedures?**

- **Emergency Contact**

- Please make sure we have the best phone number and email on file to reach you, along with anyone else who will be responsible for your child during the week. We will call phone numbers in the case of emergency or behavior issues; we will communicate important group updates to you through email.

- **Medical Emergency**

- Camp Staff will immediately call Emergency Services and the camper's emergency contact phone number provided during registration for all medical emergencies at camp. Camp Staff are certified in First-Aid and CPR procedures through the American Heart Association. Please make us aware of all related allergies and any medications that your camper may bring to camp, including Epi-pens and OTC medications.

- **Emergency Plans**

- Binder Park Zoo employees actively participate in periodic training drills related to the potential for emergency situations.

- **Severe Weather Warnings**

- We will not remain outside in severe weather and may use designated storm shelters within zoo. In the event severe weather results in the loss of power and water at the zoo, you will be contacted by email to inform you of our plans to release campers early.

- **What if my child becomes ill at camp?**

- When a child does not feel well at camp, we will provide a quiet space for them to rest. If they do not feel better after resting or show outward signs of illness, camp management will contact parents or guardians to pick them up as soon as possible. Before returning to camp, please make sure your child tests negative for COVID-19 and is free of symptoms of illness. Campers who have symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 should not attend camp, observe the state recommended guidelines for quarantine, and mask upon returning to camp.

- **What if my child is injured at camp?**

- Campers often participate in running games throughout their session and while they are supervised we cannot always prevent the occasional trip or stumble. If your child gets a minor injury we will apply first aid (typically a band aid and an ice pack). If your child needs a little time to rest, we will provide them with a quiet, safe space. Parents and Guardians will be notified by Camp Staff during pick up of all minor injuries.