



SUMMER TEEN LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

2024 DETAILS

Welcome to the Learning Department's programming at your Birmingham Zoo!! We look forward to providing your camper or teen with a fun, unique, and educational experience here at the Zoo. Please review the following document thoroughly and email education@birminghamzoo.com if you have any questions or concerns!

PREPARATION FOR ZOO PROGRAMMING

Communication

Please ensure that we have the correct caregiver email address and phone number in CampBrain to receive important logistics information and to reach you in case of an emergency. Logistics emails are typically sent the Wednesday before the week of the program.

What to Bring

Participants should bring a positive attitude and their sense of curiosity! Dress in comfortable clothing that you don't mind getting a little dirty. Closed-toe shoes are recommended for all campers and required for teen programming. All participants should bring a reusable water bottle, preferably with a strap. Please label personal items. Participants are expected to keep track of their own items. The Birmingham Zoo is not responsible for lost items.

Participants attending Summer Camp or the Teen Leadership Experience will receive a t-shirt on the first day. Extra t-shirts may be purchased online for an additional fee, listed in CampBrain registration processes.

What NOT to Bring

It is recommended not to bring personal items such as electronics, game cards, money, jewelry, collectables, etc. in case of loss or damage. Exceptions for sensory need or personal items such as fidgets may be granted with prior notice to Zoo Learning Department staff. Fireworks, lighters, and other dangerous or illegal items are not permitted and will result in immediate suspension. Any inappropriate items will be confiscated and returned to caregivers at the end of the day. Repeated violation may result in suspension from Zoo programming.



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A DAY AT ZOO PROGRAMMING

Drop Off and Pick Up

- **Check-in** for participants will occur at the Children's Zoo Entrance Gates from 8:30-9:00am. When entering, you will drive to the far end of the main parking lot, following camp signs, until you enter a car line. Check-in will begin promptly at 8:30am or earlier if able.
- A basic **health survey** will be conducted while in the car. This will include verification of any medication or dietary needs as well as medical conditions we should be aware of.
- Each participant will have an assigned number. On the first morning, a large card featuring this number will be provided. Please display the card on your car dashboard during pick-up and drop-off. This will help speed up the process for the rest of the week. All participants will be escorted by Zoo staff and volunteers from the drop-off lane to their designated areas to meet their teachers once checked in.
- **If you arrive after 9am**, please call **205-910-0907** for a staff member to meet you by the "Teacher Check-in" booth to the far right of the parking lot. This is the best location to meet us. Please do not go to the main entrance for late arrivals, especially since the main entrance is closed Monday-Tuesday.
- **Check-out** from programming will take place from 3:30-4:00 pm in the same area as drop-off. Please wait, in your car, in the pick-up lanes and place your participant's number in a visible area along your dashboard. If more than one person or vehicle is used for pick-up throughout the week or you do not have the number sheet, a photo will suffice. If neither a photo nor the sheet is available, photo identification will be required and must match a designated name on the participant's information form. Any pickups after 4:00pm may result in a fee billed automatically to your account.
- **If you need to pick up your camper early**, you may pick up your participant early, *up until 3:15pm*. For early pick-ups, please call **205-910-0907** for a staff member to meet you by the "Teacher Check-in" booth to the far right of the parking lot. This is the best location to meet us. Please do not go to the main entrance for late arrivals, especially since the main entrance is closed Monday-Tuesday. Please note: The Zoo is a large campus and activities take place throughout the Zoo. It may take staff up



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to 15 minutes to gather a participant's items and get them up to the pick-up location after you arrive. Thank you in advance for your patience.

- Participants may not be checked in or out anywhere other than the "Teacher Check-in" booth in the far right of the parking lot, or to any walk-up individuals.
- Lastly, please remember to always bring a photo ID and sign out your participant on the iPads for check-out. *Staff may ask for ID at any time during pick-up and the name on the ID must match a name provided on the approved pick-up list or the participant will not be permitted to leave with the individual until verbal confirmation is received from authorized persons/guardians over the phone.* You can add pick-up authorizations throughout the camp week by emailing education@birminghamzoo.com.

Supervision and Safety

All Zoo staff and volunteers are screened as part of the hiring and onboarding process. In addition to full-time and seasonal staff, trained teen and adult volunteers will assist in Learning Department programming. Class sizes average 12-15 students per teacher, supported by up to 4 volunteers. In addition to assigned teachers, trained full-time Education Staff are available throughout programming to provide support as needed.

Behavioral Expectations

All program participants and adults are expected to behave in a safe, respectful and courteous manner. In the event of behavioral concerns, staff are trained to contact a leader in the Learning Department to act as program principal and consult with whomever needed. Further action may include removing the participant from programming, seeking sensory aids, moving participants to another group, early dismissal, or removal from the program. Depending on the severity of the incident, caregivers may be contacted immediately, at the end of the day, or upon request by the caregiver for an update on their participant's behavior. The Birmingham Zoo reserves the right to remove a participant from programming at any time, and those involved may not be given a refund.

Lunch and Snacks

As of 2024, due to rising food costs, shifting norms within area camps, and changing



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dietary requirements, lunch will not be provided for participants.* **Caregivers are required to pack a daily lunch** for all of their participants. One daily snack will still be provided to all participants and families may pack alternate or additional snack items.

**Scholarship recipients will be provided lunch, if requested.*

Please make us aware of any allergies during the registration and/or check-in process. For the safety of all youths, staff, and volunteers, the Birmingham Zoo Learning Department strongly discourages individuals from bringing lunches or snacks that contain common allergens such as nuts.

Animal Contact

For the safety of all, participants will not have direct contact with Zoo animals except as part of a planned encounter program (e.g. Children's Zoo contact yard, lorikeet feeding, or giraffe feeding) or as a part of a specialty program (e.g. within some of the Teen Leadership Experiences). Participants will have opportunities to have up-close experiences with some of our Ambassador Animals to enrich their experience, but these will not include touching.

WELLBEING & SAFETY

The Birmingham Zoo's Education Department takes the safety and wellbeing of our campers, teens, staff and animals very seriously. While we cannot ensure 100% protection from exposure to illness, Zoo Camp and the Summer Teen Leadership Experience at the Birmingham Zoo follow guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), American Camp Association (ACA), Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) and Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH) to assist in providing the safest environment possible. Caregivers are asked to review this document closely and email any questions to education@birminghamzoo.com

Prior to Attending

We request that families and staff self-monitor all members of their household for signs and symptoms for about 2 weeks prior to attending Zoo Camp or the Teen Leadership Experience. Any camper, teen, or staff member showing multiple signs of contagious



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illness or anyone who has been in close contact with another person with confirmed or active contagious illness will not be allowed to participate in Zoo Camp or the Teen Leadership Experience.

SIGNS OF POTENTIAL COVID-19 INCLUDE: congestion, runny nose, cough, fever, chills, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea.

Health Monitoring

All Birmingham Zoo Learning Department staff and counselors supervise campers and teens throughout the day. If a child, teen, or staff member develops concerning health symptoms or a fever above 100.4, caregivers will be called to pick them up as soon as possible. Those symptomatic or exposed should follow up with medical professional or CDC guidance as required.

Please Note: Caregivers should inform the Zoo immediately if a camper, teen, or family member is diagnosed with COVID-19 or other serious illness up to a week after attending Zoo programming.

As of 2024, a camper or teen who has a confirmed illness prior to or during camp may attend or return to camp based on criteria provided by current CDC guidance. This may include a requirement to wear a high-quality face mask. Zoo credits will be offered for use within one year if a participant is unable to return to their program as a result of a confirmed and documented serious illness, provided to Zoo Learning Department staff within less than 2-weeks of their session dates. Further detail is provided in sections on Camp Refund and Credit Policy.

In the event a participant or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, all individuals from that group will be notified. Families may reference current CDC guidelines for next steps, masking, or testing recommendations for "close contacts" or "exposed individuals." In the event of multiple confirmed diagnoses of COVID-19 in a single week, affected groups' programming may be cancelled to allow staff to self-quarantine.



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Social Groupings

As of 2024, each group will generally include the same participants and staff for the entire week. Classrooms or outdoor learning spaces will contain no more than 40 individuals (up to 30 campers, 2 staff, 8 volunteers) at any given time. To ensure that all participants receive age-appropriate opportunities, develop social and emotional learning skills, and make new friends, they are placed into groups based on grade levels. In some circumstances, or based on staff discretion, participants may be moved to a new group during the week.

While placing participants together in a group can never be guaranteed, if you feel that your participant will need accommodation to support them in their learning environment, please contact education@birminghamzoo.com after registering. This includes requests to be placed with another participant or have a caregiver with them, either for their safety or to accommodate special or physical needs,

Allergy Alert

All allergies should be disclosed on the participant's medical form and followed up via email to education@birminghamzoo.com or verbal confirmation upon program check-in. Please indicate if food allergies are environmental or ingestion-only, as well as any symptoms that may occur if exposed.

Please note, the Birmingham Zoo uses nuts and nut products for animal diet purposes. Traces of nuts or nut products may be found in areas where animal feedings are conducted and in areas where animal demonstrations are performed. Despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee your child will not be exposed to an allergen.

In the Education Department, allergen safety precautions include:

- Teachers trained to recognize the physical characteristics that indicate an allergic reaction is occurring and proper responses to take when a student has a reaction.
- Teachers trained to properly use EpiPen.
- Teachers will not offer students any food containing nuts or nut products and all participants will be discouraged from bringing snacks/lunches containing nuts or nut products.



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Medical Policy and Procedures

First Aid will be administered to program participants with minor scrapes, cuts, bumps, and insect bites by staff. Updates may be available to adults who request information in the pickup process.

A child who is visibly ill or who has exhibited signs of a contagious illness including rash or fever within the past **72 hours** should not be brought to camp. Caregivers will be notified immediately if a child becomes ill.

If your child needs any type of **medication** (prescription and non-prescription) while at the Zoo, a single/daily dose should be brought in a labeled, clear plastic bag with the medication box/label. This includes **sunscreen**. Medications must be turned over for adult-carry at the time of check-in. It will accompany the participant throughout the day as they move around the Zoo. All medications will be signed for and returned at pick-up.

Participants may self-administer medication and sunscreens, both prescription and over the counter under the supervision of a Zoo staff member, as long as proper procedures are followed.

Emergency medications such as Epi-Pens, inhalers, etc. may be administered by a Zoo staff member, as long as proper procedures are followed.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Note: Additional rules and regulations may be reflected in the participant forms completed during the registration process in CampBrain.

- Class size is limited and is filled on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Registration closes 2 weeks in advance of each seasonal program. Registration must be completed online and cannot be completed at the Zoo.
- Zoo Members may not register non-custodial children, except for grandparents with memberships which include their grandchildren. Birmingham Zoo membership must



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be valid at time of registration.

- As of 2024, Summer Flash Sale discounts will be available **only** to the first 300 member registrants. There is not a Summer Flash Sale for non-members.
- No make-up days will be allowed for missed days.
- Participants must be picked up during the pick-up window. A late fee of \$50 per individual will be incurred for every 15 minutes after **4:00pm** that a camper remains at the Zoo.
- Falsification of any information (example: participant age or membership) will result in dismissal without a refund. ***A copy of a birth certificate or other age or grade-level verification may be requested at any time.***
- Any credits offered must be used within a *12-month period*.
- If your child has special needs for learning or access, please discuss them with the Zoo Education Staff in advance so that we can help make the experience a success.
- All campers must be fully toilet-trained.
- Participation in Zoo Camp and the Summer Teen Leadership Experience at the Birmingham Zoo grants permission for the Zoo to use photos, videos and other images of the participant in promotional materials, including on the website.
- *All rules and guidelines will be strictly enforced.*

CREDIT AND REFUND POLICY

Zoo/Registrant Cancellation – Serious illness:

Zoo credits for the value of missed days will be offered for use within one year if the Zoo Camp or Teen Leadership Experience participant is unable to return to programming as a result of the participant's own confirmed and documented COVID illness or other serious injury, provided to Learning Department staff within *less than 2-weeks* of program session dates.

Registrant Cancellation - Weather:

In alignment with Birmingham Zoo's inclement weather program policy, if a participant is unable to attend a program due to inclement weather, notice should be provided at least 48 hours prior to the program when possible, and as soon as possible otherwise.



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If these notice guidelines are followed, the Zoo will work to issue a Credit for the day. If a program date that is canceled within the notice guidelines due to inclement weather cannot be issued a Credit, the fee for the date's value will be refunded.

Registrant Cancellations - Other:

Full Payment is due prior to attending Camp or the Teen Leadership Experience.

- *If a participant cannot attend their scheduled program, it is **more than 2 weeks** from the start of their program week, AND another individual from the waitlist is available to take the open spot, a refund will be provided.*
- *If a participant cannot attend their scheduled program, it is **more than 2 weeks** from the start of their program week, AND another individual from the waitlist is **not** available to take the open spot, a Credit will be issued that can be used within 12 months for a future Camp of equal or lesser value.*
- *Cancellation requests received **less than 2 weeks** from the start of the program will be handled on a case-by-case basis, and a refund or credit is not guaranteed.*
- *When space is available AND notice is provided **at least 2 weeks** from the start of the scheduled program, a participant may be transferred to another camp or leadership session of equal or lesser value. Transfer requests are based on availability and cannot be guaranteed.*
- *All transfer and change requests must be emailed to education@birminghamzoo.com at least two weeks prior to the original session start date to be considered for a refund or credit.*