



# CAMP GUIDE 2025

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## WELCOME!

We're thrilled to welcome your child to camp at the Cincinnati Zoo! Our team has been busy preparing an unforgettable week filled with hands-on learning, up-close animal experiences, and plenty of opportunities to explore, create, and play.

Zoo Camp is all about sparking curiosity, nurturing a love for wildlife, and building lasting memories. With exciting animal encounters and engaging activities led by our expert educators, your camper is in for a wild adventure!

To help your child get the most out of their experience, please take a moment to review the Camp Guide. It includes everything you need to know, from what to pack to daily procedures and how we'll ensure your camper stays safe, happy, and engaged throughout the week.

Thank you for choosing the Cincinnati Zoo for your child's summer adventure. We can't wait to see them at camp!

Warm regards,  
Dan Marsh  
Director of Education  
Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden

## GET IN TOUCH WITH THE EDUCATION TEAM

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9am-5pm, Saturday 9am-12pm  
513-559-7730 | [education@cincinnati-zoo.org](mailto:education@cincinnati-zoo.org)



# GETTING READY

## TO COMPLETE BEFORE CAMP

- Review this Camp Guide (this PDF or [online](#)) for information and our camp policies.
- Review the Camp Schedule ([online](#)) and Tips for Success ([Page 3](#)) with your camper.
- Share the Arrival and Dismissal information ([Page 5](#)) with all adults dropping off and picking up.
- Check your camper's room assignment ([online](#)).
- Mark your camper's belongings with their name (first name and last initial).
- Double check your emergency contacts and authorized contacts via your Household Account. (<https://tickets.cincinnatizoo.org/customer/login>)

## WHAT TO BRING

- Lunch and a reusable water bottle. Label lunch boxes, bottles, and other belongings.
- Snacks will be provided for all campers. Campers who do not want the snack provided may bring their own. Snacks/lunches cannot be purchased at the Zoo.
- Comfortable and weather-appropriate clothing (jacket/coat, hat, gloves, etc.).
- Comfortable footwear (closed-toe shoes).
- For 4yr-Kindergarten camp:
  - Optional: Bathroom accidents can happen. Send a spare set of clothing with your camper. While a supply of some sizes is available, we cannot guarantee we will have extra clothing in your child's size. Adults will be contacted if there are any issues with clothing. Campers should be able to use the bathroom independently and without assistance.

## LEAVE AT HOME

- Candy, toys, and games
- Electrical equipment: cell phones, tablets, video games, etc.

# TIPS FOR SUCCESS

## BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Please share these expectations with your camper(s) before the first day of camp:

- Campers and instructors should be respectful to each other, their peers, the animals, and their surroundings.
- Camper(s) must be able to stay with their group out in the Zoo on hikes and follow instructions.
- Please let us know of any tools or techniques we may use to help your camper have the best camp experience.
- All electronics, toys, and valuable items should be kept at home. If a non-accessibility item brought from home disrupts camp, the item may be collected by the camp managers and returned when child is picked up from camp. Cincinnati Zoo is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or broken items.

## BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

If campers are participating in disruptive behavior, our instructors may first use positive reinforcement and redirection to help them make better choices. In cases where disruptive behavior continues, we will take the following steps:

- Instructor reminds camper of expectations (3 instances)
- Conversation with camp manager ("Principal moment")
- Second conversation with a manager and a phone call home with the camper
- Camper will go home, with a fresh start the next day
- Behavior continues when camper returns, removal from camp

In cases where the behavior of a camper is deemed harmful to themselves, others, or their surroundings, we may bypass steps and will communicate with families as needed.

# BOWYER FARM CAMP

## WHERE TO GO

- Eco Explorers Camp takes place at Bowyer Farm in Mason
- 2210 Mason Montgomery Road, Mason, Ohio 45040

## ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

- Drop-off begins at 8:45am. Camp starts at 9:00am.
- Pick-up begins at 3:45pm. Camp ends at 4:00pm.
- Park in the gravel lot between the green and red barns. Groups meet at the gazebo
- Running a little late? Call 513-559-7730.

## WHAT TO PACK

- All campers must pack a lunch and a reusable water bottle. Snack will be provided every day.
- Please label lunch boxes and a large reusable water bottles with camper's name.
- Campers should wear comfortable closed-toed shoes and weather appropriate clothing. We spend all of our time outside hiking and playing games. Hats and sunglasses are encouraged.
- Campers may choose to bring a spare pair of shoes and/or socks for use in the creek, although this is not required. Shoes must be worn in the creek and should have a back-strap (i.e. no flip-flops or Crocs).
- Campers can bring sunscreen and bug spray to use.

## SAFETY REMINDERS

- Campers should have a large reusable water bottle to stay hydrated through the day.
- Campers will be outdoors in all weather, so should wear weather appropriate clothing to stay cool and dry.
- Ohio summers can mean muggy, buggy days, so campers should have sunscreen and bug spray to avoid sunburns and itchy insects.
- All Zoo staff are first aid/CPR trained.
- All Zoo staff will have a phone with them at all times to contact main Zoo staff or guardians/emergency services if an incident arises.

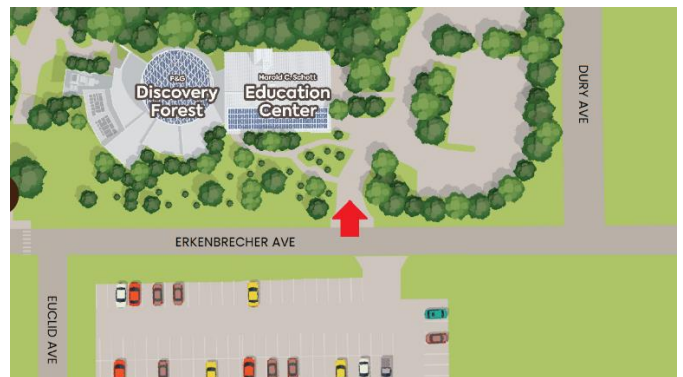
## LATE & EARLY

- Late Drop-off/early pick-up must be arranged with the instructor ahead of time.
- Once camp begins, campers will be away from the front gazebo and may be difficult to find, unless previously arranged.
- Call **513-559-7730**, as soon as possible so we may inform the camp instructor of an approximate time of arrival.
- Instructors do not have a direct number for guardians to call.

# ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL AT THE ZOO

## WHERE TO GO

- Camp takes place in the Harold C. Schott Education Building at 52 Erkenbrecher Avenue.
- Enter at **Education Gate 1**.
- When the gate arm is closed, use your gate code, located on your confirmation and reminder email.



## ARRIVAL

- The building opens at 8:45am. Classrooms open 15 minutes prior to camp start time.
- Classroom assignments are posted online. Education staff will be on hand to assist.
- Day 1: Park in the Education Lot and come to the room to check-in with the instructor and go over camper information. After the first day of camp, you may use curbside drop-off.
- Any changes to authorized pick-ups can be given directly to your instructor.
- Running a little late? Call 513-559-7730.

## DISMISSAL

- Classrooms open and pick-up begins 15 minutes prior to camp end time.
- Classroom assignments are posted online. Education staff will be on hand to assist.
- You may park and enter the building or use Curbside Pick-Up ([Page 6](#))
- Have your photo ID at hand **EVERY day**. Campers will only be released to those listed as authorized pick-ups with a photo ID.
- Campers are expected to be picked up by the end of the camp day (12:00pm, 3:30pm, or 4:00pm, depending on camp session). Running a little late? Call 513-559-7730.
  - For late pick-ups: If a camper is not picked up by 10 minutes past camp check-out time listed above, emergency contacts will be called to ensure pick up. If camper is picked up late multiple days, the registered family will be charged for a day of extended care for each day they are late to pick up. Before and After Care is available for full-day campers before camp (8:00-9:00am and after camp (4:00-5:30pm). Additional registration and fee required.

# CURBSIDE DROP-OFF & PICK-UP

## CURBSIDE DROP-OFF PROCEDURE

- Curbside Drop-Off begins at:
  - 8:45am for Full Day Camp
  - 9:15am for AM Half Day Camp
  - 12:45am for PM Half Day Camp
- Campers should remain in their vehicle until a camp representative collects them to escort campers to their classroom.
- When the line for curbside drop-off reaches the street, it is often faster for the caregiver to park and walk in their camper.

## CURBSIDE PICK-UP PROCEDURE

- Curbside pick-up begins at :
  - 11:45pm for AM Half Day Camp
  - 3:15pm for PM Half Day Camp
  - 3:45pm for Full Day Camp
- Have your photo ID at hand **EVERY** day. Campers will only be released to those listed with a photo ID.
- When the line for curbside drop off reaches the street, it is often faster for the caregiver to park and walk in their camper.
- Staff will need your camper's full name, age group ((ie 4yr-Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> grade) and camp classroom name (ie Macaw, Kapok, Twiga, etc)

# LATE & EARLY

Due to the nature of Zoo camp, campers spend much of the day exploring the zoo, hiking, seeing animals, and playing games, so we ask that any late drop-offs or early pick-ups take place during lunch (approximately 11:45am-12:45pm). This is the most convenient time, as campers are centrally located.

To ensure a smooth process, arrangements for late drop-offs or early pick-ups must be coordinated with the instructor ahead of time. If your camper's class isn't in their classroom, you will need to meet the camp group, which may add an additional 10-15 minutes to your schedule.

# PARKING & VISITING

Adults are welcome to visit the Zoo during and after your camper's program. Admission for one adult and the camper is included for regular Zoo hours. Admission for additional friends and/or family that are not included in a Zoo membership may be purchased online or at the main Ticketing building. All vehicles must move to a visitor parking lot (Vine Street, Euclid Avenue, or Erkenbrecher Avenue). Parking lot rates will apply.

# BEFORE & AFTER CARE

Before Care and After Care options are to provide added flexibility for busy adults who may need extra time in their schedules. These services ensure a safe, engaging space for participants outside regular camp hours, making it easier to accommodate work or personal commitments.

If you would like to add Before Care or After Care to your order, please contact the Education Team at [education@cincinnatiatizoo.org](mailto:education@cincinnatiatizoo.org) or 513-559-7730. Spaces are limited.

- Before Care and After Care are available for full-day campers only.
- Before Care and After Care must be preregistered.
- We cannot prorate Before and After Care.
- Before Care is available from 8:00-9:00am.
- After Care is available from 4:00-5:30pm.
- Adults must drop-off/pick-up their campers at the designated room and show a photo ID **every day at pick-up**.
- To enter the parking lot for Before Care and After Care, please use the gate code that can be found on your confirmation or reminder email.

# HEALTH & SAFETY

## SAFETY REMINDERS

- Campers must have a reusable water bottle to stay hydrated throughout the day.
- Campers will be outdoors in all weather, so they should wear weather-appropriate clothing to stay warm and dry.
- Umbrellas are not recommended for rainy days—rain jackets are preferred.
- All camp instructor staff are first aid/CPR trained.
- All instructors will have a radio with them at all times to contact camp managers if any issues arise.



## ILLNESS POLICY

It is the responsibility of the camper's guardian to monitor their camper's health and well-being leading up to and throughout the program. Campers will be asked not to participate in the program if they experience any symptoms of communicable illness, not caused by allergies or non-contagious conditions.

Please review the following list of symptoms. If your camper develops any of these symptoms before coming to camp, please stay home.

- Fever greater than 100°F
- Chills
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- New cough
- Fatigue
- Muscle aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Runny nose
- New congestion

Campers must be fever-free for 24-hours without the use of fever reducing medications before attending or returning to programs.

## IF SYMPTOMS DEVELOP AT CAMP:

If your camper develops symptoms while at camp, staff will call the emergency contact (or anyone on the authorized pick-up list if the emergency contact cannot be reached), and request the camper be picked up within 30 minutes.

At registration, purchasers gave the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden permission to administer basic first aid (i.e. band-aid, icepack). The Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden does not dispense medications, including pain relievers. In case of illness or injury, the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden will seek medical attention for the camper, and the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden is authorized to give treatment deemed necessary. Campers will be allowed to carry medically necessary medications. Special arrangements can be made, as necessary.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

Programs occur rain or shine. Camp supervisors and Public Safety will be monitoring weather conditions and communicating with staff.

For thunder and lightning in the area, all groups move to indoor locations.

If a tornado warning or watch is called, groups will seek shelter immediately at the closest tornado shelter building.

In case of predicted extreme inclement weather, the Cincinnati Zoo will contact all participants via email by 8:00am the day of the program if a program is cancelled. If a program is cancelled due to extreme weather the Zoo will refund for cancelled days.

# CANCELLATIONS

## RESCHEDULING

- For camp, you may make changes to the topics and date of your camp up to 14 days before camp, as long as there is room in the topic/date you are looking to change to.

## CANCELLATION POLICY

- For camp, you may make changes to the topics and date of your camp up to 14 days before camp, as long as there is room in the topic/date you are looking to change to.
- Programs cancelled by the purchaser at least two weeks in advance of the program date will receive a refund.
- Refunds or credits are no longer available for programs cancelled by the purchaser within two weeks of the program date.

# WAITLIST

## WAITLIST POLICY

- When a program sells out, the waitlist automatically opens. When space becomes available for a week, we will call/email the first person on the waitlist for that week. If they want it, they get it; if they don't, or do not respond, we move to the next person on the waitlist.
- There is no charge to be placed on the waitlist.
- You will only be contacted if space becomes available for your camper.
- We will contact waitlisted campers up to the Thursday before the camp week starts.

# FAQS

## **CAN MY CHILD AND THEIR FRIENDS BE IN THE SAME GROUP? WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS NOT IN THE SAME GROUP AS THEIR FRIEND?**

To ensure your camper is grouped with their friends, friend information should be part of your camper's registration information at least 8 business days before the start of camp. After that time, camp rosters and groups are being created and moving campers will not be available. To check if your camper's friend request information is correct, please see our New Household Account How To below.

## **I NEED TO UPDATE MY CAMPER'S EMERGENCY CONTACT AND/OR AUTHORIZED PICK-UP INFORMATION.**

To ensure that your camper's information is correct, any changes and updates should be made **at least 8 business days before** the start date of the camp through our NEW Household Accounts. After that time, the main contact can give the instructor any updates directly at camp, or in writing by emailing [education@cincinnatizoo.org](mailto:education@cincinnatizoo.org).

## **HOUSEHOLD ACCOUNT HOW TO:**

Our registration now has a household account function. You can create an account and login via the following link, or at the main Education tickets page. Please note, this system is not connected to the same system used for memberships. The Household Account will say that a membership is not connected to your account. This is only because there are two systems.

### **First time logging into Household Account:**

- Go to the Customer Login page (<https://tickets.cincinnatizoo.org/customer/login>).
- Click on Forgot Password?
- Enter the email address you used when purchasing Camp. This was the email that your confirmation was sent to.
- A temporary password will be emailed to you.
- Create a new password.

### **Checking Friends, Emergency Contacts, and Authorized Pick-ups:**

- Login into your Household Account.
- Under Order, click on the Registrations.
- Click on Edit next to the Registration you wish to look at. This will open the registration questions.
- There are three tabs: Info, Questions, Contacts
  - a. Info: main camper information including name, birthdate
  - b. Questions: camper allergies, medications, considerations, friends
  - c. Contacts: emergency contacts and authorized pick-ups

## **MY CHILD IS HAVING A BIRTHDAY WHILE AT CAMP. CAN I SEND TREATS?**

Due to allergy concerns, no food may be provided to campers. Other small trinkets or notes are allowed. Examples of non-food treats include stickers, bracelets, and keychains. Please speak with your instructor to know how many children are in your camper's group.

Stop by the Education desk to get a Zoo Birthday sticker.

## **HOW ARE CAMPERS SUPERVISED? WHAT IS THE SUPERVISION RATIO FOR CAMPS?**

Campers are supervised at all times by camp staff. Each group has one camp instructor and is limited to 10-12 campers. ZooTeen camp assistants may also be with the camp group.

## **THIS IS MY CHILD'S FIRST CAMP AWAY FROM ME. WHAT IF THEY ARE NOT READY TO GO?**

It's normal for first-time campers to feel a little nervous, and we're here to help! Our experienced staff works with first-time campers often and will do everything we can to ensure your camper feels comfortable and has a great time. While we'll support and encourage your camper throughout the day, if they truly can't make it through, the decision to continue is up to you and your camper. Please note, however, that we cannot offer refunds if a camper decides not to attend.

## **WILL CAMPERS WORK WITH/CARE FOR ANIMALS?**

All of our programs include encounters in the classroom with ambassador animals. 7th-8th grade camps may have opportunities for closer encounters and special experiences.

## **WHAT SUPPORTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR CHILDREN WITH DEVELOPMENTAL, INTELLECTUAL, OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES?**

The Cincinnati Zoo strives to make environmental education accessible for all people. In-classroom resources such as visual schedules, fidgets, timers, noise-cancelling headphones, and more are available for participant use throughout the program. Educators receive training on how to support children of all need types. For more information about how the Zoo may best serve your participant's specific needs, please contact [education@cincinnati-zoo.org](mailto:education@cincinnati-zoo.org).

## **CAN YOU STORE MY CAMPER'S LUNCH IN THE FRIDGE? CAN MY CAMPER HEAT UP THEIR LUNCH? CAN MY CAMPER BUY LUNCH AT THE ZOO? CAN I VISIT MY CAMPER FOR LUNCH?**

We do not have facilities to keep lunches cold or for warming up lunches. Lunches should be able to remain at room temperature or have an internal ice pack to keep cool or thermos to keep warm. Campers must bring their lunch. They will not be able to purchase their lunch or other snacks in the Zoo during camp.

Adults cannot join the group during camp. The lunch break is an important bonding time for campers and may vary in its timing day-to-day.

## **CAN MY CAMPER VISIT THE GIFT SHOP?**

Campers are not able to visit the gift shop during camp. Adults should make plans to visit the gift shop after camp.

The Cincinnati Zoo is not responsible for administering medication to children. We will remind them to take their medicine or inhaler by themselves if needed. To ensure a positive experience for all campers, it is imperative that you notify us of any medical or behavioral conditions your child may have. In most cases, we can accommodate these needs and will do so to the best of our ability.

## **MY CHILD NEEDS TO TAKE MEDICATION/INHALER. HOW SHOULD I ARRANGE FOR THIS?**

The Cincinnati Zoo is not responsible for administering medication to children. We will remind them to take their medicine or inhaler by themselves if needed. To ensure a positive experience for all campers, it is imperative that you notify us of any medical or behavioral conditions your child may have. In most cases, we can accommodate these needs and will do so to the best of our ability.

## **MY CHILD HAS AN ALLERGY. CAN I PROVIDE YOU WITH AN EPINEPHRINE INJECTOR?**

Yes, you can. Your child or our staff will carry it with the group throughout the day. Zoo staff will contact you via phone prior to the first day of camp to discuss your child's allergy and go over the specifics of their injector.

## **HOW DO I GET IN CONTACT WITH A CAMP COORDINATOR OR MY CHILD DURING THE CAMP IF THERE IS AN EMERGENCY?**

Please call 513-559-7730 for our main line.

## **MY CHILD IS OUTSIDE THE AGE RANGE FOR A CERTAIN CAMP. CAN THEY STILL ATTEND? THEY'RE ADVANCED FOR THEIR AGE.**

Our camps are thoughtfully designed to provide the best possible experience for each specific age group. To ensure all participants have a safe and enjoyable time, we kindly ask that children attend the camp sessions created for their designated age range. Younger campers may find activities for older children too challenging or feel out of place socially, which can affect their experience as well as that of the older campers. We truly appreciate your understanding and ask you to register your camper for the sessions that match their age.

## **WHAT ARE THE GENERAL PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF THIS CAMP?**

Campers may walk as much as one mile or more in one day. For everyone's safety, campers are expected to follow directions given by instructors and remain with the group at all times. Campers are



expected to treat others and the animals with respect, kindness, and empathy. Please see our Behavior Expectations ([Page 2](#)).

### **I NEED A RECEIPT FOR CHILDCARE.**

Your confirmation email should serve as a receipt. If you need additional paperwork filled out, we are happy to fill out these forms. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that every plan considers summer camp as eligible for this reimbursement. Please check with your company for eligibility.

Our Tax ID number is: 31-0537171