



# CAMP INFORMATION PACKET

Thank you for registering your child for a Zoo Atlanta Camp program. We are busy gearing up for a fun-filled time of Zoo activities. Plans are being made for projects, games, and of course, lots of animals! Please carefully read this packet to help prepare you and your child for a wonderful experience.

## Camp Hours:

- Camp hours 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Drop-off starts 8:30 a.m. and pick-up ends at 4:30 p.m.)
- Extended care is available from 8 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. – 5 p.m. for an additional fee.
- Please review our Drop-Off and Check-Out Procedures for details.

## Participant Safety Policies:

- We ask all participants to **stay home if they are experiencing symptoms of respiratory virus or other illness**, or if they are not feeling well.

## Dress:

- Please send campers in weather-appropriate play clothes each day. Whether rain or shine, we will spend as much time in the Zoo as possible. Please make sure your child has appropriate clothing, layers, and shoes so that they can be comfortable throughout the day.
- Pants and shorts are recommended instead of dresses and skirts.
- Closed-toed, athletic style shoes are preferred, and flip-flops are not permitted.

## What to Bring:

- We spend as much time outside as possible, so please send a reusable water bottle, preferably with a strap.
- We also recommend a “just in case” pair of clothes.
- Please send campers with a lunch and an afternoon snack each day.
- Please send your child with sunscreen or bug repellent if needed.
- Please label jackets, lunchboxes, etc. with camper’s name.

## Lunch and Snacks:

- Campers must bring their own lunch, afternoon snack, and reusable water bottle with them from home each day.

## General Reservations Policy

- Reservations are required prior to the program start date.
- Full payment is due upon reservation.
- Walk-up registrations are not accepted.
- Refunds will not be issued for no-shows or any individual missed days.
- Cancellation requests received 2 weeks or less prior to the program start date will result in a loss of 50% of total cost of the cancelled reservation.
- Camp programs are rain or shine.



## Camper Expectations

Zoo Atlanta Safari Camp provides an opportunity for children to explore, experience hands-on activities, cultivate friendships, exercise their bodies, and learn about animals and ways humans can have a positive impact on the planet. Much of the day is spent outdoors and active, at times in crowded areas that are open to all Zoo visitors and at times during Summer Camp in the public outdoor spaces of Grant Park.

Our Camp groups are designed with a 1:10 ratio of one Educator with a group size of ten campers.

- Campers must be able to follow directions and stay with the group so we can keep everyone safe.
- Campers must be able to show respect for themselves and for others by treating people, animals, and objects kindly.
- We expect all campers to behave in a way that is physically and emotionally safe for themselves and for those around them.

If you believe that this active, indoor/outdoor, group-oriented setting is one in which your camper will not be successful, please contact our team at [education@zooatlanta.org](mailto:education@zooatlanta.org) prior to the Camp's start date to discuss options.

## Behavioral Policy

To ensure that Camp is safe, enjoyable, and conducive to learning and growth for all, campers are expected to adhere to the camper expectations. Please review the following expectations with your camper:

- Campers are required to follow the instructions given to them by Zoo Atlanta team members.
- Campers are required to stay with their group at all times.
- Campers are expected to interact with kindness and respect—physical contact such as hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, or fighting is not allowed.
- Campers should use respectful and appropriate language at all times.
- Campers should only touch items that belong to them or shared materials provided by the Zoo and are required to refrain from touching or taking others' belongings.
- Campers should be respectful of the animals at Zoo Atlanta. It is important not to throw items into animal habitats, bang on habitat glass, or engage in activities that might harm or disturb the animals.

All Camp staff go through a variety of trainings and practice sessions to ensure that risks are mitigated and that campers are having fun and learning.

- Expectations are reviewed with our campers and reinforced on a daily basis in a positive tone and framed in a positive way.
- Positive behaviors and attitudes are rewarded.
- Redirection of negative behaviors is used to prevent escalation.
- Campers are empowered to make good choices and problem solve so they can be successful.

In the event that a camper does not follow the behavior guidelines, Camp staff will work with that camper to help them have a more successful day using one or more of the following steps:

- Reminders about behavior expectations and program rules with encouragement for good choices.
- Conversation with Camp Supervisor or Lead about behavior expectations and making good choices.
- Short amount of time away from the camper's group to redirect and reflect.
- Parent/guardian will be notified of the behavior by Camp Supervisor or Manager.

Respectful of the needs for all campers' personal safety and the safety of others, **Zoo Atlanta reserves the right to remove a camper from the program at any time.** If a continual behavior problem persists, or depending on the severity of the behavior, a child may be sent home immediately, and parent/guardian may be informed that the child will not be allowed to return the following day/rest of the Camp session.

**Note: There are no refunds when a child's own behavior requires they be sent home.**

## Drop-Off & Check-Out Procedures & Late Fees

### Drop-off & Check-Out Times

- Drop-off for Extended Care is from 8 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
- Regular drop-off is from 8:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.
- Regular check-out is from 4 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Extended Care check-out is from 4:31 p.m. – 5 p.m.

### Full Day Late Check-Out Fees

- All campers who have not purchased Extended Care and are not picked up by 4:30 p.m. will incur fees.
- If camper is picked up late between **4:31 p.m. - 5 p.m.**, the full extended care fee will be owed.
- If camper is picked up late **after 5 p.m.**, you will be charged an additional \$1 for every additional minute.

### Check-Out Code

On the first day of drop-off, caregivers will be given a printed check-out number for their children, which is required of anyone picking up your child. Please display this number on your car's dashboard during check-out. For your camper's safety we will not release your child unless the appropriate check-out number is provided. If your child will be picked up by someone else, the number can be written on a piece of paper and presented at check-out. Note: Campers will receive a new check-out number each week of Camp.

### Procedures

1. If driving to the Zoo, enter the **Cherokee Avenue** parking lot **at the stoplight** at the intersection of Cherokee Avenue and Georgia Avenue. Make your way down the hill and veer right immediately before you reach the first building (do not enter the roundabout). From there, pass the buildings on your left and drive along the lower fence line to the "Education Conservation" Gate, entering the queue for both drop-off and check-out.
2. At drop-off, a Camp Educator will greet your child and help them from the car. **Do not drop off a child without checking in properly with Camp staff.**
3. During check-out, a staff member will relay the Check-Out Code from your dashboard to the staff to prepare your camper for check-out.
4. At check-out, we will strive to have your camper(s) waiting for you, provided your check-out code is visible from your dashboard.
5. Please pull out of line to adjust car seats, etc. to keep the line moving.
6. If you would like to speak with Camp staff, please park and walk up to the gate after you have checked your child in or out for the day.
7. For the safety of campers, please remain in your vehicle when in the carpool line.
8. When exiting from the "Education Conservation" gate, take a right into the third level of the Cherokee Avenue parking lot. This will take you back out to the exit at Cherokee Avenue.
9. All walk-up and bicycle camper drop-offs and pick-ups are also conducted at the "Education Conservation" Gate. Be prepared to provide your camper's check-out code. Please remain aware of automobile traffic at all times. *Parents/guardians will assume the risks associated with walking or cycling for drop-off and pick-up.*

### Late Drop-Offs and Early Pick-Ups\*\*

If you are dropping your camper off late or picking them up early from Safari Camp, please call our Education Operations Team at 404-624-5822, let them know you would like to drop off / pick up your camper, and provide them with your camper's pick-up number.

If you are directed to voicemail, you may use the call button to contact our Security Operations Center, let them know you would like to drop off / pick up your camper, and provide them with your camper's pick-up number. For drop-offs, please wait at the gate with your camper until an Education Team member comes to get them.

\*\*Please note that there are no early pick-ups from 3:30 p.m. - 4 p.m., so plan ahead.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How are the campers grouped?

- Campers are grouped by age.

### What is a typical Camp day/week like?

- Safari Camp is a great opportunity to engage young explorers in the wild world around them and begin their journey of conservation stewardship. Through Zoo explorations, up-close animal encounters, STEAM based projects, hands-on science activities, environmental games and more, campers learn about attainable strategies and goals to combat environmental issues and are charged with finding simple ways that they can make a difference.
- While Zoo Atlanta is a great place to discover nature and wildlife, campers may at times have a chance to experience wildlife in a more natural setting. During Summer Camp weeks, guided by their Educators, campers may travel out to Grant Park (which surrounds the Zoo) to participate in a variety of activities such as nature walks, environmental research, and group team-building games.
- Please see the “Daily Activities” and “Weekly Activities” sections at the end of this packet for more detailed information.

### Can my child be in the same group as his or her friend?

- With at least one week’s notice, we can **try** to place friends together in the same group if they are of similar ages and you have stipulated this request on their registration under ‘Buddy Request’.
- We do not make exceptions to the age requirements. All of our activities and lessons are developmentally appropriate for the individual age groups. Placing children in the incorrect group can compromise the activities.

### Who are the Camp Educators?

- Safari Camp Educators are energetic, responsible, and dependable, and have an enthusiasm for wildlife and children. They are selected based on experience working with children in a camp, school, or environmental education setting.
- Educators are college graduates or are currently enrolled in college or have equivalent experience in a related field. They are required to pass criminal background and drug screenings and complete an extensive Educator training course prior to working with campers.

### What is the camper/educator ratio?

- We have one Educator to approximately 10 children in each group.

### Do you allow medicine?

- If your child has a condition that requires the administration of medication or testing during Camp, please read the Safari Camp [Medication Administration Authorization Packet](#), linked here and on the Safari Camp webpage, to understand Zoo Atlanta policies. **Parents/Guardians must submit the required, completed, and signed authorization forms at least TWO WEEKS prior to your camper’s first day of Camp. Please note that some forms are required to be completed and signed by a Health Care Provider.**
- If your child brings an epinephrine injector, an inhaler, or other life-saving medication to camp, it must come in the original container with the child's name written on the package. The child must carry it with them for the duration of Camp. Please send them with a small backpack or fanny pack to make it easier for your child to carry it.

**Can I visit my child during the Camp day?**

- To help your camper fully immerse themselves in the Zoo, build rapport with their Camp Educator and group mates, and engage with all of the activities we have planned for them this week, we ask that you refrain from visiting during Camp hours and instead wait until check-out and the trip home to check in with your camper. They will be excited to tell you about their day on the way home from Camp.

**Will my camper get to visit Splash Fountain during Camp?**

- Once each week during Summer Camp only, campers will have an opportunity to visit Splash Fountain for water play. On the designated day, please send your child to Camp in their swimsuits with water-friendly shoes and a towel. Pack a change of clothes that they can put on independently when their water play time has finished.
- During Summer Camp weeks, Junior Rangers (ages 5-7) will visit Splash Fountain on Wednesday morning. Trek campers (ages 8-11) will visit Splash Fountain on Tuesday morning. Your camper's designation as a Junior Ranger or Trek camper is reflected in their Camp registration.

**Weather Cancellation Policy**

- All Zoo Atlanta Education Programs are rain or shine. However, Camp programs may be cancelled due to severely inclement weather, in which case the Zoo will notify participants of the cancellation as soon as possible prior to the program. If this happens, a full refund will be issued for the cancelled day.
- Unless Zoo Atlanta cancels Camp, there will be no refunds given.

## Camp Activities

Throughout the week, your campers will participate in a variety of activities, some of which are daily occurrences and others that happen sporadically throughout the week.

### **Daily Camp Activities**

- Theme-based Activity: Campers will participate in a hands-on activity each day that supports the theme of Camp.
- Zoo Tour: Campers will explore the Zoo with their Educator and discuss the behaviors and traits they observe from the animals on grounds; they will learn how those animals are adapted within the weekly theme.
- Biofacts: Campers will learn about unique animal adaptations and behaviors using biological artifacts such as skulls, pelt samples, and bone replicas.
- Project Time: Campers work on a group project throughout the week to present to the other campers and Educators at the end of the week.
- Playground Time: Campers will have designated time to play on Zoo Atlanta's playgrounds.
- Snack Time: Please remember to send an afternoon snack for your camper.
- Lunch Time: This is supervised by a mix of full-time Education Team members and scheduled Camp floaters to enable the group Educators to take a lunch break.
- During check-out, campers will sit in a centralized location and enjoy chatting with one another while watching a science-based, child-appropriate children's show.
- Each day, your camper should come home with a journal page that will document the daily and one-off activities they did with their group. They can complete their journal using words, pictures, or any form of notation that makes sense to them. You can use your camper's daily journal page to ask questions about what they did at Camp, and they will be able to use it to help remember what to share with you each evening!

### **Weekly Activities** (these may happen one or more times throughout the week, but are not daily activities)

- Animal Encounter: Campers meet up to two Ambassador Animals to learn about their unique physical and behavioral adaptations.
- Petting Zoo: Campers interact with our goat and sheep ambassadors in the Petting Zoo.
- Train & Carousel: Camp groups may use supervised free time to ride the train and carousel at no cost.
- Splash Fountain [Summer only]: Campers will visit Splash Fountain one time during each Summer Camp session, Junior Rangers on Wednesdays and Trek on Tuesdays.

We can't wait to share the wonders of Zoo Atlanta Safari Camp with your child(ren)! Please feel free to reach out to us at [education@zooatlanta.org](mailto:education@zooatlanta.org) if you have any questions or need assistance.