



**L.A. ZOO CAMP**

# **A GROWN-UP'S GUIDE TO ZOO CAMP**

**SUMMER 2026**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome	03
What to Expect	04
Preparing for Zoo Camp	06
Camper Expectations	08
Camper Drop Off & Pick Up	09
Zoo Camp for All	11
Essential Info for Grown-Ups	13
Frequently Asked Questions	15



## Contact Us

### Zoo Reservations

For questions about your reservation:

Call: (323) 644-4211

Email: [lazoo.reservations@lacity.org](mailto:lazoo.reservations@lacity.org)

### Zoo Camp

For questions about program content:

Call or Text: (213) 392-0055 (June - August)

Email: [lazoo.education@lacity.org](mailto:lazoo.education@lacity.org)

# WELCOME TO ZOO CAMP

Zoo Camp is a nurturing, safe, outdoor day camp experience for PreK (age 4) to 4th grade children focused on nature, conservation, and animals! The following information will help you and your child prepare for and enjoy their Zoo Camp experience.

## Camper Requirements

In order to provide your child with the best experience possible, please share any vital information about your child's personal needs with our staff. In an effort to provide the most meaningful, positive, and appropriate experience at Zoo Camp, we require that all campers be able to do the following:

- Follow simple directions and communicate their needs to staff.
- Remain with their group at all times.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves and avoid any behavior that could harm others.
- Use language that is respectful and appropriate.
- Independently administer any personal medication, including prescription, non-prescription, and topical items like sunscreen.
- Manage basic self-care needs (including eating and toileting) without assistance, or attend camp with a personal aide.
  - If an aide will be attending with your child, please contact us at [lazoo.education@lacity.org](mailto:lazoo.education@lacity.org) after you have registered.

**Failure to follow one or more of these requirements may result in removal from camp with no refund given. If you are called to pick up your child due to disciplinary reasons, you are required to pick them up as soon as possible.**

# WHAT TO EXPECT



## Out and About

Get ready to spend lots of time walking, playing, and exploring all sorts of new things with us! Campers will discover the wonders of the Zoo with guided tours and jump into a variety of outdoor activities, including the popular World of Birds Show.

## Classic Camp Fun

Zoo Campers will get creative with fun crafts, enjoy the excitement of team games, sing silly camp songs, and join in spirited Camp Rallies. It's all about making new friends and having a blast, together!



## Keeper Talks

Camp groups will have the chance to talk with a zookeeper. These talks are a wonderful chance to discover more about our animals and the vital work our keepers do. Whether it's exploring the diet of a giraffe or the family bonds in our chimp troop, keeper talks ignite curiosity and nurture a lasting love for animals.

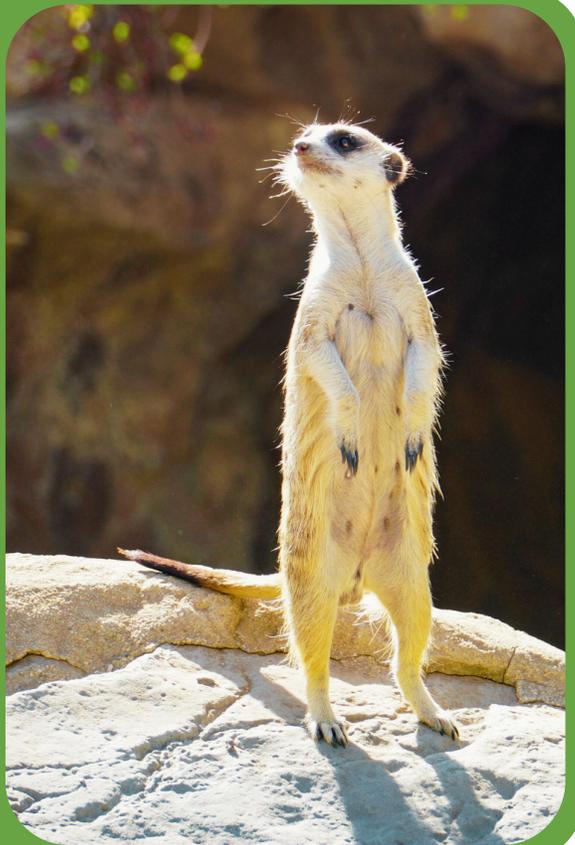
## Zoo Camp Adventures Await!

Every day at Zoo Camp offers a fresh adventure! Campers can look forward to familiar favorites, such as activities, games, and crafts that align with the week's theme. And, of course, no day is complete without a tour of the Zoo, ensuring campers become true insiders by the week's end.

Weekly highlights include a visit to the **World of Birds Show**, an engaging discussion with one of our **animal keepers**, and exciting **Camp Rallies**. This year, we are excitedly introducing **Splash Safari**, featuring a cool afternoon packed with water activities. Additionally, campers should be prepared for unexpected happenings that may arise throughout their Zoo Camp experience.

### Typical Camp Day Schedule

- 8:45** Drop off
- 9:00** Daily theme & activities
- 9:30** Zoo tour & snack break
- 12:00** Lunchtime & free play
- 1:00** Activities and crafts
- 3:00** Pick up



*Please keep in mind that activities may be canceled due to camper or animal safety, weather conditions, or other unforeseen circumstances.*

# PREPARING FOR ZOO CAMP

## Bring

- ✓ Sack Lunch & Snacks
- ✓ Reusable Water Bottle
- ✓ Change of Clothes
- ✓ Sunscreen

## Leave

- ✗ Electronic Games
- ✗ Money or Valuables
- ✗ Sentimental Items
- ✗ Glass Bottles

## Wear

- ✓ Zoo Camp T-Shirt
- ✓ Closed-Toed Shoes
- ✓ Brimmed Hat



**Campers are required to wear their Zoo Camp t-shirts every day.**

This is a safety precaution that allows us to easily recognize campers among other Zoo visitors. Campers receive two shirts for the week on their first day of camp. Although we make every attempt to ensure your child receives the size requested, please note that t-shirt sizes are subject to availability on the day of distribution.

*Repeat Campers, Please Note:*

*Children attending Zoo Camp for more than one week will receive two shirts the first week and one shirt every week following.*

## Lunch & Snack Time

Please send your camper with a **snack, lunch, and a refillable water bottle** each day. If your child is enrolled in **Extended Care**, we recommend packing a few **extra snacks** to keep them fueled for the fun!

Please be sure to **label all snacks before packing them separately** from your camper's lunchbox. This helps our staff hand them out easily during the day. Campers will have plenty of chances to refill water bottles at stations around the Zoo to stay cool and hydrated. We ask that campers **leave money at home**, as we will not be visiting vending machines or gift shops during camp.



## Food Allergies

We regularly welcome campers with allergies and make every effort to provide a safe and supportive environment. Please **inform your child's instructor** of any specific allergies during check-in on the first day of camp. If your camper requires an **EpiPen**, their instructor will carry it throughout the day and can assist with administration in the event of an emergency.

Please note that **the Zoo is not a peanut-free environment**. Some of our animals are fed diets that include peanuts and other nut products, and we are unable to regulate food brought in by general Zoo visitors. However, we can provide a designated peanut-safe area where campers with peanut allergies can enjoy their lunch safely and comfortably.

# CAMPER EXPECTATIONS

At Zoo Camp, we show our PAWS every day!

Our summer camp principles, known as "PAWS," help us remember how to play safely, show kindness, and care for one another. By following these guidelines, campers learn invaluable life skills such as teamwork, empathy, and responsibility. When everyone uses their PAWS, it creates an atmosphere where fun and inclusivity thrive!

## Show Your PAWS!



**P**

### Play Safely

We walk, listen, and use gentle hands with people and animals.



**A**

### Act Responsibly

We follow directions, stay with our group, and help keep the Zoo clean.



**W**

### Wonder & Explore

We stay curious, ask questions, and try new things with enthusiasm!



**S**

### Show Respect

We treat animals, people, and nature with care and kindness.

# CAMPER DROP OFF & PICK UP

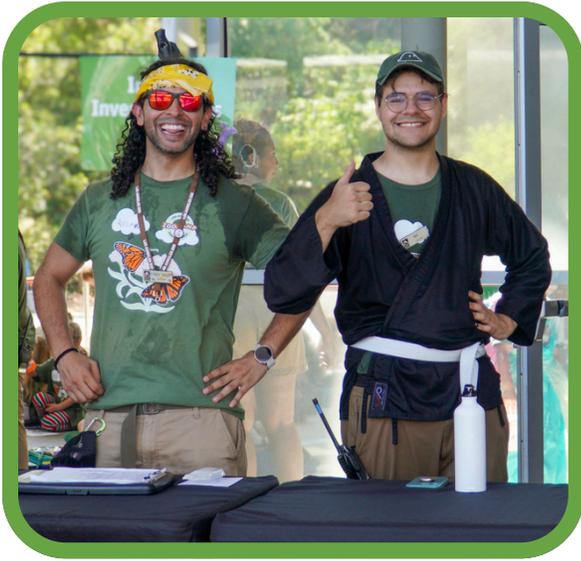


## Morning Drop Off

Zoo Camp Drop Off takes place at the right side of the Zoo main entrance at the **Children's Discovery Center**. Parking is free in the Zoo's lot and you may park as close as you can to the entrance. Zoo Camp staff will be stationed outside the doors every day for **Drop Off from 8:45–9:00 AM**. Please make sure your camper has their lunch, snacks, and water bottle each day and are wearing their Zoo camp shirt, closed-toed shoes, and protection for the weather (like sunscreen and hats).

We appreciate your patience on the **first morning of camp** as we confirm your registration information. To provide you with a smooth check in process, please review the following prior to drop off:

- Your contact information.
- Health History and Liability Waiver forms are completed.
- All adults authorized to pick up your camper are listed.



## Afternoon Pick Up

**Zoo Camp staff will be out front for Pick Up from 3:00–3:15 PM.** As with morning Drop Off, Zoo Camp Pick Up takes place at the right side of the Zoo main entrance at the Children's Discovery Center. Parking is free in the Zoo's lot and you may park as close as you can to the entrance.

All individuals you have authorized to pick up your child (*including yourself, parents and guardians*) must present **photo identification** at Pick Up each day to sign out their campers. For safety reasons, we can only release your child to the designated individuals. Please ensure that everyone authorized to pick up your child is listed on the sign-in/out sheet during morning Drop Off.

## Extended Care

Extended Care is an optional service for guardians who need an early Drop Off or late Pick Up. This program features rotating activities such as games, animal-themed fun, outdoor and indoor play, as well as movie time. You can add Extended Care for **\$100 per week** or choose a **daily rate of \$20**.

If you find yourself running late to pick up your camper from Extended Care, please call or text the Zoo Camp mobile phone [(213) 392-0055] to inform us of your estimated time of arrival. Please note that there is a **\$1 per minute** fee for pickups that occur after the PM Extended Care session has concluded.

**Morning Extended Care begins at 7:30 AM.  
Afternoon Extended Care ends at 5:00 PM.**

# ZOO CAMP FOR ALL

L.A. Zoo Camp provides an inclusive environment for **campers of all abilities**. We believe that learning together in a diverse community helps every camper explore, discover, and connect with animals and nature in meaningful ways.

During the registration process, **please let us know if your camper would benefit from extra support, specific accommodations, or will be bringing a 1:1 aide**. Our **Inclusion Specialist** will contact you to create a plan that ensures your camper has the best possible experience.

[lazoo.education@lacity.org](mailto:lazoo.education@lacity.org)  
Subject: Camp Accommodations





## Camper Aides

Zoo Camp is a little different from other camps, as our campers share space with the public and hundreds of amazing animals! Because of this unique setting, safety is especially important. Campers need to stay with their group, follow directions, and move safely around the Zoo.

**If your child requires an aide during the school year and/or may need additional assistance following our safety guidelines, we ask that an aide also accompany them during their Zoo Camp session.** This additional support helps keep your camper, their peers, and our animals safe while making sure everyone has a great Zoo Camp experience.

If your child has difficulty meeting the behavioral or safety expectations of Zoo Camp, staff may request that an aide be provided for the remainder of their registered week(s). If a 1:1 aide is requested and unable to be provided, L.A. Zoo Camp staff reserve the right to conclude your child's participation for that session.

*Important to Know:*

*Parents and other family members may not attend camp as an aide.*

# ESSENTIAL INFO FOR GROWN-UPS

## When Plans Change...

Cancellation requests must be made in writing by emailing the L.A. Zoo's Guest Services team. The Zoo Camp **cancellation policy** is that no refunds will be given for cancellations made less than 14 days prior to your program date. For cancellations made 14 days or more in advance of the program date, a 75% refund will be given. **Zoo Camp spots are non-transferable.**

[lazoo.reservations@lacity.org](mailto:lazoo.reservations@lacity.org)

**Subject: Cancellation**

Please include the following information:

- Name & the camper's name
- Program name, date, & confirmation #
- Phone number.

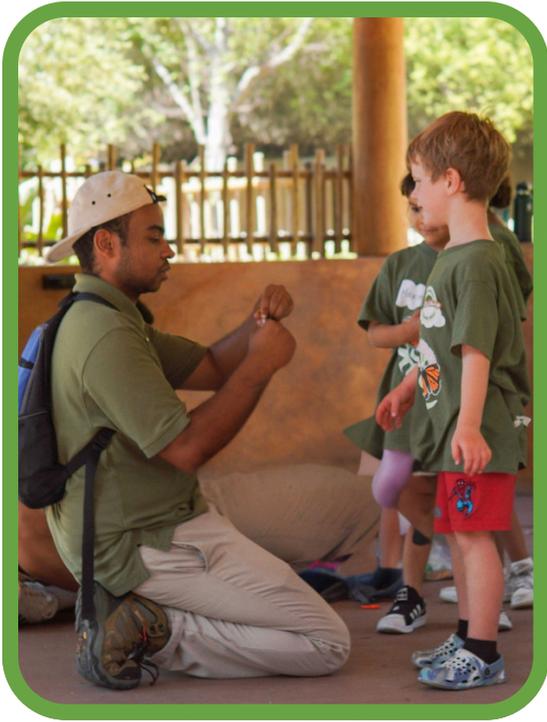


The Los Angeles Zoo reserves the right to cancel any program. In the unlikely event that this happens, all program fees will be refunded.

We know that **late arrivals** or **early departures** are sometimes unavoidable. As camp activities take place throughout the zoo, campers who arrive late or leave early may miss portions of the day, such as tours, animal encounters, or other special experiences. If you know your camper will be arriving late or leaving early, **please arrange this in advance** by calling or texting the lead staff at (213) 392-0055 so we can coordinate with your child's group.

To safely accommodate schedule changes, which often require additional staff support, a **\$10 fee may apply for late arrivals or early pick-ups.**

## ... Or Tummies Ache



To maintain a healthy environment for all campers, we request that you refrain from sending sick children to camp. **If your child is unwell and unable to attend for the day**, please reach out via call or text to the Zoo Camp lead at (213) 392-0055, or email us at [lazoo.education@lacity.org](mailto:lazoo.education@lacity.org). Letting us know your camper will be absent helps with our planning, and we appreciate the early notification.

Should your child fall ill while at camp, we will provide a quiet and safe space for them to rest. If their condition does not improve after resting, or if they develop a fever or show other symptoms of illness, you can expect a call from our lead staff to inform you that your camper is unwell and requires immediate pickup.

If your child experiences a **minor injury**, such as a bee sting or a scraped knee, our trained staff will promptly administer **first aid** to ensure their comfort and safety. We understand that sometimes children need a moment to recover, so we will provide a quiet, safe space where your child can rest and recuperate peacefully.

For minor injuries, you will receive an “Ouch” slip at check-out, detailing the incident and the care provided, so you are fully informed about your child's well-being.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## General Questions

### **What will my camper do each day at Zoo Camp?**

In addition to exploring the L.A. Zoo each day, Zoo Campers have all the fun of traditional summer camps, like games, crafts, and songs.

### **Is there a lot of walking or time spent outdoors?**

Campers will enjoy a day filled with activities, moving between classrooms for air conditioning breaks, exploring the Zoo, and playing outside. Please have your camper use sunscreen before the camp day starts and that they wear a hat and closed-toed shoes.

### **Will my camper interact with animals at the Zoo?**

Zoo Camp offers campers the chance to observe animals every day. To ensure the safety of both campers and wildlife, direct interactions with the animals do not occur outside of Muriel's Ranch.

### **Who is supervising my camper?**

You can rest assured that Zoo Camper are in skilled and compassionate care. Each session is led by qualified counselors who have prior experience working with children, many of whom return for consecutive years (some were Zoo Campers when they were kids!). Since all staff members are employees of the City of Los Angeles, they must undergo a thorough background check.

### **Is there Zoo Camp on the Juneteenth or 4<sup>th</sup> of July holidays?**

Yes, Zoo Camp runs its standard Monday to Friday schedule each week, even during federal holidays. However, we kindly ask families to notify us in advance if their camper will be absent due to other commitments. Our goal is to create a flexible, enjoyable, and educational experience for every camper.

### **Can I go with my camper to their classroom?**

Yes, you can accompany their campers to classrooms to help them prepare for morning activities, but should leave the area after check-in to let children bond with their group. If a child struggles to join their class, staff may ask their parent or guardian to take them home and try again the next day. Following classes around the Zoo is prohibited.

### **Can my camper bring their cell phone with them?**

To ensure an optimal experience for everyone, the use of cell phones, tablets, iPods/MP3 players, and any other electronic devices is not permitted during Zoo Camp activities.

### **Will my camper visit the gift shop or purchase lunch at the Zoo?**

Campers are not permitted to purchase any items from the Zoo concession stands, gift shops, or restaurants during Zoo Camp sessions. *Please do not send money to camp with your child for any reason.*

### **Do you have a lost and found?**

The lost and found bin is available at checkout for campers and their guardians to reclaim items. We will hold items for ten days before donating them. Please label your camper's belongings to help us track of them.

## **Health and Safety**

### **What is your illness policy?**

If your child is sick and unable to attend Zoo Camp, contact the camp lead at (213) 392-0055 or email [lazoo.education@lacity.org](mailto:lazoo.education@lacity.org). If a child falls ill at camp, they will have a safe resting area, and staff will call you for immediate pickup if their condition worsens.

### **What's your bathroom policy?**

All campers are required to be fully potty-trained and capable of using the restroom independently, or they must attend camp with an aide. We schedule frequent bathroom and water breaks throughout the day. Our policy involves guiding campers to the bathrooms, opening the bathroom door, and waiting outside while maintaining vocal contact with them. Private bathrooms are accessible for campers near the classrooms. While inside the Zoo, we cannot reserve the bathrooms exclusively for our groups since these are public facilities, but we ensure a safe environment for all campers.

### **How do I share allergy or medical information with camp staff?**

Please reach out to Zoo Camp staff at [lazoo.education@lacity.org](mailto:lazoo.education@lacity.org).

### **Who should I contact with questions about accommodations?**

If your camper requires accommodations or if you have inquiries regarding inclusive access, please reach out to us at [lazoo.education@lacity.org](mailto:lazoo.education@lacity.org) with the subject line: Camp Accommodations. Our Inclusion Specialist will get in touch with you to develop a plan that guarantees your camper has an exceptional experience. We do ask that if your camper has a 1:1 aide for support during the school year that one is provided for Zoo Camp as well. Please see page 12 for additional information.

### **Can staff administer medication?**

Zoo Camp staff are prohibited from administering any type of medication. This includes both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications, vitamins, supplements, and topical products such as sunscreen and insect repellent. We can remind campers to take their medication as needed.

### **What happens when a camper has lice?**

Regularly check your camper for head lice. If suspected, we will notify you for immediate pick-up and treatment at home before returning to Zoo Camp. All parents will be informed if a camper has head lice to prevent infestations.

## Pick Up and Drop Off

### **Where and when do I drop off and pick up my child?**

Zoo Camp check-in and check-out takes place at the right side of the Zoo main entrance at the Children's Discovery Center. Morning drop off is from 8:45 – 9:00 a.m. and afternoon pick up is from 3:00 – 3:15 p.m.

### **Who is authorized to pick up my child?**

For safety reasons, we will not release a child to anyone other than the persons you designate. Please make sure that all persons authorized to pick up your child are listed on the sign in/out sheet (including yourself!) when they are checked-in in the morning.

### **Will I need to show ID at pick-up?**

Yes. Please make sure to bring photo identification.

### **Do you offer extended care?**

Yes. Extended Care is an optional service for guardians needing early drop-off or late pick-up. It costs \$100 per week or \$20 daily. Morning care is from 7:30 – 8:30 a.m., and afternoon care is from 3:15 – 5:00 p.m. *Please note: A \$1 per minute fee applies for late pick-up after afternoon care ends.*

### **What should I do if I need to pick up my camper early or drop them off late?**

Late arrivals or early departures at camp can disrupt programming and may cause your child to miss activities. If necessary, arrange late arrivals or early departures in advance by contacting the instructor or lead staff at (213) 392-0055. *Note that there is a \$10 fee for early pick-up or late arrivals.*

## Other

### **My question isn't covered here. Who do I contact with questions?**

For questions regarding your camper's reservation, please call (323) 644-4211 or email: [lazoo.reservations@lacity.org](mailto:lazoo.reservations@lacity.org). For questions about program content, call or text: (213) 392-0055 (June – August) or email: [lazoo.education@lacity.org](mailto:lazoo.education@lacity.org).