



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We hope you find this document helpful!

If you have any questions, please contact us at education@zoomiami.org, or call us at 305-255-5551

GENERAL CAMP INFORMATION

What does a general Camp schedule look like?

Regular and Teen Camp	
8:30—9 a.m.	Drop-off & Morning Snack
9 a.m.—12 p.m.	Camp Activities
12 p.m.—1 p.m.	Lunch
1 p.m.—4 p.m.	Camp Activities
4 p.m.—4:30 p.m.	Pick-up & Afternoon Snack
4:30 p.m.—5:30 p.m.	Extended Care

Camp Little Critter	
8:30—9 a.m.	Drop-off & Morning Snack
9 a.m.—10:30 a.m.	Camp Activities
10:30 a.m.—11 a.m.	Lunch
11 a.m.—1 p.m.	Camp Activities
1 p.m.—1:30 p.m.*	Pick-up & Afternoon Snack
*Extended Care is not available for this program	

What kinds of activities can my Camper expect?

At Zoo Camp, we offer a mix of indoor and outdoor adventures, such as games, hands-on crafts, scavenger hunts, and themed activities tailored to each session. Some activities may be take-home projects, while others may span over multiple days, allowing us to track progress and make observations. Additionally, campers will enjoy special VIP animal experiences, such as exclusive feedings, encounters, presentations, keeper talks, and behind-the-scenes tours! Our goal is to provide a dynamic and memorable camp experience that sparks curiosity and fosters a love for wildlife and conservation.

How much animal interaction should we expect?

While we do offer exclusive animal presentations and experiences, it's important to note that direct contact with animals, such as touching or holding, is not permitted. The only exception is the animals in our Wacky Barn. This policy is in place to ensure the safety of both our campers and the animals.

Do campers go on field trips?

No. We have so much to see here at the Zoo, there is no time to leave grounds!

Can I register for single days or just a few days instead of the full week?

No. Registration is only available for the entire length of the given Camp session.

What is the class size for your Camps?

- Each of our classes allow for a maximum of 25 campers, always accompanied by 2 staff members.
- Camp Little Critter and Teen Careers Camp have a ratio of 10 Campers to 2 staff members.
- Regular Camp and Camp Little Critter receive additional assistance from Counselor-in-Training (CIT) volunteers.



What is the Camp dress code?

- Camp T-shirt
 - Provided at the start of the Camp day
- Weather appropriate shorts/pants
- Closed-toed sneakers with socks
- Jacket/rain-gear

What should my camper bring with them?

- Packed lunch if you didn't purchase our meal plan.
- Snacks for snack time
- Reusable water bottle
- Sun protection (e.g. sunscreen, hat, sunglasses, etc.)
- Insect repellent
- A "just in case" change of clothes
- **During Summer, secure, close-toed, water-safe shoes. Slip-ons are not appropriate.**



What can my camper NOT bring to camp?

- Large backpacks
 - Campers carry their belongings throughout the day (except lunches). Please limit to essentials for their comfort.
- Electronics (notebook computers, video game systems, iPods, tablets, headphones, etc.) - Cellphones are permitted for emergency use only.
- - Cameras are permitted, but Campers may be asked to put them away during certain experiences. Toys (Pokémon cards, stuffed animals, action figures, etc.)
- Valuables or sentimental items
- Money (I like your idea for a gift shop deal! I'll discuss with SSA.)
- NO PETS OR LIVE ANIMALS OF ANY KIND MAY BE BROUGHT TO THE ZOO.

How much time do you spend indoors versus outdoors?

We typically spend about 60% of the day outdoors, and 40% indoors.

Will my Camper visit the Splash Pad?

During the summer months, we incorporate visits to the Splash Pad. It's important to note that any day could be Splash Day, so please send your camper prepared accordingly. We recommend sending your child in quick-dry



clothing, including the quick-dry camp t-shirt provided, and sending a change of clothes in their bag. Additionally, shoes are REQUIRED on the Splash Pad, so please ensure they have shoes that can get wet. Campers will have time to change as needed to get ready for Splash Pad fun!

What happens if there is poor weather during Zoo Camp?

At Zoo Camp, we're prepared for all types of weather! Rain or shine, camp goes on. During inclement weather, we utilize our indoor spaces for hands-on activities. When the weather clears, we venture outside to enjoy the Zoo and soak up some sun.

For drop-off and pick-up, we shift indoors and transport campers safely using umbrellas when necessary. In the event of lightning, we prioritize camper safety and shelter in place until it's safe to resume activities. This may cause a delay in drop-off or pick-up times, but rest assured, we'll keep parents informed every step of the way.

Will I be able to see pictures of what my camper is doing every day?

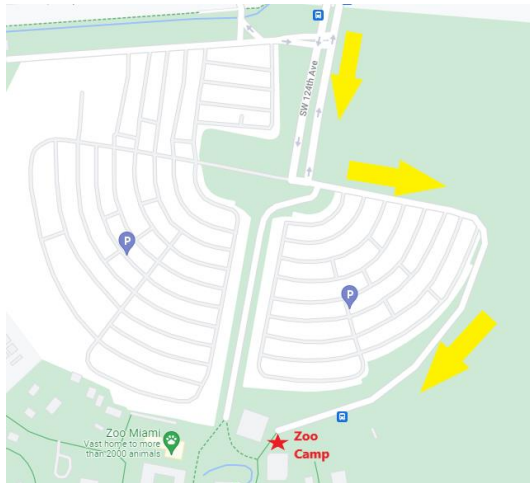
Yes, parents will be provided with a link to a password-protected photo album where they can view and download photos from the Camp day!

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

What time is drop off and pickup?

Drop-off begins promptly at 8:30am and operates until 9am.

Pick-up begins at 4pm and operates until 4:30pm



Where is the drop-off and pickup location?

- From S.W. 152nd St. (Coral Reef Dr.), turn on S.W. 124th Ave. (Zoo Dr.)
- Turn LEFT at the flagpole and follow the signs for "All Buses"
- Drive to the bus loop and stay in your vehicle for the check-in process.

Do you offer extended care?

Extended Care is available until 5:30pm at no extra charge for regular Camp and Teen Careers Camp. Pick up during extended care is at the Field Trip Drop-Off site (same location as morning drop-off).

Parents, you must arrange for punctual pick-up as you will be charged an additional \$1 for every minute after 5:30 p.m., payable at time of pick up, cash only.

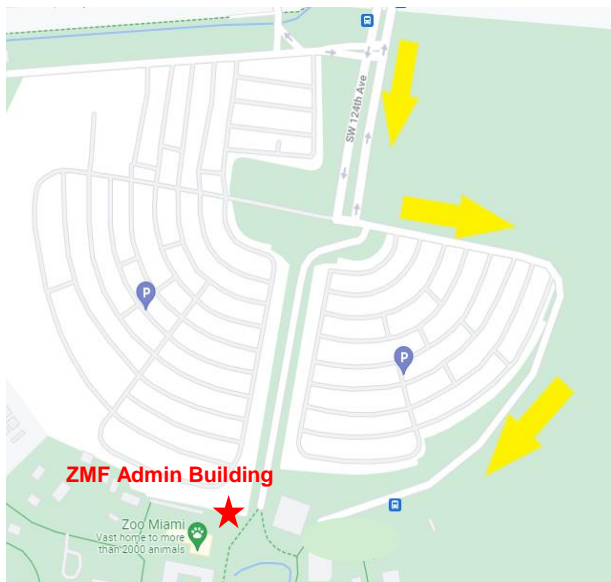


What if I arrive after 9 a.m.?

If you arrive late for drop-off, bring your camper to the Zoo Miami Foundation (ZMF) Administration Building. Camp staff will promptly pick them up and reunite them with their group. Please understand that this process may take 10-15 minutes.

Can I pick my camper up early?

Early pick-up is available until 3:15pm from the ZMF Administration Building. Please inform camp staff at morning drop-off if you need to pick-up your Camper early. Understand that it may take 10-15 minutes for your Camper to walk back to the office from their location in the Zoo.



Where is the ZMF Administration Building?

- Turn off 152nd St. onto S.W. 124th Ave.
- Once you get to the end of Zoo Dr., turn right towards the West Parking lot
- Make your first left into Row J and follow to front of parking lot
- You will enter through the side gate to the right of the Main Entrance
- Enter the Austin L. Weeks Center to find the ZMF Lobby
- Check-in with the receptionist and wait in the lobby

CAMPER QUESTIONS

My child has never attended camp before and they are a little nervous.

We completely understand the apprehension that comes with starting a new adventure, especially for first-time campers. It's natural for children to feel anxious initially, but in our experience, once they settle into the routine, they often become fully engaged in the activities and may not want to leave the Zoo at the end of the day! Our staff is trained to handle anxious children with care and compassion. Additionally, if any concerns arise throughout the day, we will promptly contact you to ensure peace of mind.

Can you make any exceptions to your age policy?

We understand that every child is unique, but we are unable to make any exceptions to our age policy. We have carefully designed our programs to accommodate children of different ages, ensuring their safety and enjoyment.



How do you group the campers?

We group the children into classes based on age, aiming to group children within a 2-to-3-year age range.

Can I request Campers be paired together and/or placed in separate groups?

Absolutely! You can make pairing requests during the registration process or by emailing us at education@zoomiami.org up to 10 days before the start of camp. While we strive to accommodate all requests, please note that we cannot guarantee pairing requests due to logistical constraints.

Can I request to change my child's group after the camp has started?

For the safety of your Camper, group changes cannot be made after the start of Camp.

Does Zoo Camp accommodate children with different physical, mental, behavioral and/or emotional needs?

We embrace campers of all abilities and have had great success with diverse needs. However, we understand that camp may not suit every child. We maintain close communication with guardians to tailor the experience. Please share any pertinent information or accommodation needed during registration. Feel free to reach out before camp or discuss with staff on the first day. Together, we'll determine if Zoo Camp is the right fit for your camper.

Are accompanying adults such as therapists, aides, or caretakers allowed in camp?

No. Currently only staff members, who undergo our thorough background screening process, are allowed in camp.

COUNSELOR AND VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

What qualifications do your counselors have?

Our counselors come from diverse backgrounds, including teachers, after-care specialists, teaching assistants, and university students studying education and/or natural sciences. They all undergo a thorough level 2 background check and are certified in CPR/first aid through the American Red Cross. Our counselors are specially trained to create an educational, fun, and, above all, safe environment for our Zoo Campers.

Who are the Counselor-in-Training (CIT) volunteers?

Our CIT volunteers are high school students who undergo a rigorous selection process, including interviews and background screenings, before joining our program. They receive extensive training in childcare, wildlife education, and basic first aid, and work under the direct supervision of our experienced counselors, making them valuable assets to our camp team. Many of our CITs aspire to pursue careers in the education field, making Zoo Camp an excellent learning opportunity for them.

Our CITs are role models for our campers and receive consistent evaluations to ensure they meet our high standards of safety and professionalism. They remain in the program only if they continue to uphold these standards.

Can I meet my camper's counselors?

Absolutely! We are happy to offer this opportunity when possible. If you would like to meet with your camper's counselors, you can request it during morning drop-off on the first day of camp, and we will do our best to accommodate your request.



My child does not speak fluent English. Will they be able to participate?

Many of our staff and volunteers are bilingual in English and Spanish. If you are concerned about your camper following along during the camp-day due to a language barrier, please discuss your concerns with staff prior to the start of Camp and we will do our best to accommodate them.

SAFETY

Are campers ever left unattended?

Absolutely not. The safety of our campers is our top priority. Our staff members are trained to ensure constant supervision for our Campers.

What is the restroom procedure at Zoo Camp?

Campers MUST be fully independent in the restroom to attend. While our staff is trained to supervise Campers during bathroom breaks, they are not able to provide any hands-on or verbal assistance for the health and safety of everyone involved.

Our counselors accompany groups inside the restroom. If gender limitations arise, they wait outside while holding the door open. Counselors are trained to intervene if necessary, regardless of gender, to maintain continuous supervision.

What is the playground procedure at Zoo Camp?

During playground and Splash Pad time, staff members are stationed at the exits, while CIT volunteers actively engage with the group, ensuring vigilant supervision and fostering a fun and enjoyable experience for all campers.

LUNCH/ FOOD POLICY INFORMATION

Will my camper have access to a refrigerator/microwave?

Campers do not have access to refrigerators or microwaves during Zoo Camp. We recommend packing non-perishable items, that do not require heating, in insulated lunchboxes or other suitable containers to keep lunches fresh throughout the day.

Does camp include lunch?

Camp price does **not** include lunch; however, you can buy lunch for an additional cost at the time of registration. You also have the option to pack a lunch for your camper to bring.

What is the menu for the meal plan?

We partner with a third-party vendor to provide lunch during Zoo Camp and we are unable to provide a daily menu. However, meals typically consist of a rotation of kid-friendly options such as hot dogs, pizza, and chicken tenders, accompanied by sides like animal crackers and a drink. If your camper is a picky eater or has dietary restrictions, we do not recommend opting for the meal plan, as our options are somewhat limited.



Can I purchase the meal plan day-of?

No, lunches must be pre-purchased to allow ample planning time for the kitchen team. In addition, please note that your camper will not be able to go buy lunch from zoo concession stands. The deadline to purchase our camp lunch is 7 days before your camp start date. If you do not purchase your lunch in this timeframe, you will need to pack your camper's lunch.

What happens if I forget my Camper's lunch?

If you forget to pack your child's lunch, don't worry! You can bring their lunch to the ZMF office before the scheduled lunchtime, and our staff will be able to pick it up from there. We ensure that no camper goes without a meal during Zoo Camp.

Can I send my Camper with money to purchase lunch?

No, we do not permit campers to bring money to purchase lunch. All meals are either provided as part of the meal plan or should be brought from home.

What is your food sharing policy?

For safety reasons, we do not allow campers to share food during Zoo Camp. This policy helps ensure the well-being of all campers by preventing potential allergic reactions, contamination, and other health concerns.

What should I do if my child has allergies?

If your child has allergies, please make sure to mention them during the registration process in the "camper notes" section. Additionally, you can speak to our staff during morning drop-off on the first day of camp to ensure they are aware of any allergies your child may have. If the allergy is severe, our staff will work with you to discuss potential accommodations, such as assigning your child to a peanut-free classroom and implementing communication protocols during activities that involve potential allergens.

Is there snack time during Zoo Camp?

Yes, we have two designated snack times during the day: one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Campers are required to bring their own snacks from home, as snacks are not provided by the camp or included in the meal plan. Please ensure that your child's snacks are packed separately from their lunch to make them easily accessible during snack times.

Will my Camper be able to refill their water bottle during Zoo Camp?

Yes! Hydration is essential at Zoo Camp. We stop at coolers and water filling stations regularly for campers to refill their water bottles throughout the day.

OTHER INFORMATION

How can I communicate with staff during the Camp day?

Our camp staff are often out in the field, ensuring your camper has a fantastic experience. The best way to reach us is by calling the Zoo Miami Foundation (ZMF) front desk at 305-255-5551. The front desk staff will contact us via radio. If ZMF is closed for a holiday, you can reach us by calling the zoo security office at 305-251-0400, and they will assist in getting a hold of camp staff. Additionally, you can email us at education@zoomiami.org, as we check our emails regularly.



Will I hear from Camp staff throughout the day?

Rest assured, if we need to communicate with you for any reason, we have your numbers on hand and will call immediately. If you are listed as an emergency contact for your camper, please ensure your phone is readily accessible so that staff can reach you promptly.

What is your cancellation and refund policy?

Partial refunds are permitted up to **noon time 7 days before your camp day begins**. The percentage of the refund reduces incrementally as Camp approaches. No credits or refunds for missed days. No credits or refunds are issued for inclement weather as camp happens rain or shine. No exceptions will be made to these rules. [Click here to review the entire refund policy.](#)

What happens if my child loses one of their belongings?

Campers are responsible for their items at all times. ZMF and Zoo Miami are not responsible for lost or stolen items. Photos of items left behind will be added to a password-protected site that we share with Camp families after Camp. If your item does not appear on the site, you can call Zoo Security 305-251-0400 to check for the item in Lost & Found.

What is an Adopt-an-Animal and how can I get one?

Adopt-an-Animal is an optional add-on available for purchase during registration for Zoo Camp! This symbolic adoption includes a cuddly animal plush carefully chosen to match the theme of your camp session, a certificate of adoption, a ton of animal fun facts, and a photo of the taken by our very own Ron Magill! As a special benefit, the Adopt-an-Animal package is available for Campers at a discounted price.