

A group of children and an adult are walking away from the camera on a dirt path through a wooded area. The children are wearing bright yellow t-shirts, and the adult is wearing an orange t-shirt. One child in the foreground is wearing a black backpack. The path is surrounded by trees and greenery.

# **CALDWELL ZOO**

# **SUMMER CAMP PARENT HANDBOOK**

Explore wildlife and make new friends



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## CONTACT US

**Email:** Education@  
caldwellzoo.org

**Education Office Phone**  
903-593-0121 x 228

The education office may be empty during camp hours, if you can't reach us please call the main office.

**Zoo Main Office Phone**  
903-593-0121 x 0

Speak with the Zoo's Visitor Services staff, who will then contact the appropriate camp staff.



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# Registration Policy

All Zoo programs are designed for children who can remain in a group setting without one-on-one assistance. In addition to age requirements, children must be:

- Toilet trained
- Able to use public restrooms without assistance
- Able to spend up to two hours at a time outside, walking around 1 to 3 miles a day around the Zoo.
- Able to spend up to two hours at a time in a classroom setting.

The Caldwell Zoo is an equal opportunity organization that welcomes children of all genders, ethnicities, national origins, disabilities, religions, sexual orientations and/or relationships with veterans into its Zoo Camps. If your child needs accommodation for a disability, please note it in the appropriate places in your registration. We organize our camps by age. We require that you register your camper accordingly. Camp registration options are for Monday through Friday.

If you experience registration issues while using the browser Safari or are attempting to register on your phone or tablet, please try another browser (Firefox, Internet Explorer, Google Chrome) on a desktop or laptop computer. If your preferred week is full, you may request to be placed on the waitlist. Campers are placed on the waitlist on a first come, first served basis. Please ensure that your camper is placed on the waitlist for their appropriate age. Any camper registered outside of their age bracket may be removed from camp without a refund. If you need to update any registration information, please contact the education department. You are responsible for making sure all information on your camper's registration is accurate.





# What To Expect



## Expect a Busy Schedule!

Your camper will experience a lot of physical activity with multiple transitions during indoor and outdoor activities. In addition to hiking around the Zoo each day, campers will participate in traditional camp activities, group games, STEM activities, art projects, and animal encounters!

## Expect the Unexpected!

Camp will happen rain or shine. In case of unexpected weather, we will implement a modified schedule that provides greater time indoors. Campers will still go outside if rain is light and no thunder is present. Rainboots and raincoats are welcome on those days!

## Expect to Spend ALOT of Time Outdoors!

Part of our mission at camp is to connect children to nature through outdoor play. You should expect your camper to be outdoors throughout the day, walking, playing, exploring! We spend up to two hours at a time outdoors, covering a distance of 1 to 3 miles a day.

## Expect to Meet Several New Animals!

Campers will get to feed the giraffes, feed the birds, and visit the goats during camp. Keep in mind that the Zoo has diverse smells, light levels, noise, and temperatures. Please contact an education staff member if you have any questions about your camper participating in these experiences.





## What to Bring

- Zoo camp shirt (required)
- Close-toed shoes, that are comfortable to walk and run in
- A reusable water bottle (required)
- A full change of clothes (required for 4–6-year-olds)



## Change of Clothes

- All 4-6 year old campers are required to bring a full change of clothes.
- This is required in case of bathroom accidents, if there is a spill during snack, or an accident during a messy craft.
- If clothes are brought in a Ziplock with camper's name written on the bag, we can keep them all week and return them on Friday.

**LABEL ALL ITEMS WITH YOUR CAMPERS NAME! PLEASE DROP YOUR CAMPER OFF WITH SUN SCREEN AND BUG SPRAY ALREADY APPLIED!**

## What Not to Bring

- Valuables
- Toys, Blankets, Stuffed Animals
- Cash (We do not take campers to the gift shop, café, or allow drinks to be bought from vending machines during camp)
- Electronics

*The Caldwell Zoo is not responsible for camper's lost, damaged or stolen items.*





## **Lunches & Snacks**

All campers will receive lunch from the café, and a morning and afternoon snack. You are welcome to pack your camper an extra lunch or extra snacks. All food should be non-refrigerated and non-microwavable; campers will eat outside if the weather permits.



# **FOOD AT THE ZOO & PEANUT POLICY**

## **Peanut Policy**

**ALL CALDWELL ZOO CLASSROOMS ARE NOW NUT FREE ZONES!**

- Please do not send any peanuts, peanut butter, or foods containing peanut butter to camp.
- Please do not send tree nuts or food containing tree nuts to camp. Common tree nuts include cashews, almonds, pecans, and pistachios.
- If your child ate foods containing nuts before class, please have your child wash their hands with soap and water before sending them to class. (Note: Hand sanitizer does not remove peanut residue)

# Monday Morning

## WHAT TO EXPECT AT MONDAY CHECK-IN

A staff member will greet you at your vehicle in the carpool line. Please do not allow campers out of the car until their counselor comes to your vehicle. Campers will receive their camp shirts and car tags at this time.

We understand that Monday mornings can be scary for some campers (and parents). To set your camper up for success while at camp, we ask that you talk with your camper about how Monday morning will look so that they are prepared to exit the vehicle safely and quickly.

Due to our time spent getting to know each camper and getting their shirts, please be aware that Monday pick-up and drop-off will take longer than expected.



**If your camper has an Epi Pen, please bring campers specific action plan, Epi pen, and additional emergency medication in a Ziploc bag.**



# Drop Off & Pick Up

## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Our car-pool drop-off and pickup line begins in the bus parking lot, which is located on Gentry Pkwy. Please have your car tag visible for counselors at drop off and pick up to help quicken the process.

No walkups from the parking lot are allowed to drop off or pick up campers. Any parent or guardian attempting to walk their camper into camp will be asked to get back in their vehicle and enter the carpool line. Additionally, we request that parents stay away from the playground area to maintain a safe environment for campers, staff, and volunteers.

**All campers are required to wear their camp shirt every day.**

Campers are only released to those who have a camp provided car tag or proper photo ID and prior approval from the camper's parent/guardian.





*Thank You!* **SPONSOR**  
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## New Water Slides!

Campers must remain in camp shirts; bathing suits can be worn under camp clothes only. Bring a towel at pick up to keep your child's seat dry.

Water Wednesday activities occur at the end of the day. There will be designated dry areas for children that do not want to participate.



# Illness Policy

For the well-being of your camper and the safety of other campers in the program, if your child should show any of the following symptoms listed below during camp, we will notify their emergency contact to pick them up **immediately**. No reimbursements will be provided for early dismissals.



**The Caldwell Zoo reserves the right to refuse entrance to summer camp if a child is exhibiting any of the symptoms listed below:**

- Lice (must be treated and free of lice, nits, and eggs for 24 hours before returning to camp with a doctor's note)
- Fever of 100° F or more (must be fever free for 24 hours with no fever reducing medication before returning to camp)
- Severe/ persistent coughing
- Sore throat
- Vomiting
- Severe headache
- Ringworm
- Other contagious illnesses
- Skin lesions/ open lesions
- Open wounds/ severe cuts
- Transmittable rashes



**All full-time camp counselors are trained in basic first aid. If you have any further questions, please contact us prior to camp at our office phone or email.**





# Behavior Policy

**You and your camper are responsible for knowing and adhering to our camp expectations and behavior policies:**

We expect campers to always act respectfully when they are on Zoo property or participating in our programs. Campers are to behave in a kind, responsible way and respect the rights and dignity of others. Caldwell Zoo Camp Expectations are as follows:

- Campers take responsibility for their actions
- Campers respect themselves, each other, camp equipment and the environment
- Honesty will be the basis for all relationships and interactions
- Campers will be caring in their relationships with others



**Campers should talk to a counselor or any camp staff member if they are uncomfortable with any experiences or need assistance while at camp.**

## Discipline Policy

If a camper's behavior does not adhere to our camp expectations and behavior policy, the usual steps are the following:

1. The child will receive a verbal warning and an explanation as to why their behavior is inappropriate (whenever possible this will be done away from other children). Staff will report the behavior to parent/guardian at pickup.
2. If the behavior continues, Zoo staff will determine an appropriate consequence for the child's actions (examples may include a time out or exclusion from participating in an activity). The child's parent/guardian will be notified with phone call.
3. If inappropriate behavior continues, as a final-action step, the camper(s) may be dismissed from camp without a refund.

Each camper is expected to treat all campers with respect, and to help each other achieve the best possible experience. If a camper has difficulty meeting this expectation, parents/legal guardians may be called upon to assist. Our leadership addresses all incidents seriously and trains staff to promote communication with their counselors and campers. We work together as a team to ensure that campers gain self-confidence, make new friends, and go home with a good camp experience.



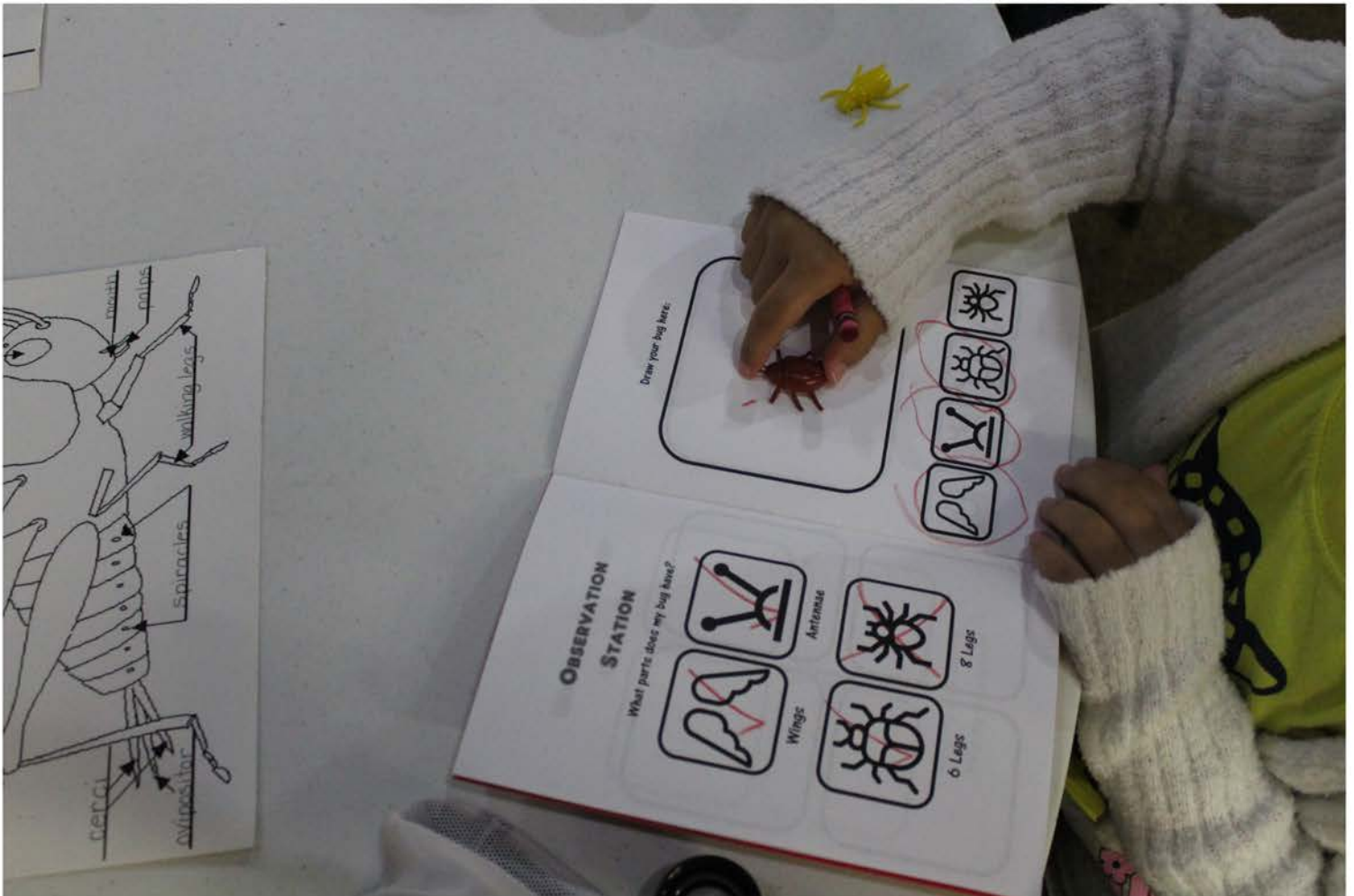
# Behavior Policy Cont.

Immediate dismissal may occur for the following situations (but not limited to):

- Refusing to follow behavior guidelines or camp rules
- Using profanity, vulgarity, or obscenity
- Stealing or damaging property (personal or zoo property)
- Refusing to cooperate with staff
- Endangering the health and safety of themselves, other campers, staff, volunteers, and/or animals
- Using unkind, mean, or harmful language towards other campers, volunteers, and/or staff
- Biting
- Fighting of any kind



**Camp fees are non-refundable if a camper is sent home.**





# Zoo Crew

Our Zoo Crew Program is a teen volunteer program open to 14–17-year-olds. **Zoo Crew Volunteers will:**

- Assist counselors by interacting and engaging with campers throughout the day
- Learn and share fun facts about wildlife and conservation
- Help counselors lead educational games for campers
- Help and inspire campers in creative crafts
- Assist camp counselors with managing camp activities and keeping campers engaged



## **Zoo Crew Volunteers will not:**

- Be responsible for disciplining campers.
- Be responsible for first aid.
- Be asked to talk to camp parents.
- Ever be alone with campers at any time.

## **Requirements to become part of the Caldwell Zoo Crew Program**

- Must submit an application including a cover letter, a resume, and two letters of recommendation.
- Must complete a face-to-face interview.
- Once chosen, must attend training to prepare for camp.





# We Can't Wait to Meet You!

All communication pertaining to your camp week will be delivered to you after registration and on Monday morning, one week before camp.

Please check your inbox and spam folder for this email. The Authorized Adult Form and Emergency Contact and Liability Form are due no later than 1 month after registration; each camper should have their own form.



**PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS**