



Zoo Camp: Illness, Behavior, and Safe Hiring Practices

Illness Policy

No child should be brought to Riverbanks Zoo and Garden who is visibly ill, or who has not been free from a contagious illness, rash or fever for at least 24 hours. Any child that has been treated by a physician while participating in Zoo programs should provide a clearance letter from the physician for the child to continue or begin the program. Any child with symptoms such as green mucus (unless allergy related), raspy cough, fever, undiagnosed rash or diarrhea will be asked to be taken home until he or she recovers.

If a child becomes ill while at the Zoo, the staff will take all measures to comfort the child while reaching a parent or emergency contact. Any ill child waiting to be picked up will remain in the Education office until they are picked up by an authorized adult. Riverbanks Zoo and Garden is not a suitable environment for sick children and the health of all the children is our first priority. Working parents should have a contingency plan for care to avoid conflicts when their children are sick. We hope that employers acknowledge the importance of parents being able to care for their sick children.

Please report all communicable illnesses such as chicken pox, rashes, measles, lice, worms, strep throat, pink eye, etc., to the office immediately. As a preventive measure we always issue a health alert when any communicable illness is reported.

Medicine can be administered only by Education Staff if the child has clearance by a physician to be in a child care setting. All medicine should be brought to the camp director clearly labeled with name, dosage and time of administration in the original container. A medication administration form giving permission to administer medication must be filled out, signed and dated. A new form must be completed for each educational program.

Allergies are common among young children. If your child has an allergy (i.e., food - including nuts and seeds, plant, animal, stinging insects), please discuss it with the staff. We will take appropriate precautions to protect your child's health, but all allergies including the level of severity must be provided when registering for camp online under "Attendee Details." For example, nut allergy: What type of nut? May the child be in the room with nuts or is the allergy so severe the room should be free of nuts? Some classes may have a classroom visit from animals who eat nuts/seeds or campers may bring such items in their lunches; therefore, we need to plan accordingly.

Sunscreen and insect repellent should be applied at home as our staff are not allowed to apply them directly to the children.

In case of emergency while your child is at the Zoo, you may reach Riverbanks Zoo and Garden at 803.779.8717. Press zero "0" and ask the receptionist to contact the Education Department or dial extension 1113.

Behavior Policy

It is important that every participant have a safe and fun time at Riverbanks Zoo and Garden. As such, rules are reviewed at the beginning of each program with the participants. The Education Department staff reserve the right to dismiss a participant immediately from a program without a refund, if that person is jeopardizing their own safety, the safety of another participant, zoo visitor, instructor or animal. Behaviors that may lead to automatic dismissal include bullying, foul language, hitting, kicking, biting and pinching. This list is not all inclusive and is subject to change. We are happy to discuss with any parent/guardian any form of behavior modification they may suggest to assist in providing their camper with the best camp experience possible. If you have any questions regarding this policy or your campers' behavior please contact the Camp Director at 803.779.8717 x1225.

Sample of Education Department Rules:

1. Remain quiet and respectful when others are talking. Please raise your hand and wait to be called on to speak.
2. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself at all times.
3. Stay with your group at all times!
4. No running on park grounds.
5. During animal visits you must remain seated and quiet.

6. Have fun!

Safe Hiring Practices

The Riverbanks Education Department endeavors to provide a safe, educational and fun learning environment for all campers. All Camp Counselors must be 18 years old or older to work at Riverbanks Zoo. Each camp counselor goes through an extensive interview process, a background check, 40 hours of training prior to the start of camp and must be First Aid/CPR certified.