



# Zoo Crew Handbook 2022



## Welcome to Zoo Crew

Dear Zoo Crew Member:

Welcome to the best team in town! You are a very special person who will help our Zoo move ahead in conservation, recreation, education, and animal care. I am extremely grateful that you have decided to join our team.

Many years ago, I was able to volunteer at my hometown zoo in Indiana. That opportunity opened up an entire world of discovery and wonder and helped me make my career decisions. Even if working at a zoo is not your career choice, you will grow and very much enjoy this Zoo Crew chapter of your life.



Please get involved in the Zoo and its programs. It is dedicated individuals like you that make Lincoln Children's Zoo such a huge success.

Welcome to the Zoo. I'm very glad you're here.

Sincerely,

John Chapo President Emeritus

PS - As I walk about the Zoo, please say hi and introduce yourself.

# What is Zoo Crew?

Zoo Crew is a group of dedicated teen workers who support the Zoo's mission while having a great time. Zoo Crew are animal caregivers, conservationists, educators, and mentors.

Zoo Crew ensure the Zoo's mission is fulfilled. This mission is:

## To Provide Firsthand Interaction with Living Things

Zoo Crew is not just a volunteer program. Zoo Crew is a mentorship and leadership program where you will learn real-world career skills. Zoo Crew are held to the same standards as Zoo employees. We will encourage and guide you as a Zoo Crew to achieve your full potential.

# Zoo Crew Shifts and Scheduling

## Sling and Scheduling

You are responsible for working or finding coverage for all your assigned workdays. Zoo Crew participants are members of the Lincoln Children's Zoo team, and their opportunities are important aspects of the zoo. As a result, it is important that you either work your assigned days or find substitute workers to cover your assigned workdays.

Zoo Crew are assigned a weekday workday (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday) as well as Group 1 or Group 2. This allows us to safely accommodate a certain number of Zoo Crew each day as well as devote the necessary time to learning.

Once assigned their group and day they will be schedule to also work rotating weekends. The Zoo is open during holidays and therefore Zoo Crew are expected to work those days. Zoo Crew also work a rotating 4:30PM to 8:00PM evening shift during Wild Wednesday, which is every Wednesday in June, July, and August. Look for your day on the schedule to know when you are assigned.

Zoo Crew can either swap shifts or pick up any available shift that is available. There is no limit to the number of shifts you work each week. Zoo Crew Level 1-3 in Session 1 can pick up shifts in Session 2 and vice versa, as long as you have completed training.



Sling is the online database that we use for scheduling. Here you are able to access your schedule, see upcoming events or rentals, and access the messaging service to communicate with managers or find subs.

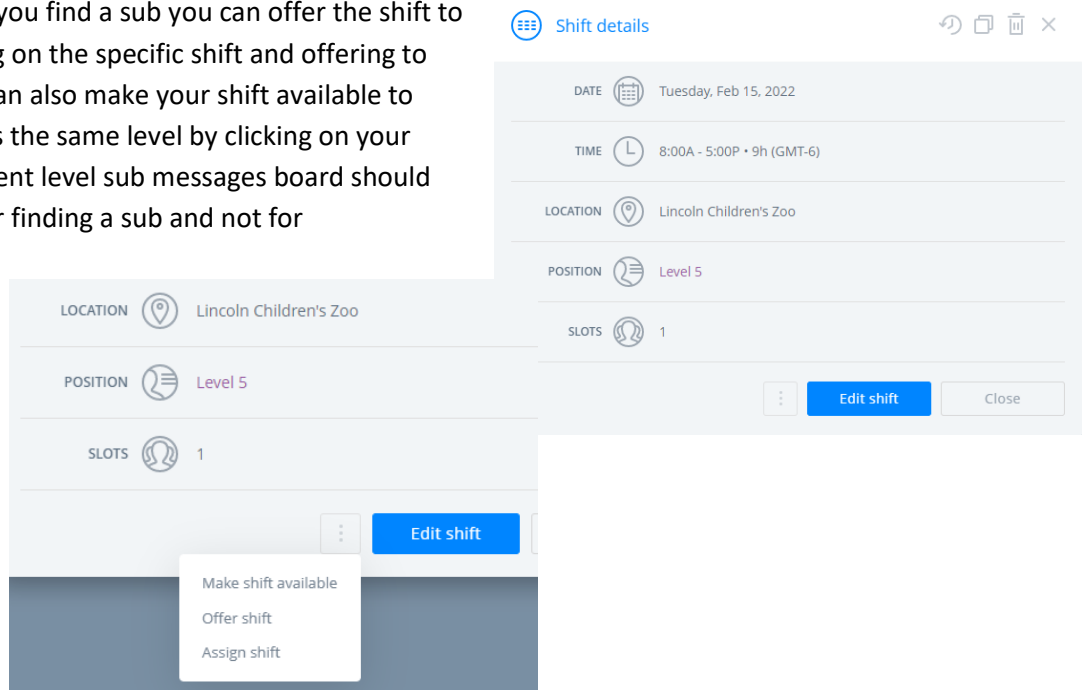
Utilize In the event of sudden illness, please email at your earliest convenience.

## How to find a substitute: Sling

This year we are using the scheduling app, Sling, to aid you in finding substitutes. Each level has their own page where you can post your sub requests. Please use this website to pick up and drop shifts. You do not need to worry about emailing your shift changes. We receive automatic updates from the website to approve. These are the portals and how we use them:

### Messages

Each Level has their own message board. Your message board is where you can post your sub requests. Please list the day and time when you need a substitute. To pick up a shift, simply reply to the sub request! Once you find a sub you can offer the shift to them by clicking on the specific shift and offering to your sub. You can also make your shift available to anyone that has the same level by clicking on your shift. The different level sub messages board should only be used for finding a sub and not for conversations.



### Announcements from Education Staff

We will utilize the messaging service on Sling if there are any announcements regarding Zoo Crew. On rare occasions, we might cancel the shifts that day or have a pop-up rental that we need Zoo Crew to work. This will be a separate message board and should not be utilized for conversations between Zoo Crew members.

If you have a question for a manager, please private message through the messaging service. We do our best to check these daily but it could be a few days before you receive an answer.

## **Information Page**

There will be an message board where we are able to provide digital copies of the handbook, animal fact pages, and other files that our Zoo Crew could benefit from. Again, this should not be for conversations between Zoo Crew.

## **Zoo Crew scheduling is for the whole family!**

We want to equip our Zoo Crew with real-life skills. We strongly encourage each Zoo Crew to be the main communicator with our Education staff to allow them to problem solve. Their guardians should be overseeing some of the communication but should be working towards an independent Zoo Crew for future levels.

We recommend 11- to 12-year-old Zoo Crew observe their grown-ups make swaps. Zoo Crew should also begin utilizing a written planner or putting important dates into their phones. Grown-ups should engage Zoo Crew in conversations about the family schedule.

Zoo Crew ages 13 to 14 can begin communicating with the Education team themselves. We encourage them to use their guardian's emails for communication. Guardians should help guide their Zoo Crew in proper communication techniques.

Zoo Crew ages 15 to 17 should take steps in communicating with their fellow Zoo Crew to find swaps. Zoo Crew this age should be actively keeping track of their own schedules. At this time, a Zoo Crew should be comfortable communicating scheduling needs via email to their supervisors.

Think of the Education Coordinator as your first "boss." A boss with the job of helping you become independent! Becoming comfortable communicating with a supervisor is an essential and hugely beneficial workplace skill. Here is the perfect opportunity to practice and perfect this skill.

## **Zoo Crew Hours**

Weekday and Weekend Work Times:

8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Wild Wednesday:

4:45 PM to 8:00 PM

## **Zoo Crew Drop-off**

- Zoo Crew should arrive at the zoo between 8:00-8:10am when a zoo staff member to admit Zoo Crew. Any Zoo Crew who arrives before 8AM must wait on the benches in the entrance plaza. Zoo Crew will NOT be allowed into the zoo until 8AM as all education areas must be staffed to ensure adequate safety and supervision.

- If Zoo Crew arrive after 8:10, they will need to wait until the Zoo opens at 10:00 AM to enter the Zoo. The Administration doors are on timed locks and cannot be staffed after 8:10. Zoo Crew are asked not to ring the doorbell after 8:10 as it disturbs our office staff. If Zoo Crew is repeatedly late, they may be dismissed from the program.
- All Zoo Crew must sign in prior to each shift and receive a schedule for the day.

### **Zoo Crew Pick-up**

- Zoo Crew will exit the Zoo at the exit gates at the front plaza. They should then wait to be picked up on the sidewalk in the north parking lot
- Pick-up starts at 4:45 pm and must be off Zoo property by 5:30 PM. Zoo Crew who are not picked up after 5:30 may be removed from the program. Zoo staff is not able to monitor Zoo Crew pass the time when the zoo closes.

### **Wild Wednesday Shifts**

- Zoo Crew should enter the zoo through the main entrance or exit gates and proceed directly to Critter Outpost for sign in and await further instruction from a Lead.

### **Tardiness**

- As stated above, your jobs at the zoo are very important and tardiness will hinder the Zoo Crew team's ability to complete their assigned tasks. Being more than 15 minutes late will be noted on attendance records. If Zoo Crew arrive after 8:10, they will need to wait until the Zoo opens at 10:00AM to enter the Zoo. The Administration doors are on timed locks and cannot be staffed after 8:10. Zoo Crew are asked not to ring the doorbell after 8:15 as it disturbs our office staff. If Zoo Crew is repeatedly late, they may be dismissed from the program.

### **Lunches**

Lunches and drinks are available for purchase at Café 65 with a 10% on duty discount for Zoo Crew.

Zoo Crew who chose to bring their lunches should store them on the appropriate space provide. Do not store valuables in your lunch box. A refrigerator or microwave will not be provided, and any cold items must be brought with cold packs from home.

Zoo Crew receive an hour lunch break. There is a picnic area behind Café 65 and the Safari Café by Josh's Pond where all Zoo Crew eat. You must pick-up your trash. Not only does littering show disrespect towards the Zoo and the earth, but it could be ingested by a peacock and make them ill. All food and trash items should be picked up from the ground and deposited in the appropriate receptacles. Recycle what you can and then discard the rest. No food should be offered to peacocks.

If you have time in your break following eating lunch that you wish to explore the zoo, you must do so appropriately. You are still expected to be off your phones in guest areas and respect the animal areas. If you want to be on your phone during your lunch you need to be in the back lunch areas provided for you.

You must bring your own water bottle every workday. It is imperative that you stay hydrated throughout the day to combat the effects of the summer heat. There are multiple water fountains and coolers stationed around the zoo to fill water bottles, but they are not to take the place of a water bottle in the possession of each Zoo Crew. Zoo Crew will always be released to fill up their water bottles or use the restroom when requested to a Lead.

## **Cell Phones**

To encourage a holistic experiential learning environment, cell phones are not permitted during Zoo Crew hours. Zoo Crew are expected to follow the same rules as staff. We understand that cell phones are the main line of communication between guardians and Zoo Crew. However, we expect Zoo Crew to be respectful and treat the program with respect. If a Zoo Crew is repeatedly told to put their phone away while at work, it will be confiscated until the end of the day. The Zoo is not responsible for any lost or damaged phones while the Zoo Crew is working. A Zoo Crew will never be denied the opportunity to make a phone call to a parent or guardian. Cell phones should only be used during breaks or for emergencies and should never be used in guest areas.

If a parent or guardian needs to reach their Zoo Crew, they may call the Zoo's main phone line at: 402-475-6741. The main phone line is staffed 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

## **Zoo Crew Expectations**

To be successful, Zoo Crew must adhere to the following expectations.

- 1. Respectful and attentive to all guests**
- 2. Respectful of animals and responsible for their wellbeing**
- 3. Respectful and attentive to Leads and Zoo staff**
- 4. Respectful and attentive to your fellow Zoo Crew members**

### **1. Respectful and Attentive to all Guests**

If it were not for the guests and their support at the Lincoln Children's Zoo, we would not exist! It is our responsibility to give them a great experience and welcome them into our Zoo. Take the time to share with them our love for animals. To share this message effectively, you must greet all guests with courtesy and enthusiasm. Nothing reflects friendliness and helpfulness better than a smile. Whether you are walking through the zoo or completing a work task, you should always smile and answer any questions, and address any concerns they might have.

### **2. Respectful of Animals and Responsible for their Well-Being**

It is very evident that we LOVE animals here at the zoo. It is our responsibility to take care of them and make sure they are always healthy and safe. All instructions provided by zoo staff members

pertaining to the care of the animals should be followed as closely as possible to ensure that the animals are as safe and comfortable. It is up to you to make sure our animals are healthy and happy whenever you are introducing a guest to an animal, socializing an animal, or cleaning its enclosure.

### 3. Respectful and Attentive to Education Leads and Zoo Staff

The Education Lead and Zoo Staff are at the zoo for the same reasons you decided to participate in Zoo Crew: their love of the natural world and desire to share it with others. They are here, not only to care for animals but also to make Zoo Crew the best program possible. They are here to ensure that all participants are both safe and happy. Their rules and instructions are meant to do just that, and it is crucial that you follow and listen to them closely. It will create the best experience possible.

### 4. Respectful and Attentive to your fellow Zoo Crew

Zoo Crew is a TEAM. You are all completing this experience together and your success depends on each other's success. A strong team will neither form nor flourish if its members are not respectful of each other and unable to work as a group. It is imperative that all Zoo Crew participants show respect for their fellow participants and treat them better than you would like to be treated.

## Zoo Crew Code of Conduct

To meet the Zoo Crew expectations, the Education Department has put together a Zoo Crew Code of Conduct that more explicitly states the rules of the Zoo and the Zoo Crew program.

- Set a good example and be professional. People are watching you! Whenever you wear the Zoo Crew logo, you are representing the zoo.
- Perform assigned duties as requested and to the best of your ability. If you are unable to do this, you need to be able to ask for help.
- Demonstrate professional behavior. Be pleasant and polite. Do not be rude, sassy, or disrespectful.
- Communicate with supervisors and Zoo staff. Not sharing information or hiding information that can be harmful to yourself, an animal, or another Zoo Crew is dangerous. Zoo Crew must be confident in communicating with adults.
- Attendance is very important; please report for work on your assigned days. If you are unable to make it, **you are responsible** for sending a substitute in your place
- Be knowledgeable about the Zoo, its programs, and residents.
- Participate in class activities and complete class assignments.
- Represent the Zoo in a positive and professional manner. Smoking, drinking, taking drugs, showing disrespect, and using inappropriate language will not be tolerated and will be cause for immediate dismissal.



# Zoo Crew Assignments



## Critter Outpost

Critter Outpost serves as a place for guests to experience an up-close encounter with various education program animals. Guests may also purchase tattoos at this location. Critter Outpost provides a unique opportunity to be up close and personal with an animal that guests can experience with all of their senses. When working at Critter Outpost you will handle and teach guests about these program animals.

## Wrangler Roundup/Domestics

Wrangler Roundup serves as a place for guests to experience an up-close encounter with animals found on a classic Nebraskan farm. Zoo Crew members treat guests to pony rides and feeding experiences with the goats, llamas, and other farm critters. Zoo Crew also helps with husbandry in these areas. Zoo Crew has the chance to prepare and saddle the horses every morning, feed the animal residents, and clean/rake the animal areas.



## Laura's Butterfly Pavilion

Laura's Butterfly Pavilion provides guests with the opportunity to get up close and personal with the zoo's winged insect community. Zoo Crew will assist guests in their encounter by providing sugar water and butterfly holding tips. Most importantly Zoo Crew open and close the doors for guests, making sure no butterflies escape. Zoo Crew will also be able to discuss a butterfly's role in the ecosystem and all their fascinating characteristics.

## The Hive

The Hive provides an opportunity for guests to experience the creepy, crawly program animals of the zoo. Zoo Crew have the opportunity, if desired, to handle these reptiles and arthropods and share their interesting characteristics and facts with guests. You also will have the opportunity to complete different husbandry practices necessary to keep Hive animals as healthy and happy as possible.



## Discovery Stations

Discovery stations positioned in different areas around the Zoo allow guests a fun, interactive, and educational experience. Topics and activities will change throughout the season.

## Pony and Camel Shack

Zoo guests have the opportunity to purchase feed for the Dromedary camels and animal inspired tattoos. While creating a great experience for the guests, Zoo Crew simultaneously get the opportunity to raise important funds for the Zoo and its conservation efforts. You get to learn cash handling and money skills while also sharing important information with our guests.

## Keeper Kitchen

The keeper kitchen is located behind-the-scenes and is attached to AKB. The keeper kitchen is the hub for all Zookeeper activity. Animal diets are stored and prepared in the kitchen. Adjacent to the keeper kitchen is the Zookeeper office. You may be asked to get produce from the keeper kitchen. Please only use what is needed and leave the kitchen neat and tidy. If you have a question about where something is, ask!

## Summer Camps

All level 2 and 3 Zoo Crew will assist with summer camps. Older level Zoo Crew who enjoy being camp assistants may also help with camps. Level 2-5 Zoo Crew are welcome to come extra and assist with camps with prior approval from the Education Coordinator.

## Jungle Outpost

Jungle Outpost is located in the former Ager building, now known as The Secret Jungle. Here Zoo Crew care for and present a variety of reptiles, mammals, and birds to the public. Older Zoo Crew may also assist in the care and keeping of these animals.



# Buildings and Their Names

**Admin** – This is the building left of the exit gates where staff offices are located. The education offices are located in the basement of this building. This is where Zoo Crew lunches are kept. Bathrooms are located in the basement. This is where the Education Managers' offices are as well.

**Animal Kingdom Building** - We refer to the building on the north edge of the property as the AKB. AKB is short for Animal Kingdom Building. This is where we keep many of our reptiles and small mammals that also have specific heat and environmental considerations. Bathrooms are located here.



**Animal Encounter Stage** – This open-air structure is west of the goats and south of the reindeer near Critter Outpost. Daily animal programs will be taking place on this stage throughout the open season.

**Rainforest Room/Disco** – The rainforest room is a location for rentals, private meetings, and birthday parties. The Discovery Center (Disco), which is adjacent/connected to the Rainforest Room, is home to education storage.

**Camelot Commons** – Is used for special events and summer camps.

**Camels**– Camels can mean either the front or back of camels. To access the back of camels you will need to use the gate located to the left of the entrance of the Hive. This back area will give you access to the tack room where we store the rakes, trashcans, and wheelbarrows used to maintain the camel exhibit.

**Cheetah Chase**- the green space where we run our Cheetahs. Zoo Crew will be asked to maintain this areas cleanliness through sweeping, trash pickup, etc.

**Crooked House**-located in Zooville square, guests are able to reserve this area for birthday parties.

**Laura's Butterfly Pavilion** – This is the building next to the wallaby exhibit and south of the penguin exhibit. The pathway to the pavilion is the Memorial Brick Plaza.

**Otters** – This exhibit area includes the North American river otters, the dwarf African crocodiles, and the pond turtles. It is located just south of the ramp that leads up to the front of the Zoo.

**Wild Safari Theater-** located South of the Giraffe yard, this is an area where our Ambassador Animal Keepers present the natural behaviors of our animals. Zoo Crew will be asked to maintain this areas cleanliness through sweeping, trash pickup, etc.

**Zooville Square** – The area north of The Safari Café is known as Zooville Square. Stego’s Big Dig and the Crooked House are located here in addition to tables for guest use. Restrooms are located here.

**Dino Dig**— The large sand area under the stegosaurus statue in Zooville where guests can dig for bones.

**Secret Jungle-** home to our Jungle Outpost area and Spider Monkeys, Secret Jungle holds our indoor play structure and our birthday party room.

## Zoo Crew Education Team

### Aimee Johns

#### Education Director

Aimee is the supervisor to all Zoo Education Staff. She makes sure we are doing our jobs, providing guidance and mentorship to the Education Team. She also does a lot of non-education related things. Aimee works with other zoos and conservationists to help us become caretakers to amazing animals (she is the reason we have cheetahs!). She is also in charge of Adventure Trips! Make sure to say hello to her when you see her walking around the Zoo!



### Kayla Manley

#### Education Coordinator

Kayla is lead on all the Education Programs here at the Zoo. She also manages seasonal camp staff, along with the Zoo Crew Coordinators. Kayla went through Zoo Crew herself and has been at the Zoo as a team member for 13 years! Make sure to say hello to her when you see her walking around the Zoo!

kmanley@lincolnzoo.org

## **Zoo Crew Coordinators**

Your Zoo Crew Supervisors make sure Zoo Crew are doing what they are supposed to do. Zoo Crew Coordinators check you in the morning. Will give you your assignments and schedule. They will also teach you Zoo Crew classes. Zoo Crew Coordinators are mentors and will help you learn as much as possible during your Zoo Crew experience.

## **Education Animal Staff**

The Education staff are here for the same reason you are; their love of animals! Leads are here to make sure you know how to properly take care of our animals. When Zoo Crew are not around, they do this job alone; they know what they're doing. It is very important to listen to their instructions and directions.

## **Interns and Apprentices**

Zoo Interns specialize in the care and keeping of animals. They don't specialize in just one area. They get experience caring for all the Zoo's animals. They are typically assigned to a Zookeeper and work with carnivores, primates, birds, reptiles, or small mammals. The Education Department typically has two to three interns as well. Interns may help you care for the animals. Intern instructions should also be followed closely. When you graduate from Zoo Crew you can become an intern too!

## **Zoo Crew Dress Code**

As a full-fledged member of the Lincoln Children's Zoo, Zoo Crew are held to the same expectations as all staff members.

### **Dress Code**

While working at the Zoo you will be required to wear provided Zoo Crew volunteer t-shirts, along with your nametag, Khaki shorts, or pants (at the knee or longer), and close toed shoes. A brown or black belt must be worn, and the shirt must be tucked in. If a jacket is needed, a Zoo Crew sweatshirt or another plain black hoodie or jacket may be worn. No logos or colorful jackets are permitted. Temperatures below 40 degrees permit any type of winter coat. Hats may be worn as long as they are plain black or khaki or a purchased Zoo Crew cap.

### **The Zoo Look**

- Zoo Crew members are required to wear a Zoo provided t-shirt, khaki shorts/pants, brown or black belt, closed toed tennis shoes or work boots and a name tag.
- Long hair must be pulled back for safety reasons.
- Jewelry is not permitted with the exception of wrist watches. Piercings are strongly discouraged from a safety standpoint.
- Please dress appropriately for the weather. Zoo Crew sweatshirts will be available for purchase and well as hats.
- If a zoo crew is not in appropriate dress, we will be calling home for them to obtain the appropriate gear.



Great Job! Shorts at or past fingertips, shirt tucked in, nametag present and on left side, Zoo Crew hat, and close toed shoes



Needs Work! Forgot nametag, shoes untied, shirt un tucked, using cell phone during a Zoo Crew shift, and hat not worn properly.

## The Zoo Crew Uniform

Here is a quick list from head to toe of what you should wear when you come to Zoo Crew

**Head:** Zoo Crew hat or plain khaki hat or visor.

**Hair:** Long hair must be pulled back and secured for safety reasons.

**Face:** No visible piercings of any kind are permitted due to safety concerns.

**Hands:** Clean, presentable fingernails are necessary. Glittery or sparkly nail polish is not permitted. This is for your safety and the safety of the animals. Fingernails cannot extend beyond the tip of the finger. Two rings on each hand are permitted.

**Neck:** Any necklaces worn must be kept under the shirt at all times. This for your safety and the safety of the animals.



Great Job! Shorts at or past fingertips, shirt tucked in, nametag present and on left side, close toed shoes, hair pulled back out of face



Needs work! Nametag on the wrong side, shoes untied, shirt un tucked, wearing a sweatshirt that is not part of the Zoo Crew uniform, hair down and in face

**Chest:** A Zoo Crew uniform shirt needs to be worn at every shift. Zoo Crew sweatshirts, hoodies or solid black sweatshirts may be worn. No logos are permitted. Coats and raingear of any type may be worn in the event of inclement weather.

**Legs:** Khaki shorts or pants must be worn to every Zoo Crew shift. Pants must be a solid khaki with no logos or patterns. Shorts must extend below the fingertips and it is recommended they fall at the knee. A black or brown belt is also required.

**Feet and Toes:** Sturdy, closed toe shoes must be worn at all times. It is best to have a designated pair of Zoo Crew shoes as you shoes will most likely come home smelling like animals.

**Where do I find khaki pants or shorts?**

Walmart and Target carry khaki pants/shorts for teens and adults for under \$20.00. Youth sizes of khaki pants may be purchased on Amazon. Do not spend a lot of money. These pants and shorts will be exposed to many things. You will also grow out of them rather quickly.



# Animal Handling

Never be afraid to ask a question. Knowing how to handle an animal safely and confidently is something you are entitled to be taught.

Animals should only be removed from their cages and handled if directed by a Lead.

All items necessary to handle the animal (carriers, bowls, towels etc.) should be gathered and collected before the animal's cage is opened.

If you are ever uncomfortable with handling an animal or getting it out of its cage, tell a Lead. No Zoo Crew will ever be forced or required to handle an animal that they are uncomfortable handling. We do strongly encourage, however, that Zoo Crew make every effort to overcome fears or discomforts surrounding certain animals to have the most enriching and rewarding experience possible.

While handling an animal there is always the possibility of getting bit. Tell a lead or manger immediately if you, a guest, or another Zoo Crew is bitten.

Your safety and the safety of the animals are of the utmost concern. All decisions regarding animal handling are made with only those two considerations in mind.

Before being permitted to handle an animal, Zoo Crew must be able to recite three fun facts about the animal and demonstrate proper handling techniques to an Education Lead.

Please see the Animal Handbook for more information on specific animal handling procedures.

# Wrangler Roundup/Domestics

## Horse Safety

- Always approach the horses calmly and quietly on the left side towards their shoulder.
- Never walk or stand behind a horse without letting it know you are there.
- Keep your feet out from under the horse, the horse will stomp to get rid of flies and it might accidentally stomp on your toes.
- Pay attention to the horse's ears and body language. Horses will almost always give a warning before they bite or kick. Make sure you are not in a position where you could get hurt.
- Remember that horses are creatures of flight. Their first instinct is to get away from the things that scare them so anticipate the things that might scare the horses (screaming kids, train, peacocks, etc.) and be ready to get yourself out of the way and calm the horse down.

## Leading a Ride

- Double-check the cinch before you get the child up on the horse. It should fit snugly enough that you can just fit your fingers under it.
- When leading a horse, stand on the left side next to their head, grasp the lead rope below the horse's jaw with your right hand, and hold the rest of the lead rope in your left hand.
- NEVER wrap the lead rope around your hand or arm.
- Always get the child up from the left side and make sure the horse is standing still while the child is mounting and dismounting. There will always be a manager present to help with these tasks.
- During the ride, keep your horse at least 15 feet behind the horse in front.
- Only one person on a horse at a time.
- Parents can walk along with their child on the left side of the horse right behind you.

## Horsemanship Skills

- To get the horse to move forward, use your voice first (clicks or kiss noises) then use your hands (pull forward on the lead rope).
- To get the horse to stop, first say "whoa" then pull back on the lead rope.
- Be firm yet gentle with the horses. Be very clear with your commands and keep asking until they do it and then reward them immediately with praise and petting when they do it right.

## Wrangler Roundup Protocol

- NO earbuds or cell phones when you are working with horses and children. They need and deserve your full attention.
- Set a good example for guests by always using the gates and ramps, not climbing over fences.
- Drink water, not pop. Wranglers have to stay hydrated.

# Zoonosis

In the Zoo Crew program, you are constantly in close contact with zoo animals. Because of this close contact, you increase your exposure to potential disease organisms. Zoonosis refers to diseases that are capable of being transmitted between animals and humans.

They may be caused by a number of viral, bacterial, fungal, or parasitic organisms. While we strive to keep our animals as healthy as possible, disease can and does occasionally occur.

When disease is noticed in an animal, the animal is generally restricted from contact and handling. This is to allow the animal to recover in a stress-free environment and to help prevent the spread of disease organisms if they are present.

Even healthy animals can harbor organisms that, if given the proper environment, can cause disease in humans. We maintain surveillance for potential disease organisms but cannot be certain that each animal is disease free at all times.

Therefore, we ask you to practice common sense in your personal hygiene. Wash your hands after handling animals; use a disinfectant soap. If a bite or scratch occurs, wash the wound well and fill out an accident report immediately.

If you notice a problem with one of the animals, please report it to one of the managers. Often, Zoo Crew members are the first to notice something is wrong with one of the animals due to their close contact with them. We appreciate your observational skills. Your help improves the quality of life for zoo animals as well as for the zoo guest.

## Zoo Crew Hygiene Reminders

1. Zoo Crew should wash their hands before and after handling any animal.
2. Zoo Crew should remind visitors who have touched animals to wash their hands.
3. Zoo Crew should clean any of their own zoo-related injuries thoroughly and fill out an accident report immediately.
4. Zoo Crew are encouraged to keep their tetanus boosters current or follow the advice of their personal physician.
5. Zoo Crew must report zoo-related injuries to the zoo staff.

## Lincoln Children's Zoo Information

The Lincoln Children's Zoo is open from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Wild Wednesdays take place every Wednesday in June through August from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM.

### Zoo Rules

1. Stay on the provided paths.
2. Don't throw things into the exhibits.
3. Don't pound on the windows of any exhibits.
4. Respect the plants and animals that live here.
5. No smoking anywhere on Zoo grounds.
6. No skateboards, bikes, or roller skates allowed inside the Zoo.
7. No pets may enter the Zoo except for service animals.
8. No balloons are allowed in the Zoo as they are made of a material dangerous for our animals.
9. Chasing and feeding the peacocks is not permitted.
10. No running.
11. No feeding the animals (including the peacocks)
12. Be respectful of all persons at the zoo.
13. Enter off-limits animal areas is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate dismissal from the program.
14. Have fun!

Zoo Crew found breaking any of these rules will not be allowed to continue with the program.

### **First Aid**

First Aid kits are available in the following areas: Administration Building, Keeper Kitchen, Animal Care Center, Wrangler Outpost, Critter Outpost, Safari Café, Gift Shop, Laura's Butterfly Pavilion and The Hive.

Zoo Crew may not provide first aid to anyone but themselves

If you are injured, you must notify a zoo staff immediately.

Parents and guardians will be notified of all injuries greater than a superficial scratch, bump, or bruise.

### **Restrooms**

Public restrooms are available for use and are located in Zooville Square, at the Entrance gates, and in the Animal kingdom Building. There are also “behind-the-scenes” restrooms available in the Rainforest Room and The Hive.

Zoo Crew should let a supervising lead know when they are going to the restroom. This is important so in the event of an emergency we are able to account for all Zoo Crew.

### **Lost Child**

If you hear that there is a lost child in the Zoo keep a look out for the child matching the description. If you believe you’ve seen the child notify a staff member immediately. Do not approach the child, touch, or pick him/her up.

If you see a child that appears to be lost notify a staff member immediately.

If you are approached by the parent of a missing child, ask the parents to stay where they are and notify the staff immediately.

### **Code Red Procedure**

A code red is called when a potentially dangerous animal escapes from its enclosure. Here is what you will hear over the intercom:

“Attention please. We have a Zoo emergency at (location). Please remain, or enter into, the nearest building immediately. If you are near the front gate, please exit the zoo.”

Follow the directions and enter the nearest building to your location and follow the directions given to you by any staff member. Remain in your location until you hear:

“Attention please. The emergency situation has been concluded. Thank you for your cooperation. We are sorry for any inconvenience. You are now free to resume your visit.”

## **Sharing the Conservation and Zoo Message**

The most important part of Zoo Crew is creating a great experience for our guests and communicating the conservation and Zoo message. Here are some conservation messages and tips to answer some of the most common zoo questions!

### **Typical Questions and Responses**

Whenever answering a question, use the opportunity to teach!

### **Limiting Flight for our Birds**

Frequently, guests will ask why the birds don't fly away or how we keep them from doing so.

- Why don't you let the birds fly?
- What's wrong with that bird's wing?
- Do you clip their wings?

Here are some sample responses that not only address the guest's questions or concerns, but also allow you to share some great information with them as well!

- Our birds here at the zoo have all been born and raised in captivity and don't know how to take care of themselves in the wild. Limiting their flight does not hurt them and it helps us ensure their safety and allows us to better take care of them.
- Also, most of the birds at the zoo are not native to Nebraska and the surrounding areas. It is important that we prevent them from escaping and disturbing the natural ecosystem and becoming an invasive species.
  - Invasive species: plants or animals' species that invade an ecosystem that they are not native too. This often disrupts the natural cycles, food chains, population dynamics etc. of the ecosystem.
- Feather Clipping: The cutting of the primary feathers of a bird's wings. Does not hurt them. It's like clipping fingernails.
- Pinioning: Surgical procedure where the tip of a bird's wing is removed at a young age.

### Urination/Defecation

Frequently, animals will urinate and defecate in front of guests.

- Eeeewwww! They're pooping!
- That's gross. Don't you train them not to do that?
- It's not healthy to go to the bathroom where they live.

Here are some sample responses that not only address the guest's questions or concerns, but also allow you to share some great information with them as well!

- All animals produce waste. It is a natural process that keeps them healthy and proves that their digestive system is working well.
- It may seem stinky and gross to us, but animals often go to the bathroom to mark their territory or leave messages for other animals.
- Our dedicated zookeepers at the zoo take care of our animals very well and clean their exhibits daily while still making sure our animals have the opportunity to live as naturally as possible and act as they would in the wild.

## **7 Guidelines to Wildlife Conservation – International Zoo Educators Association**

1. Seek out information about conservation issues.
  - Read a book about your favorite animal and learn all you can about it
  - Subscribe to wildlife conservation magazines like National Geographic World
  - Watch wildlife shows on television
  - Contact local chapters of conservation groups to find out what they're doing in your areas
  - Obtain a list of endangered plant and animal species from CITES or from your national list
  
2. Spread the word to others about the value of wildlife.
  - Encourage your family, friends, and neighbors to reduce, reuse, and recycle
  - Speak for wildlife. Let your friends and family know how much you care about animals
  - Teach children to respect nature and the environment
  - Take children camping, hiking, or on zoo and aquarium trips
  - Ensure schools have a balanced environmental education program
  
3. Look for and purchase products that are friendly to the environment.
  - "Adopt" an animal or habitat as a present for family or friends
  - Save on packaging while grocery shopping or packing your lunch for School or Zoo Crew
  - Shop for school supplies that are made from recycled materials
  - Use organic fertilizers
  - Don't buy ivory, or other products, made from wild animals
  - Purchase shade grown coffee that benefits wildlife by conserving forests
  
4. Create habitats for wildlife in your backyard.
  - Hang a bird feeder, put out a birdbath, or plant a small tree to show you care for wildlife
  - Plant a wildlife garden with flowers that butterflies like
  - Help your family build a bat box to eat all the mosquitoes in your backyard
  - Create a small pond in your backyard for aquatic wildlife
  - Contain domestic pets so they do not disturb wildlife
  - Help children discover the many wonders of their backyard, like the tiny world of insects
  
5. Reduce, reuse, recycle and replenish.
  - Recycle everything you can; newspapers, glass, cans, foil, etc.
  - Turn off the water when you brush your teeth. This saves precious water
  - Ride the bus, the subway, bike or walk to school instead of taking your car -- this saves energy and keeps you fit too!
  - Use cold water in the washer whenever possible
  - Take unwanted, reusable items to charitable organizations or thrift shops
  - Lower your thermostat one degree per hour for every hour that you are away

6. Choose your pets wisely.

- Leave wild babies where you find them, their mothers can care for them best
- Be a responsible pet owner. Make sure they have food, water, and a safe, comfortable place to live
- Learn everything about the pet you want. Some pets have a very long life span - a tortoise or parrot may live over 50 years!
- Veterinary expenses for wild or exotic pets can be high
- Be sure the pet you choose was not taken from the wild
- Some animals have special care needs; be sure you are aware of these and can provide the care and costs that are required

7. Support conservation organizations through contributions and volunteering

- Join a beach or river clean-up
- Visit a nature park where the money will go to help wildlife
- Join a conservation organization
- Volunteer at your local zoo or nature center
- Contribute dollars to conservation programs



## **Zoo Crew Status**

Zoo Crew receive daily mentorship and coaching from the Zoo's education leadership staff. Behavioral issues will be addressed directly with youth volunteers as they occur. Your Zoo Crew should be aware if there is a reason they would not be invited back next year. You will be alerted to major issues, however if you would like more information on your child's status in Zoo Crew, you will need to reach out and email the Education Coordinator. She will be happy to converse with the Education Leads and give you a behavior update.

Decisions on Zoo Crew returning are at the discretion of the Education Coordinator, however the opinions of the Education Keepers and staff as a whole can change this decision. Please remind your Zoo Crew that their continuation in the program is contingent on their ability to work well with all supervisors and their fellow Zoo Crew.

## Parent and Guardian Section

Congratulations, you are now the proud parent of a Zoo Crew. This section contains additional information that you can use to help your Zoo Crew succeed in the program.

### **Zoo Crew needing physical assistance:**

We welcome and encourage Zoo Crew who need physical assistance to participate in the program. The Zoo is ADA compliant and mobility friendly. We are able to adapt nearly any physical activity to allow every Zoo Crew to participate. Zoo Crew schedules can be adapted to accommodate unique feeding and bathroom requirements. Please contact the Education Manager to discuss how we can adapt Zoo Crew for your child.

### **Zoo Crew needing behavioral support:**

Anyone is welcome to participate in Zoo Crew as a Level 1. After Level 1, the privilege of continuing Zoo Crew is by invitation only. Participation in Zoo Crew requires the ability to follow instructions. Zoo Crew who are unable to follow instructions may not continue in the program. These are the basic behavioral requirements needed to continue in the program:

- Zoo Crew must be able to remain seated and attentive for up to 1 hour.
- Zoo Crew must be able to converse with others using typical social interactions and/or appropriate language.
- Zoo Crew must have the ability to tell time and follow a simple written schedule. We are happy to help those with reading comprehension needs. Zoo Crew are expected to be where they are assigned and remain there until they are dismissed by a supervisor.
- Zoo Crew must be able to appropriately convey their needs to supervisors.
- Zoo Crew must be able to follow supervisors' instructions correctly and within a reasonable time frame.
- Zoo Crew must accept the word "no" without becoming defiant and argumentative.

Reasonable accommodations will be made. These accommodations will not interfere with the Zoo's ability to:

- Ensure a safe and enjoyable guest experience
- Promote a safe and educational environment for Zoo program participants
- Provide safe care and keeping of the Zoo's resident animals
- Give staff and volunteers a safe and enjoyable working environment

If your child's behavioral needs are not compatible with the Zoo Crew program please do not be discouraged. We can put you in contact with our adult volunteer coordinator. The Zoo may have opportunities for family supervised volunteer work.

You will be notified via email if your Zoo Crew is exhibiting chronic behavioral issues. We ask that you address any issues with your Zoo Crew.

## **Being Sent Home**

You will be asked to pick up your Zoo Crew if the following behaviors occur:

Disruptive behavior including, but not limited to:

- Roughhousing

- Wandering around the Zoo

- Talking at inappropriate times, such as when Zoo staff are giving instructions

- Refusal to follow instructions or participate in activities

- Repetitive inappropriate language usage or subject matter

- Inappropriate handling of an animal

### **Grounds for immediate dismissal:**

- Destruction or stealing of Zoo property

- Physical violence of any kind

If your Zoo Crew is sent home, you and your child will be expected to present via email a written behavioral plan to the Education Coordinator. The Education Team will decide if your child may return to Zoo Crew. If problem behaviors continue, your child will be permanently dismissed from the Zoo Crew program.

## **Zoo Crew Communication**

We encourage all communication to be done via email . As managers and educators, we are rarely in our offices. We are outside mentoring, educating, and supervising your kids!

Please send personal questions or concerns directly to Zoo staff.

## **Zoo Crew Concerns**

Concerns with the Zoo Crew program need to be addressed immediately. If you child is experiencing harassment, bullying or needs assistance of any kind, please contact the Education Team immediately.

Encourage your Zoo Crew to speak openly about issues they may be experiencing. Our ability to remedy such issues is at its greatest when we can address things immediately. Do not expect issues to be quickly remedied if they are brought to our attention weeks after their occurrence.

Let your Zoo Crew know they can speak to a Supervisor or Director at any time. All Education staff are trained to inform their supervisors if a Zoo Crew is in need of assistance.