

Frequently Asked Questions

Zoo On Wheels Birthday Parties

What if my child is turning 3, but older children are attending the party?

We recommend that you choose a party for the age of the children attending. If your child is under three but all children are older, we recommend that you choose a Zoo on Wheels party. We will substitute Zoo on Wheels party bags for Baby party bags for any children under age 4.

What type of vehicle to you drive?

Honda Element or other non-commercial sized vehicle.

How do I pay for the party?

Full payment is due at the time of booking and we accept all major credit cards. Additional children (up to 25) may be paid for on the day of the program by check or credit card.

Should I tip the staff ?

Zoo on wheels is an educational program and our staff is instructed not to accept gratuity. Any additional funds will be donated to our Footprints program to help plant trees and offset our carbon footprint. You can find out more about this program at our website.

What time will you arrive?

Traveling naturalists arrive 15-20 minutes early to set up for their program. In the event that they encounter traffic, we will contact you with estimated arrival time.

Which animals will come out to my home?

Small to medium sized program animals that are handled by trained Zoo on Wheels staff. We do not travel with large carnivores, primates or cats.

Will you present a Zoo on Wheels birthday party at my child's school?

Yes! We do birthday parties at schools, YMCAs and other venues. We require contact information for your child's school and teacher.

Do you take requests? The Philadelphia Zoo follows the highest standards of animal care and presentation. Specific animal requests are welcome as they help use to provide the highest quality program for you and your guests. Please understand wild and exotic animals have complex needs and because of this we will not guarantee animal requests. In the event that one of your requests animals is not available, we will make an appropriate substitution.

Are we going to be touching live animals?

There are many touchable animals in our collection, including rabbits, chinchillas, ducks, chickens and Madagascan hissing cockroaches. Generally speaking, larger and more exotic animals are not touchable. Guests should follow the naturalists' instructions to ensure the safety of people and animals. The naturalist may elect to have the audience touch artifacts rather than animals at any time.

Do you present animals outdoors?

We may do outdoor presentations in a shaded area during the months of May-September, weather permitting. The traveling naturalist may elect to present animals indoors if the outdoor conditions are not favorable. In general, we require outdoor temperatures between 70-85 degrees.

What do I need to have ready at my home for Zoo on Wheels?

- Temperature controlled, quiet room with a door where animals can rest. (Animals are always secured and in carriers).
- Small table with 4 chairs for face painting
- Adequate space for games and activities
- All household pets must be locked in a separate room.
- Parking for Zoo on Wheels vehicle within 100 yards of your home.

Why do I need to provide directions?

Our staff utilizes GPS units and Mapquest directions. Please provide details that may be helpful for our educators (ie: proper entrance to use, information about detours or road closures).

Should I call to confirm my program?

The Zoo on Wheels team will email final confirmation one week prior to your program. We require a response to ensure that you received it and all details are correct. Please reply to the email or call the Zoo on Wheels office at 215-243-5353 to confirm receipt.

Zoo on Wheels Birthday Itinerary

Ages 4-11pm, 1.5 hour long party

Educators arrive 15-20 minutes before your party time to introduce themselves to the birthday child, set up and secure animals in the quiet room.

Facepainting:

Upon arrival, guests are invited to have their faces painted by our traveling naturalist. Guests will choose a design from our sample sheet. All face paints are easily removed with soap and water.

Zoo Games and Songs:

Zoo educators dive into their bag of tricks and engage children in Zoo songs, games and interactive activities. Since this is a transition activity between facepainting and animal presentation, specific games will vary depending on time, space and age of children.

Birthday Present:

Educators bring up the birthday child for their very own birthday present from their friends at the Philadelphia Zoo. This cotton Zoo on Wheels graphic T is available in youth and adult sizes. Additional shirts may be purchased in advance for \$10 each. Additional gifts may be purchased through the zoo's retail shop online.

Animal presentation:

The highlight of your Zoo on Wheels birthday! Four live animals, artifacts and a lively presentation.

Craft Activity: Each child will make a take home critter craft from model magic.

Goodbyes:

Educators will give party bags to the host and also settle any additional paperwork, payment for additional guests, etc.

**We recommend that if you are providing birthday cake or food for your guests, to do this after the craft activity.*

All Parties include a gift for the birthday boy or girl, party bag with a zoo ticket for each guest and of course, lots of fun!

Baby Birthday Itinerary

Ages 1-3, 1 hour long party

Educators arrive 15-20 minutes before your party time to introduce themselves to the birthday child, set up and secure animals in the quiet room.

Animal Sing-along

Toddlers and parents are encouraged to sing animal songs and move like animals with our traveling naturalists.

Birthday Present:

Educators bring up the birthday child for their very own birthday present from their friends at the Philadelphia Zoo. This cotton Zoo on Wheels graphic T is available in youth and adult sizes. Additional shirts may be purchased for \$10 each. Additional gifts may be purchased through the zoo's retail shop online.

Animal presentation

Traveling naturalists share 4 live animals with toddlers in a small group. Toddlers have the opportunity touch animals and animal artifacts. Parents are encouraged to participate in this animal discovery activity.

Critter craft

Specially designed for the under three set! Toddlers and their parents use glue, confetti paper and crayons to create their own critter mask to take home.

Zoo on Wheels Birthday General information

Zoo on Wheels Birthday and Zoo on Wheels Baby Birthdays

\$355 for Zoo Member

\$425 for non Zoo member (renew your membership online at www.phillyzoo.org)

Cost includes 12 children, including the party child. Full payment is due at the time of booking. Additional children (up to 25 children) may be added for \$10 each. Additional guests may be paid on the day of the program by check or credit card.

Zoo on Wheels Birthday

Designed for children ages 4-11 and their guests. These parties include facepainting, critter craft, and live animal presentation and zoo games. Zoo on Wheels birthdays last 90 minutes and we recommend that cake is served at the end of this time.

Baby Birthday

Designed for children age 1-4 and their guests. These parties include touchable animals, songs, interactives and a craft. Baby birthdays last 60 minutes and we recommend that cake is served at the end of this time.

Custom Birthday Parties

Great for adult parties, teens and special events! Ask to speak with our Zoo on Wheels team to design a custom party for your event! Additional fees will apply.

Animals

We always bring 4 animals, generally a bird, two mammals and a reptile. Zoo on Wheels animals are small to medium sized animals. We do not travel with primates or big cats. You will be provided with a list of recommended animals for your party and we will do our best to honor requests.

All Zoo on Wheels Parties include:

- Animal Presentation
- Zoo themed activities
- Zoo themed party bag with a full priced zoo admission ticket for each guest
- Present for the birthday child
- Craft activity for each child to take home.

What do I need to get ready to have the party at my house?

- Temperature controlled, quiet and secure area to rest animals, while the staff is doing face painting and activities. Suggested places are a spare bedroom, laundry room or basement storage area.
- Table and 4 chairs for face painting and the animal show.

Household pets must be secured in a separate location during the entire time of the party. This is a veterinary and safety requirement to protect both your pets and our collection animals.