

## John Ball Zoo Summer Discovery 2008 FAQ's

### ☺ **What will my child do in a Summer Discovery class?**

Summer Discovery is a unique, fun, hands-on learning experience! Each class follows its particular theme and uses a variety of age-appropriate methods to stimulate the learning process, including behind-the-scenes zoo tours, games, stories, music, hands-on activities, craft activities and more. Parent letters/updates are sent at the beginning and end of the four-day week to keep you informed of the week's activities, and special projects are often brought home each day. Every class participates in a fabric painting project (you provide the fabric item, we provide the paint and fun) to capture a wonderful memory of their zoo class!

### ☺ **What's new this summer?**

We have eliminated the online registration convenience fee this year! Now you can register for all your classes online, without any additional charge. This summer also promises exciting new class titles, the continuation of our 2-day/extended day camp options, the expansion of the optional Overnight Extension to include all 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students, and more! It's going to be a great summer!!!

### ☺ **Which class is right for my child?**

We provide classes for ages 3 years to kids entering 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and most of the age groups have several themes/topics choices. Every class will be a fun and unique learning experience, but we suggest you keep the following in mind when preparing to enroll your child:

- 1) Students will be *strictly limited* to classes for their grade level. Three and four year olds must be that age by the first day of class.
- 2) Proof of age for ALL 3 year olds and 4-K classes MUST be provided within five days of online registration or included with printed registration, if your child is new to the program. On-line registrants may mail, fax or deliver proof of age documentation to the Zoo Administration Office. Please do not send original documents...copies only! Accepted documents can include birth certificates, passports, baptismal certificates, signed Doctor's immunization record, etc.
- 3) All students must be self-sufficient in the bathroom; diapers are not permitted.
- 4) Parents are expected to notify us in advance of any special needs or medical issues concerning their child. This includes allergies, medical conditions, medicines, etc. John Ball Zoo will make reasonable accommodation for students with special needs to attend class. *Any information given is kept strictly confidential.*
- 5) Being on time for arrival and pick-up is expected and appreciated. We are unable to provide child care before or after classes (this includes the mid-day break between morning and afternoon classes).
- 6) Classes meet **Monday – Thursday**. Two weeks features our new two-day schedule: July 14 & 15, July 17 & 18, August 4 & 5, and August 7 & 8. These two-day classes meet from 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM

### ☺ **What kind of supervision will my child have during class?**

We are committed to providing a safe and nurturing learning environment that features excellent supervision. The emotional and physical well being of each child is a responsibility we take seriously. Each class has their own room with a qualified instructor and at least one educational aide—and class sizes are strictly limited. You can expect your child to have a safe and fun learning experience!

### ☺ **Can you accommodate children with special needs?**

John Ball Zoo will make reasonable accommodation for students with special needs such as physical, academic, and social. Please note that the zoo does not employ specific individuals solely to handle special needs children, and some areas of our facility utilized in this program are not fully accessible. Please notify us of your child's special needs as far in advance as possible in order to best prepare a quality experience for your child. Children are expected to function well in a 2:16 teacher to student ratio (2:10 for 3 years olds). Any student who poses a safety hazard to themselves or others will be dismissed from the program.

### ☺ **Can I stay with my child during class?**

Due to space limitations and class design, it is best if parents/guardians separate from their child at the drop-off location. Most children, while perhaps experiencing a brief moment of anxiety, overcome their fears and participate more quickly without a parent present. If you think your child cannot remain in class without you after a few minutes, please consider waiting another year.

☺ **Do you provide snacks?**

A small snack and drink are provided each day for all 3 year old and 4-K classes. We ask that you do not send a snack with your child unless medical/special needs warrant. All classes take frequent drinking fountain & bathroom breaks, but students may also bring a water bottle to stay hydrated.

☺ **How can I get my child into the class s/he wants?**

Enrollment is limited and classes fill quickly! John Ball Zoo Society Members are allowed to register for classes two weeks before non-Members, and receive a discounted class fee. We suggest you register as early as possible to provide the best chance at securing a spot for your child. JBZ Society Member registration begins **March 31<sup>st</sup>**, non-Member registration begins **April 14<sup>th</sup>**. To register online and take advantage of early registration/member pricing, you must have a current zoo membership or purchase your membership by **March 12, 2008**.

☺ **Can I register my child for multiple classes?**

Due to the popularity of this program, we do limit each child to no more than 3 classes per summer. While we appreciate your enthusiasm and support for our program, we feel this allows more children to have a chance to participate.

☺ **How can I register more than one child for the same class/same week?**

Only a parent or legal guardian can register their child. Online you can simply select from those classes that are still available for a schedule that works for you. If you are using the printed registration, make sure all of the children's registrations are enclosed in the same envelope, and use the "special needs" area to specify your wishes for joint scheduling.

☺ **Can I get my child on a waiting list if a class is full?**

Yes. All classes maintain a waiting list, and while there is no guarantee an opening for your child will become available, we do encourage you to add your child's name. We will notify you as quickly as possible if such an opening occurs. There is no charge to sign up for any waiting list. If classes are full you can register for a wait list online, or check the wait list box on the printed form and we will add your child's name to it if all of their choices are unavailable.

☺ **When will my child's registration be confirmed?**

Confirmations will be processed beginning April 21. Please allow 2-3 weeks for processing. Confirmations are emailed to anyone who provided an email address with registration, otherwise it will be sent via USPS. Email confirmations returned as undeliverable will be sent via USPS.

☺ **What if I have to cancel or change a class for which my child is registered?**

In the event you must cancel, money will be refunded (less a \$10 processing fee) ONLY with at least 2 weeks notice. Changes in registration must be made in writing and faxed (616-336-3907), dropped off at the Zoo Administration Office during normal business hours (M-F, 8AM-5PM), or mailed to

John Ball Zoo  
Attn: Summer Discovery  
1300 West Fulton  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

☺ **Who do I contact if I experience any problems or have questions about registering on-line?**

Please call the accessKent Help Desk at (616) 632-6521 for concerns regarding the on-line registration process. The Help Desk is staffed Monday – Friday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm except holidays. You can also submit an email to them [[www.accesskent.com/OnlineServices/helpdesk.htm](http://www.accesskent.com/OnlineServices/helpdesk.htm)]. We value your patience and input as we continue to tweak and improve the online process! Our goal is to provide a clear, concise and overall user-friendly experience, while continuing our commitment to superior customer service.

☺ **Who do I contact if I have questions regarding the Summer Discovery program?**

You can call the Zoo's Administration Office at (616) 336-4301 during regular business hours (Monday-Friday, 8 am – 5 pm, except holidays).