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Santa Barbara Zoo Receives Official License As First Outdoor Preschool in California

(August 12, 2022) Santa Barbara, CA -- Over the past two years while so many parents navigated new challenges surrounding remote learning due to Covid, the [Santa Barbara Zoo](#) expanded its existing Outdoor Education programs, and launched [Early Explorers Preschool](#), an early education program for children age 3 to 5. After two successful years, the Santa Barbara Zoo is pleased to announce the Early Explorers program has received its official license from the State of California, and is the very first licensed outdoor preschool in California, providing one of the most unique educational experiences available.

"We are really proud of what we've created with our Early Explorers preschool, which offers a one-of-a-kind preschool experience for children that is rich with hands-on learning, provides kinder readiness, and most importantly is at the Zoo!" shared J.J. McLeod, Director of Education at the Santa Barbara Zoo. "Children are surrounded by wildlife that they get to learn about, visit regularly, and develop a natural appreciation for their conservation. Where else do you get to hear the roar of a lion while you're at school?"

This play-based, early education program focuses on teaching through rich experiences. Early Explorers will learn to have a deep appreciation for the natural world through gardening, outdoor play, and exploration. With a student-teacher ratio of 6:1, students are grouped together ages 3-5 to enhance the development of both academic and social skills. Zoo walks, sustainability and garden education, art, and Zoo Train rides are incorporated into the week. Participants must be a [Santa Barbara Zoo Member](#) to enroll in Early Explorers.

Registration is now open for preschool at the Zoo. T-shirt included with registration. This program is for children ages 3–5. Schedule options vary from full-time to part-time, and more. For full details and to register, [click here](#).

About the Santa Barbara Zoo

The Santa Barbara Zoo is open daily from 9 am for members and 9:30 am for general admission until 5 pm with select seasonal extended days open until 7 pm; general admission is \$19.95 for adults, \$14.95 for children 2-12, and free for children under 2. Parking is \$11. The Santa Barbara Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). AZA zoos are dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great visitor experience, and a better future for all living things. With its more than 200

accredited members, AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation and is the public's link to helping animals in their native habitats. Visit www.sbzoo.org.

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