



Visiting an animal exhibit

a checklist for child care services and schools

A visit to an animal exhibit such as a zoo, petting zoo, conservation park or commercial animal farm is an opportunity for children to learn about and interact with animals.

To ensure your visit is an enjoyable and educational experience it is important to be aware of the following:

- Animals can carry germs that are potentially harmful to human health. Whilst these germs might be harmful to humans, the animals themselves may not show any sign of disease.
- Zoonotic diseases are infections from animals. Zoonotic disease can be spread through either:
 - **direct contact with animals** such as touching and handling animals or by animal bites and scratches
 - **indirect contact with animals** such as contact with animal faeces, urine, saliva, blood, aerosol or birth products; or contact with objects contaminated with these materials such as cages, enclosures, handrails, aquariums, screens, doors.

It is important when visiting an animal exhibit that everyone attending (children and adults) adopts a set of behaviours that maintains health and wellbeing.

Whilst everyone should take care when visiting an animal exhibit, children under the age of 5 years, pregnant women and people who are immunosuppressed need to take extra care. This is because they are at greater risk of acquiring a zoonotic disease, or may experience more severe symptoms, or both.



3. Educate and facilitate

Prior to your visit to an animal exhibit:

- educate children about how they can stay healthy around animals; and
- brief all accompanying adults about their roles and responsibilities in maintaining the health and wellbeing of the children and themselves.

Demonstrate how to wash hands properly with soap and running water, and to dry using a single use disposable paper towel (or air dryer).

Emphasise the importance of washing and drying hands:

- after visiting an animal area regardless of whether animals were touched
- after touching an animal, their enclosures, their cages, their feed, their feed containers or their waste
- before eating or drinking, and after going to the toilet.

To maintain health and wellbeing in an animal contact area it is important to:

- behave in a calm, quiet and respectful manner so that animals don't bite or scratch
- avoid kissing or bringing animals up close to the face
- avoid putting fingers, hands or objects in, or onto the mouth, or to touch eyes, or the nose
- avoid sitting, lying or playing in animal bedding or where animals are housed
- avoid handling animal feed unless deemed appropriate to do so by both the animal exhibitor, teacher or care service provider (and to wash and dry hands after doing so)
- not consume an animal's feed or water
- never get in between an animal and their feed
- not eat or drink around animals (only eat or drink away from the animals or in a designated food service area).

Checklist (children)

No Yes

Children have been instructed:

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • how to wash and dry their hands properly | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • when to wash and dry their hands | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • how to behave around animals | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • not to eat or drink around animals. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Checklist (accompanying adults)

No Yes

Accompanying adults are aware of their roles and responsibilities to:

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| • supervise, assist and ensure children wash and dry their hands properly | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • supervise, assist and ensure children behave in a way that maintains health and wellbeing | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • model all behaviours expected of children. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Notes

4. Before leaving

- ensure a responsible adult accounts for all the required individual health management plans, treatment protocols and medications
- ensure a responsible adult checks that a first aid kit is operational and complete
- ensure existing cuts and abrasions on children and adults are covered with a water proof dressing (change with clean hands when soiled).

Checklist

	No	Yes
• a responsible adult is carrying all the required individual health management plans, treatment protocols and medications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• a responsible adult is carrying an operational and complete first aid kit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• existing cuts and abrasions are covered with a water proof dressing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes

5. If someone becomes unwell

If anyone becomes unwell after your visit please advise them, their parent, or guardian to visit their doctor, and to explain there has been recent contact with animals.

6. ENJOY your visit!

For more information

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