This document outlines strategies to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 exposure in the Lake Superior Zoo’s summer youth programs. It will be used in conjunction with the Lake Superior Zoo’s COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. Resources used to develop this plan include the CDC’s Suggestions for Youth and Summer Camps and the Minnesota Department of Health’s COVID-19 Prevention Guidance for Youth and Student Programs (version 1/7/21). This plan may evolve as these resources are updated. This plan will be available on the program registration page of our website so families are aware of expectations for program participation.

The Lake Superior Zoo will offer two summer youth programs in 2021. Zoo Camp will run Monday-Thursday from 9:00-4:00 for 9 weeks. Some weeks will be for ages 6-8 and some weeks will be for ages 9-12. Zoo Crew will run Monday-Friday from 9:00-4:00 for 10 weeks. Zoo Crew is for ages 13-17.

There will be five teachers working in the Zoo’s Education Department this summer. As of mid-March, four of those five teachers will have received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccination.

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I. Stay Home if Sick Policy & Health Checks
All sick youth and staff will be asked to stay home. To support this policy, we will:

- Communicate to parents/guardians the importance of daily health checks, monitoring symptoms, and keeping youth home if they are sick.
- Communicate to staff the importance of being vigilant for symptoms and staying in touch with management if or when they start to feel sick.
- Follow procedures to ensure youth and staff who come to the zoo sick or become sick while at the zoo are sent home as soon as possible (see Section VI).

Parents/guardians will be asked to check their child’s health prior to coming to the zoo each day using the Home Screening Tool for COVID-19 Symptoms. Staff will monitor their own health.

Youth and staff members who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or are a close contact with someone who potentially has COVID-19 should use the COVID-19 Decision Tree for People in Schools, Youth, and Child Care Programs to determine whether or not they should come to the zoo.

Youth or their family members who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions should consult with their medical provider to assess their risk and determine if they should participate in programs.
II. Social Distancing Strategies & Avoidance of Public Areas

A. Zoo Camp

- Each camp will consist of a small, consistent group of children and adults: two teachers and no more than 12 children. These will be the same two teachers and 12 children all week (Monday-Thursday). One other teacher (SW) will be available to assist the program when needed.
- Outdoor activities will be prioritized and campers will use the solar charging station as their outdoor classroom. Campers will have access to an indoor classroom on inclement weather days. The indoor classroom will not be used by any other groups of children this summer.
- Social distancing will be practiced whenever possible. For example:
  - Chairs will be set up to allow at least a 3-foot radius around each child.
  - Children will sit at least 6 feet apart while eating.
  - Games will be modified to minimize contact (e.g. non-contact tag).
  - While exploring the zoo, campers will follow signage that encourages social distancing (e.g. one-way traffic flow patterns, marks on the ground that demonstrate appropriate spacing).
- Campers will avoid congested public areas.
  - To avoid coming into contact with very many other people, campers will visit exhibits between 9:00-10:00, before the zoo opens to the public at 10:00.
  - Once the zoo opens, activities will be held in outdoor areas where zoo visitors are unlikely to approach campers (e.g. grassy hillsides, solar charging station).
- Extra precautions will be taken in public areas.
  - Playgrounds, picnic tables, and benches will be avoided.
  - Teachers will carry hand sanitizer in order to clean the hands of children who touch windows, railings, etc. This will be done in a friendly and supportive way so children don’t feel punished or guilty for touching things.
  - The drinking fountain is taped off to discourage use. Campers will be asked to bring a water bottle that teachers can refill for them in the classroom sink.
  - Children will be supervised when using public restrooms to ensure they are the only ones in the restrooms and they wash their hands afterwards.

B. Zoo Crew

- Each day, Zoo Crew will consist of one teacher and no more than six teens. One other teacher (MM) will be available to assist the program when needed.
- Zoo Crew will use the patio next to the main building as their outdoor classroom.
- A primary role of Zoo Crew is to educate visitors. Safe practices will include:
  - Wearing a mask at all times.
  - Ensuring at least 6 feet of distance between the teen and visitors using marks on the ground or roped off teaching areas.
  - Not allowing visitors to touch any animals or biofacts.

III. Protective Equipment

- The Lake Superior Zoo’s COVID-19 Preparedness Plan requires staff to wear face coverings at all times, both indoors and outdoors.
- Campers and Zoo Crew will be required to wear face coverings indoors, per Executive Order 20-81. Youth will be allowed to temporarily remove face coverings in certain circumstances outdoors, provided that social distancing is maintained, such as while eating or drinking.
If face covering rules are relaxed by the Governor or MDH this summer, for the protection of the animals, the zoo will still require the following protective equipment:
- Youth will wear masks during animal encounters, even if they take place outside.
- Zoo Crew and teachers will wear masks and gloves while handling animals and speaking to campers or visitors.
- Any youth preparing an animal’s diet must wear a mask and gloves.
- Gloves will be provided by the zoo. Disposable face masks will be available for youth who need them.

IV. Health Etiquette
- Youth will have adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer, tissues, and no-touch trash cans.
- Teachers and youth will engage in hand hygiene at the following times:
  - Arrival at the zoo
  - Before and after eating
  - After using the toilet
  - After coming in contact with bodily fluid (e.g. sneezing, coughing)
  - Upon entering the indoor classroom
  - Before and after touching an animal or biofact (e.g. pelt, antler)
  - After picking up garbage or cleaning up animal waste
- Hand hygiene involves washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If hands are not visibly dirty, or if soap and water are not readily available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60 percent alcohol will be used.
- Teachers may need to teach children how to wash their hands using MDH guidelines: [https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/handhygiene/curricula/index.html](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/handhygiene/curricula/index.html)
- Teachers may assist children with handwashing. After assisting children with handwashing, teachers should also wash their hands.
- Youth will be discouraged from sharing water bottles or food items.
- Teachers will carry hand sanitizer and tissues with them in a backpack at all times.

V. Cleaning & Disinfecting
Routine cleaning and disinfecting will be key to maintaining a safe program environment.
- The zoo uses products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19.
- High-touch surfaces such as door handles, light switches, tables, and chairs will be cleaned and disinfected by teachers daily.
- Whenever an item is deemed soiled, it will be placed in a designated bin for teachers to clean at the end of the day. If the item is needed immediately, it can be washed according to CDC guidelines (e.g. with soap and water).
- At the end of each week, program supplies and materials will be cleaned and disinfected.
- Custodial staff may enter the classroom to clean when camp is not in session (Friday-Sunday).
VI. Response to Possible Covid Cases

- In the event that a youth, staff member, or volunteer tests positive for COVID-19, the Lake Superior Zoo will:
  - Notify MDH through the COVID-19 Information Submission Form for K-12 Schools, Childcare, or Youth Camps and follow their direction: https://redcap.health.state.mn.us/redcap/surveys/?s=KKWLDH3ARC.
  - Notify parents/guardians, staff, and volunteers via email if after hours, or by phone if during operating hours.
  - Conduct a contact tracing investigation and quarantine all employees who have been in CDC-defined close contact with the positive case.
  - Communicate to families any necessary information as soon as possible to provide time to plan.

- If a youth or anyone in a youth’s family tests positive for COVID-19, the parent/guardian must communicate immediately with zoo staff by contacting Sarah Wilcox, Director of Education, at 218-730-4500 x214 or swilcox@lszoo.org.

- Confidentiality will be honored when communicating about a case or outbreak.

- If a youth starts to feel sick during a program:
  - They will be isolated by sitting in an area nearby with a teacher. The youth and teacher will be visible or in earshot of the rest of the group.
  - A teacher will call the camper’s parent/guardian to come pick them up.
  - A teacher will walk the camper to the pick-up location.

- If a teacher feels sick during a program:
  - Backup teachers are available and will take over so the teacher can immediately go home.
  - The teacher will get tested for COVID-19 and quarantine for the period of time required by MDH and CDC guidelines.

VII. Drop Off & Pick Up Procedures

Adults and youth will follow these procedures for a safe drop off and pick up. All adults and youth should be wearing a mask during drop off and pick up.

- Drop off will be between 8:50-9:10 a.m. each day outside of Gate #4. Generally, no staff or visitors use this gate before 10:00 a.m.

A. Zoo Camp
  - Vehicles will be asked to pull up to Gate #4 at the far end of the parking lot.
  - The parent/guardian and camper may exit their vehicle and approach the teacher standing just outside the gate.
  - The teacher will verbally confirm with the parent/guardian that a health screening was conducted at home. If it was not, it will be conducted at this time using the Home Screening Tool for COVID-19 Symptoms.
  - The teacher will check the camper in. The parent/guardian will not need to touch the clipboard or sign-in sheet.
  - The camper will be asked to walk to the other teacher standing just inside the gate, and sanitize their hands upon arriving.

B. Zoo Crew
  - Zoo Crew teens will enter the zoo using Gate #4.
  - Teens will meet their teacher on the patio outside the Main Building.
  - The teacher will verbally confirm with the teen that a health screening was conducted at home. If it was not, it will be conducted at this time using the Home Screening Tool for COVID-19 Symptoms.
  - Teens will sanitize their hands upon arrival.
• Pick up will be at 12:00 and 4:00 p.m. outside of Gate #4. The zoo may be allowing visitors to enter through this gate during these times.
  o Teachers will wait with youth in the grassy area on other side of the fence.
  o Zoo Crew and campers should sit in different areas.
  o Vehicles will be asked to park in spaces near Gate #4. Adults should remain in vehicles.
  o When no visitors are using the gate, a teacher will walk each child under age 13 to their car one at a time. Parents/guardians should make sure their children can recognize their vehicles (or they can roll down their window and wave).
  o Please be patient while camp is being dismissed.

VIII. Program Modifications
While teachers are confident that this summer’s programs will be as fun and educational as ever, and will make every effort to ensure youth are having a great time, parents/guardians should explain to their children that camp might be a little different this summer. Besides the safety procedures outlined above, some camp activities will have to be modified to follow MDH guidelines. These will include the following:
• Whenever possible, activities will be held outdoors.
• Snacks and meals will be eaten outdoors.
• Each camper will have their own space where they keep their belongings and an assigned table/chair where they sit each day.
• Supplies will not be shared between campers. Each camper will have their own caddy of supplies including pencils, crayons, glue stick, and scissors. Caddy items will be disinfected at the end of each week. Items in the caddy that are not easily disinfected (e.g. crayons) will be send home with campers at the end of the week.
• Campers will be required to sanitize their hands before and after touching any animals or biofacts.
• Stuffed animals will not be used during camp due to children’s desire to share them and the difficulty of cleaning them.
• Campers should not bring any toys with them to the zoo.
• Campers may not be able to enter behind-the-scenes areas like animal holdings or kitchens. Activities like preparing animal diets or enrichments will take place outside instead.
• If camp needs to be held inside the classroom due to inclement weather, campers will be seated in chairs at least six feet apart, rather than on the floor.
• Games and hands-on activities will be modified to reduce contact between children.