



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fort Wayne Zoo Introduces Sensory-Friendly Sundays at part of “Zoo for All” Initiative

Fort Wayne IN – **The Fort Wayne Zoo is proud to introduce “Sensory-Friendly Sundays” on the first Sunday of each month starting May 3, 2026.** These days are designed to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment while supporting guests who may benefit from a less stimulating environment. Sensory-Friendly Sundays will run through October 4 for the Zoo’s regular season.

On these designated Sundays, the Zoo will offer a modified atmosphere, including no music, reduced noise levels on rides, dimmer lights, and more. **These accommodations will extend into our Glo Wild event on Sunday, May 3, when guests will be able to experience the magic of the lantern festival in a calmer environment with no music, reduced lantern movement, and the elimination of flashing lights wherever possible.**

“Creating Sensory-Friendly Sundays is an important step in our commitment to be a Zoo for All,” says Amy Lazoff, Vice President of Mission Impact. “By intentionally reducing barriers to participation, we’re ensuring that children and adults of all abilities can experience the joy, wonder, and connection that the Zoo offers in a way that feels comfortable and welcoming to them.”

While the Zoo has made thoughtful adjustments to create a more sensory-friendly environment, we recognize that sensory needs can vary widely from guest to guest and individual triggers, including smells, may still be present. Guests with questions or specific needs are encouraged to visit fwzoo.com/accessibility or contact our team at 260-427-6800 or info@fwzoo.com to discuss their needs.

In addition to Sensory-Friendly Sundays, Fort Wayne Zoo is committed to making sure each guest has an unforgettable, enjoyable visit to the Zoo no matter what day they visit. Steps taken include:

- **The Fort Wayne Zoo is a certified sensory inclusive facility registered with KultureCity.** Guests are welcome to utilize a free sensory bag, available at no charge in the Guest Service building. This bag includes headphones, fidget toys, a communications board, and more.
- **The Fort Wayne Zoo has earned the Certified Autism Center (CAC) designation, which is awarded by the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES).** This certification recognizes organizations that have completed an autism-specific training and certification programs through IBCCES to enhance their services and equip staff with knowledge of the best skills and resources to assist autistic and sensory-sensitive individuals.
 - Guests can view and download a copy of our **Sensory Guides** on our accessibility page, under the Certified Autism Center section, or by clicking [here](#).

- Year-round staff members are trained to work with individuals with may have a sensory need.
- Guests will notice **Quiet Areas** and **Headphone Zones** labeled throughout the Zoo.

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About the Fort Wayne Zoo: The Fort Wayne Zoo is northeast Indiana's largest tourist attraction, hosting more than 650,000 guests annually. The Zoo is home to Red Panda Ridge named #6 in USA Today 10Best Zoo Exhibits for 2024. In 2021, the Zoo was voted Visit Indiana's "Summer Bucket List Top Attraction" and is consistently named one of the nation's Top Ten Zoos for Kids by national media outlets.

The Zoo is a conservation leader, investing annually in local, regional, and international efforts to protect wildlife and their habitats. The Zoo cares for more than 1,500 animals and participates in 41 cooperative species survival plan programs and 42 taxon advisory groups, which are critical to supporting threatened species. As a self-supporting facility, the Fort Wayne Zoo receives no tax dollars for daily operations, unlike most accredited zoos where those dollars fund approximately 40% of their annual operating budgets. The Zoo's mission is made possible thanks to support derived from admissions, memberships, donations, group picnics, special ticketed events, and other visitation-related activities.