

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Incident occurs at Brevard Zoo

MELBOURNE, Fla., January 1, 2019 — Early this afternoon, during a Rhino Encounter, a hands-on, educational experience with Brevard Zoo’s white rhinoceroses, a young guest entered the rhinoceros yard and was injured. The family was transported to a local hospital by ambulance. The condition of the child is unknown at this time.

During the encounter, participants and the rhinoceroses are separated by a series of steel poles. According to witnesses, the child stumbled and fell in between two of the poles and at this point, the snout of at least one of rhinoceroses made contact with the child. The Zoo has offered this experience daily without incident since 2009.

“Our number one concern is the safety and welfare of our guests and our hearts go out to the family,” said Keith Winsten, the Zoo’s executive director. “Safety has always been of paramount importance to us and we are suspending these encounters until we have thoroughly reviewed our processes and procedures to ensure this cannot happen again.”

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Brevard Zoo is home to more than 900 animals representing 195 species from all over the world. As a not-for-profit organization, it is a leader in the fields of animal wellness, education and conservation. More information is available at www.brevardzoo.org.

Treetop Trek features five aerial obstacle courses that whisk guests above parts of the Zoo and through lush Florida landscapes. More information is available at www.treetoptrek.com.