Children trained to extend justice, kindness, and mercy to animals become more just, kind, and considerate in their relations with each other. Character training along these lines in youth will result in men and women of broader sympathies, more humane, more law-abiding—in every respect more valuable citizens.

Humane education is teaching in the schools and colleges of the nations the principles of justice, goodwill, and humanity toward all life. The cultivation of the spirit of kindness to animals is but the starting point towards that larger humanity which includes one’s fellow of every race and clime. A generation of people trained in these principles will solve their international difficulties as neighbors and not as enemies.

—From the 1933 National PTA Congress

With this statement, made fifty years ago, the national PTA strongly endorsed the inclusion of humane education in our nation’s schools. Today, PTAs will serve as key organizations with which teachers and humane society educators can work collaboratively. New programs can be developed or established programs can be enhanced when a community of dedicated people is involved in them. After all, we all can see “investment in the outcome—compassionate, compassionate, loving people. There’s no better time than the present—the fiftieth anniversary of the PTA’s support of humane education—to strengthen the human character, humane values, and compassion in our youth.
Decisions. We make them all the time. In fact, some experts say that even when we're not making decisions, we're making the decision not to decide! Decision-making, and its importance as a skill, is being studied and taught more at this time than ever before. Tufts University now has a Center for the Study of Decision-Making, in which graduate and undergraduate students take courses to improve their abilities to make satisfying, informed choices. There are books about decision-making and community workshops that focus on decision-making skills. In keeping with this trend, educators identified language skills and decision-making skills as the two most important skill areas to emphasize in kindergarten through twelfth grade. These educators were surveyed by members of the Curriculum Committee and the Research Committee of the National Council for the Social Studies.

We all need food, water, shelter, clothing, love. But do we all need relationships with others? Do we all need companionship? We frequently fail to carefully consider the demands and requirements of pet ownership; the characteristics of a particular pet; and their own needs, values, likes, and dislikes. All these factors affect the decision-making process and are ones humane educators can address when teaching responsible pet ownership. The following mini unit provides activities for integrating this important topic into the teaching of responsible decision-making. While the activities are essentially designed for students in the upper elementary grades and older, they can be adapted for younger students. You may want each child to keep a notebook that can serve as a handy record of information discovered and learned.

Decision-Making — What Is It?

If we kept an accurate record of all the decisions we make during one day, we might be left reeling. Usually, the decisions we remember making are the ones that are the most arduous. But regardless of whether our decisions are painstaking or spontaneous, responsible decisions — ones that are satisfying to us and are considerate of others — are generally those based on a consideration of these factors:

- Our Values — These are qualities, principles, standards, etc. that we cherish, or hold in high esteem. Values may be flexible or inflexible. What we value affects the decisions we reach, whether we’re aware of our values or not. Values such as loyalty, independence, and companionship may come into play when making decisions about pet ownership.
- Our Needs — These are those things we require; they may be tangible or intangible. We all need food, water, shelter, clothing, love. But do we all need relationships with others? Do we all need pets? We frequently confuse wants with needs.
- External Factors — These are the needs, interests, demands, and requirements of others. In regard to pet selection, external factors might include the values, needs, and preferences of other family members; applicable rules and laws; and the needs of the animals being considered as pets.
- Irresponsible decisions, including those involving pets, are characterized by an incomplete assessment of one or more of the above factors. If I’m ignorant of local pet-related laws and the needs of my family, unschooled in the variety and needs of animals, and unaware of my own preferences, needs, and values, I am likely to blunder when it comes to deciding whether to have a pet or which pet to choose.

Decisions, Decisions, Decisions

Because children are usually under the supervision of an adult, they generally underestimate the number of decisions they make. A simple way to introduce the topic of responsible decision-making is to ask students to keep a one-day log that records all the decisions they’ve made in that time period. All decisions — what clothes to wear, whether to go to school, whether to feed the dog or clean the cat’s litter box, whether to write in the log — count in this activity. Your goals are simply to raise the students’ awareness of the frequency with which they make
decisions and to begin generating material for class discussion. When the one-day logs are complete, have your students share their lists while you record the decisions on the chalkboard. Select certain decisions, especially pet-related ones, and ask the students why they decided the way they did. As students give reasons for their decisions, categorize them according to the factors discussed above (values, needs, likes/dislikes, external factors). Discuss with your students the factors of the decision-making process identified earlier in this article. Emphasize that people who are responsible decision makers carefully consider these factors. To help clarify these terms, you may need to select other examples of the students’ decisions and have students categorize the reasons for the decisions made. Once students have an understanding of the factors involved in effective decision-making, they can explore each as it relates to pet ownership.

Focus on Values

Freely, the standards, qualities, and principles that people cherish are reflected in their reasons for giving up their pets. To assist your students in seeing the connection between values and pet ownership, develop and distribute a handout titled “Reasons Why I Gave Up My Pet” that lists reasons people give for abandoning pets. The list can be expanded by material you have heard at many animal shelters include the following: “I just bought new furniture, and I don’t want the cat to ruin it.” “I’m tired of walking the dog.” “The cat smells.” “The dog jumps on people.” “My family goes away on weekends and doesn’t want to spend any more money boarding the dog.” (If you have difficulty generating a list, call your local animal shelter for help.)

Pair students and ask them to review the definition of values and to identify which values affected each decision to give up the pet. Each student pair should try to identify at least one value in every example. List the students’ ideas on the chalkboard. To further explore the role of values, ask your students who own pets to share what they cherish most about owning a pet and what they think their family members cherish most about owning a pet. Ask your students to begin a “My Pet” list in their notebooks. This list should include values that may or may not be affected by pet ownership. To help your students, you may want to provide your class with a sample list that includes popularity, achievement, self-esteem, personal appearance, the opinions of others, freedom, money. Emphasize that the “My Pet” lists may be added to at any time. These will be used later in discussing responsible pet ownership.

**External Factors Affect Decision-Making—Needs of Pets and the Community**

Begin the discussion of responsible decision-making and pet selection by having students brainstorm types of animals that are appropriate to keep as pets. These might include dogs; cats; guinea pigs; gerbils; hamsters; domestic rats; mice, and rabbits; horses; ponies; and goats. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a pet. Provide the groups with books, brochures, and news clippings that inform students about the needs of the pet—including health care, food, licensing, and needed equipment—and the local laws that pertain to each animal. You may want to invite a veterinarian, animal control officer, and/or humane society educator to address the class on these issues. When enough has been learned about the pets, have each group develop and illustrate a “Needs of the Proposed Pet” chart. Display these charts and discuss their contents by asking the class to answer these questions:

1. Which pet is the cheapest pet to own?
2. Which pet is the most expensive pet to own?
3. Which pet needs the most care and attention?
4. Which pet needs the most room? the most food?
5. If your best friend lived in a big city and wanted a pet, what would you need to know about your friend before recommending a pet to him or her?
6. If you knew your friend had a lot of money, very little room, and wanted a pet as a companion, which pet would you recommend?
7. If you knew your unmar.. inflated travel costs of owning a pet, what would you recommend?

10. Take another look at the Reasons Why I Gave Up My Pet handout. What mismatched occurred and what were the consequences?

Have the students share their answers. Then help students pinpoint the similarities and differences in needs and preferences people have. A helpful follow-up activity is to have volunteers from the class interview people who own different types of pets and people who do not own pets. Interviewers should ask about the reasons for the decisions to own or not own a pet and the positive and negative aspects of pet ownership. Have the interviewers present their findings. Assist the class in identifying the factors involved in these relationships between owners and pets.

**Summing Up**

Being a responsible pet owner means knowing yourself and knowing your pet. This mini unit touches on the important aspect of decision-making as it relates to responsible pet ownership. There are a number of follow-up activities you can use to reinforce your students’ learning. These include:

- Showing films that depict children and families deciding about pets. The March 1983 issue of HUMANE EDUCATION contained reviews of such movies. A reprint of the entire review is available for 50 cents from NAHAE.
- Having your students develop scenarios in which students role-play family members deciding whether to have a pet or which kind of pet to have. The needs, preferences, etc. of family members are important external factors to be considered, and such role-playing gives students practice in responding to these factors. Or you can have your students role-play various pets trying to persuade a person to adopt them. “The Play’s the Thing”, which appeared in the March 1983 issue of HUMANE EDUCATION, covers the basics of role-playing. Reprints are available from NAHAE for 50 cents.
- Your students can monitor the variety of subtle and direct messages about relationships between people and pets that are depicted in television and film shows. Distribute samples of magazine ads that show people and pets and ask your students to write the “untold” story that applies to the ads. How are the realities of pet ownership different from the way it’s depicted in advertising?

Responsible pet owners are good citizens, wise “shoppers,” self-aware, and able decision-makers. Your guidance and instruction can help that happen.

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**Reference**

**FLASH!**

**Good News About Kind News!**

Please welcome Kind News—the new publication from The Humane Society of the United States. Consider Kind News an economical, diminutive but valuable new successor to the former youth publication of The HSUS. And, although Kind magazine had an attractive format and a loyal readership, it was not successful in reaching large numbers of children. So after much deliberation on ways in which we might reach more children and better meet the needs of humane educators, we decided to replace Kind magazine with Kind News.

What's special about Kind News?

First, although Kind News has been designed for children, it will be a useful tool for you. In fact, the success of Kind News will substantially depend on adults. There will be no individual subscriptions to Kind News. Instead, adults can bring Kind News to children by subscribing for them. Teachers, humane society educators, Scout leaders, and other concerned adults can purchase a one-year subscription for a group and receive a packet of thirty-five copies of one level of the newspaper four times during the year. From the outset, the educator's role will be crucial.

Second, Kind News will be very newsy. Every issue of this four-page tabloid will be based on an animal-related theme and will be full of current events, updates, stories, projects, and more that are of interest to children. Do you know that children in grades 1 through 6 is for children in grades 4 through 6. The theme of both editions will be the same. What's in store for you and the readers of Kind News?

What's in store for you and the readers of Kind News?

Children in grades 1 through 3; Kind News II is for children in grades 4 through 6. The theme of both editions will be the same.

**Pleasant and Painless.**

Like HUMANE EDUCATION, Kind News will be published quarterly in the months of September, December, March, and June. To assist you in your humane education activities, feature article in HUMANE EDUCATION will relate directly to the theme of Kind News. This article, called the Kind News Feature, will provide background information and teaching activities that enhance the use of Kind News in the classroom. Kind News will, in turn, provide hands-on material for your students that support these lessons. For those HUMANE EDUCATION readers who do not subscribe to Kind News, the feature article will still provide useful teaching strategies. Either way, ready-made mini units will be yours for the teaching.

Each issue of Kind News will contain an activity or a project that encourages children to act in humane ways toward animals and/or respond to the inhumane treatment of animals. You can expand on these activities and use them as special group projects.

The Freebie section will be a regular feature in Kind News and will invite children to increase their learning about animals by weighing in on co-op materials. Children will be instructed to contact NAAHE or another specified organization to obtain their freebies. This activity will give children an opportunity to practice their writing skills.

Kind News will be a communication vehicle for children. It's their newspaper. So we want them to respond to what they read. Every issue of Kind News will contain either a Question section in which we print children's responses to a specific question or a Letters section in which we print selected letters we receive from our readers. These sections will be forums in which children can express their opinions, concerns, and ideas.

With your guidance, children can help create Kind News. If your students are involved in an animal-related activity, we want to know about it. Share their achievements with us for possible use in Kind News.

Other sections that will appear in Kind News include puzzles; reviews of books, movies, or television programs; and columns written by guest writers.

**How can you use Kind News?**

The news items contained in Kind News will focus on people and animals and will likely prompt response—concern, delight, surprise, opinion—from your students. News items will be from a variety of locales and will provide excellent starting points for class discussion and action on behalf of animals. Is your community's experience with stray animals or the elderly children and pets similar to that reported in Kind News? Your students can investigate to find out.

Classroom subjects come alive when they're tied to current events. You can use Kind News to augment the classroom materials you use to teach science, social studies, language arts, careers, etc.

Use Kind News as a teaching vehicle for slow learners. You can choose the appropriate level for your students and use Kind News to assess reading comprehension. Like all newspapers, Kind News will contain a variety of short articles.

If you are a humane society educator, you can subscribe to Kind News and distribute the issues to children with whom you're working. If you need more than thirty-five copies of Kind News or copies of both levels, you can purchase additional subscriptions (each entitled you to quarterly packets of thirty-five newspapers). There's a place on every issue for you to stamp your organization's name and affix a mailing label if you want to mail the newspaper to members of your youth division or kindness club. Kind News will be a useful tool for your children's clubs, Scout troops, or any activity-oriented youth group. Remember? Kind News is educational and fun.

**In Short, Not Too Late.**

We invite you to subscribe to Kind News for your students today. If you are a NAAHE member, a one-year subscription costs $10. If you are not a NAAHE member, a one-year subscription costs $20. A one-year subscription includes quarterly packets containing thirty-five copies of either Kind News I (for grades 1 through 3) or Kind News II (for grades 4 through 6). If you wish to subscribe to Kind News but need more than thirty-five copies, add $5 so that you may receive an extra packet of thirty-five copies each quarter. This extra-packet subscription may be for either Kind News I or Kind News II.

You may order as many extra packets as you need. If we've sparked your interest and you have questions, please contact us at the following address: Kind News, Box 362, East Haddam, CT 06423.

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**We know a place where stories and plays, people and places, issues and ideas reside.**

**And the HUMANE EDUCATION Index will help you find them.**

NAAHE has combined past indexes with listings from 1982 to provide you with a complete guide to the contents of HUMANE EDUCATION magazine from 1977 through 1982.

To order, send $3 to HUMANE EDUCATION/NAAHE Box 362 East Haddam, CT 06423.
Children in Hawaii represent many cultures. Frequently, they and their families have emigrated from countries where animals are held in low esteem. For these children, the concept of humaneness is strange and unfamiliar. Other children living in Hawaii come from military families. These families are transferred often, causing serious pet abandonment problems. It’s within this milieu that Cynthia (Cindy) Crawford, NAAHE’s 1983 Humane Education Teacher of the Year, instructs children and their families about responsible pet ownership and the importance of respecting Hawaii’s wildlife and provides a role model of caring and concern.

Cindy teaches kindergarten at the Moanalua Elementary School in Honolulu, Hawaii, where all the students know her as “the teacher who cares about animals.” Her involvement in animal welfare began about ten years ago when she adopted a puppy from the Hawaiian Humane Society. Soon after adopting Molly, Cindy began working with Cathy Goeggel, the Humane Education Specialist at the society who nominated Cindy for the Teacher of the Year Award. Cindy’s involvement in animal welfare and humane education.

In her daily work with children—in the classroom, at recess, on field trips—Cindy creates opportunities to build on their interest in and concern for animals. As a result, she is recognized as the expert on animal welfare and as a valuable source of support and instruction at Moanalua Elementary School. Cindy’s many and varied humane education activities are highlighted by her teaching assistant, Molly, who visits Cindy’s kindergartners several times each year. Through their interactions with Molly, the children see the importance of health care, grooming, and kindness in relationships with pet animals. By the time their pet-related education culminates in a field trip to the Hawaiian Humane Society, the kindergartners are knowledgeable and prepared for their visit.

In addition to the formal humane education activities she facilitates in her own class, Cindy offers assistance to other classes studying animal-related topics. Cindy also helps other classes prepare special projects. She serves as a resource person, providing helpful teaching materials to students and discussing with them aspects of animal protection. In response to her efforts, sixth graders engaged in letter-writing campaigns urging their congressmen’s support of the Research Modernization Act and requesting the Philippine ambassador to address the animal cruelty problems in his country.

Cindy, who understands the importance of fully integrating humane education into the school curriculum, also directs her educational activities toward her colleagues at Moanalua Elementary School. She has developed resource material covering animal concerns and has underwritten the cost of reproducing this material so that it can be disseminated among the faculty.

Through her work as an educator and as a volunteer at the Hawaiian Humane Society, Cindy reaches children, teachers, parents, and others, and raises their awareness about animal welfare issues. In regard to Cindy’s work, Cathy Goeggel writes, “Humane education is most definitely an elemental ethical concept. It embodies the excitement of the human spirit to extend the protective mantle of care and respect outside of ourselves…. What Cindy provides for her children is a model of humane education.”

Now when the schoolchildren observe the geckos, skinks, buffos, and the familiar tide pool animals, or when they interact with pets, they do so with a better appreciation and respect for these creatures. In Hawaiian, mahalo means “thank you.”

Mahalo for your teaching efforts, Cindy Crawford, and congratulations on being chosen NAAHE’s 1983 Humane Education Teacher of the Year.

The guide contains 285 lesson plans organized by traditional subject areas, implementation strategies, a references and resources section, and a list of educational aids. The guide provides ideas for teaching English, new games, values training, and outdoor/environmental education activities. Written in an enjoyable style, Humanizing Environmental Education incorporates some of the best features found in humanistic education, new games, values training, and outdoor/environmental education activities.

The guide contains 285 lesson plans that will be suitable for use with students in junior high school and older. A helpful teacher's guide, written by Ann Airwood, accompanies For All That Lives and lists discussion questions and learning objectives. For All That Lives costs $28.75 (including shipping and handling) and may be ordered from Lyricum Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 1018, Laguna Beach, CA 92652.

ZOO KEEPER'S BEGINNINGS DESCRIBED IN BOOK

"They say that a child who aspires to be an engine driver rarely grows up to fill that role in life. If this is so, then I am an exceptionally lucky person, for at the age of two I made up my mind—that I wanted to do was study animals. Nothing else interested me."

So begins Gerald Durrell's entertaining book, A Bevy of Beasts, which describes his apprenticeship as a zoo keeper at England's Whipsnade Zoo. Readers are provided vivid descriptions of the various animals and the zoo keepers with whom Durrell worked as a young man.

The love Durrell has for his vocation is apparent in his writing. However, he questions the British public's attitude to their captive animals and dismisses too casually the concerns of animal lovers who advocate large, natural environments. He says that "A Bevy of Beasts" with a description of his commitment to helping endangered species. The keepers of beasts is suitable for adults and children in junior and senior high school and costs $8.95. Order from the Wildlife Preservation Trust International, Inc., 34th Street and Girard Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

Also available from the Wildlife Preservation Trust International is the Gerald Durrell Coloring Book. Warm and humorous illustrations of twenty wildlife animals comprise the coloring book. Order the Gerald Durrell Coloring Book by sending $2 to the above address. All orders are shipped United Parcel Service on a ten or more, there is a 40 percent discount.
service, and categorization skills and require students to discuss, read, and write about the outdoors. The activities are designed to be carried out on or near the school grounds during the fall, winter, and spring. Unfortunately, some of the suggested activities have children collecting plant and insect specimens. However, All Outdoors To Read is a useful source of ideas for educators. Helpful bibliographies are also included. To order, send $9.95 to Starvv Press, 4113 Oak Orchard Road, Albany, NY 14411.

COLOURING SHEETS TEACH RESPONSIBLE PET CARE

Marge Wright, humane educator at the Arizona Humane Society, 9228 No. 13th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85021, reports that she is now using newly developed colouring sheets that teach responsible pet care. The sheets are developed by Pat Koepp, an artist and elementary school teacher who donated her time and talents to the society during her summer vacation.

The packet is called ‘Be Kind to Animals’ and contains cartoon style illustrations that teach aspects of responsible pet care. The illustrations are warmly drawn and large enough so that even the youngest child can easily color them. For a complimentary set of the ‘Be Kind to Animals’ colouring sheets, send a large, self-addressed, stamped envelope to Starrview Press, 4133 West 2100 Road, Albion, NY 14411.

FEELINGS AWARD ESTABLISHED

Barbara J. Miller, project coordinator of the Education Center at the Turtle Back Zoo in New Jersey, announces she has established a Feelings Award to be given each year to the winner of the zoo’s poetry contest. The child who submits a poem that best expresses his/her feelings for animals will receive the award. Barbara decided to create the award after reading an entry in this year’s poetry contest. Second-grader Allison Radeck’s poem titled “First Day,” described her love for Feelings, the zoo’s late Siberian tiger. Barbara found the poem so moving that she created and named the award in honor of the tiger. Through the award, Barbara wants to keep the memory of Feelings alive and to encourage children to express their concern for animals. For more information, contact Barbara at the Turtle Back Zoo, 560 Northfield Avenue, West Orange, NJ 07052.

The Place: 1983 HSUS Annual Conference Americana Hotel Fort Worth, Texas

The Time: October 12-15, 1983

Featuring: National experts in child development discussing the development of empathy in children

Do your ideas and materials belong in Happenings? If they do, send them to us. Send sample materials, information, and, when available, black-and-white photographs to Happenings, HUMANE EDUCATION, Box 302, East Haddam, CT 06423.

Position Opening October 1983: Humane Education Director to conduct tours, presentations, workshops; prepare educational materials, press releases, teachers’ newsletter, displays; and maintain library. $16,900-$24,900. Contact Richard F. Amtiy, Department of Animal Control, 4500 West Ox Road, Fairfax, VA 22030.

About the art/... Beverly Armstrong is an artist/humane educator whose work often appears in HUMANE EDUCATION. Beverly lives with her own menagerie of pets in Long Beach, California.

Our Neighbors’ Pets

by Lorraine P. Holden and Beverly Armstrong

When you and your students look at the Copy Master mini poster on the next two pages, you’ll find a scene that might have come off the streets of your own community. You can use the Our Neighbors’ Pets Copy Master to see how much or how little your students know about the responsibilities of pet ownership. We’ve loaded the poster with examples of responsible and irresponsible pet ownership. Can your students find them all? After each child has had an opportunity to identify what’s wrong and right in this picture, have students share their discoveries. We’ve provided an answer key to help you with this. When the class discussion is complete, invite your students to color their copies of the poster and display them in class or at home.

1. A door or window carelessly left open is an invitation to a pet to go outdoors unattended. Pets may then be lost or injured.

2. Free-roaming dogs are sometimes dangerous to pedestrians. Who would want to be this mail carrier? But it’s not the dog’s fault; it’s the fault of an irresponsible pet owner.

3. Free-roaming pets are often a nuisance to wildlife, disrupting nests or even killing animals.

4. Free kittens! It doesn’t look as though this pet owner is very successful at even giving away these animals. Spaying or neutering would have avoided this problem. If the kittens are adopted, it may not be by responsible and loving people.

5. Here we see three pets that are well cared for. One young pet owner is exercising her cat using a harness and leash. Another pet owner is grooming her cat. And the dog is free to exercise in a fenced yard where there are shade, water, toys, and companionship.

6. This stray dog probably once had an owner. Now the animal suffers from a lack of food and risks being injured.

7. Cats may like to climb, but this cat isn’t able to get down again. It’s stranded! It would be much safer indoors.

8. Oops! This free-roaming cat is making a mess. Unfortunately, the man in the hammock is unaware of the problem—or unconcerned.

9. Responsible pet owners usually don’t lose their pets. However, when an accident does occur and a pet becomes lost, posting “Lost Pet” signs in the neighborhood is one effective way to recover the animal. Notice the collar, the leash, and the pet being worn by the dog. This dog’s owner has taken steps to prevent his pet from becoming lost.

10. This dog is only doing what comes naturally—digging. Unfortunately, there’s no pet owner in sight to stop the dog and the damage being done.

11. An overweight dog and a child holding an ice-cream cone don’t mix! A free-roaming pet might be well-intentioned but can be a nuisance nevertheless.

12. Free-roaming pets run a high risk of being injured or killed by motor vehicles.

13. When fights break out, free-roaming pets can be hurt. These pets would be safer at home.

14. This cat risks injury by snoozing in the shade of the car. Will the driver even notice this animal before driving away?

15. The owner of this dog probably thought it was a good idea to bring the animal along for a drive. But, in a parked car where the temperature can soar to 160 degrees, the dog might suffer from brain damage or die. Leaving the car windows open wouldn’t have helped much.

16. This girl doesn’t seem to welcome the unexpected company. In her walk home from school, it’s safer and more pleasant to meet pets in their homes and in the company of their owners.

17. Pets need exercise, but it’s up to the owner to exercise the pet in a safe and considerate manner so that the pet won’t be bothered or other people. Where’s the leash, collar, and tag?

18. Here we go again. Another mess to clean up because these cats weren’t kept home where they belong.
In our society people face many contradictions regarding the treatment of animals. While we are taught from an early age the social value of being kind to animals, the reality is that animals are mistreated in our society on a massive scale (for example, in food production and science experimentation). However, most people seem to have little trouble accepting this profound discrepancy between society’s morals about animals and its actual treatment of them. How is it that people can believe in being kind to animals yet seem to overlook the cruelties commonly and systematically inflicted upon them?

Dr. Alan Bowd, Senior Lecturer in Educational Psychology at the Riverina College of Advanced Education in Australia, sought to gain insight into people’s abilities to communicate, to demonstrate emotion, and animals’ knowledge about animals is primarily based on their own experiences and that children are not capable of understanding the variety of roles animals play in human society. Thus, children are unaware of society’s use and general treatment of animals. Dr. Bowd further hypothesized that young children believe that humans and animals are basically similar. He thought that kindergarten children, because of their egocentrism, are more likely to assume that animals are like themselves than to conceive of basic differences between humans and animals.

Dr. Bowd interviewed thirty-seven children (average age: five years, eight months). His questions focused on four topics: the extent of the child’s contact with animals, society’s use of animals in food production, the distinction between domestic and wild animals regarding the role of human care, and the child’s concept of animal experiences as similar or dissimilar to human experiences.

What did the interviews show? The results confirmed Dr. Bowd’s first hypothesis: young children’s knowledge about animals is primarily egocentric, reflecting their direct experiences with animals (particularly those experiences with pets). The young children studied were limited in their knowledge of how animals are treated in society as a whole. Most kindergarten children did not understand the role of humans in the care and use of domestic animals and were not aware that animals are raised and killed for food. These results suggest that young children who are ignorant of society’s institutionalized treatment of animals and, thus, are unaware of any contradiction between that treatment and the social expectation to be kind to animals.

The results did not, however, confirm Dr. Bowd’s second hypothesis: kindergarten children believe that humans and animals are basically similar. Instead, Dr. Bowd found evidence of the beginning of a belief in differences between human and animal experiences. Only half the children believed that animals experience pain in the same way as humans, and almost half believed that animals experience pain from an injury less severely than humans. This devaluing of animal feelings probably helps children function in a society that formally condemns cruelty to animals and at the same time exploits and destroys animals on a large scale.

While generalizations can be only tentative, more caution must be made to the small number of children interviewed and the lack of research with older children, the study does provide some insight into the process that allows children to function in a society that endorses kindness to animals at the same time it allows their exploitation. The results of the study also suggest that humane educators might be wise to focus less on the mistreatment of individual animals and more on the similar ways in which humans and animals respond to pain. It may also be necessary to emphasize the similarities between individual acts of cruelty and institutionalized cruelty so that children can better understand the humane concerns involved. Encouraging children’s concern for individual animals is certainly important, but Dr. Bowd’s study suggests that it is unlikely that children’s knowledge of or attitudes toward institutionalized cruelty will be affected significantly through this approach alone.


Note: For copies of any studies reported or in Research in Review, or for further information on any topics covered, contact Vanessa Malcarne at NAAHE, Box 362, East Haddam, CT 06423.
By Vivian Leidy

"Pets play significant roles in the lives of children by providing companionship and nonjudgmental love. As a topic of classroom discussion, or as the subject of classroom visual aids, pets provide a comfortable, familiar, and nonthreatening theme. A teacher can use pets to help students adjust to each other, to the teacher, and to classroom activities."

This article, originally published in INSTRUCTOR, magazine, provides a back-to-school unit for primary-grade students. All the activities in the unit offer students opportunities to get to know each other better, practice study skills, and learn more about "cuddly canines." What better way to kick off the new school year than with humane education?

Concentration, matching a child's name to the proper dog's name card. We played endless variations of this game; you can match dogs to breed names, home addresses, and so on.

What's in a Name?

We used the same name cards to review language arts skills. Students matched names of dogs that had the same beginning sounds, the same ending sounds, and that rhymed. We even used these cards to review the alphabet by putting the names on the chart in alphabetical order.

Something to Bark About

Once we had mastered names, I asked children to tell me about their dogs' coloring, breeds, talents, and so on, which they recorded in booklets. Children brought in pictures of themselves and their dogs to display on the door of our corner cupboard. And so it wasn't long before my students knew not only each other's names, but the name of everyone's dog as well! During the year we continued to use this area to feature pictures of dogs and children who celebrated their birthday.
Welcome to the Dog Show

Often there were photographs of dogs with the articles children brought in. We cut these out and pasted them on another bulletin board along with pictures of unusual dogs cut from magazines. We labeled the pictures and then grouped them under the following categories: sporting dogs, working dogs, terriers, toy dogs, non-sporting dogs, and mutts. For example, sporting dogs included retrievers, pointers, spaniels, and setters; working dogs were guard dogs, sheep dogs, Saint Bernards, and so on; nonsporting dogs were those difficult to classify elsewhere, such as bulldogs, Dalmatians, and chow chows. (Any good encyclopedia offers numerous examples of each category.)

Matt Math

We even used our newly collected dog data to review graphing skills. Through bar and picture graphs, we found ways to compare dog populations according to size, breed, and origin.

Reading With Rin-Tin-Tin

Reading was a much anticipated activity every day. Often there were photographs of dogs in the articles children brought in. We stapled a large world map to a bulletin board and encouraged children to bring in newspaper articles about dogs around the world. Each child who brought his or her article to the class and then staple it near the place on the map where the event took place. This activity not only encouraged newspaper reading but also strengthened map reading skills. Each child who brought in an article got a special certificate called a Newshound Award.

Rover Riddles

At recess or lunchtime, I used dogs to encourage my children to line up quietly by giving them riddles to solve. For example, I would say, “I’m thinking of a boy who is sitting quietly in his seat, who has a brown and white dog named Sparky.” If that boy was quiet and listening, he would be able to guess who I was talking about and get in line. If not, I would go on to another child. It worked! The kids would remain quiet to make sure they heard the riddle and could guess who was next in line.

After learning so much about different kinds of dogs, everyone wanted to know more about the care and feeding of dogs. So, as a grand finale to our unit, we visited the local humane society shelter during Responsible Pet Care Week in late September. We toured the kennels and talked to the caretakers to learn the responsibilities of owning a dog. After our visit, the unit wound down to a close; but the children were not ready to let it end. They wanted to know more about the dogs they visited. So, I decided to write a story about a dog who was able to guess who I was talking about.

Common Ground and “Calls” rings are the record albums we recommend using in this learning center. “Common Ground” features the Paul Winter Consort and the sounds made by a timber wolf, a humpback whale, and an African fish eagle. “Callings” includes the voices of the sea lion, dolphin, sea otter, blue whale, orca, and other sea mammals. The “music” made by each of these animals is treated as the theme in each piece. Across this theme, the Paul Winter Consort improvises musical passages that capture the mood of the environment in which the animal lives. Each piece provides an unusual listening experience for children. You can purchase these records at your local record store or order them from the Living Music Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 68, Litchfield, CT 06759. You may also be able to borrow these records from your local library.

Consider why six out of every 10 of our own pets WE HAVE

That’s why we work to protect pets.

DON’T YOU JOIN US?
THE ANIMAL SHELTER OF THE UNITED STATES
4751 St. Clair, P.O. Box 4000, Washington, D.C. 20015

WON’T YOU JOIN US?
THE ANIMAL SHELTER OF THE UNITED STATES
4751 St. Clair, P.O. Box 4000, Washington, D.C. 20015

Note: If you have suggestions for learning centers that focus on humane education concepts or objectives, send your ideas to NAHME, Box 302, East Hadley, CT 06423.
Most educators are aware of studies that show children learn more by doing than by reading or listening. So, in teaching kindness and respect for animals, a logical tool would appear to be a classroom pet. But therein lies a painful dilemma for humane-minded teachers: Can the benefits gained by the presence of a live animal in the classroom outweigh the problems that might arise? Is the classroom really an appropriate place for a pet?

The answer to both questions is a qualified yes, says NAAHE Director Kathy Savesky. "Firsthand experience is a strong activity for empathy building," she says. "If chosen and kept responsibly, an appropriate pet can be a valuable addition to a classroom."

But what is an appropriate pet? And what factors should be examined by a teacher considering an animal companion for his or her classroom?

To answer the second question first, the single most important factor to be considered by a teacher is the role model he or she will present to children through the classroom pet experience. "The most powerful lessons associated with keeping a classroom pet are those communicated through the teacher's actions and attitudes," says Savesky. "When teachers decide to keep animals in the classroom, they must constantly be on guard to assure that their behavior is consistent with what they are trying to teach about compassion, respect, and responsibility. Kids are quick to pick up on inconsistencies, and research suggests that the behavior kids observe in their teachers generally has a much greater impact on their attitudes than do structured lessons, particularly if the two conflict. A lecture on the importance of a healthy environment for a pet will have little impact on students who have watched their teacher put off cleaning the gerbil's cage for three days because things were unusually busy."

Providing a role model of a responsible pet owner may be more difficult than it seems. In addition to making sure that the pet always has adequate food and water and a clean, safe, comfortable home, the very question of who "owns" the classroom pet is important. "While every child in the class can take part in the pet's care, the ultimate responsibility for oversight has to fall on a single individual—the teacher," Savesky stresses. "There's no such thing as a collective pet. Sending the animal home with a different student every weekend or vacation is not only risky in terms of the animal's care and safety but can also be inconsistent with the concept that a pet is a full-time, permanent responsibility," Savesky adds. "What's more, drawing straws at the end of the year to see who gets to keep the animal—a practice common in many classrooms—only reinforces the all-too-familiar perception that pets are disposable objects. The real learning comes when the children can come back and visit the pet even after they've "graduated" from that class."

Even if you're willing to take on the responsibility of providing a positive role model, there are other considerations to take into account before deciding to get a classroom pet. Does your school or school system have rules or guidelines about classroom pets? It could be traumatic to introduce a pet into the class only to have to remove it because its presence violates a rule. Are you willing and able to provide the animal with adequate care on evenings, weekends, and school vacations? Remember that many schools conserve energy by turning thermostats down on winter evenings and weekends to a point that could jeopardize your animal. If you're not able to keep the pet at your home as well as in the classroom, you may have to reconsider the idea. Do any of the children in the class have allergies (or phobias) that would preclude certain animals? Is there an appropriate place to keep a pet in your classroom? Pets need to be kept where they are comfortable and not forgotten about, but they also need a place that is quiet and where they won't be distracting during lessons that aren't pet related. Finally, are you prepared to cope with the children's reactions if the...
animal should become ill or die suddenly? If you're ready to handle all of the above, the next factor to consider is what type of pet will be appropriate for your classroom. According to SAVESKY, appropriate classroom pets include most domesticated small mammals, especially gerbils, guinea pigs, mice, rats, and hamsters. It's important to remember that domesticated animals should never be removed from their natural environment in the first place. And on the inappropriate list are birds and exotic saltwater fish. Both of these, while readily available in this country in pet stores and aquariums, are often victims of international smuggling operations that subject the animals to 24 percent of the time, death. Purchasing such pets as guppies or goldfish, are acceptable. Care and housing required by each type of pet you are considering. The expense of equipment and the time required for regular care and cleaning of a pet will be a major factors to examine. Many books on the care of small mammals, birds, and fish are available in your books or library, and often the local animal welfare organization can provide guidance in both selection and care of classroom pets. The American Humane Education Society, 450 Salem End Road, P.O. Box 2244, Framingham, MA 01701, publishes Bird Care and Small Mammal Care, two brief but helpful guides to the care of common classroom pets. You can write the society for price and ordering information.

If the pet you've chosen is a small one, such as a mouse or gerbil, you may want to get two of them. Don't, however, warn SAVESKY, allow the animals to continually reproduce. Remember that any offspring, like the pets themselves, will be your responsibility. One way to avoid the problem is to get two animals of the same sex, making sure beforehand that they won't fight. You should also be sure in advance that you can find a veterinary nearby who will care for your pets when they need it. Many vets won't handle small mammals.

It's a good idea not to introduce the pet on the first day of class. Not only is the stress of the day hard on you and the children, it's also hard on the pet. "Prepare the children first," SAVESKY advises, "by explaining what type of animal the pet will be, how much and what kind of care it will need, who will provide that care, and how chores and handling will be shared. You may want to make a list of tasks and/or cordon off an area of the classroom as the pet's "home." If your pet is a small mammal, you will need to establish rules for how and under what circumstances the pet may be removed from its home and/or held. Discuss these rules with your students prior to introducing them to your pet and focus on the reasons that such guidelines are needed (to protect the pet and the children). Injuries to the pet and children can be avoided if the children are prepared and motivated for careful and responsible handling of the animal. You may also want to involve the class in preparing the pet's living arrangements. In addition to needing clean, comfortable surroundings, the animal also requires things to do and play with, as well as its own place where it can seek privacy or quiet when it needs to rest. Cardboard tissue boxes or paper towel tubes can provide both toys and shelter for gerbils, mice, and small hamsters. Make sure the children understand why the animal needs to be left alone sometimes and why there won't be one's to watch it or play with it. Once integrated into the classroom, the pet can provide almost limitless opportunities for learning experiences above and beyond the identification of animal needs and basic pet care. Here are a few:

- Practicing Responsibility: "Feeding and cleaning chores and taking turns handling the animal enhance the development of responsibility, as well as promote sharing and cooperation," says SAVESKY.
- Studying Behavior: Have the children watch the animal without playing with it. They can practice basic observation skills by making charts or keeping records of the animal's eating, resting, and activity periods.
- Creative Writing: Ask the children to write a story or describe the classroom from the animal's point of view.
Agricultural Fair Day

In 1810, the first agricultural fair in the United States was held on this day in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. The fair was launched with a guide by George Washington in which he noted, “...the multiplication of useful animals is a common blessing to mankind.”

Observe this day by exploring with your students the modern techniques used for the maintenance and multiplication of useful animals on today’s farms. Have your students compare and contrast the lives of farm animals in George Washington’s time with the lives of today’s typical farm animals. These are many people who are concerned about the plight of animals that are suffering as a result of some modern farming techniques. Ask your students to write to The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, for more information about this issue.

People & Animals: An

16 OCTOBER

Sweetest Day

Sweetest Day is observed on the third Saturday in October each year. Originally, Sweetest Day was named in honor of a saint, as a day to spread cheer among the unfortunate. Today, Sweetest Day is observed by remembering someone with a kind act.

Have your students remember and extend kindness to animals in their local shelter. Begin by having a guest speaker from the shelter come to your class to describe the important work accomplished there. Also ask your guest speaker to suggest ways in which your students can help the shelter. For example, shelters are often in need of blankets and toys for their animals. Your class can launch a class- or school-wide campaign to restore these items. When the blankets and towels are collected, arrange a trip to take them to the shelter. The articles your class will be providing a valuable community service.

11 NOVEMBER

Smoky the Bear Dies

Smoky the Bear, the poster bear of the Forest Service, died on November 11, 1963. He was born on November 11, 1914. Smoky was a popular symbol of the Forest Service and was used in many educational programs to emphasize the importance of protecting forests and wildlife.

12 NOVEMBER

End of Year of the Animals

The Whitaker Association and the American Society of Zoologists, which began November 15, 1982, end November 15, 1983. The purpose of this one-year observance is “To view [humanity’s] tenancy of earth from the standpoint of other animals and to assure safe space for all life forms through the protection and preservation of undisturbed wilderness."

Observe the conclusion of Year of the Animals by discussing with your students the importance of land management as a way to protect animals. This excellent resource to use to begin this activity is the videotape Living With Wildlife, which is available from Animal Stouffer Productions, Ltd., P.O. Box 5057, Aspen, CO 81611.

20 DECEMBER

Anniversary of Ham’s Space Trip

In 1959 a chimpanzee named Ham rode in a rocket that traveled 55 miles into space in order to test the safety of space travel. Both Ham and the rocket landed without mishap. However, there are many people in this country and elsewhere who are critical of scientific experiments in which animals are used. Space research is only one area of science in which animals are involved. Others include the testing of new drugs, and surgical procedures, as well as extensive biomedical research regarding millions of animals annually.

To observe this day, organize a class project in which your students research the use of animals in scientific experiments. Ideally, the information gathered should present various viewpoints. Students can write to The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, for information about the humane costs of the experiments.

After the students’ research is concluded, have them present their findings. Divide the class into small groups and have each group answer the following questions: Do you support the use of animals in scientific experiments? Why? Why not? Is the use of animals in scientific experiments always good or always bad? What law would you enact regarding this issue if you were in charge of the government? How would your group enact this or that law? Which group has the best idea?"
surroundings—a lizard in a loft. boy, loves his Joey. But as the kangaroo living in people’s homes as pets, where they frequently suffer as a result of their captivity. Wild animals raised as pets are commonly called exotic pets because they are kept in places other than their natural surroundings—a lizard in a loft apartment, a wolf in a basement, a beaver in a living room. The films and filmstrips reviewed below chronicle the problems associated with keeping wildlife as pets.

ME AND YOU KANGAROO (1974) Without dialogue, this film tells the story of a boy’s decision to raise a baby kangaroo after he and his father accidentally kill its mother. Robbie, the boy, loves his Joey. But as the kangaroo matures, the inherent problems in having an exotic pet quickly become evident. Joey romps through Robbie’s mother’s garden and upsets a local food stand, scattering the produce everywhere. Inevitably, Joey returns to the wild, but whether the half-domesticated kangaroo is ultimately able to survive in the wild is left in question.

This nineteen-minute, 16mm film is available for purchase for $265 or rental for $25.

WHERE SHOULD A SQUIRREL LIVET? (1975) This is the story of a baby squirrel lost in a rainstorm and rescued by a man who tends to promote fear of rather than fascination for wildlife. But the positive educational aspects can outweigh the negative portrayal of the wild animal-human relationship if handled well by the teacher.

This sound/color filmstrip is available for purchase for $26 from Marshfilm, P.O. Box 8082, Shawnee Mission, KS 66208. The sound track comes in both a cassette and record format and is available in Spanish. This filmstrip is suitable for children in the elementary grades.

Arthur Barr Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 7-C, Pasadena, CA 91104.

MANIMALS (1978) This film by Robin Lehman is about pets in New York City—not usual pets like cats and dogs but exotic and “wild” animals. The hectic life of the metropolis is suggested by high-speed photography. Yet this hectic city is the unlikely home of many incongruous and inappropriate pets, among them a python, owls, otters, roosters, raccoons, a lion cub, and alligators. Several of the owners attempt to justify their “pets,” insisting that their animals are just like people (hence “manimals”) and that they make responsive, lovable companions. However, the film shows the difficulties and cruelty of keeping nondomesticated creatures in urban apartments.

The mood grows increasingly somber as we watch a small animal turn ceaselessly behind the bars of its cage. We are told that a man, bitten by his koala, pulled out its teeth. Then, as the film ends, we see two pathetic, crazed-looking coyotes imprisoned in a filthy collar.

Technically, the film is very well done. Many viewers feel it is a powerful indictment of the practice of maintaining wild animals in a domestic urban setting. By keeping the mood light at the beginning and showing some of the owners and their animals in almost farcical situations, the filmmaker lulls the viewer into accepting the harboring of wild animals as the harmless activity of a few eccentrics. The gruesome last scene with the coyotes catches the viewer into accepting the harboring of wild animals as pets.

This fourteen-minute, 16mm, color film is suitable for children in the primary grades.

Arthur Barr Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 7-C, Pasadena, CA 91104.

In Me and You Kangaroo a young boy learns firsthand that an orphaned kangaroo makes an unsuitable pet.

FILM REVIEWS

by Argus Archives

- People expect to find wildlife outdoors—along seashores; in the woods, swamps, meadows, mountains; and in urban areas too. Wildlife are well adapted to survive in these habitats. They’re not adapted to living in people’s homes as pets, where the squirrel gets in trouble in the home. It is suitable for children in the primary and elementary grades. It is available from Learning Corporation of America, 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10016, for purchase ($265) or rental ($25).

Arthur Barr Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 7-C, Pasadena, CA 91104.
Venture to a local park on a pleasant weekend and spot the variety of cohabitants and the activity. In many areas across the country, you’re likely to find people, picnics—and animals. Our parks are vivid reminders of the extent to which we share the Earth with other creatures.

Unfortunately, however, people share more than the Earth with animals. We frequently share our litter as well. You need only to drive along our nation’s highways or walk along a city street to see the amount of litter we leave behind. This litter is more than an eyesore; it can be a source of danger for stray animals and wildlife.

Your students may be unaware of the ways in which animals risk injury or death because of our litter. Use the photograph on the reverse side of this page to help students brainstorm the common ways in which people litter and the effects litter can have on animals. Discuss ways in which children can prevent such danger. Many of the prevention techniques are very simple: cutting the plastic rings that hold our canned beverages; completely removing the lids from cans and flattening the cans; picking up broken glass; carefully disposing of plastic bags, string, and other items in which an animal can be caught.

Unlike many problems faced by animals, problems litter poses are ones that your students can easily and immediately help to remedy. Children can learn to make wiser decisions about how to dispose of their own litter, and they can help educate their families and peers. Learning how to share the Earth but keep the litter is a small but important lesson in environmental awareness and protection.

NAAHE
A Division of The Humane Society of the United States
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