“The Humane Society has placed major emphasis where it is most important, on development of humane attitudes in children.”

Kindness to animals is not one of America’s primary traits. Every autumn some 20 to 30 million hunters take to the nation’s woods to make “sport” out of killing, injuring, and maiming America’s wildlife, with little thought for the age or condition of the animals to be killed. Rodeos, drawing 25 million spectators a year, thrive on putting cruelty to animals in a carnival setting.

Every local humane society can relate dozens of stories of cruelty to individual animals, including cats, dogs, livestock, and wildlife. One of the most shocking examples of Americans’ cruelty is the recent surge of attacks on fenced-in, defenseless zoo animals. Earlier this year, five fallow deer, one of the gentlest creatures in the world, were attacked and severely beaten in New York’s Central Park Zoo.

Stopping these cruelties is the goal of The Humane Society of the United States and all other animal welfare organizations. Yet, progress toward the realization of that goal has not been as rapid as these organizations had hoped.

“For too long the humane movement in this country has been on the defensive,” said Humane Society President John A. Hoyt. “We have so preoccupied ourselves with responding to the consequences of cruelty and abuse that we have neglected the more important task of building an ethical system in which kindness to animals is regarded as the norm rather than the exception.”

In other words, humane organizations have been treating the symptoms instead of preventing the disease.

“Our only hope of making the United States a humane nation lies in preventing
It is imperative that kindness to both man and animals become an integral part of the curriculum of the nation’s schools.

Asn. teach shooting skills to Cub Scouts as young as 8 or 9 years old, and many states issue hunting licenses to any child whose parents request them.

Children who are taught to abuse animals for the sake of sport may go through life looking upon animals as objects of pleasure, whose lives can be threatened and snuffed out at the will of man. In a study of persons found guilty of murder, armed robbery, serious assault, and forcible rape, many had tortured animals. The study data revealed that torture or killing of animals in childhood is a positive factor in forecasting adult criminal behavior.

Exploring the outdoors can be one of the most exciting educational experiences of childhood. Here, HSUS humane educator John J. Dommers shows two boys how to spot birds, squirrels, and other wildlife in the woods near their homes. The minds of children provide fertile soil in which ideas and attitudes, good or bad, take root quickly and grow to enrich or impoverish the total adult personality. But, if children are to learn positive goals such as kindness, the concepts must be planted in them before conflicting concepts have had a chance to take root. Rodos associations, for example, have children competing in Little Britches rodeos before they are out of elementary school. Gun clubs sanctioned by the National Rifle Association (NRA) teach shooting skills to Cub Scouts as young as 8 or 9 years old, and many states issue hunting licenses to any child whose parents request them. Children who are taught to abuse animals for the sake of sport may go through life looking upon animals as objects of pleasure, whose lives can be threatened and snuffed out at the will of man. In a study of persons found guilty of murder, armed robbery, serious assault, and forcible rape, many had tortured animals. The study data revealed that torture or killing of animals in childhood is a positive factor in forecasting adult criminal behavior.

Spelling can be more fun when new words describe the animals that were encountered on a field trip to the zoo. A child who is taught to appreciate even the smallest forms of life, such as this salamander, is bound to demonstrate respect for all creatures throughout his life.
to test units for all grades from kindergarten through sixth grade.

As offshoots of HEDEP, the University of Tulsa, where the project is based, has offered two three-credit courses in humane education for undergraduate and graduate students. Several graduate education students at Tulsa have selected aspects of humane education for their doctoral dissertations. And the first master’s degree in humane education in the nation will be conferred by the university this spring.

While HEDEP is concentrating on the development of new techniques and materials for teaching kindness, another arm of HSUS is concentrating on assisting educators in incorporating specific aspects of humane education into their curricula.

The program was inaugurated last September with the opening of the HSUS Norma Terris Humane Education Center near East Haddam, Conn. It is being directed by John J. Dommers, a former teacher who has made a name for himself among educators because of his innovative means of bringing nature into the classroom and extending the classroom outdoors.

Without waiting for mass distribution of the HEDEP materials, Dommers is showing teachers and school administrators how they can incorporate the subjects of animals, pollution, and other aspects of the environment into their everyday classroom activities. Math, for example, can be brought to life by figuring how much it costs to feed a family pet for 1 year. Spelling can become more fun when new words describe the animals that were encountered on a field trip to the zoo.

Dommers has already conducted workshops for teachers and administrators from throughout New England. Many of the sessions have been cosponsored with state and national organizations. Last winter, for instance, Dommers conducted a series of workshops in conjunction with Project LEARN, a cooperative education project of 18 Connecticut school districts. Sessions were held on “Selection, Care, and Handling of Suitable Classroom Animals,” “Helping Children’s Senses Make Sense Outdoors,” “Curriculum-Integrated Programs and Activities Involving Animals,” and “Careers for Animal Lovers.”

Animals show affection without distinguishing between black and white, normal and retarded, athletic or crippled.

Also operating from the center is a program to introduce animals into teaching situations with emotionally and physically handicapped children. Under the direction of special education teacher Cynthia Clarke, the program shows educators how to use animal subjects as vehicles for teaching skills, while giving the child a creature that he can relate to and through which he can learn kindness.

“At times when other people seem threatening to emotionally disturbed children, animals often offer companionship and a vehicle of communication,” she said. “Animals help the children learn to live, to communicate, and to sense responsibility.”

“Animals show affection without distinguishing between black and white, normal and retarded, athletic or crippled,” Dommers declared. “We are limited only by the amount of staff time and money available to us.”
A third aspect of HSUS's education program is the KIND (Kindness in Nature's Defense) program for children and youth 6 to 18. The program began in 1964 when HSUS agreed to administer the Kindness Club in the United States, an organization for children 6 to 10 founded in Canada. It was later expanded to include DEFENDERS, ages 11 to 14, and EcoloKIND, 15 to 18.

The KIND program is designed to be used by schools, as well as individuals. Entire classes of students and even entire schools actively participate in learning to be kind and in undertaking projects to help others and to relieve animal suffering.

KIND sponsors an annual photo contest and reports successful projects undertaken by individual members or branch clubs through its membership newsletters, published monthly except in July and August. A national award is presented to the branch club that has demonstrated the most successful efforts for the protection of animals during the year.

A former managing editor of children's publications for Xerox Education Publications, Charles C. Herrmann, is directing the redesigning of all KIND publications. Herrmann, a former teacher and college instructor, is working with HSUS Youth Div. Director Dale R. Hylton to give the publications a more exciting look and a clearer style. Extensive promotion, especially to schools and educators, is aimed at significantly increasing membership in the program. Further information will be announced in a special four-page insert in the September issue of News of HSUS.

When a KIND member turns 19, he is invited to become a member of HSUS. Through his participation in KIND activities, he has already become a knowledgeable humanitarian, fully acquainted with national efforts for the prevention of cruelty to animals.

Dommers and Herrmann are working together to develop multi-media programs for the classroom. Working with the Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection, they have already produced a slide-sound series on the mammals, snakes, and turtles native to Connecticut. They are also developing filmstrips on animal-related careers, a poster series on pet care, and records on a variety of topics.

To keep educators and humanitarians informed of new developments in humane education techniques and materials, HSUS has founded the National Assn. for the Advancement of Humane Education (NAAHE). Members will receive newsletters and a quarterly journal of articles and information on various aspects of humaneness. The first issue is scheduled for publication in September. In addition, NAAHE will publish materials and manuals and will sponsor symposia, workshops, and seminars.

As a tax-exempt organization, NAAHE will generate resources for research and development activities. For example, projects such as HEDEP will be conducted within the NAAHE framework. It is also expected that NAAHE will become the monitoring agency from which producers of humane education materials will seek a stamp of approval.

Members of the Nacogdoches, Texas, branch of the Kindness Club, part of the HSUS KIND program, raised the money to buy the above outdoor advertisement. A local bank donated billboard space in the community. This is one of many projects suggested by HSUS to local kind members.
Dr. Westerlund and Dr. Whitlock have been appointed executive secretary and assistant executive secretary, respectively. Serving as advisors are: Marin County, Calif., Superintendent of Schools Virgil S. Hollis; Dean Victor O. Hornbostel of the University of Tulsa College of Education; Tulsa Public Schools Superintendent D. Bruce Howell; Dean Donald J. Leu of the College of Education, San Jose State University; and Staff Director Harold J. Rosengren of the National Society of Professional Engineers.

With the advent of these new educational emphases and the extension of other educational efforts, The National Humane Education Center, under the direction of Miss Phyllis Wright, has refocused its objectives and activities in the areas of animal control, shelter management and its practices, and the training of animal-handling personnel. Numerous seminars covering these areas are presently being conducted throughout the country.

"The Humane Society has now placed major emphasis where it is most important, on the development of humane attitudes in children," Hoyt said. "Never before has there been such a deep commitment to this goal. We now look to our members and supporters to back us every step of the way on this vitally important undertaking."

You Can Help!

1. Enroll your children and the children of friends and neighbors in the HSUS KIND program. Write to HSUS for a free brochure on KIND.

2. Convince teachers and school administrators in your community to use the KIND materials in their classrooms. Write to HSUS for free a brochure on KIND teaching units.

3. Give copies of HSUS’s "Guiding Principles for Use of Animals in Elementary and Secondary Schools" to biology teachers and school administrators in your community. Write to HSUS for free copies of "Guiding Principles."


5. HSUS needs your financial help in order to continue this major thrust in humane education. Your tax-deductible contribution of any amount will bring major dividends in the development of humane attitudes in children and youth.

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Additional copies of this report are available at 3¢ each from The Humane Society of the United States, 1604 K St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.