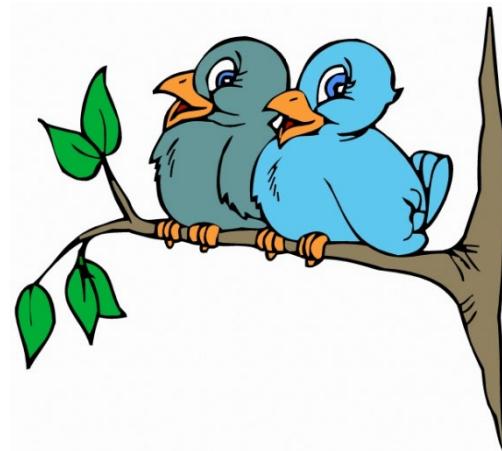


Care for animals' project — Compassion

EXPLANATION:

An important compassion message is that animals are living beings and should be treated with respect and kindness. Not only does this compassion and care benefit the animals, but it also builds character and helps students develop empathy, concern and respect for people. This activity requires students to create school-based projects to show their care for animals that visit or live in their school grounds.



YEAR LEVELS: Years 4–6

STUDENT GROUPING: Group discussion and group projects

ACTIVITY LENGTH: Initial 40 mins approx. and then time to create projects

LINK TO CURRICULUM:

Health and Physical Education: Sequence of content F-10

Strand: Personal, social and community health

Valuing diversity

- Identify how valuing diversity positively influences the wellbeing of the community

Making healthy and safe choices

- Identify and practise strategies to promote health, safety and wellbeing

Learning Continuum of Personal and Social Capability

Social awareness

- Contribute to civil society: identify the various communities to which they belong and what they can do to make a difference

Social management element

- Work collaboratively: contribute to groups and teams, suggesting improvements in methods used for group investigations and projects

SCOPE OF TASK:

Research demonstrates that spending time with creatures reduces stress and may even boost the immune system. Studies also confirm that people who are encouraged to have a relationship with a pet and engage with the responsibilities of pet ownership build stronger relationships in adulthood and demonstrate compassionate behaviour and action. Exploring respect and a love of animals and living creatures requires students to show respect towards living things. This goes beyond common household pets, and includes bugs, wild animals and all other living creatures. Compassion for animals:

- Teaches students how to treat one another and how to be integral components of society
- Supports emotional intelligence
- Supports just, kind, and considerate actions and the development of relationships

1. Activate the students' prior knowledge of compassion. Depending on student understanding encourage students to research the topic of compassion. If using the internet remind students of safe internet usage practices. Questions to lead a conversation about compassion could include:

- What is compassion?
- Who has experienced compassion? What happened?
- Who can you be compassionate towards? People, animals, things?
- What does compassion look like towards living creatures? What would it involve?
- Why should you be compassionate towards living things?
- How do animals communicate their emotions to us?

2. Discuss with the group the concept of a class project to show care and compassion towards animals that visit or live in their school space. Establish with students the type of animals and creatures that are in their specific context – make a list. Examples could include pet dogs that visit, class pet (e.g. fish), birds bugs and insects in school grounds, or school chickens.

3. Brainstorm with the students what they would need to consider before they examined possible options to engage as a class project. Suggested points to be considered:

- Who will the project benefit (which living creature)?
- What would the project look like?
- Why would you show compassion to this living creature?
- What resources would be needed?
- Is it a small group or whole group activity?

4. Decisions that the group will need to make will include the development of a project plan:

- Who will be in the project team (small or whole group)?
- Which living creature would benefit – e.g. bird house, new feeding bins for chickens, signs to inform people about insects' natural habitats to keep them safe, water bowls for visiting dogs etc.
- Timeframes needed to complete the project

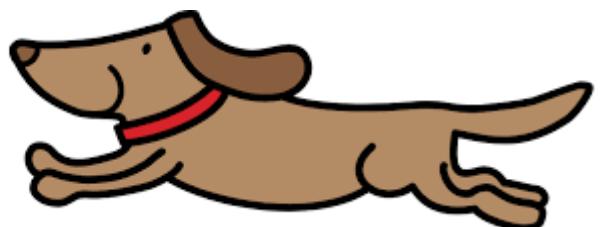
5. Once students have made their project plans they can enact their compassionate acts towards living creatures.

6. At the completion of the project students can take photos of their project and write a project report (see example of report template below). These reports can be displayed in school foyer,

hallways, library or other central places to create awareness about compassion to animals and living creatures.

RESOURCES:

- Computers and internet access
- Report template below or students can make their own



Compassionate Project

Name of project:

Project members:

Project aim:

What we created:

Photos of project:

