



Kindness Counts

KIDS LEARNING ABOUT ANIMALS

PRIMARY LEVEL ACTIVITIES ABOUT ANIMALS AND EMPATHY

BCSPCA

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Kindness Counts

Understanding animals to develop empathy

Big Idea:

Empathy development is at the heart of humane education. Making the connection about similarities and differences we have with all living beings is the root of empathy development. A skill to be learned, empathy enhances a student's ability to think critically and act in a way that respects others. Empathy is also well recognized as a significant component of prosocial behaviour and successful learners. The empathy development tools used in our units are role modelling, experiential learning and cooperative learning designed to create a classroom atmosphere of caring for one another, animals and the environment.

Our lessons incorporate critical thinking skills by posing questions that examine our relationship with animals and challenge students to interpret their own feelings and values based on different perspectives. By focusing on empathy development through the awareness of similarities between each other and animals, students start to see how their words and actions affect those around them in both positive and negative ways. Armed with these skills, students generate their own viewpoints on an issue, form their own values and express behaviours that support those values.

Kindness Counts incorporates many aspects of the new curriculum and presents them with applicable, real-life meaning.

Presentations:

In many of our locations, we offer a classroom presentation to complement these lessons. To request a presentation, contact your local BC SPCA branch or fill out the classroom presentation request form on page 17 and email it to kids@spca.bc.ca.

Core Competencies

Communication

Children are inherently interested in animals. In our programs, that natural curiosity fuels their engagement and inspires them to connect with others on topics that are relatable such as pets, wildlife and farm animals. Children practise acquiring new information about the animal world and sharing that information both formally and informally in groups or pairs, in presentations, or with the public as advocates. Through our interactive activities students collaborate with classmates to solve problems and create projects, and reflect on their own experiences and how their knowledge has evolved over time.

Thinking

Through our units, lessons, and presentations students have the opportunity to practise creative thinking, generating and developing new ideas about real issues that affect their lives every day. They are challenged to create new ways to change and improve the world around them as they learn more about animal well-being. By exploring their own basic needs and comparing them to the needs of animals, students think critically about how their personal decisions also affect other lives, their community and the environment. Older students can also begin to consider their own experiences, their culture and the media, and contemplate where their knowledge and opinions come from.

Personal & Social

All of our programs have a basis in empathy building, compassion, and teaching young people to understand and care about themselves and others. Students learn to read the unspoken signals and emotions of animals and practise recognizing and regulating their own actions and emotions in accordance with their surroundings. They begin to situate themselves in a broader environment that encompasses animals, other people, community and nature. Through games, activities and discussion they learn tangible strategies to peacefully solve problems and develop a sense of accountability that extends beyond the personal to the social.

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I wish

Anyone can make a difference in the world just by doing small, kind acts. Students will come up with solutions for how to help make the world a better place.

 **Big Ideas** Learning about ourselves and others helps us develop a positive attitude and caring behaviours, which helps us build healthy relationships.

Curricular Competencies

Physical & Health
Education

- ▶ Develop and demonstrate respectful behaviour when participating in activities with others
- ▶ Identify caring behaviours among classmates and within families
- ▶ Identify and describe practices that promote mental well-being

Science

- ▶ Observe objects and events in familiar context
- ▶ Take part in caring for self, family, classroom and school through personal approaches
- ▶ Transfer and apply learning to new situations
- ▶ Communicate observations and ideas using oral and written language, drawing, role play

Social Studies

- ▶ Recognize causes and consequences of events, decisions or developments in their lives (cause and consequence)
- ▶ Identify fair and unfair aspects of events, decisions or actions in their lives and consider appropriate courses of action (ethical judgement)

**What students
will know**

- ▶ Determine some solutions to problems in society
- ▶ Identify ways in which they can improve negative situations

Materials

Pictures on pages 2-6

Activity

Show students pictures of situations that could be improved by an act of kindness. The students choose one from each category (human, animal and nature) and draw a picture of a way they could make the situation better. Ask students what the problem is in each picture. How does this problem make each person in the picture feel? What could be done to make this a better situation?

Pictures:

Humans

A girl is sitting by herself looking sad while others are having fun skipping.

Two children are pointing and laughing at a girl wearing new glasses.

A boy is sad because he forgot his lunch.

Animals

A neighbour's dog is outside his doghouse looking sad.

A hamster is in a small cage with nothing inside.

A cat is stuck outdoors in the cold.

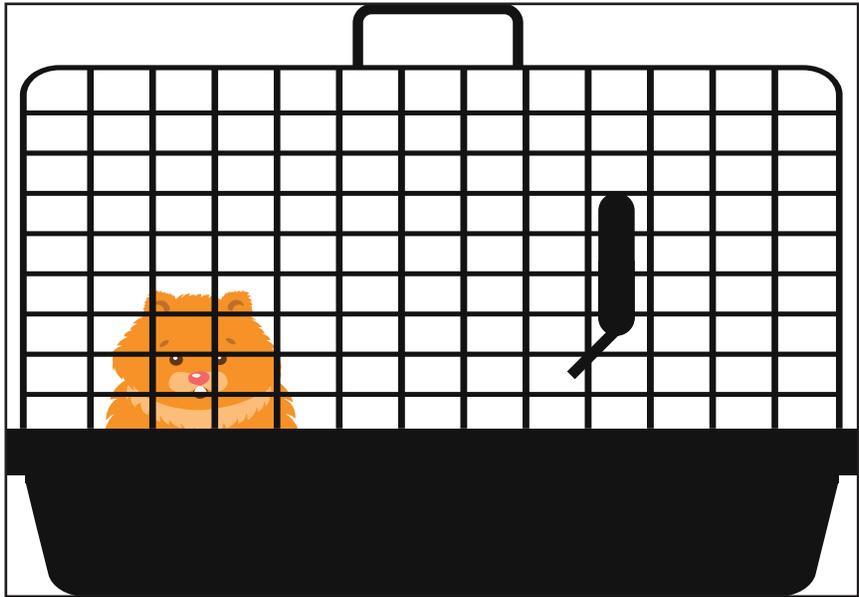
Nature

A neighbour is about to cut down a tree with a bird's nest.

There is garbage in a pond full of birds.

A child is about to destroy a spider's web.









Simon Says, you're like me

A version of Simon Says where students respond to the commands that relate to them. Students will learn what similarities and differences they have with their classmates and with animals.

 **Big Ideas** Learning about ourselves and others helps us develop a positive attitude and caring behaviours, which helps us build healthy relationships.

Curricular Competencies

Physical & Health
Education

- ▶ Develop and demonstrate respectful behaviour when participating in activities with others
- ▶ Identify caring behaviours among classmates and within families
- ▶ Identify and describe practices that promote mental well-being

Science

- ▶ Take part in caring for self, family, classroom, and school through personal approaches
- ▶ Transfer and apply learning to new situations
- ▶ Communicate observations and ideas using oral and written language, drawing, role play

Social Studies

- ▶ Recognize causes and consequences of events, decisions or developments in their lives (cause and consequence)
- ▶ Identify fair and unfair aspects of events, decisions or actions in their lives and consider appropriate courses of action (ethical judgement)

**What students
will know**

- ▶ Identify similarities between students
- ▶ Identify similarities between people and animals

Materials

Sample Simon Says phrases on next page

Activity

In this version of Simon Says students only respond to the commands that relate to them. First they must listen for the characteristic (ex. anyone who walks to school) and then for the command (ex. put your finger on your nose). Tell students that they must watch carefully because at the end of the first round of Simon Says they will have to tell you one new thing they learned about a classmate. In the second round they will have to tell you something they have in common with pets that they didn't know before.

Start with teacher being Simon. Once students get used to playing this version have other students take turns playing the role of Simon.

1) Similarities with classmates

Simon says:

"Everyone with a little brother, stand on one foot."

"Everyone who lives across the street from the school, put your hand on your head."

"Everyone who likes the movie _____, close your eyes."

"Everyone who has dog, hop on one foot."

Choose categories that students may not know about each other.

2) Similarities with animals

Simon says:

"Everyone who likes to play with friends..."

"Everyone who likes to sleep in a warm comfy bed,..."

"Everyone who goes to the Dr. when they are sick,..."

"Everyone who needs food to keep them healthy,..."

"Everyone who likes to be left alone sometimes,..."

"Everyone who likes to live in a clean house,..."

"Everyone who likes to get yelled at when they misbehave,..."

"Everyone who needs water to drink,..."

"Everyone who likes to be told they are loved ..."

Discussion

Talk about how animals and people are similar.

Ask students if they learned something new about someone.

Making a difference

It is important for children to think about how they can have a positive impact on others, the environment and animals in their lives to become caring, compassionate citizens.

 **Big Ideas** Learning about ourselves and others helps us develop a positive attitude and caring behaviours, which helps us build healthy relationships.

Curricular Competencies

Physical & Health
Education

- ▶ Identify caring behaviours among classmates and within families
- ▶ Identify and describe practices that promote mental well-being

Social Studies

- ▶ Recognize causes and consequences of events, decisions, or developments in their lives (cause and consequence)

**What students
will know**

- ▶ Simple ways they can make a positive difference in their community.
- ▶ Identify similarities between people and animals

Materials

certificate on next page

Activity

Students will decide upon one thing that they can do to be more caring and understanding of others, animals and nature. (ex. ride my bike or walk whenever I can instead of getting a ride, ask a new student to play, take my dog on outings whenever possible, pick up litter, keep my cat indoors). They will write down this commitment on the certificate on the following page. The certificate can be reviewed monthly.

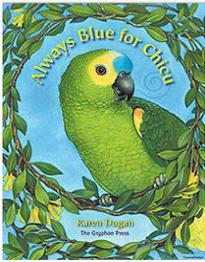


In order to do my part to make the world a place where
people are kind to each other, animals and nature,
I commit to

Name

Date

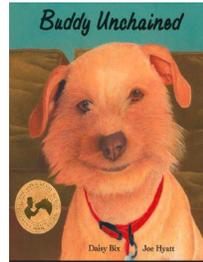
Recommended books



Always Blue for Chicú by Karen Dugan

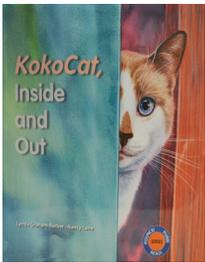
Born in Argentina, young Chicú spends time discovering the wonderful world around him and learning to fly. One day, though, Chicú is trapped and taken away to

be sold in the exotic pet trade.



Buddy Unchained by Daisy Bix

This story's message, about the importance of properly caring for pets and reporting neglect and abuse, can initiate a great discussion on preventing cruelty



KokoCat, Inside and Out by Lynda Graham-Barber

In KokoCat, Inside and Out, Lynda Graham-Barber tells the story of KokoCat, an indoor cat who lives a comfortable life with a nice family.

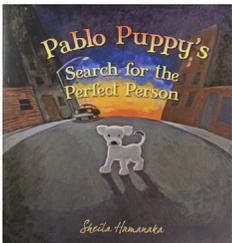
So what happens when one day the door opens and KokoCat's curiosity takes her outside to explore?



Are You Ready For Me? by Claire Buchwald

Written from a dog's point of view, Are You Ready for Me? illustrates the responsibilities and joys of adopting a dog into

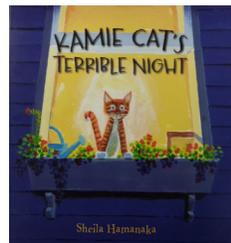
your family. Many children ask their parents for a pet without having any reference or understanding of the commitment it takes to care for another living creature



Pablo Puppy's Search for the Perfect Person by Sheila Hamanaka

Published by the Animal Welfare Institute, Pablo Puppy's Search for the Perfect Person tells the

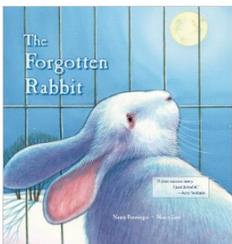
story of a stray puppy, Pablo, who ends up at the animal shelter



Kamie Cat's Terrible Night by Sheila Hamanaka

In Kamie Cat's Terrible Night, writer and illustrator Sheila Hamanaka tells the fast-paced story of Kamie's accidental

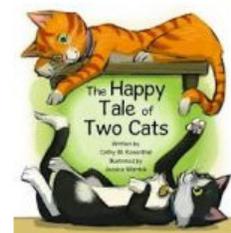
escape from her cozy house with Mr. Wong



The Forgotten Rabbit by Nancy Furstinger

What happens when rabbits are bought as gifts, impulsively and without thought to their future care? This is the question

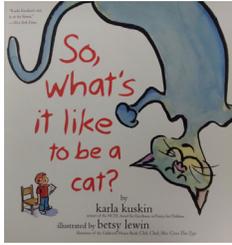
addressed in The Forgotten Rabbit.



The Happy Tale of Two Cats by Cathy M. Rosenthal

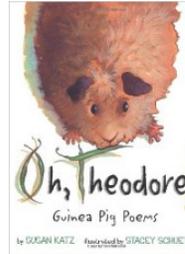
The Happy Tale of Two Cats tells a sweet and memorable story of what can happen when caring people in the community all take a part in turning an animal's life

around.



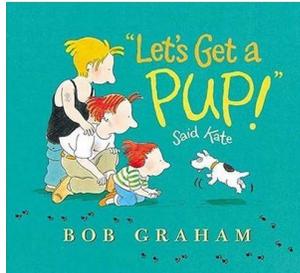
So what's it like to be a cat?
by Karla Kuskin

What's it like to be a cat? With great style, award-winning children's poet Karla Kuskin uses an interview format – between an inquisitive boy and a witty cat – to ask and answer questions about the feline way of life.



Oh Theodore! by Susan Katz

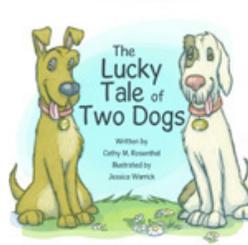
This is a great introduction to the care of guinea pigs in a fun, poetic format. Kids will love the poems and illustrations.



“Let's get a pup!” said Kate
by Bob Graham

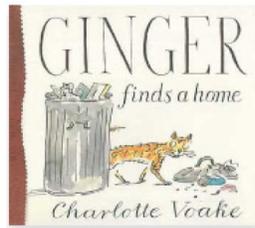
Karen and her parents are ready to welcome a dog into their family. But what kind of dog will they get? “Let's Get a Pup!” said Kate

by Bob Graham follows the family on their visit to The Rescue Center. Which dog will they choose? A big dog? A small dog? A sniffer or sleeper? A cute, brand-new pup named Dave or an old, gray dog named Rosy?



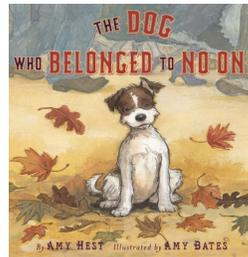
The Lucky Tale of Two Dogs
by Cathy M. Rosenthal

It is only when the unlucky dog escapes from his yard and is picked up by animal control that his life turns around and he becomes a happy dog. From the backyard to the streets, to the animal shelter and eventually to his forever home, he finds safety, friendship and love.



Ginger finds a home
by Charlotte Voake

In Ginger finds a home, author Charlotte Voake paints a heart-wrenching picture of a scraggly little cat who lives in a patch of weeds and spends his days searching for scraps of food.



The Dog that Belongs to No One
by Amy Hest

The Dog Who Belonged to No One, written by Amy Hest with pictures by Amy Bates, weaves the separate stories of a stray dog with crooked ears and a “wisp of a girl” named Lia, each in need of a friend.

BCSPCA Classroom Presentation Request Form

Today's Date:			
Contact Name:			
School Name:			
Mailing Address:			
Location of Presentation (if different than mailing address)			
Email Address:		Would you like to receive our e-Teacher newsletter?	Yes No
School phone number:		Home or cell number:	
Best time to call:		School Fax number:	
Program Requested:	Kindness Counts	Number of presentations:	
Grade:		Number of students:	
If requesting presentations for more than one class, please list the additional classes below:			
2nd teacher name:		Grade:	Number of students:
3rd teacher name:		Grade:	Number of students:
4th teacher name:		Grade:	Number of students:

Please email completed form to pneuman@spca.bc.ca. Not all of our branches are able to accommodate presentations.

Fee Amount Requested: \$2/student (reduced cost may be considered in special circumstances)
Maximum of 1 class per presentation.

Please make a cheque payable to the BC SPCA and send to:
 BCSPCA Provincial Office, attention: Paula Neuman
 1245 East 7th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5T 1R1
 If you require a receipt or invoice, please inform us.

Please let parents and students know in advance that there is a guest speaker and if a temperament tested animal is coming to class.

Teacher must be present in the room during the presentation.

Are there any students with allergies to animals?	Yes	No
Are there any students with special needs that we would need to be aware of?	Yes	No
If yes, please explain.		
Are there any students who are afraid of dogs or have been bitten by a dog?	Yes	No
Is this presentation being incorporated into the curriculum?	Yes	No
If yes, what subject?		

