

Meow!

Intermediate
Level

Vol.5
spca.bc.ca

BCSPCA Teacher Guide to Integrating Animals into the Classroom



**KIDS MAKING A
DIFFERENCE FOR
ANIMALS**

**TEACHER
SPOTLIGHTS**

STUDENT PROJECTS



MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

This year's issue of *Meow!* focuses on our most popular presentation and lesson series, *You Can Make a Difference*. The goal of this series is to inspire students and teach them how to take action on animal issues that matter to them.

Teachers tell us that our presentations motivate students to continue having conversations about animal welfare, sharing the information they have learned with their families and friends. The process of passing on knowledge to others also helps students gain a deeper understanding of the issues.

We cover animal issues based on age level, and broach a wide range of topics, including humane dog collars, animal testing, indoor versus outdoor cats, safe exercise options for small animals and farm animal housing and care, among others.



- Before handing out the worksheet on the next page, discuss the internationally recognized **Five Freedoms** for animals (right) with your students. Ask them for examples of each freedom to gauge their comprehension of the topic. On the backside of the worksheet, discuss with students why they think the freedom(s) they selected were not met. (Answers will vary)



What are the Five Freedoms?

The BC SPCA believes that all animals under human care deserve at minimum the following freedoms:

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from pain, injury and disease
3. Freedom from distress
4. Freedom from discomfort
5. Freedom to express behaviours that promote well-being

We use the **Five Freedoms** to evaluate animal welfare in a variety of settings. They help us understand whether the needs of the animals are being met.

The first two freedoms need little explanation. It is important to provide animals with a nutritious diet and clean water. Medical treatment must also be provided if an animal is sick, injured or suffering. Failing to provide food, water or medical care is considered an act of cruelty.

To better understand the last three freedoms, please see the examples below.

Freedom from distress: Just like humans, animals can experience stress. It is important not to put them in situations where they constantly feel fearful or anxious. For example, an animal who wants some time alone needs to be able to get away from other animals or people.

Freedom from discomfort: To be comfortable, animals must be provided with an environment that is spacious, clean, properly ventilated and dry.

Freedom to express behaviours that promote well-being: Natural behaviour is important for all living things. For instance, cats need to scratch, dogs need to bark, pigs need to root and birds need to fly. When we care for animals, we must consider their natural behaviours, and decide whether we can accommodate them. From there, we need to create an environment that allow animals to perform them.

Name: _____

Date: _____

The BC SPCA believes that all animals under human care deserve at minimum five freedoms

Match the freedom with its definition by connecting the dots.



Freedom from
hunger and thirst ●

● Medical treatment must be given as soon as possible if an animal is sick, suffering or injured.



Freedom from pain,
injury and disease ●

● Animals need a comfortable environment. This includes space to move around, a dry place to sleep (except for species such as fish), a clean living area, proper temperature and air quality.



Freedom from distress ●

● Good quality food specific to an animal's needs must be provided. Clean water must always be available too.



Freedom from discomfort ●

● Animals need to be able to perform natural behaviours. For example, cats need to scratch, dogs need to bark, pigs need to root and chickens need to dust bathe.



Freedom to express
behaviours that promote
well-being ●

● An animal's emotions are important. Situations that cause an animal stress or anxiety must be avoided.

Use the Five Freedoms listed below to identify which of the freedoms in the following situations have not been met. Circle all that apply.

- ✓ 1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
- ✓ 2. Freedom from pain, injury and disease
- ✓ 3. Freedom from distress
- ✓ 4. Freedom from discomfort
- ✓ 5. Freedom to express behaviours that promote well-being



Animal testing - scientific tests are performed on animals to develop new products or drugs. In the process, chemicals are ingested or tested on animals' skin and eyes.

FREEDOM

1 2 3 4 5



Tethered dogs - dogs are kept tied up outside for long periods of time or for their entire lives.

FREEDOM

1 2 3 4 5



Animals in captivity - wild animals are permanently kept in places where humans have control over their day-to-day lives. (For example, zoos, aquariums, etc.)

FREEDOM

1 2 3 4 5



Animals in entertainment - animals are used to perform, fight and/or kill for the enjoyment of humans. (For example, rodeos, circuses, horse racing, dog fighting, aquarium shows, etc.)

FREEDOM

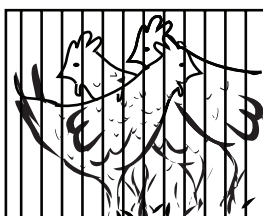
1 2 3 4 5



Inhumane dog collars - dogs are forced to wear collars that cause pain to control their behaviour. (For example, electric shock collars, choke chains, etc.)

FREEDOM

1 2 3 4 5

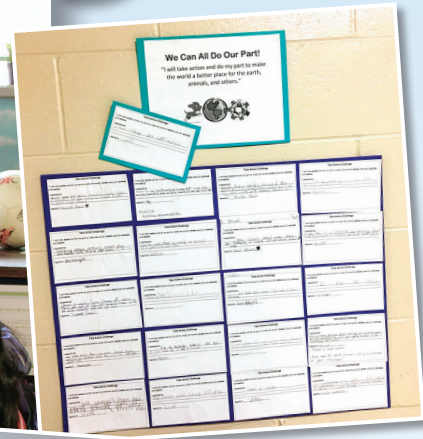


Industrialized farming - many farms raise large numbers of animals indoors in cramped conditions so they can maximize production and minimize costs.

FREEDOM

1 2 3 4 5

Teacher Spotlights



Kirsten Ickert is a Grade 4/5 teacher at David Brankin Elementary in Surrey. She has been inviting the BC SPCA into her classroom for the past two years for the *You Can Make a Difference* presentation.

Kirsten is pleased that her students were very engaged with the material and enjoyed participating. They found the information and activities relevant and interesting, which sparked discussion for weeks afterward. The students felt particularly impacted by the topic of animal testing. Their discussions prompted them to go home and look through their cupboards to see if they had products with the Leaping Bunny logo (cruelty-free certification), and to check their coats to see if the trim was made of real fur.



Given her students' varied experiences with animals, Kirsten appreciates that the program took a student-centered approach to learning. She felt that learning the **Five Freedoms** was a very clear and tangible way for both children

and adults to assess animal welfare, and that the program empowered students to continue their journey of learning about animal advocacy. She also appreciated that the children could learn without judgement, and felt safe to share their experiences.

When asked if she would recommend the presentation to other teachers, Kirsten said, "Absolutely! The presentations are engaging, informative and adapted to meet the student where they're at."

Kirsten's class embraced the definition of humane education. Together, they extended their commitment beyond taking action for animals to creating positive change for the environment and their community as well. This poster proclaims these commitments. It currently hangs outside their classroom to inspire others to follow their lead.

WHAT IS HUMANE EDUCATION?

The BC SPCA defines humane education as not only teaching responsible animal care, but also cultivating compassionate, respectful attitudes and behaviours toward animals, nature and people with a goal of creating peaceful, inclusive communities.



Leslie Baker teaches Grade 3/4 at Park Avenue Elementary in Nanaimo. For the past two years, she has invited the BC SPCA into her classroom for the *Making the Right Choice* (see back page), and *You Can Make a Difference* workshops.

Leslie notes that her students are always so interested in the workshops. “They’re a great way to teach kids how they can have an impact on the world around them, even at a young age,” she says. She remarks how her students love the presentations, becoming impressively dedicated to their inquiry projects. The workshops sparked some of the best work from Leslie’s students to date.

After the *You Can Make a Difference* workshop was completed, Leslie’s students became interested in discussing a recent bill the government passed which bans the breeding of whales and dolphins in aquariums. “It reminded me how meaningful topics really capture the learner!” Leslie says.

Leslie also appreciates how the material was presented in a way that was highly relevant. She loves how the BC SPCA Humane Education program aligns with the provincial curriculum, and adds, “I would recommend these programs to other teachers because my students just love them!”



STUDENT PROJECTS

After the *You Can Make a Difference* workshop, Leslie’s class decided to take action for animals. They created projects to teach others about animal issues, covering topics such as proper pet care, product-testing on animals and animal abandonment.

Grade 5 teacher **Alexis Cassap-Hanson**, from École Jules Quesnel, believes that teaching students about the potential impacts of our day-to-day decisions regarding animals motivates them to become powerful animal advocates and positive role models for both their peers and adults.

Alexis says, “The *You Can Make a Difference* presentation was one of the highlights of the year for my students.” She found that they became extremely engaged on the topics introduced, eagerly sharing their “Take Action!” projects with the rest of their school. A few students, for instance, wrote letters to local stores, advocating that they stock only cruelty-free products, while another student distributed pamphlets throughout the school, spreading awareness about animal testing and its alternatives.

Alexis was pleased that the presentations covered many issues in appropriate depth, leaving them to be further explored by students. She expressed admiration for the excellent visuals. “They were perfect for making the issues and stories real,” she says. She also loved that conversation was actively encouraged, which sparked a high level of student participation. But, best of all, Alexis admired how the tone remained positive throughout, and students were empowered to see their part in creating change. They were proud to share their final projects with their BC SPCA presenter and school, she says.

“The discussions and final projects really brought out and highlighted their compassion, motivation and dedication,” says Alexis. She was deeply touched by just how much her students cared, and continues to be impressed by how they still consider the welfare of animals, even after their class has moved on to new topics and projects.



STUDENT PROJECTS

Two students visited their local grocery store and documented various brands of shampoo sold there. They researched each product to see if they were tested on animals. After presenting their findings, everyone in attendance was given a pamphlet to

take home, which included information on how to shop cruelty-free. Another student shared information on safe/humane exercise wheels for hamsters.



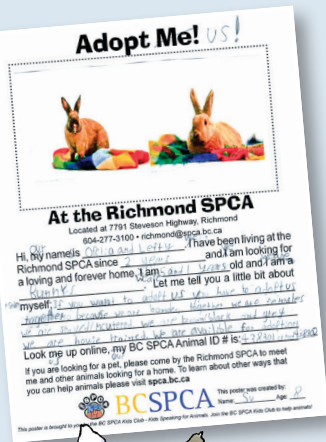
YOUR PHOTO HERE!

We are looking for a teacher to feature on the cover of next year's edition of *Meow!*. Our focus will be our *Farm Food Connection* series. If you book a three-session presentation before March 2020, we might ask you to be the cover shot! Let us know if you are interested, email: pneuman@spca.bc.ca.

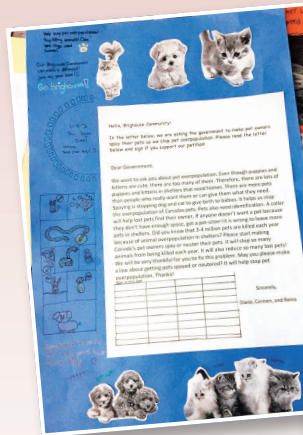
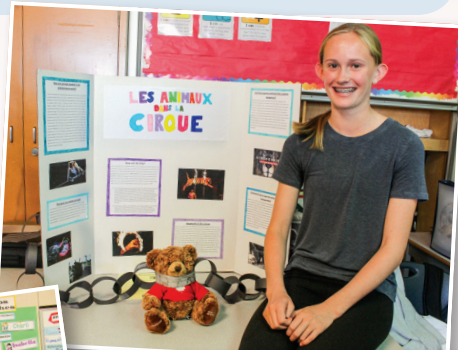


More Student Inquiry Projects

Students in Jade Song's Grade 3/4 at Samuel Brighthouse Elementary in Richmond researched the importance of spaying and neutering pets and the issue of pet abandonment. To illustrate their point, they discussed the local population of feral domestic rabbits in Richmond, and passed on their knowledge by designing posters.



The third session in the *You Can Make a Difference* presentation in Jade's class included two special guests, Lefty and Ofelia. Lefty and Ofelia were two of the BC SPCA Richmond Education & Adoption Centre's longer-term rabbit residents. Su, age 8, made a powerful connection with the rabbits' story, and visited the centre to drop off donations and treats for them. She also made a homemade adoption poster to promote the rabbits to potential guardians.



Manju Binning's students, Sarah and Kianna, from Elgin Park Secondary school in Surrey, took a unique approach to helping animals. They volunteered to teach an elementary class the BC SPCA *Bite Free* program, explaining to younger students how to stay safe around dogs. Both girls are passionate animal guardians and feel strongly about helping kids have a great relationship with dogs. They learned teaching others about being kind to animals helped contribute to communities becoming more humane, to the benefit of all.



Beatrix Knolls' leadership class at Ecole Laronde in Surrey, shared their research projects with their entire school, covering a wide range of animal welfare issues. To do so, they held an 'Animal Welfare,' setting up their classroom so that students and teachers could walk around to see their displays and ask questions. By educating others, these students demonstrated their knowledge and passed on information so that others could make changes to improve the lives of animals.



Lauressa Tessarolo is a grade 5/6 teacher at AJ McLellan Elementary in Surrey. For several years, she has partnered with the BC SPCA to inspire her students to become animal welfare advocates. Every year, she kicks off her unit with a *You Can Make a Difference* presentation, and ends with a field trip to her local SPCA. Over the past three years, her classes have raised more than \$6,000 to donate to the animals. To reach this goal, some of her students even donated their birthday money and organized their own personal fundraisers.

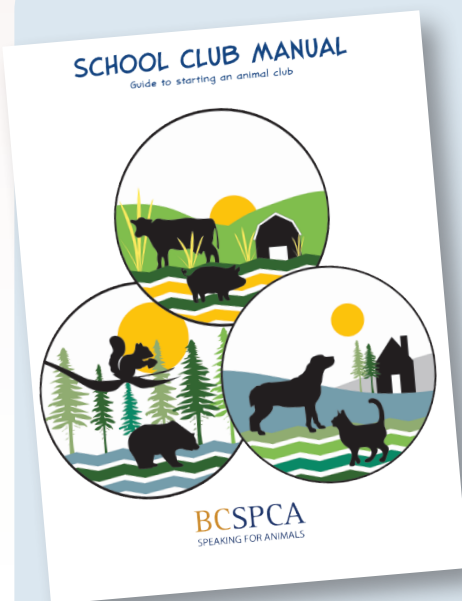
WHAT TEACHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS

"My students became so knowledgeable and passionate about advocating for animals. The SPCA presentation gave them an opportunity to zoom into the subject matter and really expand our thinking to do justice covering ideas and knowledge in-depth. I would definitely keep working with the SPCA each year with my class! Amazing program."

- Jade Song,
Samuel Brighthouse

"I liked that it introduced tough subjects in an age-appropriate way. My kids loved it!"

- Andrea Vanderkruyk,
South Nelson



"The students wanted to talk about all the images they had seen. They also wanted to discuss some of the issues that they learned about, and were not aware of, such as animal testing. I learned that

when motivated by important issues, kids are remarkable at making a difference!"

- Lauressa Tessarolo,
AJ McLellan



WAYS TO INSPIRE STUDENTS BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Encourage kids who have a keen interest in helping animals to start a school club.

The BC SPCA has created a manual to help them get started. This guide includes advice on how to recruit members and hold a first meeting as well as inspiration for different projects to suit all interests and skills. Earn badges with each type of project completed.

You can request a print copy by emailing us at pneuman@spca.bc.ca or download it yourself at spca.bc.ca/teacher.

Exploring animal issues through story



A great way to inspire students to explore animal issues is through story. For a list of BC SPCA-recommended **picture books**, **novels** and **non-fiction** that feature compassionate stories about animals, please see below. For full book synopses, visit spca.bc.ca/teacher.

Animals in entertainment/captivity

When Anju Loved Being an Elephant When Anju the elephant is captured from her home in Indonesia and sold into a circus, she questions whether she'll ever truly enjoy being an elephant again.

The One and Only Ivan Ivan, a wild-born gorilla, now lives at the Exit 8 Big Top Mall and Video Arcade. This great story explores how humans treat animals in captivity, and what we can do individually and collectively to improve their lives.

On Parade This informative book explores how keeping animals in entertainment is ultimately damaging to their welfare, while also offering alternatives to the continuation of the harmful practice.

Gaia Wild In this Jane Ray adventure, Jane fights for change in the movie business when she realizes what happens when animal actors are no longer considered useful in the industry.

Wild Animals in Captivity Delving into the experiences of a wide range of wild animals, this book examines what happens when wildlife are forced to live in unnatural spaces.

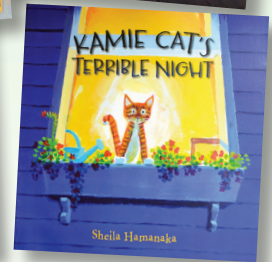
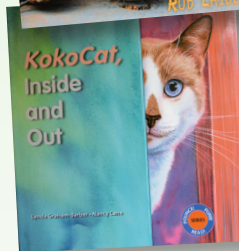
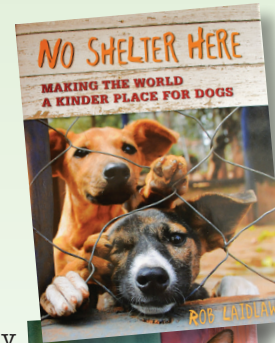
Other insightful books

The Animal Lover's Guide to Changing the World: Practical Advice and Everyday Actions for a More Sustainable, Humane, and Compassionate Planet This empowering guide provides advice for how each person can use practical, day to day actions to make a difference for animals.

Buddy Unchained Before being rescued, a young dog lives his life on the end of a chain. After being adopted into a loving home, he shares his story of neglect and rescue.

Always Blue for Chicu Chicu the parrot once lived in the wild, but was then captured and sold into the exotic pet trade. This beautiful, colourful story explores Chicu's frustration as he is passed around for 30 years, until finally he is able to find peace at a parrot sanctuary.

No Shelter Here: Making the World a Kinder Place for Dogs This book offers an overview of dog welfare all across the globe, giving youth a starting point to create positive change for our canine friends.



Outdoor versus Indoor Cats

Kamie Cat's Terrible Night

In this adorable picture book, a lost cat teaches kids the importance of treating pets well and highlights the bond between cats and their guardians.

The Happy Tale of Two Cats

This sweet and memorable story reveals what can happen when caring people band together to turn an animal's life around.

Koko Cat Inside and Out

Accompanied by beautiful illustrations, this intriguing story tells the tale of a curious indoor cat who escapes and suddenly becomes an outdoor cat. Koko encourages young readers to consider whether cats are safer inside or outside.



Kids helping animals

The Forgotten Rabbit

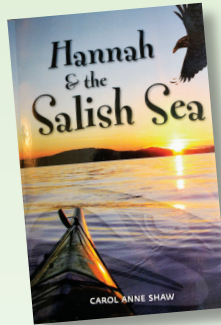
In this heartwarming story, a forgotten rabbit might just get the happy ending she deserves when she meets a little girl named Rosalita. Introducing readers to the topic of rabbit neglect, this story delves into what can sometimes happen once the excitement of a new pet has worn off.

Rabbit Rescuers When Kate and Zack see firsthand how dangerous the world can be for abandoned rabbits, they convince their friends to form an animal welfare club to help create positive change.

Fight for Life In the first novel of the inspiring Vet Volunteers series, animal lover Maggie suspects a puppy mill is responsible when several very sick puppies come into her grandma's animal clinic.

The Nine Lives of Travis Keating

When Travis Keating discovers a colony of abandoned cats, he must put his emotions aside in order to care for the animals. It is an experience that turns out to be more rewarding—and dangerous—than he initially expected.



Hannah and the Salish Sea In this exciting page-turner, three teenagers find themselves in the

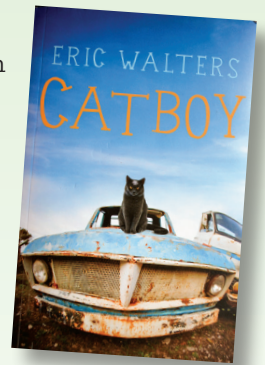
middle of a thrilling animal poaching mystery. The friends must put clues together—and themselves in danger—to find out how an accidental eagle death, the discovery of a dead bear cub and the arrival of strange new people in town are all connected.

Cat Champions: Caring for our Feline Friends

This inspiring book introduces readers to real-life cat champions – ordinary youths who are taking action in a variety of ways, including volunteering, fostering, adopting, fundraising and educating others about cat welfare issues.

Cat Boy When Taylor defends feral cats at the local junkyard from a building development that threatens their survival, a local bully gives him the nickname of “Catboy.”

Despite this, Taylor is determined to find a solution, vowing to save the lives of the cat community.



Wildlife/Environment



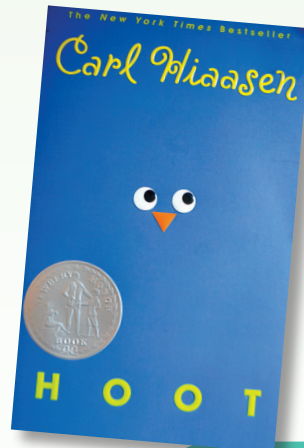
Scat In this thought-provoking mystery, a search for a missing teacher takes an unexpected turn when young sleuths discover a conspiracy involving an oil company and an endangered puma.

Hoot Roy's life changes for good when he gets involved with the fight to save the endangered burrowing owl. Inspiring and motivating, this story will encourage readers to fight for what they believe in.

Flight or Fight The first novel in the Jane Ray series, this fascinating story explores the devastation and cover-up around an oil spill that endangers the lives of many seabirds.

Crow Medicine In this Jane Ray adventure, the Urban Wildlife Rescue Centre makes the difficult decision to euthanize crows when the West Nile Virus threatens the safety of staff and volunteers. When the public responds with protests and threats, Jane and her friends embark on a trip to find a vaccine that may help save the crows.

Trash Talk This introduction to the environmental impact of trash will inspire readers to find creative solutions to dealing with what others may consider “garbage”. Artistic, imaginative and encouraging, this book gives true meaning to the phrase “one man's junk is another man's treasure.”



What's the Buzz?

Informative and accessible, this buzz-worthy book is filled to the brim with bee facts and tips on how to help bees survive.

Students can use past issues of **Bark!** magazine, found in your school library, to research different animal issues.





BC SPCA Programs and Resources

For more ways to incorporate animals into the classroom, check out our additional resources listed below at spca.bc.ca/teacher.

Curriculum Units for K-12

Kindness Counts (Gr. K-2) – Focuses on empathy for animals and people.

Making the Right Choice (Gr. 3-5) – Focuses on pet care, guardian responsibility and choosing the right pet.

You Can Make a Difference (Gr. 3-7) – Connects youth to animal issues in their community. Ideas for projects in which students can learn skills in responsible advocacy are included.

The Farm/Food Connection (Gr. 4-10) – Introduces students to farming practices, promotes critical thinking about where their food comes from and encourages respect for animals.

Including Animals in Social Justice (Gr. 6-12) – Uses animal issues to discuss social justice issues and eases students into more sensitive social justice topics such as racism, inequality and stereotyping.

Bite Free (all grades) – Teaches children how to behave safely around dogs and helps those afraid of dogs.

Cats in the Community (Gr. 4-6) – Uses pet overpopulation as the topic for lessons in science, social studies, math and language arts.

Presentations are available for these units in select locations in B.C. Visit spca.bc.ca/teacher for details.

Stay Informed with e-Teacher

Sign up for *e-Teacher*, our monthly newsletter for educators, to stay informed and get new ideas on bringing animal themes into your classroom. Receive book reviews, tips for class/school club projects, current event updates and reviews of each upcoming *Bark!* issue. You can even request a class set of *Bark!* Sign up at spca.bc.ca/news-events/enewsletters/e-teacher-newsletter



Additional Teacher Resources

e-Teacher – A free email newsletter for educators (10 issues/year).

Classroom animal guidelines – A guide to choosing and keeping a classroom pet.

Violence Link – Background resources on the link between animal abuse and family violence.

Cluck! The Life of an Egg-laying Chicken (video) – Tour an egg-laying chicken barn where you learn about the natural behaviours of hens and the different types of housing systems (available at spca.bc.ca/teacher under intermediate students and secondary students).

Bite Free (video) – A 9-minute video on dog bite safety (available at spca.bc.ca/teacher under primary students).

Book reviews – We have a list of recommended picture books, novels and non-fiction books, all of which have been reviewed and vetted for humane content.

Bark! – BC SPCA Kids Club magazine for ages 7-13.

AnimalSense – Adult-directed magazine featuring articles about the BC SPCA and animal issues.

Student Resources: spca.bc.ca/youth



School Club Manual – Ideas and activities to help students take action for animals.

Pet care guides – Care sheets on companion animals.

BC SPCA summer camps – Week-long day camps in communities across B.C.

School holiday workshops – Animal-themed activities at select BC SPCA shelters for students ages 7-11.

BC SPCA Kids Club – A \$15 annual membership for kids ages 13 and under, which includes *Bark!* (4 issues/year), e-Kids newsletter (12 issues/year) and a welcome package.

BCSPCA



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