

TeachKind

EMPATHY NOW

Why Humane Education Is Urgently Needed
and How to Implement It

An Educator's Guide
Created by the Teachers
of TeachKind

Dear Educator,

At TeachKind, we focus on helping teachers capitalize on children’s natural affinity for animals in order to foster empathy for *all* living, feeling beings. If we raise the next generation with compassion for animals, we will be taking a significant step toward reducing violence of all kinds and creating a kinder world. Sadly, the opposite is also true—when children become desensitized to the suffering of animals, the outcome can be dangerous for both animals *and* humans.

Since TeachKind sees reports of cruelty to animals perpetrated by young people around the U.S. on a regular basis, we have created “Empathy Now” to assist schools in addressing these incidents within their communities and in implementing humane education to help prevent future tragedies. This tool can guide your school district’s response to an incident of cruelty to animals and help you proactively implement humane education across the board.

In order to help schools see the bigger picture and understand the urgency of the situation, “Empathy Now” cites research showing how common it is for young people to witness or perpetrate animal abuse. It also features a list of free resources available to schools as well as testimonials from teachers who use TeachKind materials. Just as more people are beginning to recognize the kinds of trauma that children experience in their daily life, such as racial inequality and family violence, we must also acknowledge animal abuse as a form of trauma.

By incorporating humane education, schools have an opportunity to reach kids *before* they start to engage in violent behavior. TeachKind is here to help you ensure that all students benefit from a trauma-informed approach to education that includes compassion for animals.

Thank you for your concern about this important issue.

Sincerely,

TeachKind Staff



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
The Animal Abuse–Human Abuse Connection	3
Why Humane Education?	5
How Incorporating Compassion for Animals Into the Curriculum Helps Children, Too	5
A Tiered Approach to Humane Education	6
A Step-by-Step Strategy for Addressing Cruelty to Animals in a School Community	7
Step 1: Recognize That a Reported Case of Cruelty May Be Just the Tip of the Iceberg	7
Step 2: Talk About It	8
Discussing Cruelty to Animals With Elementary School Students	9
Discussing Cruelty to Animals With Middle and High School Students	10
What to Do if You Suspect a Student Has Hurt an Animal	10
Step 3: Implement Humane Education	11
Resources for K–12 Teachers	11
Resources for Elementary School Teachers	12
Resources for Middle and High School Teachers	14
Humane Education in Action	15
Real-Life Examples	15
Praise for Humane Education	16
Testimonials About TeachKind Resources	16
References	17

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to the deadly violence that has shaken schools in recent years, there's often a common thread in the history of the assailants: cruelty to animals.^{1,2} Most educators have heard of incidents in their own community in which children or teens have hurt animals, but some may think that these are isolated events and that the effects are insignificant. **Youth violence against animals is occurring with alarming frequency across the nation (visit TeachKind.org/Epidemic), and it's imperative that educators recognize that the consequences are destructive and far-reaching.**

As mental-health and law-enforcement experts well know, cruelty to animals and violence against humans are inextricably linked. Many people are aware that serial killers and school shooters—including Salvador Ramos,³ Payton Gendron,⁴ Nikolas Cruz,⁵ and Ethan Crumbley⁶—tend to have a history of cruelty to animals, and Sandy Hook Promise has cruelty to animals on its “10 Critical Warning Signs of Violence” list.⁷

PETA regularly hears disturbing reports of animal abuse by young people—and it's highly likely that countless incidents go unreported.

The Animal Abuse–Human Abuse Connection

Experts in law enforcement and psychology have reliably determined that cruelty to animals by young people is an early indicator of a tendency toward violence against humans. In other

Visit TeachKind.org/Epidemic for more information.

EPIDEMIC:

KIDS HURTING ANIMALS

As mental-health and law-enforcement experts well know, cruelty to animals and violence against humans are inextricably linked. Many educators are aware that serial killers and school shooters—including alleged killers [Salvador Ramos](#), [Payton Gendron](#), [Nikolas Cruz](#), and [Ethan Crumbley](#)—tend to have a history of cruelty to animals, and [Sandy Hook Promise](#) has cruelty to animals on its “10 Critical Warning Signs of Violence” list.

Forty-three percent of perpetrators of schoolyard massacres commit acts of cruelty to animals first. Educators can help prevent future tragedies by including kindness to animals in the curriculum. Amid the current epidemic of youth violence, PETA urges everyone to report every act of cruelty against animals and calls on authorities to take each animal abuse claim seriously—for the sake of the animal victims and to help prevent future harm. Lives may depend on it.

Map: USA Canada



Select your state or province to view its laws that pertain to teaching about kindness to animals as well as its incidents of youth violence against animals.

DON'T MISS THE SIGNS

Young people who abuse animals often go on to commit acts of violence against humans. Animals have often been targets of aggression prior to school shootings.

PREVENT FUTURE TRAGEDIES

Many states and provinces have enacted laws mandating instruction in kindness, compassion, and justice. By vigorously enforcing these laws, we can foster children's empathy for animals and prevent future acts

“Exposure to animal cruelty can have a significant impact on the developing child, including promoting desensitization and decreasing empathy ... and leading to the imitation of abusive behaviors.”

—Dr. Barbara Boat, Director of the Program on Childhood Trauma and Maltreatment at the University of Cincinnati and Executive Director of the Childhood Trust at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center

words, children and teens who commit acts of cruelty to animals don’t always stop there—many move on to harming humans. Research into the early lives of violent criminal offenders shows what the future could look like if young people don’t develop the necessary empathy skills. Studies have shown that violent and aggressive criminals are more likely to have abused animals as children than those who are considered nonaggressive.^{8,9,10,11} In fact, many serial murderers began their violent behavior by abusing animals.¹²

The FBI uses reports of animal abuse when gauging the threat potential of suspected and known criminals and classifies cruelty to animals alongside felony crimes like arson, burglary, assault, and homicide.¹³ The American Psychiatric Association identifies it as one of the diagnostic criteria for conduct disorders.¹⁴

Unfortunately, children’s violence toward animals often goes unexamined—until that aggression is directed toward humans. According to StopBullying.gov, research shows that when adults respond quickly and consistently to bullying, they can stop this type of behavior over time. Bullying doesn’t apply only to hurting humans—the act of intentionally harming any living, feeling being stems

“There is a common theme to all of the shootings of recent years. You have a child who has symptoms of aggression toward his peers, an interest in fire, cruelty to animals, social isolation, and many warning signs that the school has ignored.”

—Dr. Harold S. Koplewicz,
Director of the Child Study Center
at New York University

from the same dynamics: “[A]nimal abuse and bullying both involve an intention and desire to inflict physical, emotional or psychological harm on the victim and a power imbalance where the perpetrator is more powerful than the victim.”¹⁵

Studies show that children who witness animal abuse by someone they know are more likely to commit acts of cruelty themselves.^{16,17,18,19} And research indicates that a large proportion of young people have witnessed animal abuse.^{20,21,22,23}

A report by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child recommends eliminating practices and policies that are not “in the best interests of the child, including societal violence against animals.”²⁴ While many educators are aware that serial killers²⁵ and school shooters^{26,27} tend to have a history of cruelty to animals, they must also recognize that it is common for young people to have witnessed animal abuse,^{28,29,30,31} that doing so is a form of trauma,³² and that children who have observed acts of cruelty to animals are more likely to abuse animals themselves.^{33,34,35,36} The most egregious cases of cruelty to animals make headlines, but many children encounter animal abuse that goes unreported. **This is why schools must urgently implement preventive measures such as incorporating humane education for all students, rather than merely reacting to reported incidents of cruelty committed by students.**

It’s important for schools to enhance their social-emotional learning (SEL) programs by incorporating lessons on showing empathy, compassion, and kindness to *all* sentient beings—**humane education has the potential to save both human and animal lives.**

WHY HUMANE EDUCATION?

How Incorporating Compassion for Animals Into the Curriculum Helps Children, Too

Incorporating compassion for animals into classroom curricula fosters prosocial behavior in children,^{37,38} and activities that focus on compassion for animals can help students

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMS



strengthen core SEL competencies and shape them into responsible, critically thinking, and empathetic individuals. It can also motivate and engage students academically.³⁹ Humane education has also been shown to boost reading comprehension.⁴⁰ Children’s natural affinity for animals can inspire them to extend their own learning. You may see reluctant readers seeking out books about animals after learning about their suffering or apathetic learners conducting their own research because they’ve become inspired to help animals.

Some states, including Florida and New York, have specific provisions in their education laws that require schools to teach kids to be kind to animals. In addition, many states legally mandate character education, and the rest support character education efforts without legislation. You can find a list of these types of laws by state at TeachKind.org/CharacterEd.

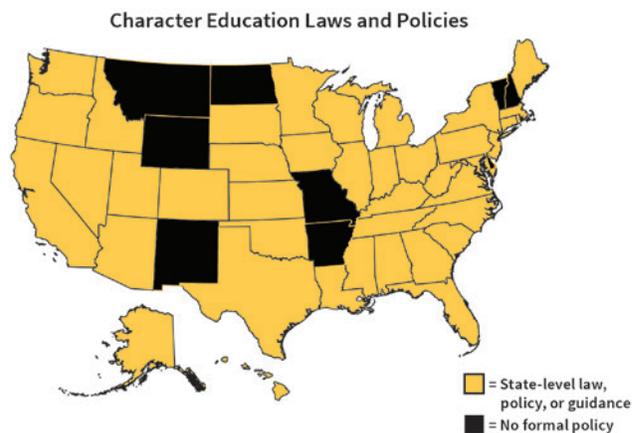
Character education involves teaching children to understand, care about, and act on core ethical values such as respect for others, justice, and responsibility for self and others. So fostering kindness to animals *should* be a natural component of these efforts. We can capitalize on children’s natural interest in animals as a vehicle for character development.

A Tiered Approach to Humane Education

Humane education is best designed as a multitiered approach. The first tier is delivering empathy training to the whole student population as an opportunity to reach children *before* they engage in abusive behavior. The inclusion of structured questioning within a humane education program enables children to disclose animal abuse occurring in their homes

DOES YOUR STATE MANDATE CHARACTER EDUCATION?

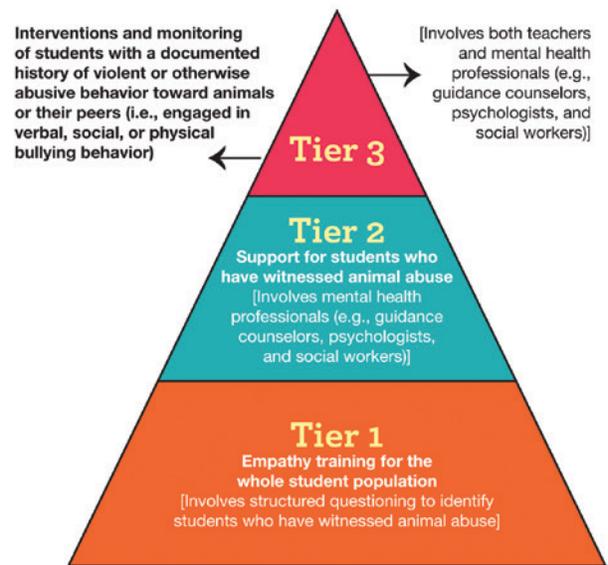
Visit TeachKind.org/CharacterEd



DID YOU KNOW?

- FLORIDA:** Required instruction includes “[k]indness to animals.”
- NEW YORK:** Schools are required to provide instruction in the “humane treatment and protection of animals.”

and communities.⁴¹ The second tier is supporting students who have witnessed animal abuse and involves mental health professionals (e.g., guidance counselors, psychologists, and social workers). At the third tier, a team of teachers and mental health support staff conduct interventions and monitor students who have documented histories of violent or otherwise abusive behavior toward animals or their peers (i.e., those who have engaged in verbal, social, or physical bullying behavior).



A STEP-BY-STEP STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING CRUELTY TO ANIMALS IN A SCHOOL COMMUNITY

You can use TeachKind’s straightforward three-step process to respond to youth violence against animals in your community in a healthy and constructive way by implementing humane education across the board. In doing so, you’re helping to prevent future acts of violence, thus enhancing the safety of all individuals in your school and community.

Step 1: Recognize That a Reported Case of Cruelty May Be Just the Tip of the Iceberg

Animal abuse as it occurs in families and communities often is overlooked as a form of trauma. Because of its strong association with other forms of family and community violence, understanding the occurrence and effect of animal abuse can lead to earlier and more effective identification of children and families at risk and improve the interventions they receive.⁴²

— *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 2019

When a child commits a violent act toward an animal and it gets media attention, most educators are horrified and understand that this individual’s behavior could get worse without intervention. But because research suggests that young people witness and/or perpetrate animal abuse far more frequently than is reported,^{43,44,45,46} it is incumbent upon schools to address this major concern year-round.

Students need the trusted adults in their lives to help them navigate troubling events such as animal abuse by a family member or friend. Educators can provide students with the

necessary support: **By choosing to discuss an incident of cruelty to animals in your community with students in an age-appropriate way, you're signaling to them that what happened matters.** Furthermore, focusing on the abuse may deter students from committing a similar act in the future. This can be a part of your trauma-informed practices.

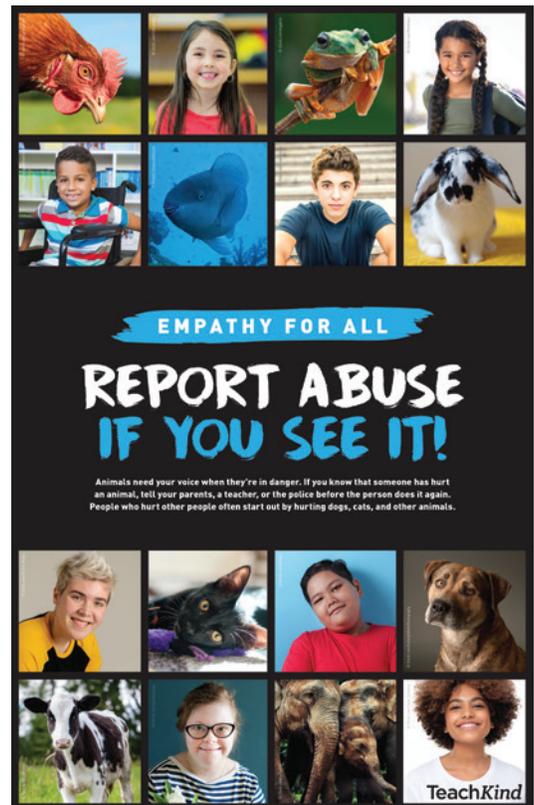
You can't change the fact that animal abuse has occurred in your community—but you can help make sure the future is different. Use this as an opportunity to start integrating humane education into your curriculum. Don't simply wait to react to the next violent incident—implement an empathy training program now. TeachKind can help you.

Step 2: Talk About It

Students of all ages may hear about the incident on the news, online, or by word of mouth. A reported case of cruelty to animals in your community should be treated like any other tragedy—seriously, rapidly, and with sensitivity.

It doesn't matter where in your district the offender lives or attends school or how old the person is. All that matters is that this tragedy took place in your community, so schools should use the incident to engage all students in a discussion about what to do if they witness animal abuse—because there's a good chance that they have.

TeachKind can send you free copies of our “Empathy for All: Report Abuse if You See It!” poster (or you can visit TeachKind.org/EmpathyForAllPoster to download a copy) to help start the discussion. Taking the time to discuss the event with your students should be a districtwide priority. This will communicate to them that cruelty to animals is a serious issue that requires our attention and that it's important to talk about distressing events that take place in the community. It will also go a long way toward encouraging them to report cruelty when they see it and, hopefully, in preventing violence against animals or humans in the future. Some students may have many questions, whereas others may not want to talk about



the event at all. Others may wish to speak privately, in which case arrangements should be made promptly for them to talk with a guidance counselor or school psychologist. In all cases, it should be made clear to all students that you and other staff are available to talk—even long after the event has passed, as it may take some students a while to process their emotions.

Discussing Cruelty to Animals With Elementary School Students

Elementary school teachers can address a case of cruelty to animals with their students during a time when they would normally talk to the whole class—circle time, morning meeting time, or morning calendar time, for example.

- Begin by making a general statement such as “You may have heard that someone in our community has hurt an animal on purpose, and that’s never OK.” For older elementary school students, it may be helpful to define the intentional harming of animals as cruelty to animals. Make clear that this is a serious problem and that it’s against the law to abuse animals.
- Assure students that they are safe and that teachers and other school staff are available if they ever need help with or want to talk about something scary that has happened in their lives. If the offender has been identified, it may be comforting for students to know that the person has been apprehended. Depending on the situation, it may also be appropriate to assure students that the offender will be punished.
- Ask children what they’ve heard about the incident. Be prepared to answer questions on matters such as why and how the person hurt the animal. You can say, “I don’t know why anyone would hurt an animal, but the police are doing their best to make sure that this never happens again.” While we encourage teachers to provide accurate information and not to avoid discussing the issue of cruelty to animals altogether, we advise using professional judgment and taking into consideration students’ age and development when choosing which details to share. Some students may make connections to cruelty to animals that they’ve witnessed and reveal this during the discussion, so it may be necessary to contact humane authorities. (If they’re unresponsive, please contact PETA at CIDInfo@peta.org.) It’s also important to recognize that animal abuse may be an indication of other violence in the home—if you suspect that to be the case, contact a child abuse hotline to report the incident. Subsequently, follow up with your school’s guidance counselor and/or social worker and the hotline to confirm that the incident is being investigated.
- Share your emotions with students, and invite them to share theirs. You can say, “It’s normal to feel sad or angry when someone is unkind to someone else—it means that you care.” Inform them that talking about their emotions with a trusted adult can be helpful.

- Tell students that they can help prevent future harm to others by reporting animal abuse to an adult, like a teacher or a parent, whenever they see it. You can use TeachKind’s “Empathy for All” poster to encourage them to be brave and speak up for those in danger (visit [TeachKind.org/EmpathyForAllPoster](https://teachkind.org/EmpathyForAllPoster) to download a copy).

Discussing Cruelty to Animals With Middle and High School Students

Middle and high school teachers can use the time at the beginning of class when they would normally make announcements to address a case of cruelty to animals with their students.

- Begin by acknowledging that students may have already heard about the incident, given their access to online news sources, including social media. Make a general statement such as “Some of you may have heard that a student from our school district hurt an animal recently.” If necessary, provide additional details and clear up any misunderstandings that may have occurred because of hearsay.
- Without naming the offender(s), invite students to discuss their feelings about the incident and the animal abuse–human abuse connection (visit [TeachKind.org/AbuseConnection](https://teachkind.org/AbuseConnection)). You can pose questions like “How do you think cruelty to animals should be addressed in our society?” and “What can we as a community do to prevent future acts of violence?” If students are reluctant to talk, have them take 10 minutes to write a journal entry detailing their thoughts. If you suspect that any students are reluctant to talk or write because of having witnessed or perpetrated cruelty to animals, let them know that a guidance counselor or social worker is available to speak with them. Follow up to obtain details about any animal who might be in danger so that you can ensure that humane authorities have been alerted.
- Encourage students to report animal abuse to local law-enforcement officials or school staff whenever they see it. Assure them that they can do so anonymously. You can use TeachKind’s “Empathy for All” poster to encourage them to be brave and speak up for those in danger (visit [TeachKind.org/EmpathyForAllPoster](https://teachkind.org/EmpathyForAllPoster) to download a copy).

What to Do if You Suspect a Student Has Hurt an Animal

If you suspect that a student might be involved in a case of cruelty to animals, get more details about the incident from the child and report it to school officials. Also report your concerns regarding the animal to humane authorities (and if they’re unresponsive, e-mail PETA at CIDInfo@peta.org). If you suspect that the child is experiencing violence at home, contact a child abuse hotline to report the incident, then later, follow up with your school’s guidance counselor and/or social worker and the hotline to confirm that they’re investigating it.

The National Link Coalition provides a directory of telephone numbers for reporting suspected animal, child, elder, or domestic abuse, which can be accessed at [TeachKind.org/ReportAbuseByState](https://teachkind.org/ReportAbuseByState).

Step 3: Implement Humane Education

In addition to taking the above steps to address specific incidents of cruelty to animals, schools can implement humane education across the curriculum as part of an SEL program that students can benefit from not just psychologically but also academically.

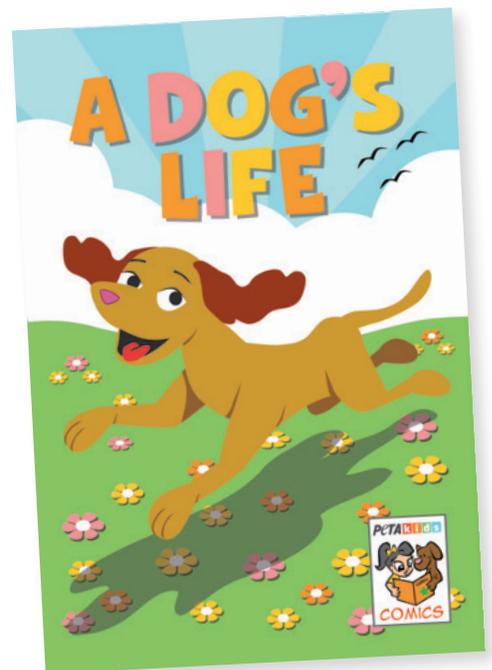
As an educator, you have a significant impact on students' lives. **When young children learn kindness to animals, they take a key step toward rejecting all forms of violence, bullying, and hatred in their adolescence and beyond.** The most effective way to implement humane education is to integrate it into the curriculum daily.

Resources for K–12 Teachers

Teachers don't have to try to fit a lesson on kindness into an already jam-packed day. As former classroom teachers, we know that teachers don't have much spare time. It's possible to teach compassion and meet other educational objectives simultaneously. At TeachKind, we call that "feeding two birds with one scone." You can address many academic learning standards while incorporating animal issues into lessons in most subjects, including science, reading, writing, math, and art.

TeachKind offers a variety of free standards-aligned lessons, activities, and resources that promote compassion, empathy, and kindness toward all sentient beings. Our materials cover a wide variety of issues with age-appropriate language and images.

You can use these humane resources in a variety of ways for academic purposes while also fostering empathy in students—these two goals are by no means mutually exclusive. You can also download and copy dozens of free worksheets, graphic organizers, and other classroom materials at [TeachKind.org](https://teachkind.org).

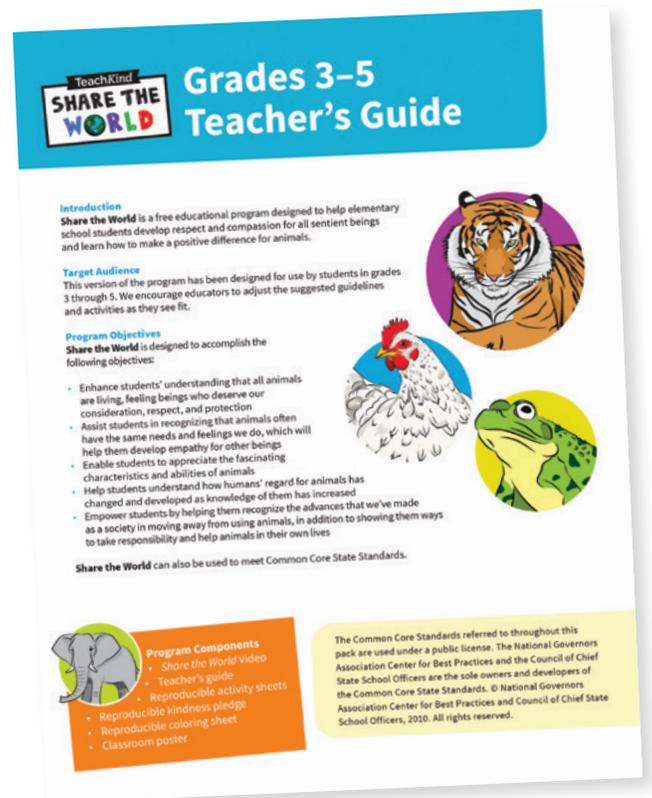


It's easy to create lessons that merge academic skills with humane education. You can view TeachKind's *free* "Key Element of a Humane Lesson: Help Animals" webinar at TeachKind.org/HumaneLessonWebinar for a step-by-step guide to creating humane lessons and to see how discussing animal rights issues and meeting academic requirements can go hand in hand. It's only about 30 minutes long, so it can easily be incorporated into your next staff-development training. While the examples in this webinar focus on elementary content, the simple steps for creating a humane lesson apply to all grade levels and content areas.

Resources for Elementary School Teachers

• 'Share the World' Program Kit (ShareTheWorld.org)

Because schools around the country are facing an epidemic of violence and bullying, it's never been more important to teach students the importance of having compassion and empathy when interacting with each other and animals. TeachKind's Share the World program kit is *free* to all teachers—but the lessons are invaluable. Using fun analogies, easy-to-understand ethics, cute and inspiring animal videos, and true stories of animals who overcame adversity, Share the World teaches students how similar we are to all the animals, large and small, with whom we share the world. The activities encourage children to consider how animals are treated and how they would feel in an animal's place. This type of perspective-taking helps build empathy. The kit contains everything that a teacher needs in order to implement lessons on empathy, kindness, and compassion in an accessible and fun way and can be used to meet academic standards.



• *Unlocking the Animal World: Incredible Facts and How Kids Can Be Superheroes for Animals* by Ingrid Newkirk

You can order a free class set of this attention-grabbing book and use the accompanying chapter questions and worksheets (downloadable at TeachKind.org/Unlocking) to foster compassion for animals while helping students develop academic skills. These worksheets include passages from the book so that students can practice observing text structure, identifying the main idea, summarizing, and making inferences.

As an informational text about animals, *Unlocking the Animal World* is unique because it goes beyond providing information about what animals look like, what they eat, and where they naturally live. It distills years of research on animals' lives into bite-size nuggets of remarkable discoveries that reveal animals as astounding individuals with intelligence, emotions, intricate communication networks, and myriad abilities. It engages children with inspiring true stories and facts about animals' lives, including that some fish create artwork and “sing” underwater, crows hold funerals, and gorillas play tag.

- **Our Primary School Kit for K–5 Educators**

This kit includes *A Cow's Life*, *A Chicken's Life*, *A Dog's Life*, and *A Rat's Life* comic books; *Let Them Be Free* activity booklets; copies of the magazine *The Kids' Guide to Helping Animals*; and PETA Kids sticker sheets. All kits also come with TeachKind's signature elementary program Share the World (see above). Many of these resources are available in Spanish as well.

- **Professional Development Workshop**

TeachKind can even come to you to deliver districtwide training! (We're also available to do virtual training sessions.) Our interactive training sessions for teachers demonstrate how to use lessons that simultaneously teach academic skills and encourage empathy toward others, including animals. We share compelling examples of ways in which humane education can foster prosocial behavior and help students grow academically.

While these workshops are focused on English language arts, they include interdisciplinary connections to science and social studies concepts. All participants receive a free Share the World kit geared toward the elementary level. These materials can help schools meet SEL program goals.



You could also incorporate TeachKind’s “A Guide to Promoting Empathy and Motivating Students” video series into your next staff-development session (visit TeachKind.org/EmpathyVideoSeries).



Resources for Middle and High School Teachers

- **Challenging Assumptions: A Social Justice–Themed Unit (ChallengingAssumptions.org)**

These lessons are designed to help students move beyond the assumptions that they might make about animals and become more perceptive, thoughtful, and analytical about the reasons why people engage in certain kinds of behavior. They can serve as a preliminary step in helping students determine which actions are in line with their belief system and how society can challenge speciesism—the misguided belief that all other animal species are inferior to humans.

- ***Animalkind* Student-Led Book Club (TeachKind.org/Animalkind)**

Having students lead and participate in a discussion about the book *Animalkind* is an excellent way to get them thinking critically about the concept of social justice as it relates to humans and other animals. TeachKind’s Student-Led Book Club is a thought-provoking activity that promotes interest in the findings that have emerged about who animals are—intelligent, aware, and empathetic beings. The book includes a guide to exciting new tools that provide alternatives to using and abusing animals. It can inspire rich and meaningful dialog in the classroom.

- **Debate Kits (TeachKind.org/DebateKits)**

We know that many middle and high school educators assign debates on topical issues in order to help their students learn to speak and write persuasively, develop research skills, and recognize multiple sides of a controversial or multifaceted issue. TeachKind’s debate kit series lists a variety of resources that can be shared with students to support the argument that animals are not ours to use in any way. Our debate kits cover a wide range of animal rights issues, from the effects of animal agriculture on the environment to the inherent cruelty of keeping marine mammals in amusement parks. These lessons build students’ research, argumentative writing, and presentational skills while simultaneously promoting empathy for all sentient beings. Resources included in each kit walk students through the process of forming an opinion, supporting it with well-documented evidence, anticipating a counterargument, and preparing a rebuttal—all necessary steps for healthy conflict resolution and the exchange of ideas.

HUMANE EDUCATION IN ACTION

Real-Life Examples

Humane education looks different in every school, but the reward is always the same—students who demonstrate empathy for all living, feeling beings and a school climate rooted in compassion. Here are just a few ways educators have incorporated kindness toward animals into their teaching:

- TeachKind has worked with the Equity, Diversity, and School Climate department of Broward County Public Schools—the sixth-largest public school district in the country, where the deadly shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, occurred—to provide all elementary schools with free materials to foster compassion for all sentient beings. These resources have been well received by educators and students alike.
- TeachKind has also worked with the Louisville Municipal School District in Mississippi to implement humane education. We’ve provided all schools in the district and some middle school teachers in the district with free Share the World kits, conducted a teacher workshop, participated in professional learning community meetings, and raised the funds to supply one school with humane education books for each teacher’s classroom library.
- In spring 2016, a group of boys in Norfolk, Virginia, harmed a turtle. After court proceedings, one of them participated in the Virginia Beach SPCA’s Animals Cultivating Empathy (ACE) intervention program, developed in part by a former classroom teacher. He spent the summer doing various shelter tasks; received daily character education lessons in compassion, respect, and responsibility; and spent a considerable amount of time grooming and socializing animals awaiting adoption (under direct and constant supervision), including a turtle named Woodstock. There was a significant improvement in his attitude toward animals by the end of the program. “I truly felt [he] came to understand that animals are capable of feeling, physically and emotionally,” says Kathleen Shambo, former director of humane education at the Virginia Beach SPCA. “He made the connection between his caring interactions with Woodstock [and] the turtle that had been abused—a lesson we hope he will carry on throughout his lifetime.”

PRAISE FOR HUMANE EDUCATION

Testimonials About TeachKind Resources

“Thank you for sharing these resources with us. We see a definite value in educating students to be kind and see where the ‘Share the World’ curriculum topics can fit into our current Social Emotional and Science curriculums. The ‘Empathy for All’ posters are also a nice visual for classrooms.

We are excited to explore the possibility of integrating the ‘Share the World’ Week resources into the many other kindness activities we currently do with our students, such as Start with Hello Week.”

—**Lori Botkin, Assistant Superintendent,
Elementary Education, Kings Canyon
Unified School District**

“I was able to integrate Share the World during a science ... unit [in which] students were learning about animals. The kids were super-excited to see the video with animals, and it led to awesome discussions in our classroom. I would highly recommend sharing this video and the lessons—not only to supplement science lessons and have valuable discussions but [also] to help teach students about kindness and the Golden Rule.

Great resources!”

—**Melissa Phillips, Elementary
School Teacher, Virginia**

“TeachKind provides resources, tips, and great videos about ways we can display love and compassion for all living beings in the classroom. Since the start of my career, I’ve abandoned harmful practices, unlearned and relearned, and found ways to incorporate these resources into my lessons. TeachKind has provided our classroom with books, posters, stickers, and Ratty, our class [stuffed animal] ‘pet,’ – and I’ve seen critical thinking and empathy bloom in my students.”

—**Josie McClain, Elementary School
Teacher, Arizona**

“I just wanted to thank you for the Share the World unit and for the lesson resources available for teachers. I am an elementary school teacher, and my students loved the Share the World unit. I am going to do the ‘Woody: A Survivor’s Story’ lesson next. It is so important for us educators to teach our students how important it is to protect animals and be a voice for them. Please continue to send me lessons like these. I believe they truly do make a difference.”

—**Natasha Vangor, Elementary School
Teacher, New York**

“TeachKind is the single resource in my class that brings humane education and animal issues into perspective for my students and leads them through the thought process to develop empathy and compassion. The information provides important lessons for the students and provides inspiration for them to be better global citizens. TeachKind provides engaging and thought-provoking materials and has given them opportunity to self-reflect on how they might develop solutions to animal and environmental issues and start putting them into action. TeachKind grants them the ability to evaluate their own lives and how they fit into the global picture. I love using TeachKind resources.”

—**Gail Frydkowski, High School English Teacher, New York**

References

- ¹Verlinden, S., Hersen, M., & Thomas, J. (2000). Risk factors in school shootings. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 20(1), 3–56.
- ²Arluke, A., & Madfis, E. (2014). Animal abuse as a warning sign of school massacres: A critique and refinement. *Homicide Studies*, 18(1), 7–22.
- ³Katersky, A., Rubin, O., Steakin, W., & Hutchinson, B. (2022). Animal abuse probed in Uvalde and Buffalo suspected shooters' pasts. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/buffalo-uvalde-suspected-shooters-allegedly-abused-animals/story?id=84970582>.
- ⁴Griffin, A. (2022). Alleged Buffalo shooter Payton Gendron once beheaded a cat, journal entry shows. <https://nypost.com/2022/05/17/alleged-buffalo-shooter-payton-gendron-once-beheaded-cat-journal-entry-shows/>.
- ⁵Sharp, R. (2022). Nikolas Cruz acts out how he skinned lizards alive aged four in chilling video shown at Parkland trial. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/crime/nikolas-cruz-parkland-lizards-psychiatrist-b2176663.html>.
- ⁶Ikononova, V. (2022). Prosecutor: Ethan Crumbley tortured animals, kept severed bird head in bedroom for months. https://www.deadlinedetroit.com/articles/29623/prosecutor_ethan_crumbley_tortured_animals_kept_severed_bird_head_in_bedroom_for_six_months.
- ⁷Sandy Hook Promise. (2023). Know the signs: You can prevent gun violence and other harmful acts. <https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/blog/teacher-resources/know-the-signs-of-gun-violence/>.
- ⁸Merz-Perez, L., Heide, K., & Silverman, I.J. (2001). Childhood cruelty to animals and subsequent violence against humans. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 45(5), 556–573.
- ⁹Trentham, C.E., Hensley, C., & Policastro, C. (2018). Recurrent childhood animal cruelty and its link to recurrent adult interpersonal violence. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 62(8), 2345–2356.
- ¹⁰Hensley, C., Tallichet, S.E., & Dutkiewicz, E.L. (2009). Recurrent childhood animal cruelty: Is there a relationship to adult recurrent interpersonal violence? *Criminal Justice Review*, 34(2), 248–257.
- ¹¹Tallichet, S.E., & Hensley, C. (2004). Exploring the link between recurrent acts of childhood and adolescent animal cruelty and subsequent violent crime. *Criminal Justice Review*, 29(2), 304–316.
- ¹²Wright, J., & Hensley, C. (2003). From animal cruelty to serial murder: Applying the graduation hypothesis. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 47(1), 72–88.
- ¹³Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2016, February 1). Tracking animal cruelty: FBI collecting data on crimes against animals. [fbi.gov/news/stories/tracking-animal-cruelty](https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/tracking-animal-cruelty).
- ¹⁴American Psychiatric Association. (2018, January). What are disruptive, impulse-control and conduct disorders? [psychiatry.org/patients-families/disruptive-impulsive-control-and-conduct-disorders/what-are-disruptive-impulse-control-and-conduct-disorders](https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/disruptive-impulsive-control-and-conduct-disorders/what-are-disruptive-impulse-control-and-conduct-disorders).
- ¹⁵Gullone, E., & Robertson, N. (2008). The relationship between bullying and animal abuse behaviors in adolescents: The importance of witnessing animal abuse. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 29(5), 371–379.
- ¹⁶Thompson, K.L., & Gullone, E. (2006). An investigation into the association between the witnessing of animal abuse and adolescents' behavior toward animals. *Society & Animals*, 14(3), 221–243.
- ¹⁷Hensley, C., & Tallichet, S.E. (2005). Learning to be cruel? Exploring the onset and frequency of animal cruelty. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 49(1), 37–47.
- ¹⁸Baldry, A.C. (2003). Animal abuse and exposure to interparental violence in Italian youth. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 18(3), 258–281.
- ¹⁹DeGue, S., & DiLillo, D. (2009). Is animal cruelty a “red flag” for family violence? Investigating co-occurring violence toward children, partners, and pets. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 24(6), 1036–1056.
- ²⁰Thompson & Gullone.
- ²¹Baldry.
- ²²Gullone & Robertson.
- ²³Henry, B.C. (2004). The relationship between animal cruelty, delinquency, and attitudes toward the treatment of animals. *Society & Animals*, 12(3), 185–207.
- ²⁴Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2021, June). *Concluding observations on the combined fourth to sixth periodic reports of Tunisia*.
- ²⁵Verlinden *et al.*
- ²⁶Verlinden *et al.*
- ²⁷Arluke & Madfis.
- ²⁸Thompson & Gullone.
- ²⁹Baldry.
- ³⁰Gullone & Robertson.
- ³¹Henry.
- ³²Randour, M.L., Smith-Blackmore, M., Blaney, N., DeSousa, D., & Guyony, A.A. (2019). Animal abuse as a type of trauma: Lessons for human and animal service professionals. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 1–12.
- ³³Thompson & Gullone.
- ³⁴Hensley & Tallichet, 2005.
- ³⁵Baldry.
- ³⁶DeGue & DiLillo.
- ³⁷Samuels, W.E., Meers, L.L., & Normando, S. (2016). Improving upper elementary students' humane attitudes and prosocial behaviors through an in-class humane education program. *Anthrozoös*, 29(4), 597–610.
- ³⁸Samuels, W.E. (2018). Nurturing kindness naturally: A humane education program's effect on the prosocial behavior of first and second graders across China. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 91, 49–64.
- ³⁹O'Connor, J. (2018). A qualitative case study of teacher perceptions of the motivation of students in humane education (doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
- ⁴⁰O'Connor, J., Samuels, W.E. (2021). Humane Education's Effect on Middle School Student Motivation and Standards-Based Reading Assessment. *Social Sciences*. 10(10), 376.
- ⁴¹Boat, B.W. (1995). The relationship between violence to children and violence to animals—an ignored link? *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 10(2), 229–235.
- ⁴²Randour *et al.*
- ⁴³Thompson & Gullone.
- ⁴⁴Baldry.
- ⁴⁵Gullone & Robertson.
- ⁴⁶Henry.

TeachKind

501 Front St., Norfolk, VA 23510

757-622-PETA • Info@teachkind.org • TeachKind.org • Instagram and TikTok: [@teachkindteachers](https://www.instagram.com/teachkindteachers) • TeachKind.org/TPT