Using Humane Education to Redefine Our Relationship with Animals

Meena Alagappan
Executive Director
HEART (Humane Education Advocates Reaching Teachers)
HEART’s mission is to develop a generation of compassionate youth who create positive change for animals, people, and the natural world.

- Nonprofit public charity
- Incorporated in 2001
- Based in New York
- Offices in Chicago and Indianapolis
Comprehensive Humane Education

- Animal protection
- Social justice
- Environmental ethics
- Explores interconnections
Desirable Outcomes

- Critical thinking skills
- Empathy
- Compassion
- Global citizenship

Artwork by HEART student Christine Jacinto
Violence Link

• Clinical case studies
• FBI tracks animal cruelty
• American Psychiatric Association lists animal abuse as criterion in diagnosing youth conduct disorders
Overview of Humane Education Laws

• New York
• California
• Florida
• Washington
• Pennsylvania
• Illinois
• Maine
• New Jersey
• Oregon
Related Legislation & Policies

- Character education
- Arbor and Bird Day
- Conservation Day
- Environmental education
- Student choice (dissection)
- Vivisection ban
Challenges with Implementation

- Varying definitions
- Lack of institutionalization
- State laws not enforced
- Limited professional development
- No required credentials
- Dearth of data
California Hate Violence Prevention Act
Education Code 233.5

233.5. (a) Each teacher shall endeavor to impress upon the minds of the pupils the principles of morality, truth, justice, patriotism, and a true comprehension of the rights, duties, and dignity of American citizenship, and the meaning of equality and human dignity, including the promotion of harmonious relations, kindness toward domestic pets and the humane treatment of living creatures, to teach them to avoid idleness, profanity, and falsehood, and to instruct them in manners and morals and the principles of a free government.
California House Resolution 28

• Observance of laws and policies relating to humane treatment of animals

• Implementing statewide or districtwide “humane education days” and involving nonprofit organizations

• Superintendent encouraged to incorporate humane education in the core curriculum
Section 809 of NYS Education Law

- Mandatory
- Elementary schools
- Humane treatment of animals
- Importance of spaying and neutering
- Infusion into standard subjects
- Implies weekly instruction
- Penalty provision
NY Educ Law Section 809 problems:

- Lack of awareness
- No funding
- No teacher training
- No prescribed course of study
- Limitation to elementary schools
New York State

• A. 693 - Audit

• A. 2082 - Secondary school expansion

• A. 5462 - Teacher training
New York City

• Res. 1541 – Calls on NYC DOE to increase compliance
• Int. 1465 – requires implementation data from NYC DOE
HEART’s Services

• Direct Student Programs
• Educator Resources
• Teacher Training & Consultation
Our Reach

• Taught over 50,000 students

• Trained over 2,500 teachers

• Partnered with over 200 schools

• Provided our curriculum to over 89,000 educator subscribers
Student-Led Projects

- Campaign to get bodegas to offer fresh foods
- Started the Anti-Factory Farming Coalition
- Advocated for a climate recovery resolution
- Organized a fundraiser for Haiti restoration projects
Evaluations of 10-Lesson Program

1) 1000 NYC students. Study conducted by Dr. Ann Higgins, Associate Chair, Graduate Psychology Dept, Fordham U.

Knowledge: child labor conditions, animal cruelty laws, effect of garbage on animals and environment, needs of wild animals, unique abilities of animals, habitat destruction, causes of bullying, greenhouse effect, and welfare of farm and companion animals

Attitudes: concern about air and water pollution and how people treat all types of animals

Behaviors: setting good example, making changes in daily choices, joining clubs to help animals and the environment, writing elected officials

2) 300 students in Chicago and NYC. Published study:

Lesson 5: Friends on the Farm

Overview: Students will learn about how farm animals are similar to and different from pets. Ask students what animals are pets. Students will determine the origins of certain foods. Then they will think about how animals are raised on factory farms before watching a video.

Objectives
- Students will be able to:
  - Describe the conditions under which animals on factory farms are raised.
  - Analyze meat and its impact on factory farming.

Time Needed: 45 minutes
1 class period

Materials
- The Meat Industry Video
  - Produced by Peace River Ranchers, Envirosafe Inc, in collaboration with ECOBASE.
  - www.sustainablemeat.com
  - www.animalindustry.com
- Farm Animal Companion Contract
  - Understanding, Caring, Committing

EVIDENCE
- Students will be expected to:
  - Make a simple story about a factory farmed animal.

Wilma Wolter, Project Coordinator

Adaptation
- "The Meat Industry Video" shows how animals are killed in a factory farm.
- "The Story Project" allows students to create a visual story about a factory farmed animal.

Background:
- "The Meat Industry Video" shows how animals are killed in a factory farm.
- "The Story Project" allows students to create a visual story about a factory farmed animal.

Target Audience:
- Students will be able to:
  - Describe the conditions under which animals on factory farms are raised.
  - Analyze meat and its impact on factory farming.

Too Many Puppies?

Name: [Student Name]

Date: [Date]

Cats:
- 2.8
- 1.3

Dogs:
- 5.6
- 1.3

- Total: 7.9

Reasons:
- 2.8: Not interested in taking care of a pet
- 1.3: Cost
- 5.6: Allergic to animals
- 1.3: Too much work

Lucky's Story:
- July 13, 2013
- 5 and a half months old
- Lived for 5 years
- Fifty puppies
- Last litter of 13 puppies

Questions:
1. How many puppies did Lucky have in her first litter?
2. How many puppies did Lucky have in her last litter?
3. How many puppies did Lucky have in total?
4. What is the average number of puppies that Lucky had over her lifetime?
5. How many puppies did Lucky have in her first 5 years of life?
K-3 Farm Animal Guide

“...A teacher manual that will stand above the rest in that it has taken a ubiquitous unit in the early grades and ramped it up to a level that has not been reached before...This is a timely resource that will find an important place in the early-grades curriculum.”

-Esther Klein Friedman, Ph.D.
Ret. Executive Director of Literacy and Academic Intervention, NYC Dept. of Ed.

Farm Sanctuary fights the disastrous effects of animal agriculture through rescue, education, and advocacy.
Everyday Circles Cards

The Peace Learning Center educates, inspires and empowers people to live peacefully
Earth Charter Indiana’s focus is on intergenerational action and education in the face of our climate crisis.
Interactive Resources

Nearpod Digital Classroom Tools
HEART has teamed up with Nearpod to provide digital classroom tools that enable teachers to engage students with standards-aligned, interactive humane education. Our Nearpod units feature a variety of animal protection, social justice, and environmental conservation themes.

For instant access our free Nearpod interactive lessons, make sure you are logged in to the HEART Library. Not a member? It's free and easy to REGISTER.

~30,000 students a year access HEART's lessons for Nearpod.

Go to Nearpod Lessons

Seesaw Activity Library
Deepen student engagement through HEART humane education lessons and activities on the Seesaw learning platform. Our Seesaw resources allow students to demonstrate and share their learning in a variety of creative ways, including typing, drawing, voice recording, using video tools, and providing feedback to their peers.

>50% of U.S. schools and 150 countries use the Seesaw platform.

Go to HEART activities on Seesaw
Educational Game About Puppy Mills

Help Cora, Kau, and Casey Solve Their Next Case!

Join Cora, Kau, and Casey to solve the Case of the Sick Puppy. As part of the CIT Squad, you are a Compassionate Investigator in Training, who gathers clues through research, conducting interviews, and following leads. You will experience unexpected situations along the way, and have to decide what to do. Hopefully, you will be able to solve the mystery of the sick puppy before it is too late.

Click above to watch the game trailer on YouTube. To play trailer on Vimeo instead, click here.

Play Game »

ABOUT  EDUCATORS  HELP

THE ANIMAL LAW CONFERENCE
Webinars

Our webinars cover a variety of important humane education topics for educators, parents, and concerned citizens. Click the link below to access the archive of past HEART webinars and video presentations on social justice, animal protection, and environmental issues.

Webinar Archive

Videos

Something we’ve learned in our many years of teaching is that seeing really is believing. Having good educational videos to accompany lessons helps all different kinds of learners to process complex information. HEART’s humane education videos are offered to the public to use at no cost.

View Videos

Book Lists

Find humane children’s books for kids of all ages that tackle human rights, animal protection, and environmental ethics issues. By introducing students to humane literature, we can broaden their horizons and encourage them to become more humane in their own lives.

Explore Book Lists
Teacher Training

• Professional development courses
• Workshops/webinars
• HEART Network
Compassionate Communities Awards program

- 30,000 students in Brooklyn, Bronx and Long Island districts
- Teacher consultation
- Partnered with NYC DOE, NYC Mayor’s Office, and Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams
American Bar Association & HEART Public Service Project

NYC, DC, Chicago, Baltimore, Los Angeles, Portland, Miami, Kansas City, Nashville, Louisville
Roles of Lawyers in Humane Education

• Teach students yourselves (you are great role models!)
• Lobby to get humane education legislation passed in states without any such law
• Help give teeth to existing laws
• File lawsuit for violation of a humane education law
• Raise awareness of the importance of humane education
• Engage youth in some of your advocacy efforts
Students Advocating for Animals

Thank you!

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