

Problem-Solving: Ending Pet Overpopulation

OBJECTIVE

To understand the reasons why pet overpopulation occurs and how we can achieve solutions by working together. Students will be able to educate the rest of their class about what they can do to help solve this problem.

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Students will take a tour of the Dumb Friends League and learn about pet overpopulation. They will divide into groups and each will present a solution to the rest of their class.

MATERIALS

- 🐾 Copies of "Ten Ways You Can Help Solve Pet Overpopulation"
- 🐾 Materials needed for group presentations (see below)

ACTIVITY

Preliminary Discussion

- 🐾 What does overpopulation mean?
- 🐾 Why is there a pet overpopulation problem and what are the causes?
- 🐾 What does it take to care for a pet?
- 🐾 How are pets, or companion animals, different from wild animals? How are each of them cared for? What are the differences between how their populations are controlled?
- 🐾 Why do all of us need to take responsibility for solving the pet overpopulation problem?

Procedure

The class will take a tour of the Dumb Friends League to learn about pet overpopulation. To schedule your tour, please contact the Humane Education Program at (303)751-5772 Ext. 7232. During the presentation the following points will be discussed:

- 🐾 The number of animals that the Dumb Friends League receives daily and annually.
- 🐾 Why are these animals ending up at the Dumb Friends League as lost, homeless, or relinquished pets? Why is the bond broken between pets and their owners?
- 🐾 What happens to the animals that are brought to the Dumb Friends League? What difficult choices do the staff members have to make?
- 🐾 What does it mean to euthanize an animal? How many animals are euthanized daily and yearly, and why?
- 🐾 What can we do to solve pet overpopulation? Students will receive a copy of "Ten Ways You Can Help Solve Pet Overpopulation" (copy attached).

When the students return to class, assign them evenly to each of the "solutions" listed on the hand-out they received. There should be ten groups. Each group will have the task of presenting their solution to the rest of the class in a creative and meaningful way. Suggestions include: a mural or poster, a role-play, a student-made video, a brochure, a story, a poem, etc. Each group should present their idea in a problem-solving fashion.

Post-Discussion

- 🐾 What did you learn about pet overpopulation?
- 🐾 Why is it everyone's responsibility to help end it?
- 🐾 How will you share the information you learned with other people in your community?

🐾 What did you learn about solving a big problem, like pet overpopulation? Why is it crucial to focus on solutions?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

What is another problem that needs to be solved, as far as animals are concerned? What are ways to tackle this problem?