



PASADO'S SAFE HAVEN BEST PRACTICES FOR DEVELOPING EMPATHY IN HUMANE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Compassion is empathy in action. The goal of Humane Education is to inspire compassion for all living beings. Compassion is what motivates us to help others. And because compassion is a response to empathy, promoting empathy when talking about animals is an essential part of inspiring compassionate behavior change. Research indicates that teaching methods like storytelling, roleplay, and prompting perspective taking can reinforce the autonomy of animals and thus create a sense of empathy for them.

Our words matter. An important way we can model empathy and compassion for farmed animals is to consider the way we speak about them. Choosing specific language can help us to develop empathy in the hearts and minds of all Humane Education participants. As you read through this document, consider ways you can utilize the tips to help develop empathy in your own educational experiences.

Remember to keep the animals central to your message. Phrases like "Peaches was a cow used for dairy" instead of "Peaches is a dairy cow" recenter the idea of the individual animal and their own autonomy. Other communication strategies such as storytelling and roleplay can help engage audiences and keep them captivated while still reinforcing the animal's individuality. Telling a story about a funny or heartwarming interaction you had with one of your goat friends at the sanctuary will highlight educational material about goats that can stick in people's minds longer than general facts about goats.

1

Provide role models of empathy.

Promote a message of equality for all animals and humans.
Introduce animals as your friends.
Be a leader in behavioral change by sharing what you do to help animals.

2

Emphasize the sentience and value of each animal.

Use personal pronouns, names, ages, and histories of animals. This helps underline the idea of the animal as an individual.
Use inclusive language that reinforces who the animal is and not what they may have been used for.

3

Engage the audience with storytelling.

Stories help to individualize an animal and bring to light their personal preferences. Use stories to emphasize the motivations or experiences of an animal. These stories are easier to conceptualize than factual presentations of an event.
Utilizing imagination during storytelling can help relate an unfamiliar audience to the animal of the story.

4

Encourage perspective taking.

Prompt audience to consider similarities and differences between themselves and an animal.
Use educational anthropomorphism to help connect your audience with farmed animals (i.e. "home" for where they sleep/live, "friends/family" for animals they interact with).
Encourage the audience to imagine what it's like to be an animal by using prompting questions. (What might they use their whiskers for? How do you think they felt when...?)

5

Conclude with a message of positive action.

Have the audience consider what they want to change.
Avoid compassion fatigue - encourage manageable, specific and relevant actions.
Use idea prompts. (What about adoption? What about eating more plants?)