



P.O. Box 336 Westbrook, ME 04098 www.arlgp.org

A TEEN'S GUIDE TO HELPING ANIMALS ***You Can Make a Difference!***

Thank you for your being an animal ally!

Since its founding in 1911, the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland has served a unique role in the community. Thousands of animals have been adopted or reunited with their families and many, many more have been served with compassion, dignity and respect.

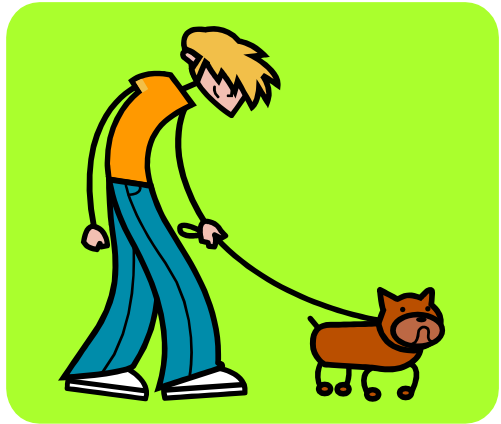
Every year, around 4,000 stray, abandoned and owner surrendered animals come through our doors. We are first and foremost an adoption agency, and we provide the best possible care for the animals until we can find their owners or until someone chooses to adopt them. We also works to create support and awareness for the humane treatment of animals through education, and to help end overpopulation through the promotion of spaying and neutering.

Working for the animals in our community is a huge undertaking and we rely on support from the community to help us. Your support of the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland is an investment in compassion. This booklet has some ways that you and others can help the Animal Refuge League fulfill it's mission. Thank you for caring!

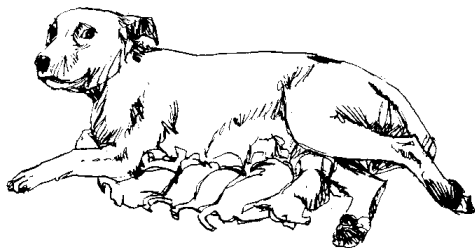


Be a Responsible Pet Owner

Most people research cars, refrigerators, televisions and other large purchases. Not nearly as many people research their pets. Having a pet is a huge commitment and responsibility. To avoid heartbreak for your family and potential pet, look into the type of animals you are considering *before* you bring one home! Consider everything your potential pet may need. Be honest and realistic with yourself. Research dog breed types. Although every dog is unique, you can usually count on some breed specific characteristics. Make sure the breed is a good match for your family and lifestyle. The staff at the Animal Refuge League can assist you in choosing the right pet.



Opt to adopt! Did you know the Animal Refuge League has many kinds of animals, not just dogs and cats? We have rabbits, guinea pigs, gerbils, hamsters, rats, birds and more! We also get in many purebred dogs. And if we don't have what you're looking for we may be able to give you information on a rescue group that does. Dogs that are sold from pet stores or online can come from puppy mills. Puppy mills are breeding facilities in which there are many, many dogs usually housed in poor conditions. The animals are generally used only for breeding and never come out of their cages. The animals that come from these places often have health and behavior issues.



The HSUS estimates that 6-8 million animals enter shelters every year and that only about half of those are placed. The best way to reduce pet overpopulation is to have your pet spayed or neutered. Spaying or neutering can also make your pets healthier by decreasing their chances of developing certain types of cancer. It can also keep them safer because it diminishes their urge to roam, which makes

them less likely to get into fights, hit by a car, contract diseases or come into contact with poisonous substances. Keep your pet up to date on vaccinations. Give your cat or dog a ticket home by making sure she has identification such as tags or a microchip. Never leave your pet outside when no one is home. He can fall prey to rabid animals, teasing or even get stolen.

Understand Animal Cruelty

Animal cruelty is a serious problem. Not only is it terrible for the animals being mistreated, but it often leads to violence against humans. It can come in many forms, from blatant physical abuse to unintentional neglect. Learn to recognize animal cruelty. If you suspect animal cruelty, inform your local police department or animal control officer, or call the state Animal Welfare Unit at 207-287-3846. Support laws against animal cruelty. For more information about animal cruelty, go to www.humaneteen.org.

Become an Animal-Savvy Consumer

Did you know that some of the products you use everyday may be tested on animals? Hair products, soap, cleaning supplies, and cosmetics are commonly tested on animals. Testing products on animals can cause them pain and stress. Research the companies who make the products you use. Stop using products from those companies who test on animals. Write to those companies and tell them you are not using their products and why. There are many companies who do not test on animals! Just to name a few (this is by no means a complete list!):

- Aveda
- The Body Shop
- Bonne Bell
- Burt's Bees
- Citre Shine (Advance Research Labs).
- Clinique Labs
- Crabtree And Evelyn
- Estee Lauder (Origins, Tommy Hilfiger)
- Jason Natural Cosmetics
- Kiss My Face
- Lee Pharmaceuticals (Lee Press on Nails)
- The Limited (Bath & Body Works, Victoria's Secret)
- Mad Gabs
- Marcal Paper Mills, Inc
- Nature's Gate
- Nivea
- Norelco
- Paul Mitchell (haircare)
- Revlon (Almay, Ultima II)
- Tom's of Maine



Remember that just because a product is labeled *not tested on animals* doesn't mean that the company that produces it doesn't test on animals or that ingredients in the product were not tested on animals. Research the companies, not just the product. A great website to learn more about products and companies is: www.leapingbunny.org. To learn more about how animals are used in science, including product testing, visit the Humane Teen website at www.humaneteen.org and download their "Science and Conscience Guide".

Did you know that much of the meat that is available in the grocery store is from a factory farm? At a factory farm, the animals live in cramped conditions, often not having the room to move around or stretch. Many times, the animals don't leave the inside of the barn. Look for the "certified humane label" on meat products that you buy. For more information go to www.certifiedhumane.com and www.hfa.org.

Have you ever wondered if the animals in your favorite movies were treated humanely? The American Humane Association's "No Animals Were Harmed" program provides oversight at film productions and rates films on their treatment of animals. To find out more or see how your favorites measure up, go to: www.americanhumane.org/protecting-animals/programs/no-animals-were-harmed/

Many plants can be toxic to animals. Make sure that the plants in your house and yard are safe. Find out more at the ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) at www.asPCA.org/pet-care/poison-control/plants/. Many chemicals that we use inside and outside our homes can also be dangerous. Avoid using pesticides and weed killing chemicals on plants and lawns and choose natural, safe alternatives. Even a tiny amount of car antifreeze can be very harmful. Buy antifreeze and ice melting products that are labeled safe for animals.



Use Your Voice

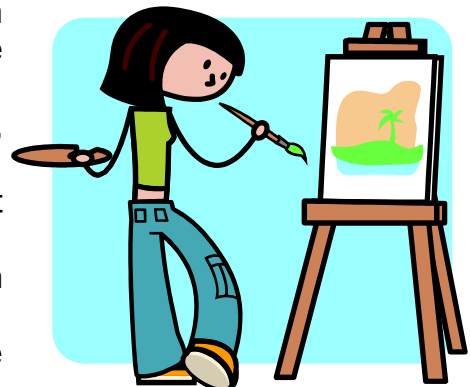
Newspapers are a great way to connect with others in your school and community. Submit articles to your local and school newspapers about animal-related issues affecting your community.



Write to your local, state and national representatives about animal related issues and pending legislation. To find out more about how to make your voice heard, go to www.humaneteen.org, and click on the “Get Involved” tab. Through the “Make Your Voice Heard” tab you can find contact information for your federal and state legislators. You can also find out more about current issues and legislation. There are also great letter-writing and advocacy tips for teens. To stay informed of new campaigns, click on the “News and Updates” tab and sign up for the Humane Teen newsletter.

You can make a difference in a lot of little and big ways. Here are some ideas:

- Put a bumper sticker on your car promoting spaying/neutering, pet adoption, cruelty free shopping, etc. You can create your own design, have some made and give them to your friends.
- Create a website or Facebook page educating others about the issues facing animals. You could highlight a different topic every month.
- Design informative flyers and post them at your school, work, local coffee houses, etc.
- Send educational e-mails to friends, family, and coworkers.
- Put a message on your voicemail about an animal issues.
- Design and create a t-shirt relating to an animal issue.
- Volunteer to help with a local legislative campaign for animals.



Find Strength in Numbers

Start a club in your school or community to help raise awareness and educate people about animal welfare. Your club may take on a specific purpose such as combating animal cruelty or preventing abandonment.



The organization of your group can be structured or casual. If you are starting a group through your school, be sure to find out what your school's rules are. Find an adult to be an advisor to your group. Put up flyers and talk to friends. Host an interest meeting. Make sure to have everyone sign in with contact information. Introduce yourself and explain why you wanted to start the group. You may want to further determine the structure of your group at this meeting. What will be the specific purpose of your group?

Where, when and how often will you meet? What will be the name of your group? Will the group have a constitution and by-laws? Have someone take notes at the meeting. Or, your group can be you and a couple of friends meeting at your house.

Here are some things you can do to educate others on your own or with a group:

- Learn about local animal issues and write letters to the editor of local papers.
- Educate yourself on upcoming legislation. Connect with elected officials through letters or meetings and let them know how you feel about animal issues.
- Create a video documentary or story about shelter animals.
- Do a bulletin board display for your school or local library. Have different animal themes each month such as pet owner responsibility, information about pet overpopulation & spay/neuter, why animals are at shelters, etc.
- Research animal related web sites and share information with others.
- Investigate dangers faced by local wildlife, and propose some solutions.
- Create a monthly newsletter/comic strip about animals and animal issues.
- Make posters for school or neighborhood library, stores, veterinarian offices about animal care, spay/neuter, adopting an older animal, etc.
- Invite someone from a local animal organization to come and speak to your group. Welcome others from the public to join you.
- Create a recommended animal reading book list for your school or local library.
- Paint a mural for your school or park.
- Design a web site to post your views on animal-related topics such as laboratory testing and cruelty prevention. Invite visitors to post their comments and get conversation started!
- Host a party where you show an humane themed movie or documentary.
- Hold a donation drive or fundraiser (see page 6) for a local animal organization



Support Local Organizations

HOLD A DONATION DRIVE

Animal shelters like the ARLGP rely on the generosity of their communities. Organize a donation drive at your work or neighborhood to collect much needed supplies for your local shelter. Have a party where you ask guests to bring items for the shelter!

What type of pet supply items should be collected?

- New or used dog/cat beds, towels and blankets, including cotton baby receiving blankets and sheets; cats and dogs love to snuggle in your old blankets!
- For the dogs and pups: unopened dry and canned food, tennis balls, rawhide bones and kongs, stuffed toys (only those made for pets, please)
- For the cats and kittens: unopened dry and canned food, cats toys, treats, Gerber baby food stage one for young kittens (turkey or chicken), tuna, unscented cat litter (non-clumping), Kitten Milk Replacement Formula
- For the small animals: small animal bedding (Aspen or recycled paper), food, timothy hay (2nd cut is best) toys (cardboard boxes with two entry points cut out, old phone books for shredding, hard plastic baby toys like rattles and keys, plastic cat toys)
- For birds: dowels, toys, Harrison's bird pellets
- Bleach, paper towels, laundry detergent, other cleaning supplies, stamps



How do we get started?

Create posters asking people to donate pet supply items for your collection drive project. You may be able to hang the posters in your school, at a pet supply store, a veterinarian's office or throughout your neighborhood. You will need to decide how you will collect the items and include that information on your posters.



HOLD A FUNDRAISER

There are many things you can do to raise money for an organization: host an event, have a bake sale, hold a penny drive...get creative! See the tips above for how to get started. For more tips and other ideas, go to www.humaneteen.org. From the "Get Involved" page, click on the "Have Fun, Raise Funds" tab.

VOLUNTEER

Become a volunteer at the ARLGP (FMI go to: www.arlqp.org/volunteer/) or at the many other shelters or animal-related organizations in Maine.