

*“The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way in which its animals are treated” –Mahatma Gandhi*

## The Global Humane Education Programme *IN AWE*

– An integrated approach

Today, many countries around the world are addressing emerging issues such as HIV/AIDS, gender equity, environment, human rights and sustainable development in their educational systems. Animal topics in humane education are increasingly recognised as having similar importance. Human, environmental and animal subjects offer an integrated value-based approach to deal with broad societal issues that are all interrelated.

Many organisations currently have good initiatives, resources and programmes for school-based education about animals. However, a coherent, integrated programme seems to be lacking. WSPA is developing this Global Programme for Humane Education, with a focus on Animal Welfare Education, to bring together all beneficial aspects of existing educational materials into a framework that can be adapted as needed and implemented into school systems around the world. The global ‘IN AWE’ Programme could lead to a curriculum tailored to local and regional needs.

WSPA invites organisations to work with them towards the achievement of the global ‘IN AWE’ aims. Strong partnerships ensure ownership by participating organisations and reflect success and development of animal welfare education in their respective countries. The ideal situation comprises a Global Humane Education Coalition, in which partners work equally together.



## The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA)

WSPA is an international organisation that provides technical expertise, guidance and assistance to promote animal welfare across the globe and works in co-operation with governments. WSPA has offices in 13 countries and works in partnership with over 500 member societies. WSPA has consultative status with the United Nations and the Council of Europe and works with the World Health Organisation (WHO), The Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations (FECAVA), World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and other international bodies to improve the status of animal welfare. WSPA focuses on the welfare of companion animals, farm animals and wild animals through its campaigns and projects.

Education is one of the pillars of WSPA. Currently, many WSPA Kindness Clubs for children are active in Africa and Indonesia and other WSPA Education programmes run successfully in South and Central America.



For more information about the Humane Education Programme, please contact

Jasmijn de Boo, Education and Training Coordinator of WSPA in London, at: [jasmijndeboo@wspa.org.uk](mailto:jasmijndeboo@wspa.org.uk) or call +44 20 75875031.

This leaflet is printed on paper made from 60% recycled fibres and 40% wood pulp derived from managed forests.



# International Animal Welfare Education Programme



**WSPA**  
World Society for the Protection of Animals

# A Global Humane Education Programme about Animals, People and the Environment

## Humane Education

Humane Education (HE) is a broad discipline that encompasses all forms of education about social justice and citizenship, environmental issues, the welfare of animals and their care. HE is unique in that it recognises the interdependence of all living things. Through Humane Education children's attitudes and critical thinking skills are developed in order to become more compassionate and to respect everyone, their own family, their community and those from different cultures. Humane Education provides an opportunity for children to develop a sense of awe and responsibility for the natural world and their environment and for the animals which share it.

This value-based education empowers children to make decisions and take action as responsible world citizens, helping the planet, animals and people in an appropriate and sustainable manner. Sustainability and humane society are interlinked, but in education for sustainable development animal welfare is often lacking

*Humane Education involves active and interactive classrooms, innovative learning activities, and more engaged pupils, who will enthusiastically take the HE message home, thereby influencing family members*

## Animal Welfare

Animal welfare (AW) is defined by both the physical and psychological states of an animal, including how it feels. The welfare of an animal can be described as good if the individual is fit, healthy, free from suffering and when it has the opportunity to express positive natural behaviour. The concept of animal welfare applies primarily to animals in whose lives we have intervened.

## Animal welfare education

Animal welfare education (AWE) is a process, which promotes knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes related to our involvement in the lives of animals, the effects this has on animals' ability to satisfy their needs, and the responsibility this places on us. Animal welfare education includes topics such as animal biology, law and ethics, which are necessary to understand how we can reduce animal suffering and enhance welfare.

A foundation in animal welfare education provides educators with the skills to:

- Instil in students a reverence for life and respect and responsibility for the earth and other species
- Convey accurate information so students understand the consequences of their decisions as consumers and citizens in relation to animal welfare
- Inspire creativity, curiosity and critical thinking so students can evaluate information and solve problems on their own
- Encourage informed, humane choices so students can help bring about a better world for animals

(Adapted from: International Institute for Humane Education)



## The Global Humane Education Programme *IN AWE*

Although Humane Education encompasses human, environmental and animal issues, the 'IN AWE' project focuses on Animal Welfare for children in the 5-16 age range. Environmental and humanitarian organisations could add contents to this global initiative to make the programme more holistic. The WSPA 'IN AWE' Programme consists of relevant validated and professionally supported teaching units on companion, farm and wild animal welfare. The units could eventually form an independent HE or an animal welfare syllabus. All topics should be capable of being cross-referenced within existing subjects such as language, science, Personal and Social Education (PSE), agriculture and arts. Furthermore, the aim of the 'IN AWE' programme is to establish lasting contacts with governments (e.g. Ministry of Education), teacher training institutes, teachers, other NGO's and relevant organisations and to provide professional support for all actors.

