



## **Animals in the Community Education**

For more information, see [www.sustainablejersey.com](http://www.sustainablejersey.com)

Education is an essential element of any effort to effect change. Given the need for greater understanding and respect for others and different value systems or view points, humane education specifically fosters more positive interactions between both human and animal members of the community. Humane education not only improves community members' understanding of the intrinsic value of wildlife and domestic animals but also increases their appreciation for the connection between animals, society, and the natural environment. Municipalities can reduce conflict, as well as public and environmental health risks, through educational initiatives that focus on coexisting and thriving with all members of the community, both human and animal.

This action encourages municipalities to work in partnership with schools, state agencies, and other community organizations and stakeholders to implement humane education programs to foster appreciation and respect for wildlife and/or domestic animals and our shared environment. Resources and guidance are provided to facilitate the development and implementation of the educational programs that can target one or more of the following audiences: school children, professional educators, and community members, including residents and business owners.

Municipalities are encouraged to link the educational initiatives to service learning opportunities to further engage both young and mature students and to demonstrate how individual behaviors can significantly impact our communities. In addition to reducing nuisances, improving environmental stewardship, and promoting responsible pet care, humane education and applied learning strategies can increase community members' understanding of how wildlife and companion animal issues relate to their everyday lives and how the choices they make can lead to positive interactions and a more sustainable future for themselves and their communities. In addition to promoting individual

responsibility, these activities can build support for local government to take progressive steps and utilize innovative tactics to resolve complex community problems.

### **Who should lead and be involved with this action?**

This action encourages municipalities to work in partnership with schools, state agencies, and other community organizations and stakeholders to implement humane education programs that can target one or more of the following audiences: school children, professional educators, and community members including residents and business owners.

If you intend to implement a program for schools or provide professional development for educators, create a working group that includes at least one staff member from the school and one from the municipality. Other working group members and stakeholders should include: school administrators and teachers, parent-teacher organizations, student groups and clubs, municipal staff, animal control and wildlife officials, wildlife conservation organizations, nature centers, zoos, museums, animal rescues/shelters, and veterinarians.

If you intend to implement a program for mature community members, including residents and business owners, initiate the development of a team including residents, business owners, community groups, academics, state agency personnel, veterinarians, animal control staff, and other stakeholders to determine the topics to address and to identify existing programs to utilize or adapt to deliver education to the community.

Be sure to include organizations or individuals that can provide service learning opportunities in your community.

### **Timeframe**

The time needed to develop partnerships and educational curricula depends on the topics selected and the nature of existing relationships within the community.

In general, establishing a school-municipal working group to lead the initiative can take 1-3 months. Integrating curricula into course work is often a long process and could take more than a year. Establishing an afterschool club or service learning program takes 1 month to 1 year. Organizing special in-school or afterschool events or activities takes 3-6 months.

Organizing teacher training/professional development workshops takes 1 month to 1 year to plan and implement.

Developing community education programs could require 3 months to determine issues to address and to identify existing programs and community resources to utilize to deliver the programming.

### **Project Costs and Resource Needs**

This action mostly requires municipal and school staff and/or volunteer time to accomplish. The amount of staff and volunteer time needed to implement programs will depend on the activities pursued. Many activities have low or no direct costs for materials. School program implementation will be less costly if drawn from existing curricular resources, such as those supported or developed by NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) or other non-profit organizations' education programs, rather than paying staff to develop new curricula.

Service learning programs will rely on staff/volunteer time and may also involve some costs for transportation of participants to project locations.

Costs for teacher training and community workshops vary. Some groups, such as state agencies like NJ DEP, will provide services inexpensively or at no cost, but there is often a fee charged by consultants and professional workshop providers. For example, NJ Audubon charges \$100/hour plus expenses for a professional development workshop for teachers.

### **Why is it Important?**

Education about animals, their habitats, and their connection to humans promotes and empowers responsible community stewardship of New Jersey's wild and domestic animals and of our shared environment. Humane education programs help to teach students, residents, and other stakeholders in the community about the interactions between humans and wildlife as well as about responsible pet ownership, which includes not only caring for pets, but also how pets are allowed to interact with society and the natural environment. Through such education, municipalities can promote positive interactions between community members, both human and animal, and improve stewardship of the natural environment.

As recognized by NJ State legislators, humane education programs help schools promote respect and compassion for living things and the environment, discourage violence, and provide the knowledge and understanding necessary for children to behave according to these principles. Humane education programs are an effective, inexpensive way of addressing the core causes of some significant social problems, such as violence, domestic violence, and animal abuse, according to the NJ Animal Welfare Task Force. In its final report to the Governor (<http://www.njstatelib.org/digit/i62/i622004.pdf>), the task force noted that a wealth of research has established a clear link between violence to

animals and violence towards humans and has emphasized the importance of humane education in deterring violence before it begins.

This action also helps educators engage students and meet their educational goals — and by extension the goals of the community — by offering opportunities for aligning school lessons, activities, and special programs with topics and issues of great interest to today's youth. Children have a natural affinity for animals. According to a 2008 survey by the Girl Scout Research Institute, two out of three young girls feel strongly about protecting wildlife and are concerned about ecosystems. More than nine out of ten girls believe that schools and youth organizations should be proactively involved in educating students and families about how to protect the environment. In one recent market survey, endangered animals were the top environmental issue among children ages 6-14. Thus, animal-themed lessons and educational activities can help teachers and schools achieve goals in language arts, science, social studies, and other subjects by engaging students with topics they care about and thereby motivating them to learn.

This action also offers opportunities for integrating meaningful community service with formal instruction, which fosters civic responsibility, enriches student engagement with curricula, and engages youth as assets and resources that contribute to the community in positive ways. Community benefits also include increased capacity to address a specific community problem or meet a particular need and promoting interaction between young people and other community members, which enhances overall community relations. There also have been documented cases where service learning was directly associated with increasing the number of adult volunteers in schools and passage of municipal tax levies in support of schools.

### **What to do and how to do it ("How to")**

Below we have listed the requirements for earning points for this action.

1. Educational programs must have occurred within 2 years of your certification application submission.
2. In order to be credited with points for this action, implement humane education programs to increase understanding of and improve interactions with wildlife and/or domestic animals. The term "program" in relation to the Animals in the Community – Education action refers to an integrated sequence of planned educational experiences and materials intended to reach a defined set of objectives. Programs can be small or large and can range from short-term in-school activities or professional development workshops to long-term integration of relevant curriculum units or student service learning projects. Programs can also take the form of ongoing community education about wildlife or companion animal issues unique to your municipality.

3. Programs can target one or more of the following audiences: school children, professional educators, and community members including residents and business owners. While we encourage the municipal government to work with the schools to deliver programming or professional development, the municipal government must, at a minimum, be informed of the educational activities occurring in relation to humane education programs.

We have provided guidance and recommendations for implementing the action. You do not need to follow this guidance exactly as long as your final product meets the requirements.

1. Form a diverse committee of municipal staff, community organizations, and other stakeholders to discuss the needs of your community.

2. Identify issues related to wildlife and/or domestic companion animals that affect or are impacted by your community members. Think broadly about unique environmental conditions that support wildlife (e.g. nesting coastal birds or turtles) and are important to preserve; nuisance complaints the town frequently receives (e.g. stray pets, violation of pet waste laws); animal control issues (e.g. unlicensed pets; wildlife management), etc. Envision your community when human behavior mitigates impacts to wildlife and habitat and when wildlife and companion animals coexist in an ideal way with society. Can educational programs help your town achieve this vision? Focus on humane education that provides understanding of animal-related issues and offers alternatives for conserving critical habitat, reducing nuisances, and/or promoting positive interactions between both humans and animals.

3. After identifying priority educational issues to address, determine which audience to target to achieve the greatest impact. This may include school children, educators, or the community members at large.

### School Programs

a. Identify a teacher, administrator, or other school representative to interact with the Municipal Green Team or the designated committee. The liaison should keep the municipal government informed of educational programming being implemented in the schools.

b. Identify resources and experts that will help your town deliver the educational programs successfully. See the resources section. Design an educational program relating to wild and/or domestic animals. The term “program” refers to an integrated sequence of planned educational experiences and materials intended to reach a defined set of objectives. Programs can occur on a range of scales as in-school activities or after-school-clubs; however, they are not one-time events. You may also incorporate standards-based education on wild and/or domestic animals and their habitat into existing courses in at least one grade

level in your school district and engage in a related student service learning project.

c. Identify service learning opportunities, and teaching strategies that link students' skills and knowledge to issues, needs, or problems they identify in their school or community. Municipalities can enlist community support in mitigating problems or resolving conflicts. Applied learning reinforces the materials taught in the educational programs, and benefits students and the larger community because it relates what they're learning to real world community issues..

#### Professional Development

a. Organize a teacher training or professional development workshop with a focus on responsible, sustainable relationships with animals and the environment and/or humane education.

[Note: Humane education, as authorized in New Jersey, provides instruction in the principles of humanity as they apply to kindness and avoidance of cruelty to animals: "Each board of education may teach, by special courses or by emphasis in appropriate places of the curriculum, in a manner adapted to the ages and capabilities of the pupils in the several grades and departments, the principles of humanity as the same apply to kindness and avoidance of cruelty to animals and birds, both wild and domesticated." -- N.J.S.A. 18A:35-4.1]

b. You may want to utilize skilled professionals to implement at least one humane education-related activity.

#### Community Members

a. Identify existing educational programs, resources, and experts that will help your town deliver the educational programs successfully. See the resources section.

b. Identify service learning opportunities. Municipalities can enlist community support in mitigating problems or resolving conflicts. Applied learning reinforces the materials taught in the educational programs and therefore the benefits derived from such.

4. Publicize the educational opportunities and evaluate the impacts of these programs on the community.

#### **What to submit to get credit/points**

In order to earn points, your submission must meet the following standards:

1. Educational programs must have occurred within 2 years of your certification application submission.

2. In order to be credited with points for this action, implement humane education programs to increase understanding of and improve interactions with wildlife and/or domestic animals in your community. The term “program” in relation to the Animals in the Community – Education action refers to an integrated sequence of planned educational experiences and materials intended to reach a defined set of objectives. Programs can be small or large and can range from short-term in-school activities or professional development workshops to long-term integration of relevant curriculum units or student service learning projects. Programs can also take the form of ongoing community education about wildlife or companion animal issues unique to your municipality.

3. Programs can target one or more of the following audiences: school children, professional educators, and community members including residents and business owners. While we encourage the municipal government to work with the schools to deliver programming or professional development, the municipal government must, at a minimum, be informed of the educational activities occurring in relation to humane education programs.

Submit the following documentation to verify the action was completed to the above standards. (Log in to the password protected webpage where you submit your online application for certification to write in the text box and upload documents).

1. In the text box, please provide a short narrative (300 word max) to summarize what was accomplished and the general steps taken to accomplish it. Be sure to explain the wildlife or domestic animal issues your community identified as priorities to address through education and which audiences you targeted. Note any impacts achieved.

2. In "upload file 1," submit project documentation that may include an outline of the educational programming, a description of the professional development course, or the curricula updated with animal-related education. Information should include dates the activities occurred and how many students or teachers participated.

3. In "upload file 2," submit examples of educational materials. Multiple documents can be combined into one file.

4. If school initiatives were pursued, use "upload file 3," to submit documentation that highlights the municipality's involvement in or knowledge of the school initiatives.

**IMPORTANT NOTES:** Please excerpt relevant information from large documents. Please remember that your submissions will be viewable by the public as part of your certified report.

## **Spotlight: What NJ towns are doing**

### **Going Green for Animals: How one class took action Jackson Avenue School, Hackensack, New Jersey**

The fourth grade of Jackson Avenue School in Hackensack implemented standards-based curricula from the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) to help engage students with the knowledge and tools they needed to take action for animals and habitat. The class participated in IFAW's "Beneath the Waves" marine wildlife conservation lesson plans, then wrote essays and created a science fair project on threats to marine animals.

To help protect marine habitat, the students organized a *Kids Going Green* program that got the PTA, a local scout troop, and their community involved in raising funds for reusable shopping bags and a recycling dumpster for their school. The IFAW Animal Action program, according to lead teacher Kathy Pina, "sparked thinking about not only what we, as a class can learn and do, but what our entire school and community can learn and do!"

Contact: Kathy Pina

<http://hackensack.nj.k12us.com/k.pina>

## **Resources**

### **Program Funding**

#### **American Humane Mini-Grants for Humane Education:**

<http://www.americanhumane.org/human-animal-bond/programs/humane-education/mini-grants.html>

#### **Corporation for National & Community Service "Learn and Serve America" Grants for Schools:**

[http://www.learnandserve.gov/for\\_organizations/funding/nofa.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/for_organizations/funding/nofa.asp)

Melinda Gray Ardia Environmental Education

Grants<http://www.mgaef.org/index.html>

**EPA Environmental Education Grants:** Support environmental education projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to help people make informed decisions that affect environmental quality. EPA awards grants each year based on funding appropriated by Congress. Annual funding for the program ranges between \$2 and \$3 million. Most grants will be in the \$15,000 to \$25,000 range. <http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html>

NJ Regional Contact: Teresa Ippolito, U.S. EPA, Region 2

Environmental Education Grants

Grants and Contracts Management Branch



290 Broadway, 27th Floor  
New York, NY 10007-1866  
ippolito.teresa@epa.gov

**GreenWorks! Service Learning Program Grants:** Awarded to schools and youth organizations for environmental neighborhood improvement projects that involve youth with their communities.

[http://www.plt.org/cms/pages/31\\_41\\_44.html](http://www.plt.org/cms/pages/31_41_44.html).

**Jenny's Heroes Community Grant:** Talk show host and philanthropist Jenny Jones will donate an additional \$1 million to continue her community grant program, which provides grants of up to \$25,000 each to fund projects that promise long-term community benefits. The program's focus is primarily in communities where fundraising can be difficult. <http://www.jennysheroes.com/>

**National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grants** are available for organizations interested in initiating The Nature of Learning program (see service learning projects above) in their communities. [www.nfwf.org/natureoflearning/](http://www.nfwf.org/natureoflearning/)

**National Science Teachers Association/Toyota Tapestry Grants:** Grants to K–12 science teachers for innovative projects that enhance science education in the school and/or school district. Proposals may include but are not restricted to: involvement with the community and/or industry; collaborative programs among students and teachers; multidisciplinary or interdepartmental participation; in-class or extracurricular activities; solution to a local community problem. <http://www.nsta.org/pd/tapestry/>

(See also the **New Jersey DEP Environmental Education News** for potential funding sources: <http://www.nj.gov/dep/seeds/njcee/grants.htm>.)

**New Jersey Department of Education: The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program** provides federal funds that support high-quality programs for academic and enrichment activities for students when school is not in session. Approximately 22 grants totaling \$12 million will be awarded to eligible agencies. <http://www.nj.gov/education/news/2009/0225cclc.htm>.

**Lowe's Outdoor Classroom Grant Program for Schools:**  
<http://www.lowes.com/lowes/lkn?action=pg&p=AboutLoves/outdoor/index.html>

**TogetherGreen Grants Program:** The National Audubon Society (NAS), with support from Toyota, will fund projects that engage diverse communities and contribute to measurable conservation outcomes. The NAS invests in leaders who are committed to empowering others and to creating positive environmental change in their communities and organizations. <http://togethergreen.org/Projects/Grants.aspx>

## **Resources: Standards-Based Curricula**

### **Elementary/Middle School Curricula**

#### **ASPCA Lesson Plans on Pets and Responsible Care:**

[http://www2.aspca.org/site/PageServer?pagename=edu\\_lessonplans](http://www2.aspca.org/site/PageServer?pagename=edu_lessonplans)

**Education World: *Animals A-Z*** printable activity pages are designed for weekly use with students in 2nd – 4th grades. Students learn interesting facts about animals as they reinforce basic skills of capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar. Good standardized test preparation.

**International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)** – Animal Action curricula series on wild and domestic animals and habitats aligned with national standards in science, social studies, and language arts for grades 3-9.

[www.ifaw.org/education](http://www.ifaw.org/education)

***Kids Interacting with Dogs Safely*** curriculum from American Humane:

<http://www.americanhumane.org/human-animal-bond/programs/humane-education/kids-education-project.html>

***Make Kindness Contagious*** curriculum offered free by St. Hubert's Animal Welfare Center, founded in 1939 by Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge, Meets NJ core curriculum standards for 1st - 3rd grades. <http://www.sthuberts.org/042415.pdf>

**National Wildlife Federation** – Schoolyard Habitats Lessons

<http://www.nwf.org/outside/pdfs/standards.pdf>

**Nature's Partners -- *Pollinators, Plants, and You*** A comprehensive curriculum on the importance of pollinators for grades 3-6.

<http://www.kidsgardening.org/pollinator/curriculum/index.php>

**New Jersey Audubon** has several curricula, including: [Bridges to the Natural World](#) (elementary/middle school) focused on natural habitats, fundamentals of ecology, as well as interactions between human systems and natural systems and [Fishing for Answers in an Urban Estuary](#) (middle school) focused on the Newark Bay Complex and understanding the essentials of an estuary ecosystem and how a system changes over time.

**New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection: State Environmental Education Directory (SEEDS)** <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/seeds/>

Project Learning Tree: curricula on forest habitat and ecosystems

<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/forest/plt.html>

Project WET (Water Education for Teachers)

Project WILD

Project Aquatic Wild

**New Jersey Veterinary Medical Association:** Middle School teaching guide on responsible pet ownership (grants for implementation available)  
<http://www.njvma.org/TeachingGrants.aspx>

**Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC)/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS):** Backyard Conservation series of lesson plans promote field investigation of local ecosystems and understanding of how community values impact the creation of wildlife habitat.  
<http://www.wildlifehc.org/managementtools/backyard-lessonplans.cfm>

### **High School Curricula**

**New Jersey Audubon: NJ WATERS: Watershed Approach to Teaching the Ecology of Regional Systems** (middle/high school) focuses on New Jersey's watersheds, how we determine a watershed's health and how humans impact the quality of watersheds. **Songbirds at the Crossroads of Migration** (high school/college) focuses on looking at New Jersey and habitats as a link in a global phenomenon.

**New Jersey DEP, Division of Fish and Wildlife** offers a variety of educational resources for teachers. [http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/educatn\\_tchrs.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/educatn_tchrs.htm)

**Project Learning Tree:** Forest ecosystems and biodiversity curricula.  
[http://www.plt.org/cms/pages/21\\_21\\_16.html](http://www.plt.org/cms/pages/21_21_16.html)

### **Resources: Service Learning Projects**

**Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)** service learning resources:  
[http://www.humanesocietyyouth.org/resources/service\\_learning.asp](http://www.humanesocietyyouth.org/resources/service_learning.asp)

**NFWS NATURE OF LEARNING**, a community-based conservation education program that uses national wildlife refuges as outdoor classrooms. Student-led stewardship projects connect classroom lessons to real world issues (see grant funding opportunities under Incentives section below).  
[www.nfwf.org/natureoflearning/](http://www.nfwf.org/natureoflearning/)

**NJ Cares – Animal Welfare Volunteer Opportunities:**  
<http://www.njcares.org/animal.htm>

**NJ SEEDS volunteer program:** <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/seeds/sect8.htm>

**New Jersey Wildlife Conservation Corps:**  
<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/wcchome.htm>

**US EPA - Adopt Your Watershed:** <http://www.epa.gov/adopt/>

## **Resources: Professional Development/Teacher Training Workshops**

Costs for teacher training and professional development workshops vary. Some, such as state agencies like NJ DEP or FWS, will provide services for free or inexpensively, but there is often a fee charged by consultants and professional workshop providers. For example, NJ Audubon charges \$100/hour + expenses for a professional development workshop for teachers.

**Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ** offers Professional Development Workshops for Teachers highlighting New Jersey's endangered, threatened, and rare wildlife. By attending one of our full-day or half-day workshops, educators will improve their knowledge and teaching skills related to New Jersey's rare wildlife populations.

<http://www.conservewildlifenj.org/teacher/prof/development.html>

**New Jersey Audubon Society:** NJAS is a statewide non-profit organization that has a network of education centers throughout the state overseen by the NJAS Department of Education. [www.njaudubon.org/education](http://www.njaudubon.org/education)

**Project Learning Tree New Jersey:** Hands-on multi-curricular teacher training workshops: <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/forest/plt.html>. Contact: Elizabeth Faircloth

**Project Wild** – NJ DEP, Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife: Workshops for Educators. Coordinator distributes materials and acts as a central contact point for training other educators. <http://www.njfishandwildlife.com>

New Jersey Contacts:

Liz Jackson, Project WILD Coordinator  
New Jersey Division of Fish, Game & Wildlife  
Pequest Center, 605 Pequest Road  
Oxford, NJ 07863

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Port Republic, NJ 08241

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## **Community Education Resources**

**Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ**

<http://www.conservewildlifenj.org/education/>

**NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife - Education**

<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/educatn.htm>

**Rutgers University Wildlife Damage Control Center**

<http://njaes.rutgers.edu/centers/quickinfo.asp?wdcc>