



Animal Shelter Awareness

PATCH PROGRAM



The Animal Shelter Awareness Patch program helps Daisies - Ambassadors understand the issues and needs surrounding animal behavior, animal care, and finances and how they all relate to your local animal shelter. Girls may earn this patch one per level by completing the different activities listed by level.

Step 1: Learn about interacting with animals

Step 2: Learn about animal needs

Step 3: Learn more about the resources available for animals in your area

Step 4: Learn about the issues

Step 5: Make a plan and Take Action



STEP 1:



Learn about interacting with animals

Daisies – Brownies (Select at least one)

- ◆ What animals make good pets? Learn about what a pet is and what kind of animals make good pets. What makes pets different from wild animals? Why is it important for wild animals to stay in their natural environment and not be taken in as someone's pet? (Brownies) Share what you learned with your family and friends.
- ◆ Safety around dogs is important. Learn how to stay safe when meeting someone who has a dog. Practice what you have learned using a stuffed animal or act out the parts with friends.
- ◆ Learn how to hold a puppy or a kitten. Why is it important to hold a puppy or a kitten properly? Practice with a stuffed animal and then share what you learned with a friend or family member.
- ◆ Learn how to behave around pets the right way. Find out how pets communicate using their body language. Be an actress and act out the scenarios on the next page.

Juniors and Up (Select at least one)

- ◆ How do dogs and cats communicate or talk to us? How do dogs and cats tell us when they are happy, sad, scared, playful, lonely, angry, or sick? Learn about how dogs, cats, and critters use body language to communicate. Then, observe your dog, cat or critter (or visit a park to observe how dogs interact and communicate with one another and people), and try to determine what the animal is trying to say. Record your observations. (Cadettes and up - Make a flyer to share with others that depicts an animal's body language and what it means).
- ◆ Ask an expert to help you understand how to interact with a new animal (an animal you haven't met before). How does this differ from how you might interact with your pet?



How to Approach a Dog

Step 1- Ask the owner for permission to pet their dog. If the owner says it is ok, then follow the next steps. If not, be polite and leave the animal alone.

Step 2- (if you have permission to pet the dog) Stand still with your arms at your sides. Make sure you do not make eye contact with the dog. Allow the owner and the dog to approach you and let the dog smell you.

Step 3: Stand to the side of the dog, and pet the dog gently on his back or side, not its head. Be sure to pet the same direction as their fur, from their nose to their tail.



A Cat Runs and Hides

Scenario #1

Cat: Is walking around the house.

Child: Sees the cat and chases after her.

Cat: Hisses, runs into the corner and hides.

Child: Continues to approach the cat.

Cat: (pretend) Scratches the child.

Was this the right or wrong thing for the child to do? How do you think the cat felt? The best thing to do is to respect how they feel and leave them alone if that is what they are telling you with their bodies.



Scenario #2

Cat: Is walking around the house.

Child: Approaches the cat slowly, holding her hand out.

Cat: Sniffs hand, then rubs up against the child. The cat walks away.

Child: Says, "looks like she has had enough" and walks away.

Was this the right or wrong thing for the child to do? How do you think the cat felt? In this scenario, the child did the right thing. Just like us, sometimes animals like to be left alone. It shows kindness and compassion to respect what the animal is telling us.

A Dog is Playing With A Toy

Scenario #1

Dog: Is playing with a ball.

Child: Takes toy and runs away with it.

Dog: Chases child and jumps on them.

Was this the right or wrong thing for the child to do? Why do you think the dog reacted this way? Dogs love to play with toys but not letting them have the toy is called teasing. What does teasing mean? Have you ever been teased? How does it feel?



Scenario #2

Dog: Is playing with a ball.

Child: Takes ball and throws it.

Dog: Chases ball and brings it back to child.

Was this the right or wrong thing for the child to do?

When you play with a dog make sure to stand in one spot and not run with the toy. Also, if a dog stops to chew on toy then the best thing to do is leave him alone. The dog may be tired and need a break from playing and you can come back later.



A Bunny is Sitting in His Cage

Scenario #1

Bunny: Is sitting calmly in in his cage

Child: Walks over to the cage and pets bunny from tail to nose

Bunny: Jumps up and stomps back feet.

Was this the right or wrong thing for the child to do? Just like people, bunnies can get scared. Bunnies cannot see directly in front of them, so make sure to approach from the side. If the bunny is suddenly pet, then he will stomp his back feet to tell you he is upset. And like all pets, bunnies like to be pet in the same direction as their fur, from nose to tail.

Scenario #2

Bunny: Is sitting calmly in his cage

Child: Approaches bunny from the side and slowly pets bunny from nose to tail.

Was this the right or wrong thing for the child to do? Learning about the natural behaviors of our pets will allow us to stay safe around them and allow them to be more comfortable.

STEP 2:

Learn about animal needs



Daisies - Brownies (Select at least one)

Learn about what pets need. This can include: food, water, shelter, grooming, training, love, exercise, and veterinary care. How much does it cost to care for your pet?

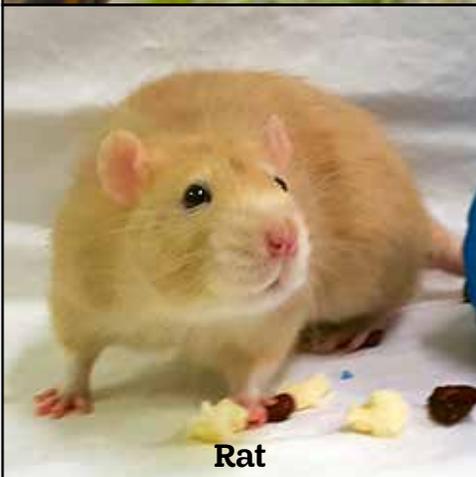
- ◆ Play a game of Pet Bingo using the Bingo card on the next page.
- ◆ Pretend to care for a pet using a stuffed animal. Make sure you think about where it needs to sleep and play, what it needs to eat, and what kind of care it needs to stay happy and healthy. Using pretend money, take your pet to the (pretend) vet and buy your pet food from your pretend grocery or pet supply store.
- ◆ Create a biography for your pet at home (where did they come from, what does it eat, what does the pet play with, how much did they cost, how long have you had them, etc...).
- ◆ Help your parents take care of your pets for a week.
- ◆ Take a survey to find out what type of pet is right for you and your family.

Juniors and Up (Select at least one)

- ◆ How much does it really cost to own a pet? The cost of adopting a pet is only the beginning of the money you will spend on caring for the pet. Determine how much it actually costs to take care of a pet. Expenses might include: adoption fee, leash, collar, ID tag, Microchip, training classes, food and water bowls, flea control, brush, grooming, dewormer, toys, food, spay/neutering, yearly vaccinations, yearly check-up, boarding, dog bed, crate for training, and more. What are the one-time costs and what are the reoccurring costs? To find prices, visit a local pet supply store, call a veterinarian, or search online. (Cadettes and up should repeat this activity for two types of pets).
- ◆ Take a survey to find out what pet is right for you and your family . What factors impact the decision to get a pet and what kind of pet is right for you at that time, including the age and temperament of the pet? Research how shelters help match up pets with families. You can research online or go into your local shelter and interview a staff member about adoption.



Pet Bingo



How to Play

Pick one of the squares. Then, answer the following questions about the animal listed. When you find the answers to the questions, make an X on the square. Try to answer all the questions about each of the animals in a row up/down, across, or diagonally. Or, if you want, try to answer all the questions about all of the animals on the Bingo card.

- ◆ How much does it cost to care for this pet?
- ◆ How much space does this pet need?
- ◆ How much food does this pet need?
- ◆ What kind of human contact does this pet like?

STEP 3:



Learn more about the resources available for animals in your area

Daisies – Brownies (Select at least one)

- ◆ Learn about how animals are adopted at your local shelter, and pretend to adopt a pet at your own adoption center following the same steps your local shelter would take.
- ◆ Visit your local shelter to see how it works. What kinds of animals do they care for? How do they go about finding homes for these pets? What needs do they have?

Juniors and Up (Select at least one)

- ◆ Compare and contrast shelters in Maine vs. shelters in other states. What works well in Maine? What works well in other states? How are these shelters different?
- ◆ Visit the shelter to see how it works. While you are there, interview a member of the shelter staff to see what their job is. What needs does the shelter have? Where do the pets come from? How does the shelter go about finding new homes for the pets? What challenges do they face?
- ◆ Research which animal shelter is local to your area.
 - ◆ Find out where shelters get their animals.
 - ◆ Find out what national animal welfare organizations, like ASPCA, do to help animals across the country.
 - ◆ Find out the history of your local shelter.



STEP 4:



Learn about the issues

Daisies – Brownies (Select at least one)

- ◆ Why is it important to have identification for your pet? Compare and contrast having a collar with an I.D. Tag and a Microchip. What one is most beneficial in reuniting a lost pet with his family?
- ◆ Learn what to do if your pet gets lost. Pretend your pet, or a made up pet, is lost. Follow the steps and make a pretend sign to post about your pet to help others help reunite the lost pet with your family.
- ◆ Talk with your local shelter to learn about some of the reasons pets arrive at the shelter. How do shelters reconnect owners and lost pets?

Juniors and Up (Select at least one)

- ◆ Why is it important to have identification for your pet? Learn about the different types of identification: I.D. tags and microchips. Discuss the pros and cons of each type of identification. Which one is most beneficial in reuniting a lost pet with his family? If you have pets, how do you know they have proper identification?
- ◆ What are some factors that determine how long it takes an animal to get adopted from a shelter? Breed? Age? Special needs? Color? Why do these factors impact adoption rates? What is being done to change this?
- ◆ Learn about the amount of homeless pets in the US. Every minute in the United States there are 7.3 humans born and 48.6 puppies and kittens born. How many pets would your family have to care for to prevent them from being homeless? Use the information on the side of the page to help answer this question. Why are there so many homeless pets? What measures can you and your family take to ensure you don't have too many pets? What can be done to help reduce the number of homeless pets? How can we find homes for pets that are already homeless?

Cadettes and up (Select at least one)

- ◆ Learn about spaying and neutering, and the benefits to shelters when their communities have access to spaying and neutering services. Does your local shelter have a spay/neuter program? How do you think this helps people, pets, and shelters? Educate at least one other person about what you learned and how they can help.
- ◆ Learn about adoption rates in different parts of the country. Why do shelters in some regions (like New England) adopt out more animals than other areas of the country? What can be done to help shelters that have lower adoption rates and more animals in their care? How do shelters collaborate to help more animals?

1. Write the number of people that live in your house: _____
2. Multiply the number of people in your house by the number of dogs they would have to care for: _____ x 3 = _____
3. Multiply the number of people in your house by the number of cats they would have to care for: _____ x 7 = _____
4. Add the answers from the dog and cat lines _____ + _____ = _____
5. The people in your house would have to care for _____ dogs and cats in their lifetimes! That's a lot of animals!

STEP 5:



Make a plan and Take Action

Daisies – Brownies (Select one)

- ◆ Make dog biscuits for the dogs at your local shelter. Bring them to the shelter, and learn why the animals love them so much.

Recipe

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup peanut butter (be sure Peanut Butter does not contain xylitol)
- 1 cup 100% Pumpkin Puree, canned
- 1 and 1/2 cups of whole wheat flour
- 1/4-1/2 cup of water

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper
2. In a large bowl, stir together the peanut butter, pumpkin and water until smooth. Then, add in flour 1/4 cup at a time until the dough is no longer sticky.
3. Roll the dough out between two pieces of parchment paper to about 1/4 inch thick. Use a cookie cutter to cut out the dough and place on prepared pan.
4. Bake for 8-10 minutes. Let cool completely. Store in an airtight container or freeze for even more fun or dogs!

- ◆ Hold a toy drive or invite others to help you make toys for your local shelter. Why do you think the shelter gives toys to the animals in their care? Why does the shelter need so many toys? What toys are the best for each kind of animal at the shelter?

- ◆ Make enrichment for small animals. What kind of enrichment do the animals like? What don't they like?

Recipe

SUPPLIES

- Timothy Hay
- Dried Cranberries
- Oats
- Cheerios (Plain or Honey Nut)
- Dried Pasta (Any shape)
- Brown Paper Bag or Paper Towel Tube
- Newspaper

Directions

- Hide the cranberries! Cranberries are a favorite treat for critters so make them search for them. You can fold them into the newspaper, hide them in the hay or even put them into a large piece of pasta.
- Put ingredients into a brown paper bag or paper towel tube. The bag should be mostly hay with a piece or two of pasta, cheerios and oats thrown in.
- Be creative and put it in any order you want.
- Want to make enrichment for rats, mice, hamsters, or gerbils? You can use all the ingredients except the hay.
- Find out what your local shelter needs and hold a donation drive to collect these items for you local shelter.

Juniors and Up (Select one)

- ◆ Hold an event to make Kuranda beds for the shelter- invite others from the community or other Girl Scouts to join you in making the beds. Explain why these beds are important to the animals and how they are used. Be sure to check with your local shelter to see what their needs are before making any plans.
- ◆ Create a video that explains shelters and their needs to others in the community. Share your video with members of your community as well as on social media.
- ◆ Create a survey for other kids to figure out what pet is right for them and provide information on what that pet might need and how much it would cost to own that pet.
- ◆ Help a homeless pet find a home. Research animals at your local shelter that need homes. If possible, try to choose a pet that may have a harder time finding a new home. Design a flyer or short commercial to promote the pet for adoption. Be sure to include information about that pet and where people can call for more information. Share your flyer or commercial with others and spread the word about these pets in need.
- ◆ Do something special for Adopt A Cat month (June), Adopt a Dog Month (October), or be Kind to Animals Week (May).
- ◆ Volunteer at your local shelter over the course of a month. Make sure to look into volunteer requirements before making any plans.
- ◆ Foster a pet. If you and your family are able to provide a home for an animal in need, until they find their new home, learn about your local shelter's foster program.

