



Lesson Plan: Caring Responsibly for Companion Animals

YEAR LEVELS:

P	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Outcomes: Students know about the Animal Welfare League and how they help animals in need in the community.

Students know about the four steps of responsible animal care; desex, identify, train and keep companion animals safe and happy.

Duration: 40 minutes

Resources: 'The Four Steps' poster
'Caring Responsibly' Grab Bag
Class set of AWL stickers and colouring sheets

Teaching Notes

Reasons why Companion Animals come to the AWL Sanctuary

They are Stray

If a dog or cat runs away from home, or accidentally gets out of their yard/house, they can easily get lost. Dogs and cats found wandering the streets without an owner are picked up by the Council Animal Control Officers and taken to the City Pound. Animals found on the streets are 'Stray'. If the dogs or cats are identified with a tag, registration or microchip, then the owners can be easily contacted and they can hopefully come and get their animal and take it back home. If they are not identified though, the dog or cat must spend three days in the pound in hope that their owners come looking for them. If no one comes looking for them, then the dog or cat is then given to the AWL and we then decide if we can try and find it a new home.

They Get Surrendered

Sometimes no longer is able to look after or wants their dog or cat. The owner is then able to give their animal to the AWL so we can try and find it a new home. When an owner gives us their animal it is 'Surrendered'. People surrender their dogs and cats for many different reasons. The most common reasons are because the dog/cat is behaving badly (barking, biting, making a mess), the people are moving house and can't take their animal with them, the owners are getting a divorce and no one wants the family pet, they owners are going on holidays and can't get anyone to look after their animal. These are all very sad reasons and some of them very irresponsible. Some people though, have no choice but to surrender their dog or cat, and these owners can be very upset and sad when they are forced to.

They are Injured or Abandoned

Some animals are the victim of cruelty or neglect and come to the AWL very sick or injured. Some animals are found on the road or street because they have been hit by a car and left to die. Sometimes litters of puppies and kittens are left all alone on the side of the road, in rubbish bins or in the bush because people don't want them and don't care what happens to them. If they are lucky though, a kind person will find them and bring them to the AWL where we can try and nurse them back to health and find them good homes to live in.

Teaching Notes Cont...

Caring Responsibly for Companion Animals: The Four Steps

Desex (represented by a photo of a cat with a desexing scar)

Prompting Questions: ‘does anyone know why the kitten in this picture has stitches?’; ‘What is the name of the very important operation that kittens and puppies should have?’; ‘Where do dogs and cats go when they need an operation?’

Elaboration: There are too many puppies and kittens being born and not enough homes for them to go to. This is why we need to take our pets to the vet to be desexed. Desexing is an operation done by a vet, which means that your dog or cat can’t have puppies or kittens anymore. This is a good thing because there are already so many dogs and cats looking for homes, we don’t need any more being born. In this picture you can see where this kitten has just had her operation and she has stitches where the vet operated. The operation only takes a few minutes and it is all over very quickly. It doesn’t hurt the puppies and kittens because the vet gives them a special needle that sends them to sleep for a little while whilst the operation is happening. When they wake up it’s all over and they just have this little scar. We should take our puppy to the vet to be desexed by the time it is 6 months old and our kitten by the time it is 5 months old. This is because puppies can start breeding at 6 months and kittens at 5 months.

Identify (represented by a collar with a name tag and council ID tag & a microchip)

Prompting Questions: ‘Where does this go?’; ‘What do you think is written on this?’ (pointing at the address tag); ‘Why do we need to put these on our dogs/cats?’; ‘If our cat or dog got lost and someone found it what would could they do?’

Elaboration: If our dog or cat gets lost or goes missing, we want to make sure that it will be returned to us. There are three ways we can do this. First, we put a collar with a tag on it on our animal friend. On this tag is our animal’s name, the address of where it lives and the phone number of its owner. Second, if our friend is a dog, we make sure he is registered with the council. If he is registered he will have a little tag like this one. Lastly, we must microchip our dogs and cats. This here is a microchip, and it is a tiny little computer chip that has all the information about where that dog or cat lives. A vet uses a special needle to put this microchip under the animal’s skin at the back of its neck. This is the best way to identify our dogs and cats because a microchip will stay there for the animal’s whole life.

Train (represented by a dog lead)

Prompting Questions: ‘What are some things we need to teach our dogs to do?’; ‘What would we use these things for?’; ‘Why is it important to teach our dog good manners?’

Elaboration: It is very important to teach our dogs good manners, so they know how to behave around people and other animals. This is called training. We need to teach them to walk on a lead, to “come”, “sit” and “stay”. We also need to teach them to behave themselves around our friends (like not jumping up or being aggressive when they come to the front door) and around other animals (like being friendly to other dogs and not chasing cats or wildlife).

Keep Safe (represented by a toy house)

Prompting Questions: ‘What are some things outside that can be dangerous for dogs and cats?’; ‘How can we keep our dogs safe from outside dangers?’; ‘How can we keep our cats safe from outside dangers?’

Elaboration: The safest place for our dogs and cats is in our homes. There are many outside dangers for dogs and cats. For dogs, if they escape from the yard they could get hit by a car, lost, get into a dog fight, bitten by a tick or a snake, taken to the pound or even stolen. For cats, they could also get hit by a car, lost, get attacked by a dog or another cat, get trapped, stolen or even hurt by a person who doesn’t like cats.

If we have a dog we need a secure, fenced backyard for them to play safely in. If we have a cat we should keep them totally indoors. These are the best ways to keep our best friends safe from harm.

Learning Activity	Approx. Duration	Teaching Procedure	Resources
1. Who is the AWL?	10 min	<p><i>Prior to lesson: ask teacher to seat students in a circle on the floor.</i></p> <p>Education officer introduces themselves and the mascot animal they have brought with them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'Has anyone here ever been to the Animal Welfare League?'</i> • <i>'Does anyone know what we do at the AWL Qld?'</i> <p>At the AWL we take care of all the dogs and cats that don't have homes to go to. Animals just like(insert name of mascot animal here).</p> <p>Education Officer asks: 'Does anyone know why animals can become homeless?' 'How can animals get lost?' 'What are some reasons why people might not want their animals anymore?'</p> <p>Education Officer listens to students responses, then tells students the different reasons why the dogs and cats are at the AWL. <i>(see teacher notes)</i></p> <p>Education Officer then tells students; 'We care for all these animals at the AWL Sanctuary and help to find them new homes to go to. People come to the AWL Sanctuary and can adopt a cat or dog. This is called <u>rehoming</u>.'</p>	AWL Mascot animal
2. Caring Responsibly: The Four Steps	20 min	<p>Education officer asks: <i>'How can we be RESPONSIBLE when taking care of our animals?'</i> Officer hears some student responses, then tells students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'Being responsible means making good choices about how you care for your dog or cat'.</i> • <i>'If we want to keep our dogs and cats happy, we need to <u>care for them responsibly</u>.'</i> • <i>'There are four steps to caring responsibly for our dogs and cats'</i> <p>Education officer shows students the 'Four Steps' poster and lists each step - Desex, Identify, Train and Keep Safe.</p> <p>Education Officer shows students the 'Caring Responsibly' Grab Bag. Inside this bag are four items that relate to each one of these four steps <i>(see teacher notes)</i>.</p> <p>Education officer selects a student to come up and choose an item from inside the bag. The other students must guess which step this item relates to. Officer should prompt students by asking questions if they are unsure. Once a student has guessed correctly, education officer describes how it specifically relates to caring responsibly <i>(see teacher notes)</i>.</p> <p>Education officer repeats this process for each of the four items. When complete, Officer asks students to repeat back what the four steps are. If they repeat them back altogether, then all students get a 'responsible care' sticker.</p>	'The Four Steps' poster
3. Question Time	10 min	<p>Education officer asks students; Does anyone have any questions? Remind students that you only want questions - not stories. A question is something they want to know, not a story! Education officer gives stickers and colouring sheet to classroom teacher.</p>	Class set of AWL stickers and colouring sheets

