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Humane Education: An Annotated Bibliography [2001-2010]

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Aguirre, V., & Orihuela, A. (2010). Assessment of the impact of an animal welfare educational course with first grade children in rural schools in the state of Morelos, Mexico. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 38(1), 27-31. [PDF](#)

The purpose of this study was to evaluate if an educational package used for animal welfare teaching would have significant effects on the knowledge of first grade children in a rural area of Mexico. The research was conducted with 276 students in six public schools. In the experimental group, 177 children participated in a 10 week-long animal welfare education program that covered ten one-hour animal welfare topics. The control group, consisting of 99 children, did not receive the course. There were no significant differences ($P > 0.05$) between pretests of the experimental and control schools (ANOVA). However, a significant effect of the program on the children's knowledge was found when the results of the post-test were analyzed using the pretest as a covariate (ANCOVA). Furthermore, the correct responses of the children exposed to the Animal Welfare program were on average 78% richer in concepts compared to responses from children in the control group. These results contribute to the growing body of research literature on the relationship between children and animals in humane education, suggesting that first grade children living in moderate economic conditions can assimilate animal welfare concepts.

Arbour, R. R., Signal, T. T., & Taylor, N. N. (2009). Teaching kindness: The promise of humane education. *Society & Animals*, 17(2), 136-148. [PDF](#)

Although the popularity of Humane Education Programs (HEP) as a method of teaching compassion and caring for all living beings is increasing, there is a need for rigorous, methodologically sound research evaluating the efficacy of HEP. Recent calls for the inclusion of HEP within broader humanistic, environmental, and social justice frameworks underline the importance of HEP beyond a simple "treatment of animals" model. Lack of methodological rigor in the majority of published HEP studies (e.g., absence of a control group) and dispersal across disparate fields (with differing indices of efficacy), however, means that there is a potential for the popular use of HEP to outstrip our understanding of the variables that impact efficacy. The current study discusses some of these issues and presents a pilot study of a literature-only HEP intervention. Comparisons with an age-matched control group indicated that the four-week HEP resulted in an increase in measures of empathy and treatment of animals, although only the increase in empathy levels was significant. This paper discusses the implications of the current results and areas in need of future consideration.

Arkow, P. (2006). "Old wine in a new bottle": new strategies for humane education. In A.H. Fine (Ed.) *Handbook on animal-assisted therapy: Theoretical foundations and guidelines for practice*. San Diego: Academic Press, 425-451. ISBN: 9780123694843. [PDF](#)

The original edition was the first book to provide a comprehensive overview of the ways in which animals can assist therapists with treatment of specific populations, and/or in specific settings. The second edition continues in this vein, with 7 new chapters plus substantial revisions of continuing chapters as the research in this field has grown. New coverage includes: Animals as social supports, Use of AAT with Special Needs students, the role of animals in the family- insights for clinicians, and measuring the animal-person bond. Also features contributions from veterinarians, animal trainers, psychologists, and social workers as well as guidelines and best practices for using animals as therapeutic companions, and addresses specific types of patients and environmental situations.

Blake, S. (2007). Promoting emotional and social development in schools: A practical guide. London: Paul Chapman. ISBN: 9781412907309.

This accessible resource presents guidelines for creating an emotionally and socially healthy school and offers case studies that illustrate how good practice improves behavior and promotes inclusion.

Broom, D. M. (2005). Animal welfare education: Development and prospects. *Journal of Veterinary Medical Education*, 32(4), 438-441. [PDF](#)

Animal welfare has developed rapidly as a scientific discipline since the 1980s. Concepts have been refined, methodologies for assessment developed, and links made to other areas of science. Changes in the subject and in its teaching are required. Since 1986, a series of senior academic teaching posts in the subject have been created, especially in the last 10 years. Veterinary and animal

science students should receive a specific course on animal welfare, in addition to mention of the subject in other courses. In the future, more allusion to developments in understanding of welfare in relation to disease and brain measures of welfare is likely. The central role of animal welfare in veterinary and animal science teaching will become more firmly established.

Brunskill, K. (2006). *Developing consideration, respect and tolerance*. London, England: Paul Chapman. ISBN: 9781412919630.

This resource helps students aged 5 to 12 in cultivating their talents, proactive problem-solving, positive social orientation, and establishing a sense of belonging.

Brunskill, K. (2006). *Learning to be honest, kind and friendly*. London, England: Paul Chapman. ISBN: 9781412919623.

The four books in the series provide a whole-school value based programme for young people from five to twelve years of age. They help in the creation of wellbeing and resilience in students by introducing and developing a range of values and behaviours that will assist with social and emotional health. The series is well differentiated for the target age group and each volume follows a similar format: (1) introduction; (2) guidance on how to use the materials; (3) links to curriculum areas; (4) comprehensive teacher notes on each theme. The themes are based around stories which will engage young people and these are accompanied by worksheets and follow up activities. Each book can be used individually or together as a complete programme to promote pro-social values. All the books will help young people to: (1) have a sense of belonging; (2) identify their talents; (3) develop proactive problem solving; (4) enhance positive social orientation; (5) encourage an optimistic sense of fun.

Caselman, T. (2009). *Teaching children empathy: The social emotion : lessons, activities and reproducible worksheets (K-6) that teach how to "step into other's shoes"*. Chapin, SC: YouthLight, Inc. ISBN: 9781598500141.

Helping children develop greater empathy-related awareness and skills can help prevent negative social behaviours such as bullying, meanness, and alienation. Empathy is a fundamental social emotion because it brings a sense of emotional connection to others. It is this awareness that is not only basic to all healthy relationships; it is the root of prosocial behaviour, altruism, kindness and peace. Empathy has cognitive, affective and behavioural components that can be learned and improved upon by children. The lessons and activities in this book are designed to: teach students the value of empathy; assist students in recognizing their own and others' feelings; help students put themselves in "someone else's shoes"; and instruct students how to exhibit understanding and acceptance. Each topic-related lesson includes five inviting worksheets that can be reproduced and used repeatedly with elementary school-aged students.

Dilmaç, B., & Kulaksizoglu, A. (2007). *An examination of the Humane Values Education Program on a group of science high school students*. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 7(3), 1241-1261. [PDF](#)

The purpose of this study is to find out whether the Humane Values Education Program has produced any changes on the students' level of humane values. The research was conducted with the first-and second grade students in Konya Meram Science High School in the 2006-2007 academic year. Thirty students participated in the study. Half of the participants were assigned to the experimental group and the other half to the control group. The research period spans April & May. Having prepared the education program and the scale, the experimental and control groups were formed objectively. The experimental group, consisting of 15 students, was provided with the Humane Values Education Program lasting 14 sessions. Two sessions were held in a week. Statistical methods were used to balance the control and experimental group. The control group didn't receive any program. Findings of the research can be summarized as follows: Between the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group, a significant difference can be seen in favor of the post- test. There is no such a difference for the control group. According to the post-test results of the control and experimental group, there are meaningful differences in favor of the experimental group in the sub-dimensions of responsibility, friendship, amiability, respect, honesty, and tolerance. Thus, these results show the effectiveness of the program presented. The sub-dimensions of the Humane Values Education Program given above show that this study is effective with regard to affective, cognitive, and behavioral outcomes. Suggestions are made in the light of the findings and it has been concluded that the program is effective in the development of secondary education students' value acquisition.

Gordon, M. (2005). *Roots of empathy: Changing the world, child by child*. Toronto, Ont: Thomas Allen Publishers. ISBN: 9780887621284.

Roots of Empathy – an evidence-based program developed in 1996 by longtime educator and social entrepreneur Mary Gordon – has already reached more than 270,000 children in Canada, the U.S., Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere. Now, as The New York Times reports that "empathy lessons are spreading everywhere amid concerns over the pressure on students from high-stakes tests and a race to college that starts in kindergarten", Mary Gordon explains the value of and how best to nurture empathy and social and emotional literacy in all children – and thereby reduce aggression, antisocial behavior, and bullying.

Levine, D.A. (2005). Teaching empathy: A blueprint for caring, compassion, and community. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree. ISBN: 9781932127782.

The Teaching Empathy resource set (book and CD) focuses on teaching the pro-social skill of empathy by naming and practicing it, and by modeling and encouraging it. The four sections of this resource set will help you build a culture of caring in your school: 1. Teaching With Empathy: Connect with students, model prosocial skills, and build trusting relationships through storytelling, symbolic teaching and other strategies. 2. Learning Empathy: Teach students empathy and its companion behaviors of listening, compassion, honor, and generosity through strategies such as Social Skills Learning, cross-training and rituals, and the Fishbowl. 3. Living Empathy: Build a school culture of empathy through the 10 intentions of the school of belonging. 4. Courageous Conversations: Focus on dilemmas, the powers of choice, and other empathic skills in the mini-empathy curriculum that combines 13 lessons with 8 thought-provoking songs including "Howard Gray."

Loar, L., Colman, L.L., & Latham Foundation. (2004). Teaching empathy: Animal-assisted therapy programs for children and families exposed to violence. Alameda, Calif.: Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Humane Education. ISBN: 9780967533032.

Teaching Empathy: Animal-Assisted Therapy Programs for Children and Families Exposed to Violence is a repository of practical skills and interventions. You can select from a rich menu of ideas, assessment tools, worksheets and resources to design humane education and animal-assisted therapy programs that are safe for both the human and animal participant. You will not take an animal into a classroom again and be ignorant of the possible impact of your words and the animal's behaviors on certain children. All of this knowledge is essential to safeguard the welfare of both humans and animals and to promote the best that the fields of humane education and animal-assisted therapies have to offer.

Pedersen, H. (2004). Schools, speciesism, and hidden curricula: The role of critical pedagogy for humane education futures. Journal of Futures Studies, 8(4), 1-14. [PDF](#)

This article discusses approaches to educational theory and practice, influenced by moral philosophy, critical pedagogy and ecofeminist social analysis, that build on an expanded moral sphere also including nonhuman species. The theoretical framework is reflected against 1) the humane education approach, contextualizing the human-animal relation within a broader framework of social justice; and 2) empirical material from a pilot study, focusing on how this relation is dealt with within a Swedish primary school. A Causal Layered Analysis is proposed as a platform from which to explore educational futures encompassing the human-animal relation, and strategies for developing humane curricula are discussed.

Robinson III, E.M., & Curry, J.R. (2005). Promoting altruism in the classroom. Childhood Education, 82(2), 68-73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00094056.2006.10521349>

Another hypothesis comes from social learning theory, which posits that children learn to be altruistic through multiple social interactions, including adult role modeling of ideal behaviors, dialectic conversations that stimulate cognitive formation and development of altruistic ideas, and role playing and instruction that increase children's perceptions of their own competencies for helping others (Konecni & Ebbesen, 1975). Further evidence supporting the social learning theory of altruism comes from research by Konecni and Ebbesen (1975), who found that children have a greater response to adults who behave altruistically (through role modeling) versus adults who merely make statements in favor of altruism.

Shapiro, L.E. (2008). Learning to listen, learning to care: A workbook to help kids learn self-control & empathy. Oakland, CA: Instant Help Books. ISBN: 9781572245983.

When it comes to teaching kids to behave well, the "why" is as important as the "how." In Learning to Listen, Learning to Care, children learn why it is important to follow rules and behave considerately toward others. This cultivates empathy, which contributes not just to good behavior, but to academic and social success. By working through the fun and engaging exercises in this book, kids learn how to recognize the impact of their behavior on others, express emotion in appropriate ways, and compromise with family and friends. Behavioral problems among children are at an all-time high in the US. Parents of nearly 2.7 million children say that their kids suffer from severe emotional or behavioral problems that interfere with their family life or learning. A staggering 50 percent of counseling referrals are for behavioral problems. Empathy is the antidote to many of them, according to child psychologist and author Lawrence Shapiro. In Learning to Listen, Learning to Care, he teaches the empathy and self-control that can reduce behavioral problems and lead to long-term success. This book is appropriate for kids between the ages of six and twelve.

Spinrad, T., & Eisenberg, N. (2009). Empathy, prosocial behavior, and positive development in schools. In Handbook of positive psychology in schools, 119-129. ISBN: 9780805863611. [PDF](#)

National surveys consistently reveal that an inordinate number of students report high levels of boredom, anger, and stress in school, which often leads to their disengagement from critical learning and social development. If the ultimate goal of schools is to educate young people to become responsible and critically thinking citizens who can succeed in life, understanding factors that stimulate them

to become active agents in their own learning is critical. A new field labeled "positive psychology" is one lens that can be used to investigate factors that facilitate a student's sense of agency and active school engagement. The purposes of this groundbreaking Handbook are to 1) describe ways that positive emotions, traits, and institutions promote school achievement and healthy social/emotional development 2) describe how specific positive psychological constructs relate to students and schools and support the delivery of school-based services and 3) describe the application of positive psychology to educational policy making. By doing so, the book provides a long-needed centerpiece around which the field can continue to grow in an organized and interdisciplinary manner.

Thomas, S., & Beirne, P. (2002). Humane education and humanistic philosophy: Toward a new curriculum. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education & Development*, 41(2), 190-199. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2164-490X.2002.tb00142.x>

The authors argue that humane education should be an integral part of humanistic philosophy. They outline 2 key components of a humane education: (a) an understanding of the sociological and psychological dimensions of animal abuse and (b) the cultivation of empathy for nonhuman animals.

Thompson, K.L. and Gullone, E. (2003), Promotion of empathy and prosocial behaviour in children through humane education. *Australian Psychologist*, 38,175–182. [PDF](#)

While the importance of normative levels of empathy and prosocial behaviour is becoming increasingly recognised, it has been suggested that modern western industrialised society is not conducive to the promotion of empathy development in children. Related to this, it has been proposed that one method for contributing to the building of empathy is to encourage direct contact with animals. The rationale for this is the belief that by developing a bond with animals, empathy toward other living beings will be encouraged. Consequently, it has been proposed that empathy directed at non-human animals will transfer to humans. Such cross-species association has been demonstrated for animal abuse. For example, some studies have reported that childhood cruelty toward animals is related to interpersonal violence in adulthood. Humane education programs aim to intervene in the cycle of abuse by decreasing a child's potential to be abusive toward animals, and, as a consequence, to promote prosocial behaviour toward humans.

Tsai, Y. F. L., & Kaufman, D. M. (2009). The socioemotional effects of a computer-simulated animal on children's empathy and humane attitudes. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 41(1), 103-122. [PDF](#)

This study investigated the potential of using a computer-simulated animal in a handheld virtual pet videogame to improve children's empathy and humane attitudes. Also investigated was whether sex differences existed in children's development of empathy and humane attitudes resulting from play, as well as their feelings for a virtual pet. The results showed that after playing Nintendogs for 3 weeks, the participants of both sexes, on average, scored higher levels of empathy on the Bryant Empathy Index, and had higher levels of humane attitudes on the Intermediate Attitude Scale, compared to their pretest scores before they played. A statistical association also was revealed between time playing with a computer simulated animal and improved scores in empathy and humane attitudes toward animals. The findings also showed that participants tended to form emotional attachments with their virtual pet and considered it a real pet.

Unti, B., & DeRosa, B. (2003). Humane education: Past, present and future. In D.J. Salem & A.N. Rowan (Eds.), *The state of the animals II* (pp. 27-50). ISBN: 9780965894272. [PDF](#)

No summary available.

Verene, D. P. (2002). *The art of humane education*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. ISBN: 9780801440397.

In *The Art of Humane Education*, Donald Phillip Verene presents a new statement of the classical and humanist ideals that he believes should guide education in the liberal arts and sciences. These ideals are lost, he contends, in the corporate atmosphere of the contemporary university, with its emphasis on administration, faculty careerism, and student performance. Verene addresses questions of how and what to teach and offers practical suggestions for the conduct of class sessions, the relationship between teacher and student, the interpretation of texts, and the meaning and use of a canon of great books. In sharp contrast to the current tendency toward specialization, Verene considers the aim of college education to be self-knowledge pursued through study of all fields of thought. Education, in his view, must be based on acquisition of the arts of reading, writing, and thinking. He regards the class lecture as a form of oratory that should be presented in accordance with the well-known principles of rhetoric. *The Art of Humane Education*, styled as a series of letters, makes the author's original and practical ideas very clear. In this elegant book, Verene explores the full range of issues surrounding humane education.