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CREATED BY	Erich Yahner
AFFILIATION	The Humane Society Institute for Science and Policy

Ascione, F. R. (1997). Humane education research: Evaluating efforts to encourage children's kindness and caring toward animals. *Genetic Social and General Psychology Monographs*, 123(1), 57-78. [DOC](#)

Humane education includes instructional approaches to teaching children kindness toward animals. Although efforts to teach children to be caring probably began within the first human social groups, formalized programs aimed at fostering children's compassion and responsibility toward people and animals are a more recent phenomenon, emerging in the United States not much earlier than a century ago. This article describes what has been evaluated in humane education programs, why such programs are being scrutinized, how programs have been evaluated (with a listing of the shortcomings of some evaluations and suggestions for improvement), and where programs and their evaluations should be directed in the future. The focus is on preschool and elementary grade programs. After a discussion of historical perspectives, recent approaches to implementing and evaluating humane education are reviewed. Special attention is given to the issue of whether teaching children to be caring toward animals has effects that are generalizable to human-directed empathy. Suggestions are offered for future research on this relatively neglected topic in child psychology.

Ascione, F. R., & Weber, C. V. (1996). Children's attitudes about the humane treatment of animals and empathy: One-year follow up of a school-based intervention. *Anthrozoös*, 9(4), 188-195. <https://doi.org/10.2752/089279396787001455>

This study assessed the maintenance of the effect of a year-long school-based humane education program on fourth grade children's attitudes toward animals. Generalization to human-directed empathy was also measured. Using a pretest-posttest (Year 1) follow-up (Year 2) design and ANCOVA, we found that the experimental group (children who experienced the program) humane attitudes mean was greater than the control group mean at initial posttesting and at the Year 2 follow up. At both Year 1 and Year 2 posttesting, the enhancement of attitudes toward animals generalized to human-directed empathy, especially when the quality of the children's relations with their pets was considered as a covariate. The results contribute to the growing literature on the significance of the relations between children and animals, and serve to encourage humane education efforts.

Ascione, F. R., & Weber, C. V. (1993, March). Children's attitudes about the humane treatment of animals and empathy: One-year follow up of a school-based intervention. Presentation at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, New Orleans, LA.

No summary available.

Ascione, F. R. (1992). Enhancing children's attitudes about the humane treatment of animals: Generalization to human-directed empathy. *Anthrozoös*, 5(3), 176-191. <https://doi.org/10.2752/089279392787011421>

We assessed the impact of a year-long, school-based humane education program on younger (first and second graders) and older (fourth and fifth graders) children's attitudes toward the treatment of animals. Generalization to human-directed empathy was also measured. Using a pretest-posttest design and ANCOVA, we found that the program enhanced the animal-related attitudes of children differentially, depending on grade level. For younger children, there was no significant difference between experimental (E) and control (C) group attitude means; however, qualitative analysis showed that greater enhancement of attitudes occurred for first grade E group children than for C group children at that grade level. No differences were present on the generalization measure of empathy. For older children, there was a significant difference between E and C group attitude means qualified by grade level—there was greater enhancement of humane attitudes for E group than for C group fourth graders but no difference for fifth graders. On the generalization measure of empathy, posttest means for the E group were significantly greater than means for the C group regardless of grade level. The results contribute to the growing literature on the relation between children and animals and serve to encourage and validate the efforts of humane educators to improve children's caring and kindness toward companion and noncompanion animals.

Balcombe, J. (1999). Animals & Society courses: A growing trend in post-secondary education. *Society & Animals*, 7(3), 229-240. [PDF](#)

A survey of college courses addressing nonhuman animal ethics and welfare issues indicates that the presence of such courses has increased greatly since a prior survey was done in 1983. This paper provides titles and affiliations of 67 of 89 courses from the current Survey. These courses represent 15 academic fields, and a majority are entirely devoted to animal issues. The fields of animal science and philosophy are proportionally well represented compared with biology and wildlife-related fields. An estimated 5000 or more North

American students are now receiving instruction in these issues each year. While the availability of courses in animal issues is still sporadic, it is unprecedentedly high and seen as an important component of changing social values toward nonhuman animals.

Battistich, V., Watson, M., Solomon, D., Schaps, E., & Solomon, J. (1991). *The Child Development Project: A comprehensive program for the development of prosocial character*. In W. M. Kurtines & J. L. Gewirtz (Eds.), *Handbook of moral behavior and development (Vol. 3: Application)*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum. ISBN: 9780805808827

No summary available.

Bebeau, M. J., Rest, J. R., & Narvaez, D. (1999). *Beyond the promise: A perspective on research in moral education*. *Educational Researcher*, 28(4), 18-26. [PDF](#)

Changing concerns and ideological shifts in American society produce different emphases in moral education. We argue that different approaches address different dimensions of development. If viewed as complementary rather than contradictory, we may be able to move beyond ideological and philosophical disputes to solid theory-building based on empirical findings. In proposing an action program for moral education that incorporates research, we draw upon lessons learned from the Head Start movement of the 1960s. In defining researchable variables, we recommend the Four Component Model (sensitivity, judgment, motivation, character) instead of the usual tripartite model (thinking, feeling, acting).

Grier, K. C. (1999). *Childhood socialization and companion animals: United States, 1820-1870*. *Society & Animals*, 7(2), 95-120. [PDF](#)

Between 1820 and 1870, middle-class Americans became convinced of the role nonhuman animals could play in socializing children. Companion animals in and around the household were the medium for training children into self-consciousness about, and abhorrence of, causing pain to other creatures including, ultimately, other people. In an age where the formation of character was perceived as an act of conscious choice and self-control, middle-class Americans understood cruelty to animals as a problem both of individual or familial deficiency and of good and evil. Training children to be self-conscious about kindness became an important task of parenting. Domestic advisors also argued that learning kindness was critical for boys who were developmentally prone to cruelty and whose youthful cruelty had implications both for the future of family life and for the body politic. The practice of pet keeping, where children became stewards of companion animals who were then able to teach young humans such virtues as gratitude and fidelity, became a socially meaningful act.

Hepner, L. A. (1994). *Animals in education: the facts, issues, and implications*. Albuquerque, NM: Richmond Publishers. ISBN: 9780963941800 [PDF](#)

No summary available.

Petto, A. J., & Russell, K. D. (1999). *Humane education: the role of animal-based learning*. In Francine L. Dolins (ed.), *Attitudes to Animals: Views in Animal Welfare*. Cambridge University Press. pp. 167 ISBN: 9780521479066

No summary available.

Rusnak, T. (1998). *An integrated approach to character education*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Corwin Press. ISBN: 9780761904373.

Shows how to promote character growth and discernment of right from wrong among schoolchildren of all age groups.

Ryan, K., & Bohlin, K. E. (1999). *Building character in schools: Practical ways to bring moral instruction to life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. ISBN: 9780787943448.

Young people in America today face a crisis of character. Traditional role models continue to disappoint the public, falling short of expectations and fostering cynicism rather than idealism. As a result, many young people struggle to distinguish right from wrong and seem indifferent to whether it matters. It clearly becomes the task of parents and schools to re-engage the hearts and minds of our children in forming their own characters. In *Building Character in Schools*, Kevin Ryan and Karen Bohlin draw from nearly fifty years of combined field experience to offer a practical guide to character education -- designed to help children to know the good, love the good, and do the good. Ryan and Bohlin provide a blueprint for educators who wish to translate a personal commitment to character education into a schoolwide vision and effort. They outline the principles and strategies of effective character education and explain what schools must do to teach students the habits and dispositions that lead to responsible adulthood -- from developing curriculum that reinforces good character development to strengthening links with parents. A useful resource section includes sample lessons, program guidelines, and a parents' list of ways to promote character in their children. *Building Character in Schools* clearly defines the responsibilities of adults and students in modeling and nurturing character and sets forth practical guidelines for schools seeking to become communities of virtue where responsibility, hard work, honesty, and kindness are modeled, taught, expected, celebrated, and continually practiced.

Scruton, R. (1993). *On Humane Education*. Boston University Press. ISBN: 9780872701052

No summary available.

Selby, D. (2000). *Humane education: Widening the circle of compassion and justice. Weaving connections: Educating for peace, social and environmental justice*, 268-296. ISBN: 9781894549011

No abstract available.

Selby, D. (1995). *Earthkind: A teachers' handbook on humane education*. Stylus Publishing, LLC.. ISBN: 9780948080883

Curriculum materials for teaching about humane treatment of animals. Intended to provide information and background materials for students from primary through secondary age. Includes recommendations of appropriate ages for activities, key concepts explored, terms and issues falling under chapter topics and a documents section. Since curriculum was developed in Britain, the resource organizations listed in the end may be less helpful to American teachers.

Selby, D. (1993). *Humane Education and Global Education. Australian Journal of Environmental Education*, 9, 115-133. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0814062600003220>

This paper is based on David Selby's workshop 'Animal Rights and Global Education' presented at the Touch 92 conference of European environmental educators, 29 March - 4 April 1992, Loutra Sidirokastrou, Serres, Greece. The conference was organised by the Department of Primary Education, Aristotle's University of Thessaloniki.

Zuman, J. P. (1993). *Promoting Respect for All Forms of Life: A Model Primary School Program in Costa Rica. Humane Innovations and Alternatives*, 7, 475-79.

Summarizes the progress of the Costa Rican Humane Education Project after four years of work to educate children to protect the environment and to develop a genuine respect for all forms of life. Evaluation results indicate children have developed positive attitudes about animals and their environment.