



*A note to educators;*

The goal of the Animal Services Education Office is to provide education to citizens of all ages. Whenever possible, our office will provide materials to classroom teachers so that they may use them as an integral part of humane/character education after our brief visit. According to Lesia Winiarskyj of The National Association of Humane and Environmental Education (the youth education division of The Humane Society of the United States), *“Humane education gives us a better, more honest understanding of animals’ behaviors, biology, and needs and teaches how and why animals should be treated kindly. By its very nature, it compliments another major educational initiative, character development, in that the values humane education promote in children’s dealings with animals – respect, responsibility, empathy, fairness, and compassion – apply as aptly to their relationships with people.”*

During the April 2005 Animal Care Expo held in Atlanta, Georgia, NAHEE offered this definition and brief history of humane education:

*“Often thought of as the teaching of proper care of companion animals, humane education, in fact involves much more. It is a form of character education that stresses respect, compassion, and responsibility in our treatment of all animals-and people-and the preservation of natural habitats.”*

*“Hardly a new concept, humane education was introduced to American school children on a broad scale in the late nineteenth century by George Angell, the founder of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Angell was responsible for the widespread distribution of humane storybooks to public schools, including Anna Sewell’s famous Black Beauty...In 1882, he began the formation of ‘Bands of Mercy,’ groups of students and teachers who pledged kindness to animals and engaged in activities to prevent cruelty...The Bands have a modern-day equivalent in the extracurricular animal and environmental protection clubs that exist in elementary and secondary schools (today)...”*

*“Today, the primary source of humane education activity in the United States continues to be local animal care and control agencies (SPCAs, humane societies,...)often support(ed) by national organizations. Although humane education methodologies vary...a central theme links all humane education efforts: the belief that just as helping children develop good character is an integral part of their education, treating animals responsibly and humanely is an essential part of good character.”*

