



National Pet Month 'Keeping Pets Healthy' lesson plan for vets and schools

Building relationships in the local community is at the heart of National Pet Month's work and we know that bringing pet experts and children together is the perfect way to raise awareness of responsible pet ownership.

We are delighted to have been working with Marc Abraham, TV vet, author, and animal welfare campaigner to develop downloadable resources for pet health professionals to use when making school visits. Our new (2014) 'Keeping Pets Healthy' session will help children aged 4-7 (Reception and KS1) understand the role of a vet and the importance of caring for animals and others.

Having seen Marc in action at a school, we know how much value it brings and hope more vets and local schools can benefit from our 'Keeping Pets Healthy' lesson.

This is our 'Keeping Pets Healthy' lesson plan chart to help guide vets leading the sessions. To accompany the session, vets will also need a set of baby and adult animal images for the first game. We have given some examples – you might want to use similar ones in your lesson.

National Pet Month is a registered charity number 1114880. The Trustees are:



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National Pet Month



Activity	Teacher	Children	Time
Warm up	<p>Ask children some simple questions to introduce them to the subject: What do I do? Who can tell me what a vet does? Why do I do it? Who likes animals? Who has pets? Why don't you have pets?</p> <p>Do you like games?! <i>(leads on to next section)</i></p>	<p>Children answer questions. <i>Ensure all children feel happy to have contributed.</i></p> <p><i>Opens up discussions about allergies, new babies etc</i></p>	10
<p>Game 1 (this lets them get to know/trust you & requires animal images click here)</p>	<p>Tell the children you will now be playing a game about growing up! Ask the children: What will you be when you grow up? <i>(Note: you are looking for 'a grown-up' or 'adult' as answer. Not job/profession e.g. vet, policeman, ballet dancer etc!</i></p> <p>This helps lead into the game... Explain to the children that you are going to show them lots of images of baby animals: Can you tell me what <i>they</i> will be when they grow up? <i>(Reassure the children that it's ok to guess as that's how we all learn).</i> Hold up A4 images of baby pet animals and have the grown up version ready to reveal. Suggestions: Horse, Guinea Pig, Dog, Cat, Rabbit, Parrot, Tortoise, Hedgehog, Snake, Butterfly.</p> <p>Final adult image is of a wounded animal e.g. dog with bandaged leg.</p>	<p>Children discuss</p> <p>Children guess</p>	10
Discussion 1	<p>Explain that you would like to discuss how we can tell if an animal is hurt... (Prompt them to think about their own injuries – BEFORE the bandage/cream/calling teacher stage!)</p> <p>Invite the children to discuss what to do if an animal is hurt... <i>Encourage them to say that animals need caring for and taking to vet/adult/grown-up.</i></p> <p>Discuss what happens to wild animals – differences between caring for pets and wild animals <i>and themselves.</i></p> <p><i>With older children, you can discuss how to help the animal. Listen to its breathing, heart, take blood, X-rays, anaesthetics, and operations.</i></p>	<p>Children will suggest things like: bleeding, crying, limping, not eating and general behaviour change</p>	10

<p>Game 2</p>	<p>Explain that you have a bag of tricks from your clinic! You would like the children to guess the items in your bag. Pull out a selection of items one at a time and invite the children to name and explain what they are used for:</p> <p>Latex gloves – to stop germs spreading Cotton wool – cleaning wounds Bandage - to keep clean from germs/support Muzzle – to stop biting vet/owner Syringe – what’s in it/what’s it used for/why?</p>	<p>Children discuss</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>Summing Up</p>	<p>Thank the children for their great comments and remind them what they have learned in your lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What a vet does - How animals grow up like us - How to spot an injured animal - How to care for them & wildlife/nature <p><i>You can also explain the Five Welfare Needs in more detail with the older children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Good diet</i> • <i>Good home</i> • <i>Good health</i> • <i>The right company</i> • <i>The right behaviour</i> • <p>Conclude that you want them to remember how important it is to care for <i>all</i> animals (just like our friends).</p>		<p>5</p>