

Tolerance



April 2003

A lesson in Character Education
Humane Society of Broward County
2070 Griffin Road
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312

Raising a PUPPY or KITTEN...a lesson in TOLERANCE

- Write in capital letters on the board the word “PUPPY.” Next, make two columns one entitled POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS and the other entitled NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTICS.
- Ask students how many of them have ever owned a puppy. Ask them to think back on their experience and share what are the positive aspects of owning a puppy and the negative aspects. List their comments on the board.
- Ask students how many of them kept their puppies through adulthood. Ask how many of them gave up their puppies. If their families gave up their puppies ask them why (chances are many of the families gave up the puppies for behaviors they considered intolerable).
- Erase the list of positive characteristics from the board and one by one go down the line and speak about each intolerable behavior. Some of your answers will probably include the following: chewing, biting, urinating or defecating in the house, destroying things, crying at night, barking etc.
- Explain to the students that each of these behaviors is natural and normal; it is what puppies do. We as their owners are responsible for teaching them what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.



- Write the word “BABIES” on the board. Ask students to list some things, we must teach babies or toddlers. When you are finished, ask them if they see some similarities between the types of things we teach animals and babies. (some similarities might be potty training, getting into things, playing gently, crying etc)
- State that even though sometimes babies might test our patience we wouldn't get rid of them because they are acting like all babies do. Just as we should not get rid of our puppies because they are doing, what puppies do.



Group Activity

1. Divide students into groups and hand to each of them an index card with one of the negative characteristics of owning a puppy. Tell them their job is to come up with a list of five ways to teach the puppy in a positive way.
2. For example: If the negative characteristic was “CHEWING” inappropriate things, some ideas would be: supplying proper chew toys, telling the puppy “NO” and then showing him what to chew, putting away things the puppy might get into, confining the puppy when you are gone, etc.
3. Remember to stress the behavior must be addressed in a positive way.
4. Have students report their ideas to the rest of the classroom.
5. Repeat this entire activity with kittens rather than puppies.

Put on a skit!

Have the kids work during the week to put on skit for other classrooms regarding tolerance and pets. Their skits can portray what happens when people lose their cool and are not tolerant of their pet's behavior. The skits can show the patient and correct way to teach your pet proper behaviors. Have fun with it, have kid's make costumes and really get into their roles!

SKIT IDEAS:

- *A puppy loses his home because his family can't take the chewing anymore / a family takes their puppy to puppy classes to address the chewing problem*
- *A puppy gets chained in the yard because the family has had it / the family exercises their dog and makes him a part of the family*

Call the Humane Society of Broward County to speak to your classroom about raising puppies and kittens in a fun, healthy and positive way!

Call Mara at (954) 266-6848