



Vet Science

Learning Animal Behaviors

Levels

Cloverbuds, Juniors, Intermediates, and Seniors

Lesson Objective

The objective of this lesson is to familiarize 4Hers with the behaviors and actions of animals, and how to deal with animals, keeping safety a priority.

Time

1 hour.

Materials

Knowledgeable and enthusiastic group leaders, and a list of possible scenarios dealing with animals, and possible pictures of animals displaying the listed behaviors for visuals for participants. Videos may also be helpful in showing animal behaviors, and how to, or not to react.

Space Required

Room with table and chair space.

Before the Meeting

Set up tables with chairs for members to sit at.

Background

Though you have probably usually dealt with friendly, loving pets, or calm livestock, there are many situations in which animals can be frightened, aggressive, or both, and the situation can quickly turn dangerous for both the animals and humans involved. As vet science participants, it is important to recognize and react to all animal behaviors.

Activity Instructions

1. 4H members will be separated into their respective age categories of Cloverbuds, Juniors, Intermediates, and Seniors.
2. The group leaders will explain the list of animal scenarios to their group, with supplemental photos of the selected animal displaying the certain behavior with the usual signs.
3. The group will then discuss the proper way to react, with leader guidance if necessary.
4. Cloverbuds and Juniors should not be encouraged to deal with any fearful or aggressive animal, but should be taught to get help.
5. All members should be encouraged to make the situation as safe as possible, and utilize a knowledgeable adult's help with containing, restraining, or protecting themselves from the animal.
6. It is important to emphasize the idea that people should try to 'put themselves in the animal's position' to understand how the animal sees the situation, how it will likely react, and why it will react that way.
7. Wildlife situations may be addressed if time allows.
8. Members should be able to recognize the different signs of behaviors, or the 'tells' that animals will give to show their feelings.
9. The level of involvement encouraged and the situations presented may vary with the age group.
10. Person and animal safety are always the priorities.

Reflect and Apply Questions

1. Do you have some of the feelings and or behave in the ways listed above?
2. What is the most important thing to remember when dealing with animals?
3. Write your own scenario with any kind of aggressive animal and a human. Describe how to deal with the situation

References:

<https://www.avma.org/public/Pages/Recognizing-risky-situations.aspx>
<http://www.nature.com/scitable/knowledge/animal-behavior-13228230>
<http://www.animalbehaviorsociety.org/web/applied-behavior-definition.php>