

# Citizenship



## Lesson: Animal Neglect

### Initiating Questions:

What constitutes a good citizen? What are some things a good citizen might do? What are some things a good citizen can do for animals?

### Description:

Students will learn about some animal laws in our community. Specifically, they will learn about the plight of dogs on chains, and the absence of law in this area. Students will learn what they can do to make their voice heard and to make a difference in their own community on behalf of animals.

### Procedure:

1. Begin the lesson with the initiating questions above or choose some questions of your own. You're looking for the response that a good citizen is somebody that follows the law and helps the community in which they live.
2. Ask the students what laws they follow regarding their own pets at home (See "for your information" regarding laws). Share with them some of the laws in Broward County to protect animals. Explain to them that laws are ultimately for the protection of both animals and people.
3. Tell the students that the law against the "Confinement of animals without sufficient food, water or exercise; abandonment of animals" (write on the board) is a law that needs to be improved and enforced. Explain that every day thousands of dogs are kept on four- to six-foot chains for their entire lives.
4. Explain to students that currently the law in Florida states that dogs only need to be provided with food, water and proper shelter. The law does not forbid dogs to be kept on chains. Ask the students if they think it's fair that dogs stay on chains for prolonged periods of time. Ask how many think it is wrong and give reasons why, list on the board.

5. Ask them that a good citizen might do to help dogs on chains or what could be done to prevent other dogs from becoming a victim of this cruelty. Suggestions might be:

- Educate others: Tell friends, neighbors and family about the miserable life of chained dogs. Call the Humane Society of Broward County to get information to pass onto others about chained dogs (954) 266-6848.
- Write a letter to your Governor / Senator: Let your voice be heard! Each person can make a difference. Tell them you think it is wrong and would like to see a law to protect dogs from this abuse.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper.
- Report Cruelty/ Neglect - You can be a voice for the animals, since they can't speak for themselves. If you see an animal being abused or neglected it report it to the Humane Society at (954) 266-6823 or the Broward County Animal Care and Adoption at (954) 359-1313.

## **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

### **Regarding animal laws:**

There are many laws in Broward County to protect animals. Here are just a few:

1. **Leash law:** Your dog must be kept on a leash if it is outside your fenced yard. This law is to protect your dog from being hurt, injured or lost. The law is also made to protect people and other animals from being hurt or bitten by a loose dog.
2. **Rabies:** Every dog or cat four months of age or older in the State of Florida must be vaccinated and licensed against rabies. The reason for this law is to protect people and other animals from catching this fatal viral disease.
3. **Abandonment of animals:** It is against the law for any person to willfully abandon any animal for a period in excess of 24 hours without providing food, water, proper shelter, protection from the weather and necessary veterinary care for the animal.
4. **Fighting animals is prohibited:** It is a felony for any person to cause, instigate or encourage any dog or animal to fight another of its own species or another of a different species, or to maintain a place where any dog or animal is permitted to fight for exhibition, for wager or for sport.

### **Regarding dogs on chains:**

Dogs are very social animals. They are used to living in packs, today in our society their pack is their human family. Humans domesticated dogs over 10,000 years ago to live as companions and family pets. Since then they have learned to live

with us and depend on us. Dogs are not solitary animals without us they suffer horribly from loneliness. Dogs kept on chains for long periods, begin to suffer from boredom and loneliness. As a result these dogs sometimes get very depressed and give up. Other dogs become aggressive from lack of mental stimulation and socialization with human beings. All dogs left on chains will end up with a variety of behavior problems such as digging, biting, barking and chewing. It is simply cruel and inhumane to have any dog spend long periods of time on a chain.

**Follow-up Activity:** Have student investigate an animal law and give an oral report to the class.



*This lesson was provided by the Humane Society of Broward County. We offer a variety of free education programs! Please call 954-266-6848 for more information.*



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