

# What do animals need?

Activity Plan 7-9 years



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## Starter Activity

### About this activity

This session will help children learn to empathise with the needs of animals, including working animals like galgos, which are very similar to our own needs. Children discuss, draw, write and act their ideas as they explore what it means to be kind.

Age group: 7-9 years old

Time required: 45-60 minutes

You will need: A4 paper, pens or pencils, space to sit and discuss or role-play classroom blackboard or whiteboard.

### Energising Starter Activity: 'When do I feel cared for?'

1. Write the question 'When do I feel cared for?' on the board. Ask children to silently think of an answer.
2. Ask the children to stand up and find at least one other child with the same answer as them (and others if they have the same answer) to form groups. Give children 2-3 minutes to form their groups.
3. Ask each group to share the answer they have in common. Write their answers on the board.
4. Highlight that we all need to feel cared for in similar ways.
5. Ask: Who can care for us? Let the children respond and then highlight that we can all be kind and care for others.

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## Activity 1

### Activity 1: Kind to a friend

1. Explain that now, you would like children to identify what we need to feel happy and cared for. Divide the children into small groups.
2. Ask children to imagine that a friend is staying in their home for a few days. What things will their friend need, so they are happy and feel cared for?
3. Give children 2-3 minutes to think of how their family could be kind and care for this friend.
4. Ask each group to share their ideas, which children can describe or mime.
5. Ask children to volunteer to help you by writing each example on a sheet of paper. Then stick their examples on the wall or board.
6. Use these examples to highlight that there are some things we all need (make sure each of these examples is written on a sheet of paper):
  - Shelter
  - Warmth
  - A bed
  - Food
  - Drink
  - Friendship
  - Affection
  - Good health

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## Activity 2

### Activity 2: Kind to a stranger

1. Give each child a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil.
2. Ask children to imagine that someone like them and their friend, but who they have never met before, needs to stay with their family for a few days.
3. Ask children: Which of these things would this person need, so they will feel happy and cared for? Work through each example one by one.
4. Help children to identify that we all have the same needs and that we should show kindness to everyone.
5. Ask each child to complete the sentence: 'We should be kind to others because...'. Invite children to share what they write and praise them for their ideas.

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## Activity 3

### Activity 3: Kind to a pet

1. Ask children to raise their hands if they have a pet. Invite some children to name and describe their pet, and to explain what they like best about it.
2. Explain that you would like children to think of all the things they and their families might do to look after a pet dog.
3. Ask children to get back into their small groups. Each group identifies what they might do every day, once a week, and less often, to care for and be kind to this dog. Children can write three short lists on a sheet of paper.
4. Invite the groups to share their ideas. Using the words on the wall or board that children wrote to list our own needs in Activities 1 and 2, help children to identify similarities between human and animal needs. Emphasise that humans and animals have the same needs: animals need our kindness and care just as other people do.
5. Ask children to think back to their ideas about what makes them feel cared for. When would a pet dog feel happy and cared for? Ask them to share their ideas.

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## Activity 4

### Activity 4: Kindness to working dogs

1. Ask children: Are all dogs pet dogs?
2. Briefly discuss their ideas, which might include stray dogs and working dogs. Share ideas about what working dogs might do, including police dogs, assistance dogs and farm and hunting dogs, including galgos.
3. Help children understand that working dogs all help us. Ask children: if a person is helpful towards you, how do you feel towards them? How would children feel if they were helpful towards someone, but that person was then unkind to them?
4. In their small groups, ask children to take turns to put themselves in the character of a working dog and explain to their friends how they would like to be cared for. How would they like their owner to be kind to them? Give children a few minutes, so each child can share their ideas with their group.
5. Invite each group to share what they think are the most important examples they thought of (it's OK if groups repeat one another). Use their ideas to help you highlight that just like how a stranger has the same needs as a friend, a working dog has the same needs as a pet. We should be kind and care for working dogs.

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## Reflective plenary activity

Use this activity at the end of the session to reflect on what children have learned and reinforce the key things that animals need.

1. Invite children to share what they have learned or talked about today that was new or interesting to them.
2. Ask: Who now thinks differently about the needs of animals, especially working animals like galgos?
3. Ask children to imagine that they are going to create a poster advertisement that encourages people to be kind to working dogs. What could their poster say, to persuade people to be kind? Share ideas as a group.
4. Thank the children for listening and for working with you today. Encourage them all to think about how they can be kind to animals and encourage their friends and families to do the same.

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## Extra activities

Children could:

1. Draw pictures and write descriptions to show the similarities in what a person and an animal needs in order to be happy and feel cared for, and create a display.
2. Write a simple 'Day in the life' story of a pet that is cared for and happy, or one that is neglected, mistreated and unhappy, to compare how they feel. Children can read their stories and use them to stimulate a discussion of the importance of being kind.
3. Use some of the Greyhounds in Need teaching resources to explore these ideas more:
  - Nico's story – explore feelings and emotions through the story of a galgo.
  - Feelings and emotions flash cards – these support Nico's story but can also be used independently.
  - Rescue shelters – find out more about how rescue shelters help dogs in need.
  - Matching activity – match the English and Spanish words to pictures of what a dog needs.
  - Wordsearches – explore galgo feelings in English and Spanish.

Find these and more resources at

[www.education.greyhoundsinneed.co.uk/teaching-resources](http://www.education.greyhoundsinneed.co.uk/teaching-resources)