An exciting year and promising future!

I am so happy to welcome you to our first edition of HEART Matters! We hope that our newsletters not only update you on our programs and activities, but also inform you about ways that we can all make a positive difference in the world.

Over the past year, we have focused major efforts on the design and launch of our exciting new initiative called the Humane Living Program, detailed in the article on page two. Having served over 200 New York students during this past spring semester, and over 100 children during the summer, we are well on our way to establishing the program as a model that is capable of being replicated throughout the state. An evaluation of the program's first 18 months will illustrate the value of humane and character education for our youth. We expect these results to strengthen the field of humane education by providing us with a persuasive tool that demonstrates the beneficial effects of humane education on children's attitudes and behavior.

On a local level, humane education has caught the attention of the NYC government. Council Member Tony Avella welcomed the opportunity to sponsor an important resolution that will increase compliance with the NYS humane education law. Unfortunately, most educators are unaware that a state humane education mandate even exists. The NYC resolution is described in more detail in our newsletter's Humane Education News section. Additionally, we are pleased that our advocacy efforts in city government have resulted in endorsements of our Humane Living Program, and recent grants to HEART, from the Manhattan Delegation and individual City Council Members. Our persistence in promoting and garnering support for humane education will continue so that as many children as possible can benefit from instruction in humane education.

While our organization is small, our ideas are big and life changing. Through humane education, we are working to build generations of socially conscious, caring people committed to making the world a better place.

Your support for our work is needed and enormously appreciated.

Warm regards,

Meena Alagappan, Esq.
Executive Director
Successful Launch of The Humane Living Program: Bringing Character and Humane Education to NY Students

HEART is pleased to announce the launch of its Humane Living Program in New York City schools in January 2006. Over 300 New York middle and elementary school students and teachers have embraced the program this year. What is this program about and why should children participate?

THE HUMANE LIVING PROGRAM PROVIDES character and humane education to help students gain a personal sense of responsibility and a compassionate attitude toward one another, animals and the earth they live on. Creative program activities, lively debates, group discussions and semester-long civic action projects captivate the students to learn about the content in each lesson, apply it to their other academic subjects, and incorporate the lessons learned into their daily lives.

INSTRUCTION IN HUMANE AND CHARACTER EDUCATION IS ESSENTIAL to building generations of healthy, socially conscious individuals. The best way to prevent wasteful and destructive habits in adulthood is to instill a humane ethic in children through education. The Humane Living Program encourages compassionate living by introducing children to an array of issues including: the link between animal and human violence; bullying; factory farms; pollution; animal cruelty; dogfighting; child labor; global warming; endangered species; and habitat destruction.

THE BENEFITS ARE GREAT AND LONG-LASTING and include:
* Creating better students and caring, compassionate citizens.
* Offering an effective way to reduce and prevent violence in school and at home.
* Fostering a sense of responsibility for children to act upon their personal beliefs.
* Cultivating empathy for animals.
* Encouraging students to strive for a sustainable society while protecting natural resources and the environment.

What are kids saying about the Humane Living Program?

“I liked the day when we talked about bullying and what it does. It taught me to stop being a show-off and stop hurting people. That lesson was very important. A lot of children in my class needed to understand the concept of bullying. I learned about sweatshops, bullying, dogfights, factory farms, and many other interesting things.” - Michael

“You really taught me a lot about nature and thanks to you my family knows a lot more about nature as well. I hope you enjoyed your visits to our class and I hope you know that we enjoyed your visits as well. I hope you have a wonderful life.” - Shekara

“I would like to thank you for teaching my classmates and me about life. Personally, I changed a lot because you taught me how to love animals, help save and change the Earth and try to be nice to others even if they were or are your enemies. I learned so much from you and your organization, so thank you Mr. Bob and thank you HEART program.” - Mamietua

“My mom and I discussed sweatshops. We thought that this must have more publicity. Sweatshops are in the United States and in other countries. We should help people that are suffering because of these conditions. We should give information to the President. It should be brought to his attention. So our goal is to spread the word. Stop sweatshops. No More Sweatshops.” - Yash

I think that the best part of HEART was learning about the horrible things that are happening in this world. I think it is good to learn this so that in the future we can prevent that stuff from happening.

1. I am littering less so even the tiniest part of the ozone layer won’t open up.
2. I am taking better care of my cat and leaving him alone more often.
3. I am choosing to make correct choices more often.

- Veronika
Who is Mr. Bob?
A role model of humane living, Robert Schwalb is HEART's Humane Educator. Known as “Mr. Bob” to the children he teaches, Bob shares his experiences, inspirations and observations.

Q: How did you become involved in humane education?
A: About five years ago I attended an inspiring and enlightening workshop on humane education given by Zoe Weil, the founder of the International Institute for Humane Education. It was then that I realized the incredible potential of humane education and enrolled in a Human Education Masters program at Cambridge College. And here I am today, following my passion and doing what I love.

Q: What has been the most inspiring and exciting part of your work?
A: One of the best parts of my job is being able to teach kids about issues I never learned about in school. Kids, I find, naturally take to these issues. Most students are immediately saddened, angry, and empathetic toward those who suffer. They want to know why these things are allowed to happen, and why no one bothered to tell them about all of this sooner. Their sadness and anger, however, soon give way to enthusiasm as they learn about the many things that they can do to help. Witnessing such awareness, along with a desire to take responsibility, is incredibly inspiring to me.

Q: Have you noticed any changes in your students because of humane education?
A: Many students begin asking about the consequences of certain choices they are weighing, questions they probably wouldn't have considered before going through our programs. Also, I am always pleasantly surprised when the roughest and toughest kids begin to show empathy and compassion toward those being oppressed, like farm animals, for instance. Scenarios like these remind me that no one is out of reach; they remind me never to give up on anyone.

Humane Education News

Humane Education Resolution Introduced in NYC Council

NYC Council Member Tony Avella agreed to sponsor a resolution to help increase compliance with the humane education law and introduced it on September 13, 2006. Section 809 of the NYS Education Law requires that all publicly funded elementary schools provide instruction in the humane treatment of animals. This resolution would call on the NYC Department of Education to help force compliance with Section 809. The League of Humane Voters of NYC is helping HEART find co-sponsors for this important resolution.

American Bar Association Recognizes Importance of Humane Education

A subcommittee on humane education was formed recently within the American Bar Association’s Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section’s Animal Law Committee. This subcommittee will raise awareness among attorneys and the general public about the need for humane education, support efforts to enforce existing state humane education laws, and assist with the enactment of humane education laws in states without any such statutes. HEART’s Executive Director, Meena Alagappan, is the Chair of this new humane education committee.

ATTENTION! ATTENTION!
“Have a HEART” Online Auction
November 7th—22nd

Together with Charity Buzz, HEART will be holding a live online auction to benefit our programs.

Visit www.charitybuzz.com anytime between the auction dates to bid on exciting items such as a 2007 Toyota Prius Hybrid, a Grey’s Anatomy script signed by cast members, tickets to Joaquin Phoenix’s film premiere, weekend getaways to Loew’s South Beach and NYC’s Trump Tower, an annual Equinox Fitness Center membership and items signed by actress Courtney Cox and New York Yankee Jorge Posada.
Did you know? Sweatshops are factories that violate workers' basic human rights. Employees cannot form independent unions, are usually not paid a living wage and work long hours, often under very poor conditions. Many sweatshops hire children. Sweatshops exist all over the world - even in the U.S.

What can you do about it?

- Tell the companies where you shop for clothes that you want them to sell only sweatshop-free clothing.
- Refuse to purchase clothes made in sweatshops.
- Purchase union-made clothing or secondhand clothing from thrift or consignment stores.

Did you know? Despite significant progress over the past few years, almost 23,000 dogs and cats were euthanized in NYC in 2005 because no homes could be found for them.

What can you do about it?

- Spay and neuter your cats and dogs and encourage others to do the same.
- If you want to get a dog or cat, do so by adopting from an animal shelter or rescue group instead of buying from a pet shop or a breeder. Pet shops and breeders purposely breed dogs and cats even though there are millions of them already in desperate need of homes.
- Tell family and friends about the advantages of spaying or neutering their animals and assist your local humane society or municipal shelter in educating the public.

Did you know? According to Environmental Defense, if global warming continues at its current rate, it would cause the seas to flood the homes of 13-88 million people around the world each year in the 2080s.

What can you do about it?

- Conserve energy at home by thoroughly insulating your home, using energy efficient appliances, and installing compact fluorescent lighting.
- Conserve automotive fuel by driving fuel-efficient vehicles, carpooling, walking, biking or using public transportation.
- Decrease your thermostat by 2 degrees in the winter and increase it by 2 degrees in the summer. Approximately 50% of the energy we use in our homes goes to heating and cooling. You could save about 2,000 lbs. of carbon dioxide annually with this small adjustment.

HEART's services rely on the generosity of individuals like you who are dedicated to humane living.

Your contribution can be mailed to:

HEART
P.O. Box 738
Mamaroneck, NY 10543

Or your donation can be made through our website- www.teachhumane.org

All gifts are enormously appreciated!

For more information, please contact:

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Kristy Jelenik, Director of Development, at 914.381.0309 and via email at kirsty@teachhumane.org.

A special thanks to our generous funders...

* Animal Welfare Trust
* ASPCA
* National Association for Humane and Environmental Education
* The Peter Dartley Charitable Trust
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