1

PURPOSE, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

Identify the primary purpose, overarching goals, and specific objectives for your humane education initiative.

- What is my/our main purpose? (The reason for your humane education program)

- What are my/our key goals? (The big-picture/overarching outcomes you want to achieve)

- What are my/our specific objectives? (The measurable progress you want those you are teaching to make)

If you work for an organization, you might want to discuss these questions with staff from various departments so that you can identify the current goals or objectives of your organization, and directly connect your educational programs to those goals and objectives. This will also help the rest of the organization to better understand the work you are doing in humane education, build buy-in and support for your program, and increase potential funding and/or marketing efforts for your program from the rest of the organization (depending on the size of your agency).

Once you answer these questions, it will be much easier to establish programs that meet the needs of your organization and to evaluate your progress. You can more effectively create informal or formal assessments if you know the specific objectives you are trying to achieve. (See Step 7 for more information on assessment.)

2

PRIORITIZE

Develop a focus, start small, and then expand.

Based on the purpose, goals, and objectives you identified, brainstorm all the topics that relate to your area of focus. Depending on how many topics you generate, group together the topics that relate to each other (meaning topics that you think could be taught in the same program). Now, rank them in order of priority. This will help you to determine which educational program topics to develop first.

3

AUDIENCE

Determine who your audience is.

Now that your topic(s) are finalized, decide who your audience is — youth or adults? What is your target age group? Any specific location? To determine your audience, go back to your goals and objectives. Who do you think you need to reach in order to meet your goals and objectives? Once you connect your audience to your goals and objectives, you can begin to think about how you will teach your identified topics in an age-appropriate way.

Although it's important to develop your program before spending a lot of time reaching out and building relationships with these audiences, knowing as much as possible about your target audiences will help you create a stronger program. What are the potential venues/locations where you can teach or provide programs to best reach your intended audience(s)? There are many places where you might be able to offer your programs, such as your facility, schools, youth organizations (e.g., Boys and Girl Clubs, YMCA, Girl Scout Troops), libraries, rotary clubs, home school groups, parent-teacher organizations, and faith-based groups. You may be surprised to discover how many places are looking for engaging learning opportunities and are enthusiastic about hosting an educational program from you or your organization.

4

WORTH

Make your program valuable.

It's vital to develop a program that meets the needs and interests of your audience. For example, if you are going to teach directly in schools, consider aligning your programs to national or local standards (e.g., Common Core Learning Standards, Next Generation State Standards, International Society for Technology Education Standards, or Social-Emotional Learning Competencies), because that alignment is what most schools look for in an educational program.

If you are trying to reach a specific after-school club, find out if it has a focus such as literacy, computer skills, environmental awareness, or other competencies. If you are doing outreach in the community, consider the needs of the individual community members. As you research and learn about the interests, needs, and priorities of the community groups you want to work with, you can infuse them into the program you develop, making it of greater potential value and interest to your audience.

Don't try to be something that you are not—but if you can connect your topic to the needs and interests of your audience, the people you are reaching out to will be more likely to accept your program.

5

IMPLEMENTATION

Model your message.

Remember, your content is only a portion of what you are teaching. As a famous saying goes, *People will remember a little of what you say, some of what you do, and all of how you make them feel.* It is essential that we act humanely while teaching humane values. Find ways to create a classroom culture of respect, kindness, and inclusion. Manage the class with effective strategies that model the behaviors you want to foster. Provide opportunities for youth to share their thoughts and feelings openly and honestly, without judgment. Utilize humane communication strategies that encourage open dialogue, build bridges, and encourage reflection.

6

THE PROGRAM

Develop your program.

When you begin to develop your actual program, consider some of these tips, especially if you are teaching a youth program:

- Find resources that already exist (you don't have to reinvent the wheel). There are great organizations out there to help such as:
  - HEART (We have lots of free resources for you to use!): teachheart.org/library
  - **Academy for Prosocial Learning:** prosocialacademy.org
  - **Association for Professional Humane Educators:** aphe.org
  - **Humane Education Coalition:** hecoalition.org
  - **Institute for Humane Education:** humaneeducation.org
  - **RedRover:** redrover.org/readers/
  - **TeachKind:** peta.org/teachkind/

  And so many more!

- Include an essential question to encourage application to issues beyond your lesson or program. (For example, if your topic is on one's relationship toward animal companions, wildlife, or farm animals, consider a framing question such as: *How can I act in a responsible way toward others and my community?*) In your program, you will focus on your specific topic, but ask youth to reflect on this question at the beginning and end so they can apply what they learned in your lesson to other living beings and the larger community.

- Include content that:

    ‣ Provides accurate information and increases knowledge/awareness

    ‣ Cultivates prosocial behaviors and/or reverence for the natural world

    ‣ Makes authentic connections/relates to people, animals, and the natural world when applicable

    ‣ Promotes critical thinking and discussion (not indoctrination and telling youth what is right or wrong, but allowing them to question and decide what they think for themselves)

    ‣ Encourages youth empowerment and gives youth an opportunity to take action/do something positive — even if it is a simple project. When people are given the opportunity to be of service, they are more likely to seek out similar opportunities in the future.

- Use your content as a means to teach skills, not just content, so that youth can apply what they learn to other issues facing people, other species, and the planet (e.g., critical thinking, problem-solving, cooperation, active listening, reading, writing, or social-emotional learning).

- Provide extension activities so that whoever you are working with can use them to continue reinforcing the concepts you taught after you leave; people are more likely to remember something if they see it, hear it, and do it multiple times.

7

ASSESSMENT

Assess your program for effectiveness.

Humane education as a field is lacking in quantitative and qualitative data. Don't forget to develop an assessment to evaluate whether or not you are meeting your stated objectives. You can create informal and/or formal assessments to evaluate your program. If your assessment results indicate that you are not meeting all of your objectives, it is an opportunity to consider ways you can modify your delivery or revise your content to more effectively meet your goals.

8

EXPAND AND REPEAT

Expand your program to address additional topics or reach new audiences.

Once you have an effective program, you will be able to continue your efforts and grow. You might consider developing a new program, based on the same topic to reach a new target audience, or go back to the topics you brainstormed and develop a program on an entirely new issue. Either way, as you continue to develop effective programs, the process will become easier, and you will learn from your experience.

We wish you all the best as you start and expand your humane education programs. Thank you for your efforts to create a more compassionate, equitable, and sustainable world for all.

STEP #1: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- What is my/our main purpose?
  (The reason for offering your humane education program)

- What are my/our key goals?
  (The big-picture/overarching outcomes you want to achieve)

- What are my/our specific objectives?
  (The measurable progress you want those you are teaching to be able to make)

STEP #2: PRIORITIZE

- Brainstorm the topics that you are most interested in teaching (based on responses from step #1).

- Group related topics together.

STEP #3: AUDIENCE

- Who is your target audience?

- Why is this group your target audience?

- Where are potential venues/locations to reach your target audience?

STEP #4: WORTH

- What are the interests/needs/priorities of my target audience?

- How can I best meet my goals and objectives while also meeting the interests and needs of my audience?

STEP #5: THE PROGRAM

- What is my essential question?

- How can I provide accurate information in an interesting way?

- How can I provide opportunities for critical thinking?

- How can I cultivate prosocial behaviors and/or reverence?

- Are there any additional connections that I can make between people, animals, and the natural world in approaching this topic?

STEP #6: IMPLEMENTATION

- What strategies will I use to create a respectful, kind, and inclusive classroom?

- What strategies will I use for classroom management that model my message?

- How will I respond to questions? How will I communicate in a way that encourages open, honest dialogue?

STEP 7: ASSESSMENT

- What objectives do I want to assess?

- What informal and/or formal assessment activities can I develop to assess the effectiveness of my program?

STEP 8: EXPAND AND REPEAT

- In which ways do I want to expand?

- Are there additional audiences or new topics to explore?