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Pet And Wildlife Stewardship

Curriculum
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WildCare^{Foundation}

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Dear Oklahoma Students,

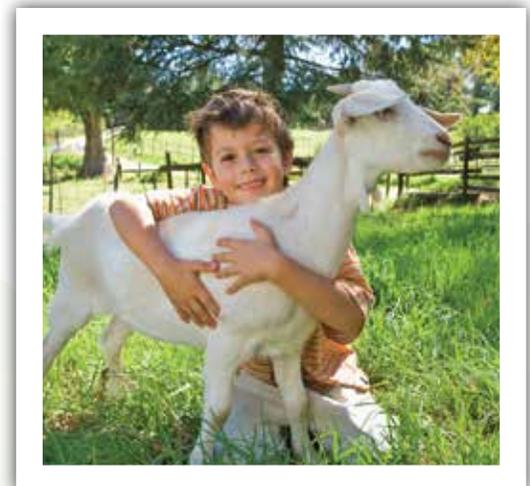
Since 1955, Kirkpatrick Foundation has been concerned with the wellbeing of Oklahoma animals. That early commitment by our founders, John and Eleanor Kirkpatrick, has grown into a major effort to make sure animals within our state are treated well wherever they live. Our financial support has provided state-of-the-art veterinary equipment and supplies, medical care for search dogs and zoo animals, and tools for emergency and disaster preparedness. The vision of Kirkpatrick Foundation is to make Oklahoma the safest and most humane place to be an animal by the year 2032.

As a citizen of Oklahoma, you play an important role in helping us reach this goal. We hope that you will learn about your favorite animals, where they live, and how you can improve their lives. You can help by taking care of natural resources, protecting animal habitats, and sharing the importance of animal protection with your friends and family. From our state animal—the Bison—to farm animals and household pets, your efforts to help animals matter.

As Jane Goodall once said: "You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." We understand your power to make a difference, and we are excited to see the impact that your efforts will have on Oklahoma animals.

Best regards,

Louisa McCune
Executive Director



Be Kind to Animals

Share with us all of the ways you are learning and teaching others to be kind to animals using the hashtags #CauseforPAWS #NIEOK #OklahomaAnimals

Five Freedoms

1

Freedom from Hunger and Thirst

by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigor.

2

Freedom from Discomfort

by providing a suitable environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.

3

Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease

by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.

4

Freedom to Express Normal Behaviors

by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.

5

Freedom from Fear and Distress

by ensuring conditions that avoid mental suffering.

Advocate: *someone who publicly supports a cause, and as a result, they can inspire others to also support that cause as well.*

As an **advocate** for animals, the first thing you need to understand is that animals are living, thinking beings that have emotions like joy, loyalty and trust as well as fear and anger. They can also feel pain. They have needs just like we do – food, water, shelter and freedom to be themselves. It is our job to help provide a

safe and healthy environment for all animals. In 1965, Professor Roger Brambell served on a committee that came together to write the Five Freedoms meant to protect the physical and mental health of animals everywhere. Those five freedoms are listed above.

Animals should never be denied access to fresh water or food and available foods should be things that would exist in their natural diets. An animal that is naturally a vegetarian should

not be forced to consume meat products; this can have a negative effect on their body's natural processes. It is also important that all nutrition needs be met. Just like with people, it can take a variety of foods to meet all of an animal's nutritional needs. Without proper nutrition, certain functions within the body can be depressed. This can cause sickness, disease and even mental distress.

It is also important that animals be offered an environment or **habitat** which provides them with shelter from elements and meets their natural needs. Animals confined to environments where they are consistently exposed to dangerous elements or unable to engage in their natural behaviors can develop diseases, exhibit abnormal behaviors and injure themselves. Wild animals become accustomed to specific types of environments and their environments allow them to engage in behaviors which are instinctual for them. Even in a restrictive environment, animals may attempt to engage in normal behaviors resulting in them injuring themselves. Restricting an animal's natural way of life can be very upsetting and can cause great emotional distress for the animal.

Habitat: *a habitat is the natural home or environment of an animal or plant in the wild.*

DON'T BE A BULLY! Never tease, scare or intentionally hurt an animal. That is a form of bullying.

Did you know that allowing or encouraging animals to fight is against the law?





Prairie Dogs are one of the most social ground squirrels, living communally in large underground networks called "towns." Weighing in at two-and-a-half to three pounds, these gregarious rodents are primarily light brown with a black tipped tail. The tan coloration serves as a predator defense; blending in with the habitat allows prairie dogs to escape from hawks circling overhead and coyotes hunting from the ground. Like most rodents, prairie dogs are herbivores, feeding on grasses and annual forbs. This diet keeps the surrounding area clipped, encouraging desired forbs to grow while improving predator detection.

Reference: Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation



Bobcats are small cats with slight ear tufts. Its back, sides and upper tail is pale to reddish brown with black spots, while the lower part of its body is white with dark spots. Bobcats frequent habitat types ranging from coniferous and mixed forests to desert scrublands to Cypress swamps. While bobcats can be active throughout the day or night, they are primarily crepuscular, meaning their peak hours of activity are around dusk and dawn. Although small in stature, bobcats are very effective predators, even of large ungulates such as deer, especially fawns or yearlings. More often, though, bobcats prey on rabbits and other rodents, as well as wild turkeys and other ground-nesting birds. Bobcats have been the most heavily harvested and traded cat species in the past two decades. Through effective management and responsible harvesting, the bobcat population is very healthy in Oklahoma.



In the state of Oklahoma, there are close to 100 wildlife species highlighted by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. Some of those species include:

- American Bison
- Beaver
- Bobcat
- Raccoons
- Whitetail Deer
- Bald Eagle
- Eastern Screech Owl
- Ruby Throated Hummingbird
- Turtles
- Woodhouse Toad
- Prairie Dog
- Butterfly

Student Activity

Research a wildlife species that lives in Oklahoma. For a complete list of species recognized by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation visit: <https://www.wildlifedepartment.com/wildlifemgmt/species.htm>.

Through your research, answer the following questions:

- What does this species habitat look like?
- What are their dietary needs?
- What natural behaviors does this animal need to be able to engage in?
- How does this species interact socially with other members of its species?

Create a poster that describes the species you have chosen and share with your classmates what would be required to ensure that this species Five Freedoms are consistently protected.



SHARE YOUR POSTER WITH US AND YOU COULD WIN THE STUDENT CONTEST!

Students can mail their poster to

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with an official entry form or submit them digitally by visiting

<https://nie.newsok.com/educators/curriculum/cause-for-paws/>.

The winner in each age group will receive a recognition award and one project will be chosen as the Grand Prize Winner! The Grand Prize winner will be highlighted through The Oklahoman and NewsOK.com and will receive a \$500 cash prize to be shared by all group participants.

Caring for Injured Wild Animals

Don't touch! If an animal appears to be sick or in danger, always seek help from an adult before beginning to interact with the animal.

It is also important to reach out to an expert that works in the field of wildlife rehabilitation; they will be able to offer you direction on the best ways that you can help without putting yourself in danger. For a comprehensive list of Wild Life Rehabilitators within the state of Oklahoma, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/y9ayo22f>

Wild animals are all beautiful in their own way, and baby wild animals are especially amazing. As humans, our tendency to step in and assist or help baby wild animals can be overwhelming. It is important to remember that not all baby wild animals need rescuing and if we are not careful, we may accidentally kidnap them from their parents. Without their parents to teach them, baby animals could struggle to survive on their own in the wild. With that said, sometimes they do need our help and so do their parents, so it is important to recognize when to get involved and when to leave them be.

Some animals are capable of contracting or carrying rabies (rhabdovirus). Rabies is a serious virus that can affect a large variety of mammals – including humans. An animal that has rabies might show signs of increased salivation or foaming at the mouth, abnormal behavior and paralysis. If left untreated, rabies will lead to death.

If you get bitten or even scratched by a rabies-infected animal, you may catch it too! Animals that may carry rabies:

- Bats
- Skunks
- Raccoons
- Monkeys
- Coyotes
- Beavers
- Squirrels
- Cats
- Horses
- Sheep
- Goats
- Dogs
- Ferrets
- Rabbits
- Humans

When attempting to help an injured or sick animal that you are unfamiliar with, it is best not to handle the animal with your bare hands, especially if the animal could be a potential rabies carrier.

Different animals and different injuries will require different types of care. The first step to helping a hurt or sick animal is identifying what might be wrong – do they have a physical injury, or is the animal sick with a possible disease or illness? Once you've determined what is wrong, you will be better equipped to seek help for them. Below are some common wild animals which have been identified by the WildCare Foundation and signs to look for if they are sick or injured:



Birds

Physical Injury

- Missing or tussled feathers
- Broken limbs or wings
- Limping or trouble standing
- Visible wounds

Disease or Sickness

- Missing feathers
- Discoloration/swelling/crust on eyes
- Lesions
- Fluffed feathers in warm weather

For more information on how to tell if a bird is sick or injured and requires help, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/ybraw6re>



Squirrels

Physical Injury

- Limping or trouble standing/walking
- Visible wounds

Disease or Sickness

- Discoloration/swelling/crust on eyes
- Lesions
- Bloody nose

For more information on how to tell if a squirrel is sick or injured and requires help, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/ya2jz824>



Turtles

Physical Injury

- Cracked or damaged shell
- Visible wounds

Disease or Sickness

- Cloudy or swollen eyes
- Shell is discolored or smells funny

For more information on how to tell if a turtle is sick or injured and requires help, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/ydc596ku>

Helping an animal that is sick or hurt is one of the many ways that humans can show compassion and help to preserve wildlife – but it is important that we all make sure we are not doing more harm than good. Seek advice, do your research and keep in mind the Five Freedoms that we should all fight to protect for animals.

Preserving Natural Habitats

By The Nature Conservancy

About 40 percent of rivers and lakes in the U.S. surveyed by the EPA are too polluted for swimming or fishing. The United Nations Environment Programme reports that plastic debris causes the deaths of more than 1 million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals every year. In fact, Keep America Beautiful, a volunteer-based action and education organization, found that 18 percent of all littered items end up in streams and waterways as pollution. And a fire starts somewhere in the world every 12 minutes because of litter.

All over the world, animals, especially marine mammals and sea turtles, are dying from eating our trash.

- In August of 2014, a young female sei whale, which is an endangered species, was found dead in the Chesapeake Bay. A broken DVD case was identified as the cause of death.
- That same year, scientists reviewed seabird necropsies (an autopsy of an animal) and found that 90% of seabirds found dead on the beach have ingested plastic.
- In 2013, a sperm whale washed up on Spain's southern coast. It's stomach contents? An astonishing 17kg of plastic including clothing hangers, ice cream containers, and plastic sheeting.

Recycling and reusing products are two simple, yet highly effective, ways to reduce the waste filling our landfills. And saving space in our landfills is just a small benefit of waste reduction activities. Recycling and reusing materials helps the economy, the community and the environment as well.

Trash, litter and chemicals often pollute our lakes and rivers. This harms or may kill animals and endangers the natural habitat of hundreds of Oklahoma animals.

TONY BROWN

Assistant Director of Science & Stewardship

Tony is known by many as the Assistant Director of Tallgrass Prairie Preserve. However, his career with The Nature Conservancy started as a seasonal ranch hand in 2004. Before long, Tony grew to appreciate the work that the Conservancy does to protect wildlife and conserve nature. Having found his passion, Tony promptly changed his college major from Chemistry to Nature Resources **Ecology** and Management and took a permanent position with the Conservancy in 2007 at Tallgrass Prairie Preserve.

A childhood filled with hunting and fishing and enjoying the outdoors inspired Tony's love for nature. He feels fortunate to have a career which allows him to be close to nature and protecting the wildlife he appreciates. Tony's **GPS** and **GIS** skills, as well as hard work ethic and agreeable demeanor make him a

Ecology: a branch of biology that studies the relationships between organisms and their environment. Ecologists study complex ecosystems and find patterns and relationships which are important when it comes to predicting the effect that changes to that ecosystem may have on different life forms.



valuable addition to the Conservancy's team in Oklahoma.

Tony hopes that through their work at Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, neighboring landowners will be positively influenced by the Conservancy's land management practices and implement them on their own property to encourage and preserve **biodiversity**.

Biodiversity: diversity among and within plant and animal species in an environment. Biodiversity can also be described as the existence of a wide variety of plant and animal species in their natural environments successfully co-existing and contributing to an ecosystem.



Animal Safety

It is important that we all make smart and empathetic decisions when it comes to interacting with members of the Animal Kingdom. There are things that you should never do, even when you are familiar with an animal, and there are precautions that you should take when it comes to unfamiliar animals – this includes stray animals and wild animals!

Dogs and cats are considered **domestic animals**.

Domestic animals are animals that have been tamed by humans and kept as work animals or pets.



Humans must do their best to protect the Five Freedoms for domestic animals just as they would wild animals. It is important to understand that even domestic animals have natural environments that they thrive in, have specific dietary needs and will engage in instinctual behaviors.



Because we are used to interacting with domestic animals such as dogs and cats, we can sometimes forget to use caution when interacting with ones that we don't know. Some dogs, for instance, are more rambunctious than others. There are also notable differences between dog breeds. A playful dog may have a tendency to jump up on humans, which can be scary for some people. Sometimes, out of fear, a human's reaction may be to run away or wave their arms to try and shoo the dog away – but did you know that these types of movements actually attract more attention from the dog? When humans run away from dogs, the dog's first instinct is to chase after them. Waving your arms around isn't any better; the extra movement gets them even more excited. The best thing to do if you are getting unwanted attention or find yourself face to face with a strange dog is to act like a tree!



Have an emergency plan in place for your pet in case of an emergency or natural disaster.

In Oklahoma we experience tornados, earthquakes, fires and severe weather of all kinds. If we are making good decisions, we should all have emergency plans in place for our families and this includes our pets. Just like we should have an emergency preparation kit for humans, it is important to do the same for animals. This kit should include pet food, vet records, water, and water dishes and any medications that your pet needs. Families should have space prepared within their shelters for their pets too. Our pets are our family, and we need to take the necessary precautions to ensure their safety just like we would our parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters.

Student Activity

Create a poster that could act as a public service announcement using newspaper clippings, magazine cut outs, images located on the internet, markers, colored pencils and any other artistic materials you can think of. Focus on creating a checklist for pet owners to use to ensure that they are prepared in the event of an emergency or natural disaster.

Here are some areas to think about: medical needs, dietary needs, and shelter.

Here are some helpful things to remember when it comes to dogs and staying safe!

1) Always ask for permission before petting someone else's dog!

It is important to ask both your parents and the dog's owner. They will be able to tell you if it is safe or not!

2) Dogs can be very protective of their food!

If a dog is eating or chewing on a bone, leave them be! They may think you are trying to steal their food which can lead them to growl and even bite!

3) Always look for clues that a dog may feel threatened or scared!

Dogs that feel either of these emotions can become aggressive. If a dog does any of the following – it is best to leave them be:

- Shies away from you
- Growls at you
- Pins their ears back
- Tucks their tail in between their legs

4) Be gentle!

Dogs don't like to be squeezed and they don't like being hugged (especially from behind). They also don't like it when people try to grab a hold of, squeeze or play with their tails. Forgetting to be gentle with a dog can lead them to growl at you and can even lead them to bite!



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with an official entry form or submit them digitally by visiting

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Man's Best Friend

Dogs can be our best friends! We just have to understand how their minds work and make sure we are being mindful of their natural instincts. We also have to work to be responsible pet owners and take good care of our pets. Here are some things that we can all do to be better pet owners:



Spay and neuter your pets.

When pet owners make the responsible decision to spay or neuter their pets they are keeping them from accidentally having more babies. Dogs and cats give birth to litters. This means they have more than one baby at a time and finding homes for those babies can be a challenge. Some of these puppies and kittens can end up with people who don't know how or can't take care of them. This leads to unwanted animals who often end up in animal shelters. Did you know, according to the Oklahoma Humane Society, in Oklahoma City alone, over 17,000 dogs and cats are euthanized every year simply because there are not enough homes for them? [Central Oklahoma Humane Society, okhumane.org]



Always be sure that your pets are wearing a collar.

Pets can sometimes get lost. It can be heart breaking to lose a member of your family and without a collar and the appropriate tags, if someone finds your fur friend they won't know how to get a hold of you to let you know. Pets should always have collars and identification tags so that they can be returned should they become lost.



When walking dogs, always use a leash.

Even the best trained dogs can become distracted or end up in harm's way. Dogs without a leash can accidentally get hit by a car, may see another dog or animal and take off running when you least expect it. Having your pet on a leash also allows you to monitor your pet better – if they go to the bathroom you can clean up their mess or if they find something foreign and try to eat it you can stop them before they get sick!

Wild Animals Are Not Pets

Animals of all kinds are special and fascinating, but it is important to understand that wild animals should not be kept as pets. Trying to keep a wild animal as a pet can be dangerous to humans and unfair to the animal. Being kept from their natural habitat impedes on the animal's Five Freedoms. Wild animals need to socialize, hunt or gather their own food and engage in behaviors that contribute to their overall emotional health and wellbeing. When an animal is taken from their home and placed in confinement they can develop abnormal and sometimes aggressive behaviors. Animals that normally fear humans become increasingly comfortable with human interaction,



removing that fear. This can make them more likely to become aggressive towards humans. Every day there are new cases where wild animals that have been taken in as pets cause harm to their human care takers.

Student Activity



Write an essay on why keeping wild animals as pets is a bad idea. The essay should be 3 – 5 pages in length, including a minimum of five credible resources and offer the following:

- Introduction
- An overview of the Five Freedoms for animals
- An overview of how removing a wild animal from the wild takes away their Five Freedoms
- An overview of a documented case that illustrates the dangers for humans of owning wild animals as pets
- Conclusion

SHARE YOUR ESSAY WITH US AND YOU COULD WIN THE STUDENT CONTEST!

Students can mail their essay to

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with an official entry form or submit them digitally by visiting

<https://nie.newsok.com/educators/curriculum/cause-for-paws/> for a chance to win.

Volunteer Opportunities

There are a variety of volunteer opportunities available through conservation efforts, local animal shelters, wildlife foundations and more. Here are a few organizations you might look into if you are interested in volunteering:

- WILDCARE FOUNDATION - WILDCAREOKLAHOMA.ORG
- FREE TO LIVE ANIMAL SANCTUARY - FREETOLIVEOK.ORG
- BELLA SPCA - THEBELLAFOUNDATION.ORG
- THE NATURE CONSERVANCY OF OKLAHOMA - NATURE.ORG/OKLAHOMA
- OKLAHOMA CITY ZOO - OKCZOO.ORG/VOLUNTEER



MATTHEW GOODWIN

Executive Director, BELLA SPCA

A day of work for me can look drastically different from day to day. One morning might be rushing to get an animal that has been abandoned or that is in urgent need of help, and then the afternoon is meeting with a potential donor to enlist their support for our mission of saving animals. The next day may involve a conversation with a veterinarian to forge a partnership to help us in providing veterinary care for families in difficult situations. This is one of my favorite aspects of our mission; helping families who thought they would have to say goodbye to their four-legged friend and instead giving them a second chance.

One of the biggest obstacles to getting where I am today was learning to say "no". I was a young pastor and compassionate ministry leader, and in my zeal to help others, would rarely say no.

My favorite part of being a non-profit professional/animal rescuer is the privilege of getting to help people and animals nearly every day. One role that I particularly relish is that of chief story-teller, sharing tales of animals helping people and people helping animals. We may initially arrive with the mindset of saving the animals, but they return the compassion and love 100-fold. There is a beautiful synergy there that makes every day something to look forward to (and our office is always full of cats and dogs, so that perk cannot be taken for granted!).

Career Pathways - Conservation, Wildlife and Animal Services

Did you know that right now, in the state of Oklahoma, there are over 23,000 jobs available that would offer you the opportunity to contribute to the well-being of animals? These are exciting and challenging careers that require varying levels of education from Technical Certifications to Doctorate degrees.



Animal Health

- Shelter Medicine
- Small Animal Veterinarian
- Large Animal Veterinarian
- Emergency & Critical Care
- Animal Dentistry
- Veterinary Technician

Animals Needing Help

- Animal Groomer
- Kennel Assistant
- Shelter Manager
- Animal Cruelty Investigator
- Animal Rehabilitator
- Animal Welfare Officer

Animals as Helpers

- Animal Trainer
- Comfort Animal Handler
- Service Animals Handler
- Equine Therapy
- Search & Rescue
- Animal-Assisted Therapist

Student Activity

Choose a career from the list on page 10 that is of interest to you! Do your research and complete the following:

1. Identify the education requirements for entering into your chosen career.
2. Identify at least three educational institutions within the state of Oklahoma where you could retain the required education for the position you have chosen.
3. Perform a job search online for job postings here in the state of Oklahoma (you can use JobsOK.com, Monster.com, Indeed.com, USAjobs.gov and any other job search engine to locate position postings). Locate three job postings for the position you have chosen and create a list of required skill sets that are common across all three job listings.
4. Create a poster that highlights your chosen career! Using newspaper clippings, magazine clippings, markers, colored pencils, etc. fill in the blank:

I would make a great _____
(enter your chosen career), because I am great at _____
(what skills do you possess that would make you great at this career?).

SHARE YOUR POSTER WITH US AND YOU
COULD WIN THE STUDENT CONTEST!

- 1) Submit a photo of your poster digitally by visiting: <https://nie.newsok.com/educators/curriculum/cause-for-paws/>

Mail your poster to:

Newspapers in Education
100 W Main St. Ste 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

- 2) Share a digital link to your project via Facebook or Twitter using the following hashtags: #CauseforPAWS #NIEOK



KIMBERLYN ELKIN

Statewide Freshwater Conservation Program Director

As a child, Kim loved watching nature documentaries and playing outdoors. These interests followed her into adulthood, and the love for being outdoors is what sparked her passion for biology.

"I believe being in nature is the best therapy for dealing with the world we live in. We need more people to help conserve and preserve nature, and that has led to my passion for the environment."

Since 2012, Kim has worked for The Nature Conservancy to explore and learn about the streams and rivers in Oklahoma. She collects valuable data about the water and the creatures that live in it. This information allows the Conservancy to make recommendations to the state of Oklahoma on how to preserve Oklahoma's precious rivers and streams for future generations.

"I hope that by collecting **aquatic** data and putting this information into useful reports and maps that this will allow for the conservation and preservation of the **natural resources** on The Nature Conservancy lands and waters we all work so hard to protect."

Aquatic: if something is described as being aquatic it means that it lives in, grows in or somehow pertains to water. An aquatic animal, for instance, is an animal that lives in water. Aquatic data would refer to information that can be used to describe the state of a body of water (for example, what types of animals live in the water, are there any pollutants or contaminants in the water, is the water salt water or fresh water?, etc.).

Natural Resources: a natural resource is something, such as a forest, a mineral deposit, or fresh water that is found in nature and is necessary or useful for humans and animals. Natural resources come in limited quantities and can often take a great deal of time to renew, if they can be renewed at all. Trees take years to grow from saplings and they are vital to the production of oxygen and provide natural habitats to many animals.

Cause for P.A.W.S. - STUDENT CONTEST

As an advocate for *animal safety*, *emergency preparedness*, and *natural resource stewardship* what can you do to make a difference in your community? Work independently, or in a group, to come up with a project that directly supports the Cause for P.A.W.S.

- 1. Identify an area of focus for your project:** animal safety, emergency preparedness or natural resource stewardship.
- 2. Design an outreach/education plan.** Come up with a plan for educating other members of your community as to what your project entails and why it is so important. Be creative! Perhaps you can work with your school to make a public service announcement, or you can seek a business to give a presentation to, you may even decide to call in to your local radio station or newspaper, put social media to good use or hang fliers throughout your community. Regardless of how you decide to reach people, encourage your friends and family to join the movement and use the hashtag #CauseforPAWS to document their efforts.
- 3. Generate community involvement.** Create a plan for getting other members of your community involved in your project.
- 4. Document your project.** Create a video, photo collage or write an essay to share your project with us. Be sure that your final presentation includes the following:

WHO is benefiting from your project?

WHAT was the overall goal for your project?

WHERE did you project take place?

WHY was your project important to your community, animals and the environment?

THERE ARE THREE WAYS TO SUBMIT YOUR STUDENT PROJECT!

- 1** Submit your video, photo collage or written essay digitally by visiting: <https://nie.newsok.com/educators/curriculum/cause-for-paws/>
- 2** Mail your video, photo collage or written essay to: **Newspapers in Education | 100 W Main St. Ste 100 | Oklahoma City, OK 73102**
- 3** Share a digital link to your project via Facebook or Twitter using the following hashtags: **#CauseforPAWS #NIEOK**



Student entries will be divided into three categories by grade level (Kindergarten through 5th grade, 6th through 8th grade, and 9th through 12th grade). The winner in each age group will receive a recognition award and one project will be chosen as the Grand Prize Winner!

The Grand Prize winner will be highlighted through The Oklahoman and NewsOK.com and will receive a \$500 cash prize to be shared by all group participants.

