

Animal Welfare Education

What interventions work and for whom?

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(Scottish SPCA)



Promoting a 'duty of care'



- **Funded by Defra**
- **2008-2012**
- **Focus on children (primary school age)**
- **3 components:**
 - (1) Literature review**
 - (2) Child studies**
 - (3) Intervention & evaluation**

The multi-disciplinary team

Dr Janine Muldoon (University of Edinburgh)

Prof Jo Williams (University of Edinburgh)

Prof Alistair Lawrence (SRUC - Scotland's Rural College)

Prof Candace Currie (CAHRU - Child & Adolescent Health Research Unit, University of St Andrews)

Gilly Mendes Ferreira (Scottish SPCA)



Our child studies

- **Children have limited welfare knowledge**
- **Not confident in identifying needs in own pets**
- **Reluctance to take responsibility for pets**

Unintentional harm and neglect through lack of knowledge of welfare needs & how to apply that knowledge:

- **Freedom from hunger and thirst**
- **Freedom from discomfort**
- **Freedom from pain and suffering**
- **Freedom to express natural behaviour**
- **Freedom from fear and distress**

Muldoon, J.C., Williams, J.M. & Lawrence, A. (2016). Exploring children's perspectives on the welfare needs of pet animals. *Anthrozoös*, 29(3), 357-375.

Muldoon, J.C., Williams, J.M. & Lawrence, A. (2015). 'Mum cleaned it and I just played with it': children's perceptions of their roles and responsibilities in the care of family pets. *Childhood*, 22(2), 201-216.



Intervention design

Intervention

- 3 x 40 minute sessions using pedagogy based on collaborative learning and range of thinking skills (e.g., observation, categorization, problem solving, decision making, hypothesis testing)
- Focus on pets, farm animals, and wildlife

Evaluation

- Intervention and control groups (n = 410, age 9/10, 11 primary schools)
- Pre-test, post-test, delayed post-test
- Intervention delivered by Gilly (Scottish SPCA), but evaluated by research team



Workshop 1: Animal Needs (photographs)

Workshop 2: Animal Detectives (videos)

Workshop 3: Who is responsible for looking after animals? (moral dilemmas)

Workshop 1: Animal needs

Dogs need....

A comfortable place to live

Things to eat/drink

Other pictures

To be safe & healthy

To be able to act like dogs



To be happy & not scared

Workshop 2: Animal detectives



Workshop 2: Detective's notes



	Yes	No	Don't know
1. Does the dog look hungry or thirsty?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Does the dog have a comfortable place to live?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Does the dog look hurt or ill?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Does the dog look free to do the things that dogs do?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Does the dog look scared or upset?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Anything else the detective has noticed?.....

.....

Workshop 3: Whose responsibility?

On your way home from school, your friend notices a hedgehog under the football nets in the park. It is struggling to move.



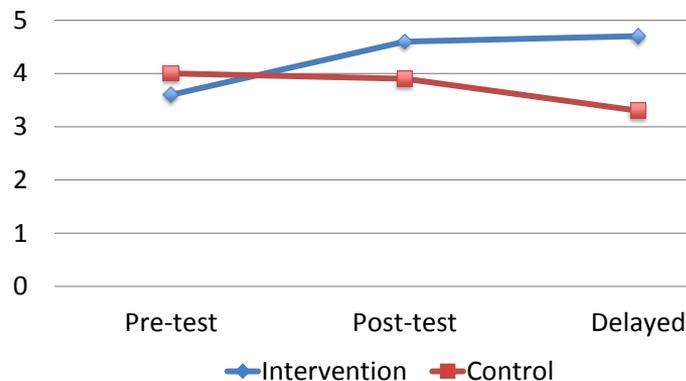
- (1) Who should do something about this?
- (2) What should they do?
- (3) What should you do?

Key findings

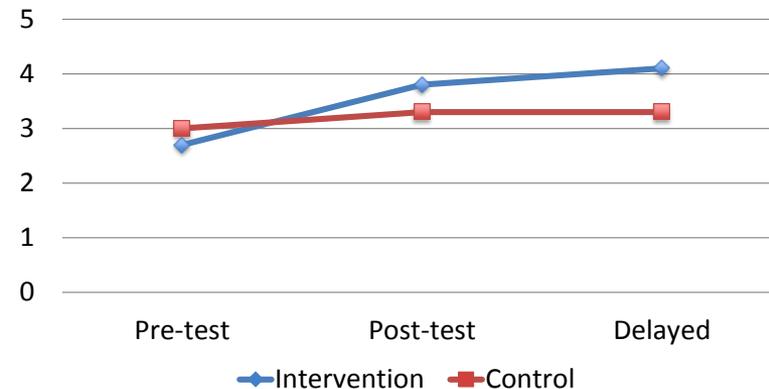
- Most impact on knowledge (for all animals)



Mean scores for knowledge of goldfish welfare needs



Mean scores for knowledge of cow's welfare needs



- Improved understanding of role of others (owners in particular)
- Increases in child's own sense of duty of care
- No changes in attitudes or attachment

Evaluation of 'Prevention through Education'

- Scottish SPCA programme
- Primary school children 7-12 years
- Prevent unintentional animal cruelty
- Pre-test, post-test, delayed post-test
- Test: 1090 children from 22 primary schools
- Control: 127 children from 3 primary schools
- Self-complete questionnaire

Range of measures: knowledge, compassion, attachment, humane behaviour, attitudes, acceptance of cruelty, belief in animal minds



Evaluation of 'Prevention through Education'

Results:

- ✓ Knowledge about animals (all)
- ✓ Knowledge about the Scottish SPCA (all)
- ✓ Beliefs in animal mind (pets, farm)
- X Compassion
- X Attachment
- X Humane behaviour
- X Attitudes
- X Acceptance of animal cruelty



iPad game development

- Pet Welfare, Farm Animal Welfare, Wild Animal Welfare
- Game specifications drafted
- Collaborative process with SPCA
- 3 levels:
 - 1) Animal sentience
 - 2) Animal Welfare
 - 3) Appropriate and safe behaviour (farm = welfare vs money)
- All information was based on scientific research and advice/knowledge from SPCA. Images validated
- Games developed by three teams using Unity (Farm Welfare) or Articulate Storyline 2 (Pet Welfare and Wild Welfare)
- Colourful, engaging, interactive functions, feedback with sounds



iPad game development



7b How is this cat feeling?



- Angry
- Happy
- Sad
- In Pain
- Scared

SUBMIT

Player 1 Store 0



More Money Happy animal

< Select >

Which farming systems are better for money and which are better for happy animals?
Place the farming system onto the scale!

Development Build



Five Welfare Needs

- Comfortable place to live
such as having a soft bed to sleep and a secure garden
- Food and water
dog food, dog biscuits and water
- Normal dog behaviour
such as running and playing and having company
- Happy and not scared
It is important to do things that make your dog happy and not scared
- Good health
protected from pain, taken to the vet if ill or injured

OK

< PREV NEXT >



Pet Welfare

SCOTTISH SPCA
CAAR
RSPCA

Menu

1. Dog needs

iPad game development

Target:

Children aged 7-12 years
For use in SPCA education programme
General population

Intervention:

Educational iPad game
One-off session in class, 15 mins
Aim: promote positive child-animal interactions
Play 3 levels:
1) Animal sentience
2) Animal welfare needs
3) Behaviour impact on animals

Outcomes:

1. Increased belief in pet minds
2. Increased knowledge of the five freedoms
3. Increased knowledge of appropriate and safe behaviour
4. Increased compassion*
5. Lower acceptance of animal cruelty*

Change mechanisms:

1. Understanding of animal sentience and ability to recognise emotional signals
2. Understand what animals need to be happy and healthy
3. Understand impact of human behaviour towards pets

iPad game evaluation

Pet Welfare

- ✓ Welfare knowledge
- ✓ Understanding of Animal Minds
- X Compassion
- ✓ Attitudes towards cruelty
- ✓ Appropriate and safe behaviour knowledge

Wild Welfare

- ✓ Welfare knowledge
- ✓ Understanding of Animal Minds
- ✓ Compassion
- ✓ Attitudes towards cruelty
- ✓ Appropriate and safe behaviour knowledge

Farm Welfare

- ✓ Welfare knowledge
- ✓ Understanding of Animal Minds
- X Compassion
- X Attitudes towards cruelty
- ✓ Understanding of welfare consequences of intensive farming systems

- Engaging for children, contribute to digital learning
- Results will feed into future education materials and impact educational strategies. Will be added to Scottish SPCA 'Prevention through Education' programme



Key take home messages

- Incorporate research into development
- Logic models and theoretical basis
- Key age is 7-12 years
- Challenge inaccurate/partial knowledge/ welfare = easiest
- Safety knowledge and appropriate behaviour
- Animal sentience as core theme
- Tackle attitudes towards animal cruelty
- Technology: engaging, interactive computer-based games, VR? Robots?
- Difficult to change compassion and attachment?
- **Need for targeted interventions**



Thank you!



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ChildAnimalResearch



@ChildAnimals



SCOTTISH SPCA
Scotland's Animal Welfare Charity

