

Mississippi DOVIA Presents

Kindness to Animals

Children and Youth

- Write a play about being a responsible pet owner. Ask brothers, sisters, and friends to help. Make programs for the play to hand out to the audience. Include information about the play and the actors. Sprinkle in a few tips about kindness to animals and being a responsible and caring pet owner.
- Make posters reminding others to spay or neuter their pets and to place them in a safe, quiet place during parades, fireworks, and picnics. Get permission to hang these posters in stores.
- Set up a booth at a town, church, or neighborhood fair. Give out information encouraging people to be responsible pet owners.
- Make bookmarks to remind people to spay or neuter their dogs and cats. Distribute them at an animal shelter or pet store.
- Call an animal shelter and find out what donations they need.
- Collect treats, food, first aid supplies, toys, cat litter, towels, and soft blankets for the homeless animals.
- Help others to create safety kits for their pets. Supply these emergency kits with pet food, medicines, pet carriers, ID tags, leashes, and blankets.
- Make a birdbath from a plastic dish and put it in your yard or on the windowsill. Keep it filled with water.
- Notify authorities immediately about pets left in hot cars. You may save a life.
- Set aside a special time each day to play with your pet.
- Cut up plastic six-pack rings. Place them in the proper trash receptacle so small animals don't get caught in them.
- Talk to younger children about why catching wild creatures like frogs and turtles is not a good idea. Remind them that wild animals need to stay wild and free.
- Offer to wash your dog or a neighbor's dog.
- Make nutritional treats for dogs and cats, and give them to neighbors for their pets. Make extra for animal shelters.
- Be sure your pet's shots are current.
- Brush pets daily to keep their fur smooth, clean, and free of ticks and fleas. Trim their nails regularly.
- Research animal shelters and gather information about their services for a flyer. Distribute copies of the flyer to classmates and friends so they know what to do if an animal needs help.

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Adults and Families

- Ask lawmakers to establish dog parks in your community, and offer to raise money to help maintain them.
- Hold a fundraiser and donate the proceeds to an animal shelter or wildlife fund.
- Participate in beach cleanups to remove debris that can harm birds, sea turtles, and other beach creatures.
- Maintain water bowls during cold months for both migrating and local birds. Make birdseed available as well.
- Create a pet care plan in your will to guarantee a happy and secure future for your pets, should you die before they do. Cats and dogs may live past 15 years, and some birds can live 50 to 100 years.
- Switch to pet-safe antifreeze. Antifreeze contains propylene glycol that carries a tempting but fatal taste to animals. Just one teaspoon can kill a cat and two ounces can kill a dog.
- Ensure your pet's safe return if it scoots out of the house by putting an identification tag, license tag, microchip, or tattoo on it. Offer ID tags as gifts for your friends who own pets.
- Place a sticker on your window, alerting firefighters to the number and types of pets inside your home.
- Encourage people not to buy baby bunnies and young chicks for children's springtime gifts. These animals grow up and are not always appropriately handled and loved.
- Delay adopting a dog or cat until a couple weeks after the winter holidays. Just like other gift returns, far too many pets offered as presents end up in animal shelters.
- Slow down on curves on winding roads in areas frequented by deer. Each year, 500,000 deer are killed and 29,000 people are injured in deer-vehicle collisions. Deer roam at dawn, dusk, and the first few hours of darkness.
- "Adopt" a lion, tiger, whale, or other animal. Many zoos, aquariums, and animal sea habitats have adoption programs. In exchange for financial support, you get a photo and bio of your new adoptee.
- Don't allow your dog to ride in the back of your pick-up truck. Not only will you risk the dog falling out of the vehicle, but in hot weather, a dog's pads get burned standing on the metal floor of a truck bed.
- Provide outdoor animals with food, water, and shelter. Ensure that their drinking water does not freeze. Bring them inside, if possible, during extremely hot or cold weather. Provide them with regular human contact.

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