

# Mini Resource SPOTLIGHT

A 15-MINUTE LEARNING SERIES

Humane Education and Gender-Based  
Violence Prevention:  
Exploring Humane Canada's Promising  
Practices Framework and Learning Centre



Women and Gender  
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité  
des genres Canada

Canada 

Ontario 



## Mini Resource Spotlight

Humane Education and Gender-Based Violence Prevention:  
Exploring Humane Canada's Promising Practices Framework and Learning Centre

Tuesday October 27, 2026 (12-12:15pm EST)

# Agenda

1

Land acknowledgment

2

Exploring the “violence link”

3

The role of humane education to promote healthy and equitable relationships

4

Introduction to Humane Canada’s Promising Practices Framework and Online Learning Centre



As a remote organization, Humane Canada acknowledges the many Indigenous Nations and communities that have relationships with these lands since time immemorial where our work takes place.

We express our gratitude to all Indigenous communities – First Nations, Metis and Inuit, for their past, present and future leadership and stewardship. We are inspired by and grateful for Indigenous ways of knowing that teach us the interdependency and interconnectedness of all life forms, and our relationship of mutual reliance and shared destiny with other people, animals and the earth.

We encourage everyone to learn more about the Indigenous Peoples who are the original stewards of the lands you reside on.



# About Humane Canada

Founded in 1957, Humane Canada, previously known as the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, is Canada's federation of SPCAs (*Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals*) and humane societies.

## Vision

A humane Canada

## Mission

To drive positive progressive change to end animal cruelty, improve animal protection and promote the humane treatment of all animals.

# Violence Link

- Research has found that animal abuse frequently co-occurs with interpersonal violence and is recognized as an important warning sign for other forms of abuse, including intimate partner violence, child maltreatment, and serious violent offending [1].
- Animal abuse is a commonly reported tactic used by perpetrators of gender-based violence [2].
- Male perpetrators of gender-based violence will often use the bond between the survivor and animals to control, intimidate, harm, or make the survivor remain silent about the abuse [3].
- In one Canadian study, children exposed to domestic violence were 2.95 times more likely to have displayed animal cruelty than those in the non-exposure group [4].
- Rooted in attempts to exert power and control over survivors and animals they love

# Violence Link (Cont.)

Animal and Interpersonal Abuse Research Group (AIPARG), University of Windsor conducted research with survivors in 16 women's shelters in Canada [2].

## Findings

- 89% of survivors with pets stated that their perpetrators had threatened, neglected, or perpetrated emotional or physical harm against their pets.
- 25% of survivors with pets reported at least one severe form of physical abuse against their pets; roughly one in seven (14.8%) conveyed that their perpetrator had killed their pet
- 90% of offenders were men in IPV/related animal cruelty cases (mostly in their 20s and 30s). Intentional cruelty (not neglect) accounted for 84% of cases

# Humane Education

- Increases empathy and pro-social skills among children and youth [5]
- Growing area within the animal welfare sector to raise awareness and provide public education regarding animal welfare issues [6]
- Offers an opportunity to build off children's natural curiosity and interest in animals by promoting empathy, compassion and understanding of consent
- Often introduced in the early years, when children are 4-5 years old, with significant potential to advance upstream prevention efforts



A child participates in a humane education program adapted with the Promising Practices Framework hosted by the Georgian Triangle Society.



# Promising Practices Framework

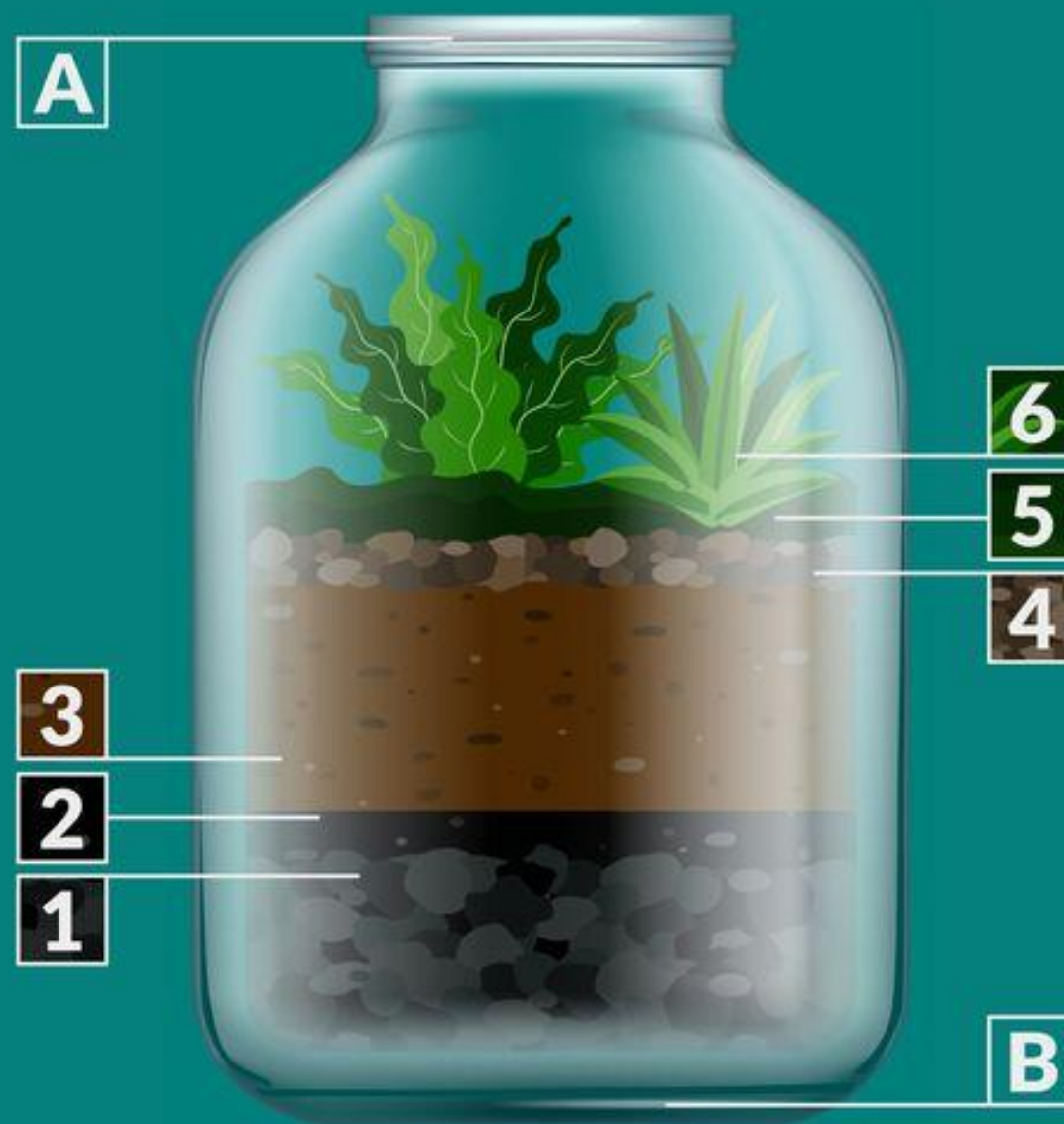
- Developed based on Humane Canada's National survey results and [Promising Practices Literature Review](#)
- Informed by input from 30+ organizations in GBV and animal welfare sectors
- Provides a foundation and articulation of six educational pillars to guide educators in engaging men and boys as allies to end gender-based violence through humane education programming
- The framework has been adapted by numerous animal welfare organizations across Canada

# Six Pillars (Promising Practices Framework)

- Transforming Perceptions of Gender
- Addressing Violence
- Respecting Boundaries
- Living Well Together
- Empowered Action
- Confident Self Expression

Participate in Humane Canada's 30-minute module exploring all pillars of the framework [here](#).

# The Promising Practices Framework



## INTRODUCTION

LANGUAGE

FRAMEWORK INTENTIONS, RATIONALE, & OUTCOMES

SAFE SPACE

GROUNDING RESEARCH

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, DECOLONIZATION

## FOUNDATIONS

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

APPLICATION TO DIFFERENT AGES & CONTEXTS

PROGRAM TIMELINE

SAFE SPACE

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, CULTURAL SENSITIVITY, ACCESSIBILITY

PROGRAM EVALUATION

FOUNDATIONAL THEORIES

PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

DISCLOSURES OF SENSITIVE INFORMATION (HUMAN & ANIMAL)

DUTY TO REPORT

AFTER CARE & FOLLOW UP

CULTURALLY RELEVANT RESOURCES

TRANSFORMING PERCEPTIONS OF GENDER

HEALTHY & UNHEALTHY  
MASCULINITIES

MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS

EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION

EMPOWERMENT

GENDER & GENDER EQUALITY

STEREOTYPES

CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS OF GENDER

INTERSECTIONALITY

GENDER IDENTITIES & INTERSECTIONS  
WITH GBV

ANTROPOMORPHISM OF ANIMALS

PATRIARCHY

SYSTEMS, IMPACTS, AND BARRIERS

DECONSTRUCTING & CHALLENGING  
PATRIARCHY

SOCIAL IDENTITIES & SYSTEMS OF  
OPPRESSION

ADDRESSING VIOLENCE

TYPES OF VIOLENCE & ABUSE

VIOLENT BEHAVIOURS (HUMAN VS. ANIMALS)

UNINTENTIONAL/NORMALIZED VIOLENCE

INTER-GENERATIONAL VIOLENCE

SURVIVAL BEHAVIOURS

THE VIOLENCE LINK BETWEEN VIOLENCE  
AGAINST HUMANS & ANIMALS

INTERSECTION OF VIOLENCE & SYSTEMS OF  
OPPRESSION

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

INTERSECTIONS OF GBV & OTHER FORMS OF  
OPPRESSION

SURVIVORS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF  
THEIR VOICES

RISK FACTORS FOR VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN EXPERIENCING &  
PERPETRATING VIOLENCE

METHODS TO ADDRESS

HUMANE  
EDUCATION

NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION  
(HUMAN & ANIMAL)

MICROAGGRESSIONS &  
MICROAFFIRMATIONS

PREVENTION & EARLY  
INTERVENTION

RECOGNITION OF VIOLENCE & ITS WARNING SIGNS

RESPECTING BOUNDARIES

BOUNDARY COMMUNICATION

HUMAN & ANIMAL BODY LANGUAGE

HOW TO SEE & ADDRESS BOUNDARIES

HEALTHY & UNHEALTHY  
BOUNDARY PRACTICES

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

BOUNDARIES WITHIN SELF

SELF-REGULATION, SELF-COMPASSION, &  
SELF-AWARENESS

REJECTION SENSITIVITY

BOUNDARIES WITHIN  
RELATIONSHIPS

INDIVIDUAL, COLLECTIVE, & CULTURAL  
BOUNDARIES

CULTURAL NORMS

CONSENT IN ALL RELATIONSHIPS

IMPACTS OF COLONIZATION

LIVING WELL TOGETHER

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

MEANINGFUL CONNECTION

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS &  
CYCLE OF VIOLENCE

RELATIONSHIPS WITH ANIMALS

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

ENDING RELATIONSHIPS

HEALTHY METRICS FOR  
RELATIONSHIPS

HEALTHY COMMUNICATION

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

CONSENT

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

DECOLONIZATION

INDIGENOUS WAYS OF  
KNOWING & KEY TEACHINGS

CONCEPT OF CARE

ONE HEALTH / ONE WELFARE

ANIMAL SENTIENCE

EMPOWERED ACTION

ACTION IN COMMUNITY

DIGITAL  
COMMUNITY

TECH-  
FACILITATED GBV

BYSTANDER  
INTERVENTION

EMPOWERING  
EACH OTHER

BUILDING COMMUNITY (VIRTUAL & IRL)

ADVOCACY FOR HUMANS & ANIMALS

EXPLORING MALE ALLYSHIP FROM AN  
INTERSECTIONAL LENS

CREATING SAFETY FOR HUMANS &  
ANIMALS

CULTURAL  
CHANGE

RESTORATIVE  
JUSTICE

COMPASSIONATE ACTION

ACCOUNTABILITY

EQUITY-DRIVEN ACTION

ACTION WITHIN SELF

MEDIA LITERACY

ACCOUNTABILITY, FORGIVENESS,  
RESTORATION & TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

PROCESSING HARMFUL BEHAVIOUR

GUILT & SELF-FORGIVENESS

SELF-REFLECTION & ONGOING ALLYSHIP

SELF-EXPRESSION

CONFIDENT SELF-EXPRESSION

WITHIN THE SELF

AUTHENTICITY

EMPATHY

SELF-CARE

HEALING

SELF-COMPASSION

SELF-VALIDATION

CRITICAL SELF-THOUGHTS & SELF-  
MONITORING

BREAKING CYCLES OF VIOLENCE

EMOTIONS

MANAGING EMOTIONS

FEELING & EXPRESSING EMOTIONS

ACCEPTANCE OF EMOTIONS

EDUCATION

ANTI-OPPRESSIVE EDUCATION

RESPONSIBLE REPORTING OF SUSPECTED  
ABUSE

LIFE LONG LEARNING

ADVOCACY

SELF-ADVOCACY

ANIMAL JUSTICE

RELATIONSHIPS

HEALTHY MODELS OF RELATIONSHIPS

SEEKING EXTERNAL/COLLECTIVE HELP

# Examples of Framework Adaptation

## Example #1: Humane Education Program Adaptation

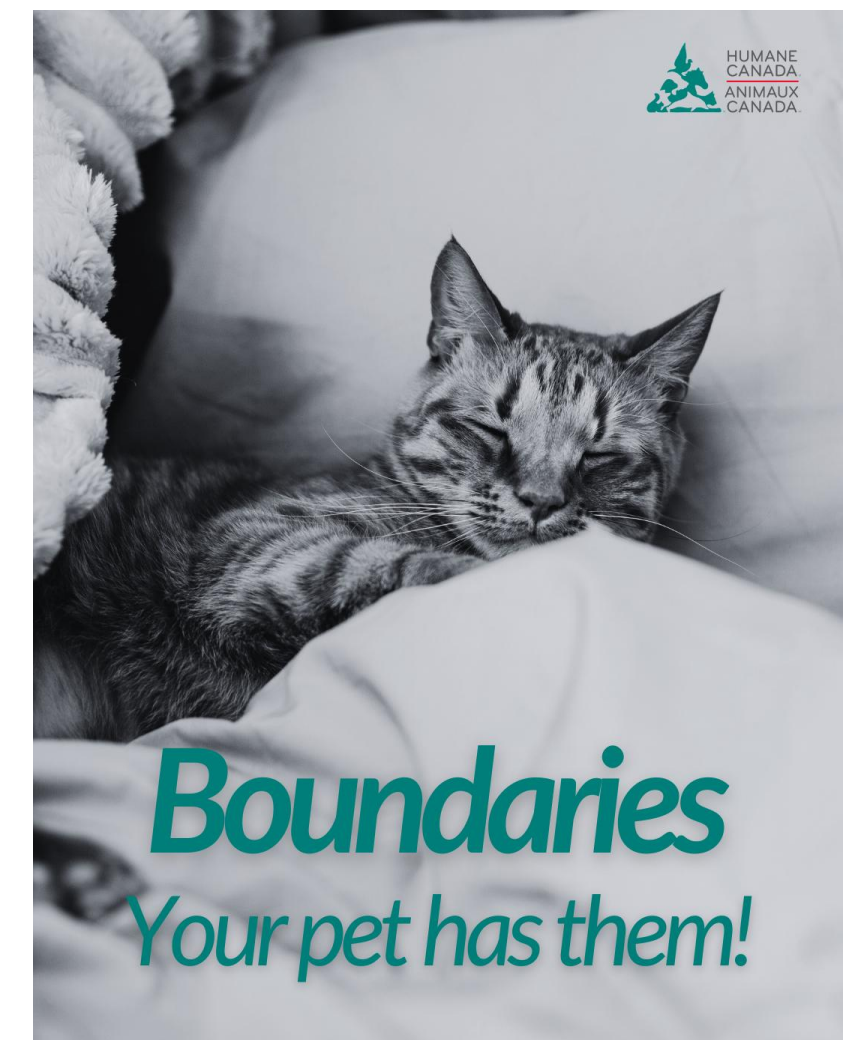
*“We used the framework to adapt our existing programming to further focus on the violence link. Our programs all focus on increasing empathy and compassion through the human-animal bond. Each course works on teaching the importance of consent, which students practice with interactions with the cats at our animal centre.”*

-Project partner, animal welfare organization

# Examples of Framework Adaptation

## Example #2: Social Media Campaign

PEI Humane Society launched a 5-part social media campaign. The campaign focused on awareness regarding boundaries and empathy with animals. Campaign assets can be accessed [here](#).



# Examples of Framework Adaptation

## Example #3: Internal capacity-building

*“We decided to focus internally and featured the project and GBV prevention content in our bi-weekly newsletter. We reached 202 staff members. We focused more on communication materials, including what healthy communities look like and explored the violence link.”*

*-Project partner, animal welfare organization*

# Promising Practices Online Learning Centre

- Includes interactive modules, activities and practical tools
- Designed to support effective humane education program implementation communities
- Resources are tailored to help create safe, equitable environments
- Empowers men and boys to actively address and prevent Gender Based Violence (GBV)



Women and Gender  
Equality Canada

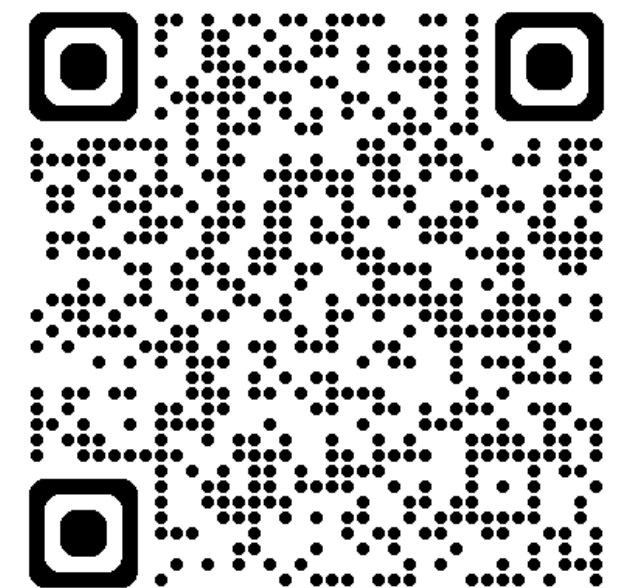
Femmes et Égalité  
des genres Canada

# Promising Practices Online Learning Centre



## Education

- Consists of 6 (30-minute) modules for GBV educators, humane educators, elementary and secondary school educators, community leaders

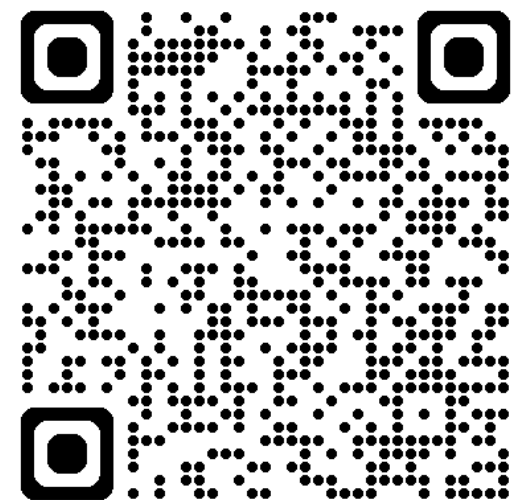


# Promising Practices Online Learning Centre



## Resources

- Consists of the Promising Practices Framework, Curriculum and arts-based resources, activity guides (to be updated early 2027), evaluation resources, promotional and social media resources



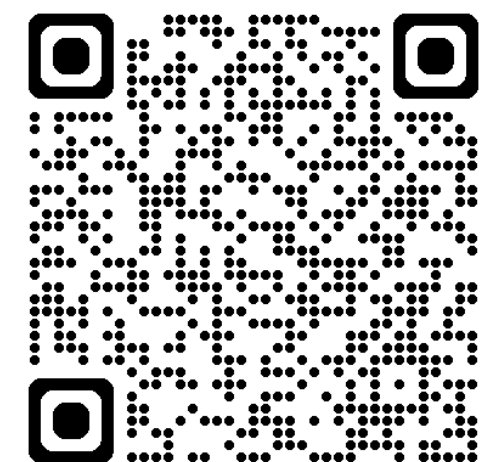


# Promising Practices Online Learning Centre



## Community of Learning

Network with other educators, exchange resources, and access the activity database and resource library



# Benefits of Cross-Sectoral Collaboration

- Violence Against Women (VAW) shelters can better meet both the physical and emotional needs of survivors, as animals can play important roles in emotional support and healing
- Increased likelihood of survivors accessing shelter if they can maintain contact with their pets, leading to enhanced safety and well-being
- Reduced burden on survivors to ensure their pets are taken care of if accessing shelter
- Enhanced upstream prevention efforts by addressing root causes of harm and violence



## Upcoming Events

- Join Humane Canada on **Monday February 22 and Tuesday February 23, 2027** for a 2-day Knowledge Exchange Event entitled “Bridging Gender-Based Violence and Animal Welfare: Strengthening Support and Prevention.” *Registration opens December 2026.*
- Refined educational materials on the Promising Practices Online Learning Centre will be updated early 2027 (including innovative new learning materials for children and youth)

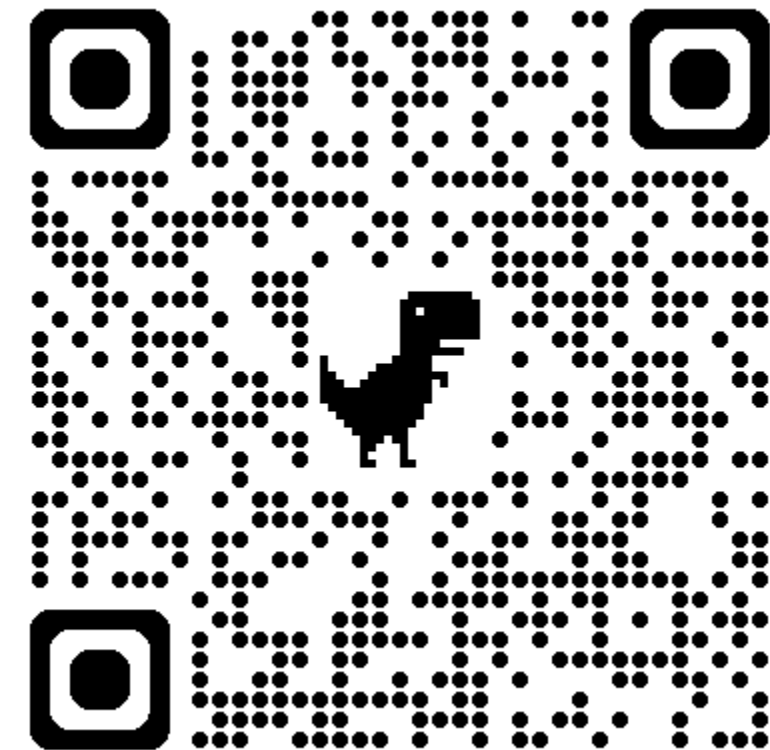


# Stay in touch!

Instagram: @humanecanada

Facebook: /HumaneCanada

LinkedIn: [Humane Canada](https://www.linkedin.com/company/humane-canada)



# References

1. Mota-Rojas, D., Monsalve, S., Lezama-García, K., Mora-Medina, P., Domínguez-Oliva, A., Ramírez-Necoechea, R., & Garcia, R. d. C. M. (2022). *Animal abuse as an indicator of domestic violence: One Health, One Welfare approach*. *Animals*, 12(8), Article 977. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ani12080977>
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3. Barrett, B., Fitzgerald, A., Stevenson, R., & Cheung, C. H. (2019). *Animal maltreatment in the context of intimate partner violence: A manifestation of power and control?* *Violence Against Women*, 25(15), 1807-1824. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801218824993>
4. Currie, C. L. (2006). *Animal cruelty by children exposed to domestic violence*. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 30(4), 425-435. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2005.10.014>
5. Samuels, W. E., Meers, L. L., & Normando, S. (2016). *Improving upper elementary students' humane attitudes and prosocial behaviors through an in-class humane education program*. *Anthrozoös*, 29(4), 597-610. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08927936.2016.1228751>
6. Humane Canada. (2021). *2021 Canadian animal shelter statistics report*. Humane Canada.
7. Humane Canada (2025). *Promising Practices framework*. [Promising Practices Learning Centre](#).