

Vegan Education in Schools

Vegan Clubs

Years 7 to 12

Craft workshops for sanctuaries

Overview

Craft workshops for sanctuaries are hands-on activities where students create useful items such as toys, blankets or enrichment tools for animal shelters or wildlife centres. These workshops provide practical support to organisations caring for animals while fostering creativity and empathy in students. By making items that directly improve the lives of rescued animals, students can see the tangible impact of their efforts and develop a deeper connection to animal rights.

How to organise craft workshops for sanctuaries

1. Partner with local animal shelters or wildlife centres to determine their needs.

- Reach out to sanctuaries or shelters to identify what items they need most.
 - a) Example needs:
 - Toys for dogs, cats or small animals in shelters.
 - Blankets or beds for comfort and warmth.
 - Enrichment tools for farmed animals or wildlife to stimulate natural behaviours.
 - b) Ask for specific guidelines on materials or designs to ensure the items meet their requirements.
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2. Choose craft projects that are age-appropriate and impactful.

- Select projects that suit the skill level of your group:
 - a) **Simple crafts for younger students:** Making no-sew fleece blankets or braided dog toys.
 - b) **More advanced projects for older students:** Constructing birdhouses, climbing platforms for small animals or feeding puzzles for wildlife.

3. Gather materials and tools needed for the workshop.

- Collect donated or affordable supplies to minimise costs:
 - a) Fabrics like fleece or cotton for blankets.
 - b) Recycled cardboard, paper towel rolls and non-toxic adhesives for enrichment tools.
 - c) Wooden planks, nails and hammers for creating birdhouses or wildlife shelters.
 - Ensure all materials are safe and appropriate for the intended animals.
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4. Provide clear instructions and examples to guide students.

- Start the workshop with a demonstration of how to create each item.
 - Example: Show how to braid old T-shirts into a durable dog toy or tie cotton fabric quilting strips to make a simple blanket.
 - Share templates, diagrams or instructional videos to make the process easier to follow.
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5. Incorporate education about the animals benefiting from the crafts.

- Include brief talks or videos about the animals the items will support:
 - a) "This blanket will provide warmth to rescued kittens at the shelter."
 - b) "This enrichment tool will help a rescued goat express their natural behaviours."
 - c) "The birdhouse you're building will create a safe nesting spot for native birds."
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6. Add a creative touch to make the items unique and personal.

- Encourage students to decorate their crafts with non-toxic paint, stencils or patterns.
 - Allow them to write messages of kindness or include drawings on items where appropriate.
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7. Organise a delivery day to take the items to the sanctuary.

- Plan a visit to the shelter or wildlife centre so students can see where their crafts will be used.
 - Example: Arrange for students to meet some of the animals their work will benefit.
- If a visit isn't possible, share photos or videos from the sanctuary showing the items in use.

8. Include a reflection session to reinforce the impact of the workshop.

- After completing the crafts, discuss with students what they learned and how they felt about contributing.
 - a) "How do you think the animals will benefit from these items?"
 - b) "What did you enjoy most about making something to help animals?"
 - c) "How can we continue to support animal sanctuaries in the future?"
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9. Combine the workshop with a fundraising or awareness campaign.

- Sell some of the crafts (if appropriate) to raise additional funds for the sanctuary.
 - Use the workshop as part of a larger campaign to educate others about animal rescue and protection.
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10. Celebrate the students' contributions with a small event or recognition.

- Host a "craft showcase" where students can display their creations before they're delivered.
 - Provide certificates of appreciation or small tokens to acknowledge their efforts.
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Outcomes

- **Hands-on support for animals:** The items created provide comfort, stimulation or shelter to animals in need.
- **Empathy and connection:** Students gain a personal sense of responsibility and empathy for animals.
- **Creativity and teamwork:** Crafting encourages collaboration, problem-solving and creative expression.
- **Educational value:** Students learn about the needs of rescued animals and how sanctuaries support their recovery.
- **Community impact:** The workshop fosters a sense of purpose and highlights the importance of helping local animal organisations.