

Vegan Education in Schools

Vegan Clubs

Years 7 to 12

Adopt-an-animal sponsorship

Overview

The Adopt-an-Animal sponsorship program is a meaningful way for students to connect with rescued animals by virtually “adopting” them through partnerships with local or international sanctuaries. This activity allows students to learn about the individual stories of animals; understand the challenges they’ve faced and see how their sponsorship contributes to the animals’ care and wellbeing. It also fosters a sense of responsibility, empathy and awareness of the work done by sanctuaries.

How to organise an adopt-an-animal sponsorship

1. Partner with a sanctuary or animal organisation that offers sponsorship programs.

- Research local sanctuaries, wildlife centres or international organisations with adopt-an-animal programs.
 - Examples of organisations in Australia:
 - a) Edgar’s Mission (farmed animals).
 - b) WIRES (wildlife rescue and rehabilitation).
 - c) Sea Shepherd (marine animals).
 - Confirm the details of the sponsorship, including costs, benefits and the types of animals available for adoption.
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2. Select an animal to sponsor who aligns with the group’s interests.

- Work with students to choose an animal who resonates with them:
 - a) A cow or pig rescued from animal agriculture.
 - b) A native species like a wombat, koala or platypus rehabilitated by a wildlife centre.
 - c) A marine animal such as a sea turtle or dolphin rescued from ocean debris.

- Share the animal's story with the group to build a personal connection.
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3. Raise funds for the sponsorship collaboratively.

- Organise simple fundraising activities to cover the cost of the sponsorship:
 - a) A vegan bake sale.
 - b) A gold coin donation day at school.
 - c) A trivia night with an entry fee.
 - Alternatively, ask each student to contribute a small amount toward the sponsorship.
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4. Share updates and resources provided by the sanctuary.

- Once the sponsorship is confirmed, ensure students receive updates from the sanctuary:
 - a) Photos, videos or letters about the sponsored animal.
 - b) Information about how the funds are being used to care for the animal.
 - c) Educational resources about the animal's species and their challenges.
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5. Organise regular check-ins to keep the group engaged.

- Schedule sessions to discuss the sponsored animal's updates and reflect on their journey:
 - a) "What do you find most interesting about this animal's story?"
 - b) "How do you think sponsorship helps sanctuaries continue their work?"
 - Encourage students to brainstorm other ways to support animals in need.
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6. Include a creative element to personalise the sponsorship experience.

- Examples of creative activities:
 - a) Students can create artwork, posters or a scrapbook dedicated to the sponsored animal.
 - b) Write letters or messages of support for the sanctuary staff caring for the animal.
 - c) Film a thank-you video to the sanctuary expressing what the sponsorship means to the group.

7. Connect the sponsorship to educational discussions.

- Use the sponsored animal's story as a starting point to discuss broader topics:
 - a) The importance of sanctuaries in providing safe havens for animals.
 - b) The environmental and ethical impacts of human activities on wildlife.
 - c) The role of advocacy in creating an empathetic world for all species.
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8. Plan a visit to the sanctuary if possible.

- Arrange an excursion to meet the sponsored animal and learn more about their care firsthand.
 - If an in-person visit isn't possible, request a virtual tour or video call with the sanctuary.
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9. Celebrate the sponsorship with a group event.

- Host a small celebration to mark the sponsorship and recognise the group's efforts:
 - a) Include vegan snacks and decorations related to the sponsored animal.
 - b) Share updates and reflections on what the sponsorship has meant to the group.
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10. Encourage ongoing support for sanctuaries and rescues.

- Use the sponsorship as a stepping stone for continued involvement:
 - a) Encourage students to sponsor another animal as a follow-up activity.
 - b) Start a school-wide sponsorship program to support multiple sanctuaries.
 - c) Advocate for animal rights-based practices in the community, such as helping people live vegan or supporting ethical tourism.
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Outcomes

- **Empathy and connection:** Students develop a personal bond with the sponsored animal and a deeper understanding of their needs.
- **Educational value:** Learning about the animal's story and species highlights broader animal rights and environmental issues.

- **Inspiration to act:** The sponsorship motivates students to support animal rescues and consider empathetic actions in their daily lives.
- **Teamwork and collaboration:** Raising funds and participating in the sponsorship fosters a sense of shared purpose among students.
- **Support for sanctuaries:** The funds raised provide vital resources to sanctuaries, directly improving the lives of rescued animals.