



AKC Canine Ambassador and LSART Ralph's Responders

Community Helpers and Being a Responsible Dog Owner

Purpose: To teach children about the role that animal control and shelters play as community helpers. We will cover what to do when you see a lost dog, and how to help keep your dog from being lost and quickly reunited if lost. We will also discuss how to approach and always ask for permission before petting a dog and the responsibility of pet ownership. Finally, we will touch on the importance of training for safety and building a strong bond with your pet and how you can even compete in dog sports. We will also give ideas of ways they can help their local animal shelters.

We focus on the four aspects of pet health, training, travel, and being community helpers.

Student Outcomes:

1. To understand the role animal control and shelters play in our community
2. To understand the importance of microchipping
3. To understand how to safely approach a dog and ask permission before petting
4. To understand the importance of training their pet to be calm in a kennel or cage, walking on a leash/harness, basic commands such as coming when called, and preparing for travel. We will also discuss pet exercise and dog sports.
5. To know how they can help other animals in their community

Recommended Readings/Activities:

There are many resources under the Kids Corner of the LSART website at www.lsart.org that are available in both English and Spanish as well as www.akc.org

Rowen and the Animal Shelter By Sara Deen Kimball- Learn who animal control is, what an animal shelter does, about heartworms, and how you can help your local animal shelter. Book includes discussion questions and games at the end.

Ralph's Responders Pet Activity Book- An activity book that includes small, large, and exotic pets. There are coloring pages, matching, mazes, connect the dots, crosswords, seek & find, and learn to draw pages.

Heartworm Freeze Tag- Kids will learn the importance of heartworm prevention. Instructions for how to play are on the LSART website. Play multiple times and add the number of mosquitos and/or decrease the playing space to demonstrate how disasters can cause diseases and parasites to spread faster.

Pet profile sheet- This is a pet information sheet that is included in a pet's go-bag. It includes space for the pet's photo, pet info, owner info, vet info, vices, known commands, and care instructions.

Course Outline:

Designed for Kindergarten and elementary. Time tailored to session

- Community Helpers- Read *Rowen and the Animal Shelter* and discuss the role that animal control and shelters play in our community.
- Identification- Start by talking about your own pet and to help animal control reunite it should it get lost through tags and microchips. Talk about pet tags for temporary identification and microchips for permanent identification. Explain that a veterinarian can give a pet a microchip and it allows for the owner to update their contact information should it ever change. Allow a student to scan a pet or stuffed animal with a microchip.
- Approaching a Dog- Discuss the correct way to approach a dog calmly, and to always ask permission before petting. Demonstrate how to ask and then allow the dog to smell the back of their hand before petting under the chin. Have a child come up to demonstrate this method for everyone to see. Tell them to always ask permission before touching someone else's pet and remind them that pets may bite or scratch out of fear if they are snuck up on, run up to, startled, or fearful. If they see a lost animal, always tell an adult.
- Training- It is crucial to spend time with a pet and train it. This will give your pet physical and mental exercise, as well as strengthen your bond. Your pet should be comfortable walking on a leash or harness, as well as staying in a kennel or crate. This will make it less stressful if the pet must be boarded or stays at an animal shelter. Your pet should also be comfortable with you touching its paws, ears, and body as this can help lower stress during vet visits. Bathe your pet as well so that it will be used to being cleaned and groomed. Another important thing for your pet to learn is to come when called should it get lost or start to run. Pets will enjoy the quality time you spend training and grooming them! If you brought a demo dog, have the kids sit in two lines facing each other about four feet apart. Tell the dog to stay and then come to you. Walk up and down the line and allow the kids to pet the dog. Talk about how important this socialization is. A pet that is not properly socialized will be more stressed or fearful in strange environments or people. There are AKC clubs around the country where they can take group classes to teach their pet these skills, meet other dog people, and learn about dog sports.
- Volunteering- There are many ways that they can help their local animal shelter from volunteering time to read to or walk dogs, help at adoption days, foster a dog, or collect donations. There are ideas and suggestions in the back of the book *Rowen and the Animal Shelter*. Bonus- you can make the AKC treat recipe below for dogs.

Peanut Butter and Pumpkin Dog Treats

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup canned pumpkin puree
- 1/2 cup [dog-safe peanut butter](#) (Make sure it has no xylitol, an artificial sweetener toxic to dogs.)

Directions

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F.
2. In a large bowl, mix together the pumpkin and peanut butter.
3. Stir in the flour and combine the mixture into a dough.
4. Roll out the dough onto a floured surface
5. Cut the dough into shapes with [your favorite cookie cutter](#).
6. Place the treats 1/2 an inch apart on an ungreased cookie sheet.
7. Bake for 12 minutes.



Store in an airtight container. Remember that not all people food is safe for dogs.

*Source- AKC- <https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/lifestyle/pumpkin-recipes-for-dogs/>