



Dane County Citizenship Public Adventures

- **Part 1:**
Dane County 4-H Public Adventures Group
- **Part 2:**
Choosing a Topic
- **Part 3:**
Tour of the Humane Society
- **Part 4:**
Researching Ways to Help
- **Part 5:**
Action Plan
- **Part 6:**
We Did Our Project
- **Part 7:**
Making the Webpage
- **Part 8:**
Meeting Highlights
- **Part 9:**
Responsible Pet Ownership Teaching Packet
- **Part 10:**
Reflections from the Adult Coaches
- **Part 11:**
A Little More About Public Adventures
- **Part 12:**
Links

Part 1: Dane County 4-H Public Adventures Group

A Citizenship Project

Public Adventures is a new citizenship curriculum designed to help youth contribute to the world around them and develop a life-long commitment to active citizenship.

Our Group

We are young teens, Melissa, Beth and Lisa, and two supportive adults, Linda and Kathi, who all like animals. We decided to work with the Humane Society in promoting animal adoptions in our community.

Mission Statement

We, the Public Adventures Group of Dane County, are concerned about encouraging more pet adoptions from the Humane Society. We believe this is important because we care about giving the animals good homes.

Our goal is to try to get as many animals adopted as possible from the Humane Society. To accomplish this we will make presentations and a webpage.



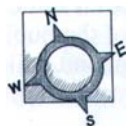
Part 2: Choosing a Topic

Working from the Public Adventures 4-H literature, we went through the book's early steps. We found the meaning of the word citizenship and drew a picture of what we thought it meant.

The next step was to look at our neighborhood. So, we drew a picture of how we saw the neighborhood on large paper. The picture helped us realize what was important to us while helping us get to know each other better.

The next step was to pick a specific topic for our group to work on. We looked at examples of what other people had done to make a difference in their communities. We began looking at how we could also make a difference. To get ideas, we looked at newspapers, magazines, Internet articles, and talked about topics we knew about. We narrowed our list to helping either a homeless shelter or the humane society. We then talked to people in our neighborhood and families about what was important to them.

We chose to help the Humane Society because we all had a common interest in helping animals. We also found that we were too young to help at the Homeless Shelter.



Part 3: Tour of the Humane Society

Our first phone call to the Humane Society was frustrating because we had a hard time talking to a real person to get information. Voice recordings were the only contact we could make. After 45 minutes and many tries, we gave up contacting them. Melissa was finally able to call them on another day to get the needed information to schedule a tour.

Tim, our tour guide showed us the basics of how the Humane Society worked; how a pet arrived, was adopted, and what happened in-between. They had volunteer services already established. We felt volunteering was a good idea, but it didn't fit our citizenship project ideas. We read handouts on existing programs, and watched a short movie on the Humane Society.



Part 4: Researching Ways to Help

During our tour, the Tim described some of the programs that were already going on at the Humane Society. The programs were Luv a Pet (Pet therapy at nursing homes), SNAP (Spaying and Neutering Assistance Program), and Tagging Stray Cats (A new program being promoted by the Dane County Humane Society Board). We discovered our topic when our tour guide told us about one of the problems of pet adoption -- that often people got pets and were unable to care for them.

On the way home from the tour, we brainstormed how we could help the Humane Society. We decided to develop a presentation to give to local 4-H clubs to encourage responsible pet ownership and increase awareness of the Humane Society programs and services. At a later meeting, we decided we would make a teaching packet on whether to get a pet, where to get the pet, and how to take care of the pet.



Part 5: Action Plan

We then planned our presentation. It took several meetings to get it all together. We all took parts of our presentation and started working on it. Here's our teaching outline.

1. Introduction and Overview (Melissa), also includes Family Situations (Beth)
2. Should You Get A Pet? (Melissa)
3. Where Do You Get A Pet? (Beth), (Speaker from the Humane Society)
4. Taking Care Of A Pet (Lisa)
5. Small groups complete Family Situations (Everyone)
6. More About the Humane Society (Speaker from the Humane Society)

We didn't have a chance to practice together, but we did on our own.



Part 6: We Did Our Project

We presented to Melissa's 4-H club. We were by ourselves because both of our leaders had conflicts with the meeting date. Tim, our speaker came, but the lady at the desk sent him home. We realized that about five minutes before our presentation, so we had to figure out a way to make it through without him. After a frantic huddle, we figured out how to do it without Tim. Beth and Lisa were still discussing this while Melissa started the introduction. While we talked, it all fell into place. The presentation went very well even though we did not have Tim, our speaker from the Humane Society.



Part 7: Making the Webpage

We thought a web page would be a good way to share our teaching plan with other groups. We all have computer skills and use the Internet for communication and information. We hope that other youth groups would talk about pet adoption at their meetings after using our teaching plan.

We started working on the web page the end of August 1999. First, we decided what should be on the web. Then, we talked about who could help us. We felt we should provide information on our Public Adventures work as well as the pet selection and adoption presentation. We worked in small groups to write up the different sections of the web page. We typed the text on a computer and reviewed it together using a computer projection unit.



Part 8: Meeting Highlights

- Our hardest meeting: when we first met and didn't know each other yet.
- Our most difficult meeting: when we chose what our project would be.
- Our funniest meeting: trying to call the Humane Society.
- Our most productive meetings: when we wrote our Mission Statement, and while we are typing this.
- Our most boring meeting: when we were in a weird room with weird chairs.
- Our best meeting: when we wrote with scented markers on our posters.



Part 9: Responsible Pet Ownership Teaching Packet

View an example of our teaching outline.

How to Use This Teaching Packet

Included in this teaching packet are six scenarios and three activity worksheets about responsible pet ownership. The scenarios are six situations about families who are trying to decide what pet to get. Get Responsible Pet Ownership Citizenship Scenarios.

1. At your meeting, count off and put people into groups of 3-5 people. You will need to decide who will be the discussion leader in each small group.
2. Each group picks a specific scenario out of a hat. When groups do the three activities they role-play the situation by pretending to be the family in the scenario. At the end of the presentation, the group decides what is the best pet for the family in their scenario.
3. The leader passes out activity worksheets, one at a time, reads the introduction and makes sure everyone understands the directions. Give groups 5-10 minutes to discuss the questions in their small group.
4. Don't pass out the solutions until the very end. These solutions are not meant to be the only answer, just suggestions on what type of pet might be a good selection for the family in the scenario.

Should you get a pet? Online Activity #1.

Where do you get a pet? Online Activity #2.

Taking care of a pet. Online Activity #3.

Small Group Reports

1. After the small groups have gone through the three activities and filled out the worksheets, regroup as a total large group.
2. Ask each small group to read their scenarios to the entire group, as well as share:
 - o The pet the group selected.
 - o Where they got their pet.
 - o How they will care for their pet.
3. Next hand out the suggested solutions to the groups and compare answers. Suggested Solutions for Responsible Pet Ownership Citizenship Scenarios.
4. Share examples of 4-H pet, cat and dog literature and tell them how they can sign up for these 4-H projects.
5. Hand out brochures and pamphlets from your local humane society and tell them how they adopt a pet as well as volunteer to help out with any local Humane Society programs. Encourage people to share other resources and ideas on responsible pet ownership.

Part 10: Reflections from the Adult Coaches

We welcomed the opportunity to work with these youth on Public Adventures. We spent quite a bit of time getting acquainted for the young women belonged to three different 4-H clubs and lived in different parts of the county. It took the group awhile to decide on a project based on their common interests because they didn't share the same school, church, youth group, or neighborhood. They all love animals and have pets. Pet selection and adoption was a topic they all cared about.

One of the ideas of the Public Adventures curriculum is to create something of lasting public value. Thus,

the group thought a web page would be a way to pass on their interest and work.

All of us are new to web page development. This effort took longer than what we expected. One year has passed since our effort began. We look forward to having a new group pick a new topic to start a new adventure!



Part 11: A Little More About Public Adventures

Public Adventures is a new citizenship curriculum designed to help youth contribute to the world around them and develop a life-long commitment to active citizenship. It is designed for youth in grades six through eight, but can be modified for use by both younger and older youth.

Through Public Adventures, youth will:

- Find out about issues that are important to them and others.
- Gain new skills so they can make positive things happen.
- Discover new ideas to help them make sense of what they're doing.
- Take what they are learning and put it into action.

The heart of Public Adventures is the project that the youth plan that creates, changes, or improves something that is valuable to many people. Then they do it! This is what being an active citizen in a democracy is all about.

Youth receive the Citizenship Public Adventures Kit, which consists of:

- A map. This map shows the steps involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating an active citizenship project.
- A passport. The passport serves as a record book for the youths' project. The youth can mark off tasks as they complete them. In addition, you can purchase stamps or stickers to make the passport more realistic.
- Postcards. The postcards have tips to help youth master the skills they'll need for their project.
- Notebook divider pages. These pages include "True Adventure" stories, activities, postcard references, notebook ideas and questions.
- A phrase book. The phrase book is a glossary of concepts in the "True Adventure" stories and raised in discussion and is found in the back of the notebook divider pages.

Each group of youth needs an older or more experienced guide to work with as they go through the process. The guide receives a handbook with background information, activities to help the youth do their work, and ideas to address common problems that groups face.

The Public Adventures curriculum can be used in a variety of settings such as youth groups, school, after school programs, and faith based youth groups.

Part 12: Links

- **Wisconsin 4-H**

- [WI State 4-H Website](#)
 - [4-H Online Projects](#)
- [UW-Extension and Cooperative Extension](#)
- [Dane County Humane Society](#)
- [Dane County 4-H](#)