

What is People Connect?

People Connect develops programs to promote and foster interaction between people and companion animals. From humane education and animal assisted therapy, to pet visits, People Connect works to cultivate the human-animal bond.

ARF All Stars® Humane Education

ARF All Stars® is a multi-day humane education course which emphasizes the value of companion animals in society and instructs children as to their care. Designed in a foster to adopt plush animal context, children learn to understand and provide for pets' needs. By calculating the cost of veterinary and animal necessities, students come to realize the expense of having a companion animal. Students also learn dog bite prevention, cat and dog behavior, and positive training reinforcements. Simply, students discover what it takes to become a good pet guardian.

Camp ARF

Camp ARF is a perfect summer experience for children who love animals and are interested in learning more about them. Camp ARF promotes the values of humane education while strengthening the bond between animals and children. Activities include: animal themed games, crafts, hands-on animal activities and play time with pets.

Classes and Workshops

All students - grade schoolers, high-schoolers, and families will explore the ideas of responsibility, caring, respect, and empathy, in a setting which is both interactive and academic. Most class lessons are structured around the California State Standards, and all classes address the California Education Code which states that "...Each teacher shall endeavor to...(teach) the meaning of equality and human dignity, including the promotion of harmonious relations, kindness toward domestic pets and the humane treatment of living creatures..." California Ed.code 233.5a.

Learning Center

The first interactive center in Contra Costa county for children to learn about companion animals, ARF is taking humane education to a new level at its Learning Center. Children experience what it is like to be a veterinarian, to care for a rescued dog or cat, go shopping for pet supplies, and role-play a "pet's perspective" on life. The step-by-step experience is available to school classes and groups.

Pre-Teen and Teen Volunteer Training

Middle and high school students attend humane education classes and animal care workshops to become a volunteer for ARF.



Teaching Loving Care (TLC)

TLC is an animal-assisted therapy (AAT) program created for young people with serious emotional and behavioral problems. TLC provides animal-assisted mental health therapy for participants and involves them in providing foster care, training, and behavior modification for rescued cats and dogs. Throughout the program, participants explore a variety of life topics through a curriculum designed to make a therapeutic and metaphorical connection between youth who have experienced emotional and behavioral difficulties and animals that have experienced poor socialization, neglect, and abuse. ARF collaborates with a number of mental health and educational organizations and has a unique partnership with the Chris Adams Girls Center, a 20-bed, county-run facility for high-risk young women in the juvenile justice system. ARF also provides TLC for at-risk teens at the Summit Center and Seneca Center in Contra Costa County.

All Ears Reading™

The All Ears Reading™ program supports literacy skill development using a classic concept: reading to a pet. ARF therapy animals have been trained to be patient listeners and tested for health and temperament. Along with their guardians, these compassionate animals offer children of all reading ages an opportunity to improve their reading skills in a setting which has been proven effective and fun.

Added Touch Program (ATP)

The Added Touch Program (ATP) is a customized program for visitors from assisted living facilities. ARF staff works with each participating facility to provide a program suitable for the participants. Participants enjoy animal assisted activities and learn about animal body language. Not only will the human clients benefit, but they will continue to keep ARF's shelter guests well socialized as they wait for ARF to find them loving homes of their own.

Pet Hug Pack (Therapy Animal Team)

Medical studies have found that interaction with companion animals lowers blood pressure, reduces anxiety and otherwise improves one's physical and mental health. In addition, research has demonstrated that many people who are emotionally "closed down" or unresponsive will often open up in remarkable ways when they are petting a cat or dog. ARF's Pet Hug Pack Team supports over 2,000 skilled nursing and assisted living patients/residents at 22 facilities county-wide by visiting them with cats and dogs that are temperament-qualified for the experience.