



Classrooms Gone Wild!

School is back in session and your child is starting to settle into the classroom routine. This year, don't be surprised if your child's classroom has a wild side! More and more teachers are incorporating animals into the learning environment. Whether it is a field trip to the petting zoo, a weekly visit from the therapy dog, or a real guinea pig as a classroom mascot, animals can provide important opportunities for entertainment and learning.



Animals in the classrooms can stimulate learning, however, there is also a risk for getting sick or hurt from contact with animals, including those in school and childcare classrooms. In the United States, the biggest risk of human illnesses from animals, especially to young children, is getting infected with germs like Salmonella and E. coli and others that cause vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramping. Young children are especially at risk for illness because their immune systems are still developing. Also young children are more likely than others to put their fingers or other items into their mouth, a behavior that can spread germs. Animals can also carry germs that cause



other kinds of diseases, such as rabies. Animals may have germs on their bodies and in their droppings, even when they appear clean and healthy. The germs can also get on cages, bedding, and wherever animals roam or walk around, and can contaminate these areas.



Prevent Illness

Parents and teachers should teach children to always wash their hands right after they touch an animal, their food, and/or their habitats. Adults should always supervise hand washing for young children. Running water and soap are best. Use hand sanitizer if running water and soap are not available, but wash hands as soon as a sink is available. Other tips to follow:



- Never allow young children to put their hands or objects (like pacifiers) in their mouth while around animals.
- Designate specific areas for interaction with animals.
- Do not allow human food in animal contact areas; do not allow animals in areas where human food and drink are

prepared, served, or consumed.

- Clean and disinfect all areas where animals have been present.
- Do not clean animal cages or enclosures in sinks or other areas used to prepare food and drinks.
- Teachers should inform parents of the benefits and potential risks associated with animals in school classrooms. Consult with parents to determine any special considerations.
- Reptiles (e.g., turtles, snakes, and lizards), amphibians (e.g., frogs, toads, salamanders, and newts), live poultry (e.g., chicks, ducklings, and goslings) and ferrets should not be allowed in schools and childcares with children younger than 5 years of age.



Prevent Injury

Injuries caused by animals in public settings include bites, kicks, scratches, and others. Most injuries from animals can be prevented if schools and childcare classrooms follow proper safety precautions.

When Animals Bite.

Prevention is the best medicine when it comes to animal bites. Children should be taught not to approach unfamiliar animals and strays. Additionally, all pet owners should keep pets, such as dogs, properly restrained.

If a bite does happen, the first step you should take is to thoroughly wash the wound with soap and running water.



Washing the bite area can greatly reduce the chances of becoming infected with the rabies virus as well as other harmful bacteria that could cause infection. Next, if bit in Scott County, report the animal bite to the Humane Society of Scott County's Animal Control Program by calling 563-388-6655. Reporting the bite helps animal control collect important information about the animal and the incident. In Iowa, anyone with knowledge of an animal bite or scratch is required to report it to animal control or law

enforcement. An animal bite should also be reported to your family doctor. Your doctor will decide if he/she needs to examine you. Your doctor will determine your risk of contracting rabies and whether treatment is



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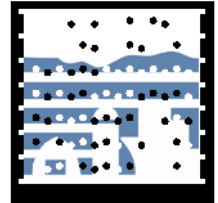
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MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

- Scott County Board of Health Joint Meeting with the Board of Supervisors

Thursday, September 20, 2012; 12:00-1:00 p.m.

*Open to the Public. Location: Scott County
Administrative Center, Board Room-1st Floor*

OUR MISSION:

The Scott County Health Department is committed to promoting, protecting and preserving the health of the community by providing leadership and direction as advocates for the individual, the family, the community and the environment we serve.

OUR VISION:

As recognized and respected leaders in serving and protecting our citizens, we at the Scott County Health Department are committed to a safer, healthier community and environment. In so doing, we provide a multitude of services with Professionalism, Responsiveness, Involvement, Dedication, and Excellence.



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