GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF ANIMALS IN SCHOOL SCIENCE BEHAVIOR PROJECTS
COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL RESEARCH AND EXPERIMENTATION

With today's emphasis on the advancement of science, more and more intermediate and secondary students are participating in classroom and science fair projects with live animals. Although new knowledge may result from classroom research, the guidelines that follow are predicated on the assumption that the main objective of using animals in such projects is educational. Such projects should not only teach research procedures but should also introduce students to ethical issues in animal care and animal research. Since the resources available in schools will rarely be comparable to those of an established research facility, these guidelines are more restrictive than those for research settings. They do not apply to supervised student work in research laboratories, which comes under the provisions of the APA Principles for the Care and Use of Animals.

1. In the selection of science behavior projects, students should be urged to select animals that are small and easy to maintain as subjects for research.

2. All projects must be pre-planned and conducted with humane considerations and respect for animal life. Projects intended for science fair exhibition must comply with these guidelines as well as with additional requirements of the sponsor.

3. Each student undertaking a school science project using animals must have a qualified supervisor. Such a supervisor shall be a person who has had training and experience in the proper care of the species and the research techniques to be used in the project. The supervisor must assume the primary responsibility for all conditions of the project, and must insure that the student is trained in the care and handling of the animals as well as in the methods to be used.

4. The student shall do relevant reading about previous work in the area. The student's specific purpose, plan of action, justification of the methodology, and anticipated outcome for the science project shall be submitted, and approved by a qualified person. Teachers shall maintain these on file for future reference.

5. No student shall inflict pain, severe deprivation or high stress levels or use invasive procedures such as surgery, the administration of drugs, ionizing radiation or toxic agents unless facilities are suitable both for the study and for the care and housing of the animals and unless the research is carried out under the extremely close and rigorous supervision of a person with training in the specific area of study. These projects must be conducted in accordance with the APA Principles for the Care and Use of Animals.

7. The basic daily needs of each animal shall be of prime concern. Students must insure the proper housing, food, water, exercise, cleanliness, and gentle handling of their animals. Special arrangements must be made for care during weekends, holidays, and vacations. Students must protect their animals from sources of disturbance or harm, including teasing by other students.

8. When the research project has been completed, the supervisor is responsible for proper disposition of the animals. If it is appropriate that the animal's life be terminated, it shall be rapid and painless. Under no circumstances should students be allowed to experiment with such procedures.

9. Teachers and students are encouraged to consult with the Committee on Animal Research and Experimentation of the American Psychological Association for advice on adherence to the Guidelines. In cases where facilities for advanced research by qualified students are not available, the Committee on Animal Research and Experimentation will try and make suitable arrangements for the student.

10. A copy of these Guidelines shall be posted conspicuously wherever animals are kept and projects carried out, including displays at science fairs.

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Approved by the Council of Representatives, January 24, 1981