



THE MUTT-I-GREES® CURRICULUM: CALM, CONFIDENT AND CARING KIDS

* Teaches pro-social skills * Enhances confidence, empathy, and appreciation for diversity * Unique in its use of stories and activities about Mutt-i-grees® (shelter dogs) * Used by teachers and counselors in thousands of schools in over 40 states * Provides real-life experiences and community connections * Research findings indicate the Curriculum improves behavior and increases parent involvement and positive school climate

WHAT IS BEING TAUGHT? The Mutt-i-grees® Curriculum teaches social and emotional skills and is unique in its bridging of humane education and the emerging field of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). The notion underlying SEL is that being socially and emotionally competent leads to school success; just as we teach academic subjects, we can teach social and emotional skills.

In a series of easily implemented lessons, students learn critical skills that will help them in their interactions with people (and animals) in school, at home, and later on in the workplace. The lessons are presented in five units: **Achieving Awareness, Finding Feelings, Encouraging Empathy, Cultivating Cooperation,** and **Dealing with Decisions.** Activities and readings include feature lessons on dog behavior developed with renowned dog behavior expert Cesar Millan, from NatGeo WILD's *Dog Whisperer*.



HOW IS THE MUTT-I-GREES® CURRICULUM BEING USED? Each lesson is scripted to enable easy implementation and includes various different types of activities. Teachers may select from **discussions, role playing** and **hands-on activities**, or they may use the **readings** and **vocabulary words** highlighted in each lesson plan. Song and dance, art, and writing activities provide opportunities for creative expression and collaboration. Specific **activities for parents** ensure that families have opportunities to participate and follow up on what their children are experiencing in the classroom.



HOW DOES THE MUTT-I-GREES® CURRICULUM WORK? A unique aspect of the Mutt-i-grees® Curriculum is the focus on Mutt-i-grees®, or shelter dogs. However, **the Curriculum does not require the presence of a dog in the classroom**, although some schools involve a therapy dog for some lessons. Even the presence of a dog in the form of a puppet or toy or simply reading about dogs has been shown to be effective in commanding attention, improving cognitive abilities, and contributing to happiness.



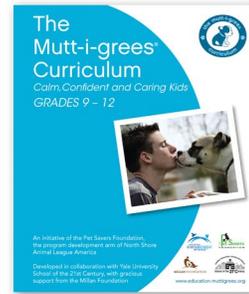
WAS THE MUTT-I-GREES® CURRICULUM EVALUATED? YES! We conducted outcome studies with more than 800 students in schools in rural and low-income urban communities. The studies randomly assigned some classrooms to receive the Mutt-i-grees® Curriculum and included student and educator surveys on school climate, as well as behavior, empathy, and parent involvement measures. Comparing classrooms using the Curriculum with non-Curriculum classrooms, we found:

- * Significantly higher understanding of shelter dogs and dog behavior among teachers and students in classrooms using the Curriculum;
- * Significantly higher levels of empathy and pro-social behaviors among students; and
- * Significantly higher levels of positive school climate (linked to bullying prevention) and parent involvement.



In addition, school principals reported reduced incidences of bullying and classroom conflict.





THE MUTT-I-GREES® CURRICULUM MAY BE IMPLEMENTED IN:

- * Mainstream classrooms
- * Service learning
- * Special education classrooms
- * After-school programs
- * Character education/Life skills programs
- * Health education
- * Preschool, childcare, and Head Start programs
- * Parent education programs
- * Title I Schools
- * In conjunction with bullying prevention programs
- * Mentoring programs

LESSONS IN THE MUTT-I-GREES® CURRICULUM INCLUDE:

- * Vocabulary/Key Words
- * Discussion
- * Focus on reflection
- * Hands-on activities
- * Role play
- * Song and dance
- * Opportunities for art, writing, and creative expression
- * Readings and resources
- * Family and community involvement activities

WHAT STUDENTS, PARENTS AND EDUCATORS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE MUTT-I-GREES® CURRICULUM:

"The Curriculum makes sense in a desensitizing world."
 – 10th grade male student participating in pilot test of Grades 9-12 Curriculum

"Mutt-i-grees® teaches us that we are special."
 – 1st grade student

"The Curriculum made me feel important."
 – 6th grade student

"I can attest to the fact that visits to my office involving bullying, for instance, have definitely dropped as our Mutt-i-grees® Curriculum took off."
 – Matthew Spade, Principal, Ponderosa Elementary School

"It enhances self- and social awareness and encourages students to develop a sense of responsibility... It meets our kids at whatever developmental level they're at and then takes them higher."
 – David Riddick, Principal, Fenton Avenue Charter School

"Bravo to whoever brought the Mutt-i-grees® Curriculum to our school. This sounds like an amazing approach to discuss such important and valuable topics. Promoting appreciation for their individual qualities and acceptance of individual diversity is so desperately needed, especially at this age. Being comfortable in one's own skin and being committed to your principles is difficult at any age."
 – Parent of a 5th grade student

* **"I liked how easy it was to illustrate the power of communication through body language, using dogs as examples. It was very easy for all the students to understand the objective of the lessons. I also liked the positive and hopeful message about handling adversity. The students were engaged and enjoyed the lessons."**
 – School Psychologist

* **"I liked seeing how thinking about and relating to dogs brought out positive feelings in my students."**
 – Teacher, grades 7 & 8

* **"The teachers that implemented the program this year had positive comments to share with our entire staff. One of the teachers commented that it was her favorite thing to teach during the week."**
 – 5th grade teacher

* **"My students were very interested in talking about their experiences with dogs. I especially liked how easy it was to relate human body language with how dogs communicate non-verbally."**
 – Teacher, grades 6-8

* **"By focusing on dogs and learning about and from dogs, children are learning about their own feelings and about other people's feelings. We are sowing the seeds for a more humane world and helping children."**
 – 2nd grade teacher

* **"I especially liked the emphasis on accepting diversity and the idea of tolerance."**
 – Teacher, grades 6-8



The Mutt-i-grees® Curriculum is a Pre-K to Grade 12 program available in the following binders: Pre-K–Grade 3, Grades 4–6, Grades 7 & 8, and Grades 9–12. To order, please visit <http://education.muttigrees.org/signup>. For more information about the Mutt-i-grees® Curriculum, please visit www.education.muttigrees.org. You may also contact us at info@muttigrees.org or (203) 432-9944.