

Kindness toward others is a natural human sentiment, and it is an important ethic for the building of a spiritually-rich society. On top of this, consideration for vulnerable animals nurtures empathy for and generosity to others. On the other hand, cruelty to animals is inhuman behavior that ignores the suffering of others, and it even hurts those who observe it. Moreover, it is said that animal cruelty committed by young people (instances of which have been seen more commonly in recent years) cripples the normal building of the inflictor's character and may lead to criminal cruelty which might be directed at people. It should be noted that the killing of animals for justifiable reasons—for example, for food or because they are suffering terribly from illness or injury that cannot be cured—is not cruelty. However, even in such cases, methods must be used that minimize suffering.

Prohibition of abandonment

The responsibilities of people who own animals—which are living beings—do not stop at simply providing them with proper care and handling them with affection; it also includes looking after them appropriately over the course of their lifetimes. Those who abandon animals because they can no longer care for them do more than expose the animals to danger and suffering from hunger or thirst; they also cause a significant problem for nearby residents. And recently, more people are releasing non-native animals that do not live naturally in Japan into the wild. This causes serious social problems as such animals can destroy crops and ecosystems. Although, to a certain degree, "releasing" animals into the wild was once considered acceptable, in today's society—which is experiencing changes in social conditions and the natural environment, and in which the kinds of animals kept by human beings are diversifying—releasing animals is prohibited as an act that causes animals to suffer unnecessarily and that impacts on the surrounding environment and ecosystems.

