

Junior Volunteer Small Mammal Training



Schedule



Introductions



Body Language



How to Visit



Small Mammal Visitation



Questions



Why do they need to be comforted?

Rabbits and guinea pigs are highly social animals. They can become depressed if they don't have companionship from a human or another animal! However, **they are shy and need to learn to trust you.**



It's a scary world out there!



Prey animals have many different survival techniques, being scared is one of them!



Rabbit body language



https://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=ruK6AXVLhiM



Rabbit food



Rabbits love fresh herbs and greens

See "Rabbit Food" handout for the list of foods you may feed the rabbits

There is often food in the cat kitchen refrigerator you may feed the rabbits

Please only feed the rabbits food items that appear on the list



What about guinea pigs?



More likely
to freeze
than to run
away

They
“popcorn”
when they
are happy

Much
more
vocal than
rabbits



Guinea pig sounds



Visiting small mammals at HSHV

Go to the front desk and let them know you are here for small mammal comforting



A staff member will make sure a JV approved animal is out



Interact with the small mammal appropriately



Leave a note about your visit and sign out when your shift is over



Go slow!

Small mammals need to learn to trust you, be patient!



Wait for them to come to you.

Start with one finger. If they don't run away, then pet with one hand.



Never pick up the small mammals.



Why don't we pick up the small mammals?

They don't like it

Rabbits and guinea pigs can become anxious when they are lifted off the ground

Remember, rabbits choose to run away when they are scared!

They have thin fragile bones that can break easily

They may try to jump out of your arms and hurt themselves

Holding a rabbit improperly can break their back!

YIKES!



What do you need?

- PATIENCE!

- A towel or rug to sit on

- Approved foods (optional)

- A book, journal, or homework (optional)



Animal Visitation Time!



Meet back 10 minutes before class is over



Reminders



You may only volunteer for what you sign up for



Volunteers may not assist with customer visitation



You may not bring friends or family members with you when you volunteer



You should only plan on staying for your assigned shift



Questions?

