

As one of the many people who have decided that animal experiments are morally wrong, your personal efforts can and do make a difference. Even if you lack the time or means to devote yourself completely to the struggle against animal exploitation, there are many meaningful ways you can take action in your own life to help bring an end to animal experimentation.

The following are some ideas to help you get started:

Educate yourself about the use of animals in research, testing and education so you can educate others about the issues. You can begin by reading some of the books that are listed in the AAVS merchandise catalog. The more information you have about vivisection the more credible you will be. Focus on both the moral and scientific problems inherent in animal experimentation; both arguments have their place in making the case for animals.

Join The American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) and become an active member of our organization. Respond to action alerts and other information that you find in *The AV Magazine*, our publication. Send away for AAVS educational materials to distribute in your community.

Start your own grassroots organization. There are some significant advantages to starting a group. A group can increase your credibility with public institutions, the media, other community groups and individuals you are trying to attract to the cause. As a team you can also be more effective in protesting and other activities. Contact The AAVS for information on how to set up and manage your own group.

Stop using products that have been tested on animals or are made from animal products. There are many products available that are not developed at the expense of animals. You can receive a cruelty-free shopping guide by contacting The AAVS.

Organize a campaign against animal experiments at local institutions or companies. Learn how to use the Freedom of Information Act and other means to find out what's going on at experimental facilities in your community. The AAVS is available for consultation and support with your campaign.

Contact community groups, churches, synagogues, and other institutions in your area to identify interested audiences for a talk on animal rights. Develop presentations which anticipate and address specific interests and concerns that your listeners might have. Contact The AAVS for assistance in planning presentations.

Promote concern for animals in the public school system by insisting that humane education be integrated into the curriculum, and by helping to ensure that humane literature is available at all libraries. The AAVS has materials available on how to set up your own humane education program.

React promptly when you see or hear of animal abuse occurring in your community, by bringing the matter to the attention of the media, the local humane society, or the police if necessary. If every person with humane sentiments responds in such cases, the chances of positive action will increase.

Make use of every opportunity to discuss animal rights with other individuals. Most people simply don't know the facts, so it's important that you have them, and that you present them in a credible and compassionate fashion. An informed activist can make a significant impact on the attitudes of others through her/his personal contacts.

Write letters about animal experimentation to magazines, newspapers, radio and television stations, corporations and influential figures in your own community. Use the telephone, too!

Promote legislation to protect animals, by becoming an active citizen lobbyist. Your influence with federal, state and local legislators can be considerable. Study the proposed legislation very carefully and identify its central features. Make your letters, phone calls and personal visits courteous and brief. Be firm in asking that your legislator work for or against a specific bill. If you write, make it clear that you expect a response on the issue. Make sure the other concerned citizens in your area do the same.

Donate to the charities that support responsible, ethical research. Is your money going to help people and animals now, or is it being squandered on cruel and useless experiments? Most of the major disease charities actively support animal experiments and are therefore responsible for a considerable amount of animal suffering. Contact The AAVS for a list of charities that do and do not use animals in research.

Promise yourself that you will make use of whatever personal or professional influence you might have to stop the exploitation of animals. Each of us can make his/her influence felt as an alumnus/a, parent, veteran, union member, church deacon or professional. Your personal and professional contacts can give a big boost to your campaigns on behalf of animals.

Only You Can End Animal Abuse!