



## Kia Ora and Happy New Year!

2020 has come to a close and 2021 is in full swing at our SPCA Centres all across New Zealand!

With summer being kitten season, lots of people will have recently welcomed a lovely cat/kitten or two into their family. As such, we've decided to highlight a very important part of responsible cat guardianship in this new edition of Kind Matters – keeping your cat safe and happy at home.

In this issue you can also find fun activities, learn about the importance of grooming your companion animals, find instructions for how to make a cool nature related craft, and read all about NZ's 2020 Bird of the Year, the fascinating kākāpō!

## SPCA Competition

Win a prize by designing the ultimate catio!

A catio is an outdoor cat enclosure, also known as a cat patio. It is an area where your cat can have access to the outdoors, without being able to roam off your property.

Catios are important because they allow your cat to experience the sights and sounds of the outdoor world, minus the risks. You can learn more about keeping your cat safe and happy at home on pg 2 of this issue of Kind Matters!

Enter the competition by emailing your design to [education@sPCA.nz](mailto:education@sPCA.nz) with the subject "SPCA Catio Design Competition." Please include your name, address, contact information, and an explanation of your design, including how it would keep a cat happy and safe at home.

*Some things to remember - your innovative catio design must be safe, and include a variety of platforms at different heights, comfortable hiding places, food, water, litter trays, and protection from the heat of the summer and cold and rain of the winter. Catios must also meet cats' behavioural needs with lots of toys and enrichment!*



## What's Inside



### Safe and Happy at Home

Tips for responsible cat guardianship.



### Kind Conservation

Learn about the 2020 Bird of the Year.

Jake Osborne "Xena" *Strigops habroptilus* (Kākāpō)



### Craft Time

Clay Nature Impressions.



# Keeping cats safe and happy at home

Keeping your cat safe and happy at home is an important part of responsible animal guardianship!



Cats who stay at home are more likely to enjoy a longer, healthier life - this means more quality time spent with you and your family! Keeping your cat at home will also reduce risks your cats may face when they are able to leave your property and then roam around the neighbourhood, including:

- > becoming lost,
- > fighting with other neighbourhood cats,
- > being attacked by a dog,
- > getting serious infections or disease, and/or parasites/worms/fleas,
- > being injured by road traffic,
- > getting caught in a trap
- > eating poison or foods that can make them sick
- > causing problems with your neighbours, such as toileting in their garden, and
- > harming other animals, such as wild birds and lizards, or even rabbits or guinea pigs that are living in the

backyard of a nearby house. Keeping your cat at home can be fun for both you and your cat! You can do this by cat-proofing an outdoor area, using a combination of indoors and a secure outdoor enclosure, or keeping your cat indoors. Another option is to give your cat access to your yard, by securing your yard with an escape-proof fence. By increasing the height of your fence or attaching a cat-proof rolling bar on top, and blocking any other potential escape routes, your cat can enjoy the outdoors without being able to stray in other properties.



Just remember - in addition to physical needs, you will need to provide your cats with opportunities to meet their important behaviours such as scratching, playing, hiding, etc. All cats are unique and will have

different preferences for they want, so make sure to closely watch your cat to ensure you are meeting their physical, health, and behavioural needs.

Below are ways in which you can keep your cat happy and healthy and help them express these behaviours:

- > Provide your cat with cat trees, scratching posts, climbing frames and lots of platforms at different levels.
- > Provide all essentials like their water source, toileting areas, and resting and hiding places in their own separate areas.
- > Provide them lots of toys, play, and interaction.
- > Experiment with DIY projects to make your home more cat-friendly – you don't have to spend a lot of money to enrich your cat's environment!
- > Monitor your cat for signs of stress or boredom, and periodically add new elements to their environment to keep it interesting.
- > Even if your cat stays at home, ensure they are microchipped, desexed, and vaccinated.

Remember, the best way to keep your cat safe, is to keep them at home at all times!

You and your family can find more information about keeping your cat safe and happy at home by clicking [HERE](#).

## Paws, hooves, and claws!

Can you figure out what the animal is based off the photo of their feet? Write the answers in the blanks below.

Did you get them all?  
Answers on pg 5.



# Kind Conservation: Kākāpō



Jake Osborne "Kenneth" Strigops habroptilus (Kākāpō)

**At the end of 2020, there was a very exciting announcement – we found out which bird Aotearoa voted as Te Manu Rangonui o Te Tau (Bird of the Year). The winner was a large, green, nocturnal\*, endemic\* parrot. You guessed it – the kākāpō!**

Kākāpō are truly special birds and just like other animals, they have their own unique traits, behaviours, and personalities. Not only are they the only flightless parrot in the world, but they are also the heaviest parrot in the world. Despite this, kākāpō are wonderful climbers and so they spend their time roosting\* on the ground, as well as in trees. Known to be able to live for up to 90 years, these

birds have a large beak and claws, unexplained whiskers, short wings, and a round build, earning them the nickname of "owl parrot."

These herbivorous\* parrots mature at 5 years old and only breed every 2 to 3 or 4 years, when rimu trees fruit. Kākāpō naturally love to eat rimu fruit, supplejack vines, orchard tubers, among other leaves, roots,

bark, and seeds. As such, kākāpō are a key part of healthy New Zealand ecosystems, helping pollinate plants and distribute seeds.

Kākāpō used to be found all throughout New Zealand, however these days, they only live in the dense forest and bush habitats of three different islands off of Aotearoa. Sadly, kākāpō are critically endangered, with only about 213 individuals left. A large reason for their population decline is because of habitat destruction and predation. This is why it's so important for us to protect our natural habitats and keep our cats safe and happy at home – great examples of Kind Conservation!

## Glossary

\*Nocturnal – most active at night

\*Endemic – found only in a certain place in a particular country

\*Roosting – the act of sleeping or resting

\*Herbivorous – plant-eating animal

## Fun Kākāpō Facts



Photo © Don Merton | DOC

Kākāpō will feed almost entirely on rimu fruit when they ripen.



Photo © Jake Osborne "Kohititea" Strigops habroptilus (Kākāpō)

Kākāpō chicks are born with fluffy white feathers and are cared for solely by their mums.



Photo © Don Merton | DOC

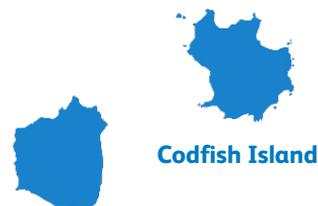
Kākāpō males make "bowls" in the bush and put on a display to attract females.



Photo © Jake Osborne "Atatū" Strigops habroptilus (Kākāpō)

Spreading awareness is the first step to helping kākāpō. Let your friends, peers, family, and whānau know about the importance of their conservation!

Kākāpō can only be found on three New Zealand Islands – Little Barrier, Codfish, and Anchor Island.



Little Barrier Island

Codfish Island



Anchor Island

## Happy Tales



**Meet Cleo, Indi, and Buzz – three cool cats that are now living their very best lives together in their loving, forever home.**

However, these beautiful siblings did not always have a place to call home. In fact, they spent the first couple of weeks of their lives living on the streets. Luckily, a compassionate member of the public found them and brought them into SPCA so that they could have a second chance at the life they deserve.

Before they could find their new home, Cleo, Indi, and Buzz needed lots of extra care and attention. As such, an SPCA staff member brought them home to prepare them for their next big step. With the help of their foster mum and dad, they grew to be very friendly, snuggly babies who loved to play with each other and cuddle.

Now it was time for the trio to be adopted. It wasn't long before ALL THREE of them were adopted by an amazing family and brought to their home where they all get to enjoy the contained outdoor garden, heaps of cat tunnels and toys, and their very own five story cat tower that they sleep in each night!

Their new mum says that they "love them to bits and they're spoilt rotten - but they deserve it! They're awesome."

Cleo, Indi, and Buzz are three very lucky and loved cats!



## Responsible Guardianship Tip: The Importance of Grooming



Grooming is an essential part of responsible animal guardianship. Cats, dogs, rabbits, guinea pigs, horses, goats... many animals require grooming to be happy and healthy. Not only is grooming key for your animal's welfare, but calm and gentle grooming can help increase your bond with your animal!

There are a number of different health issues that can arise if your animal is

## Animal Boggler Puzzle

Using the letters in the puzzle below, find as many 3+ letter words as you can. No letter can be used more than once within a single word. Plurals could be another word. Write the answers in the blanks below.

Scoring:

- > 1 point for each 3 letter word
- > 2 points for 4 letter words
- > 3 points for 5 letter words and so on.
- > There are also at least 17 animal words to be found – find them all and get another 5 bonus points!

C	P	S	D	E
F	A	O	W	A
G	B	H	I	Z
U	T	K	R	K
N	L	I	X	Y


What was your score? You can find the animal word answers on pg 5.

not groomed properly and routinely. Before adopting an animal, always make sure you're aware of their grooming needs and that you're able to meet these needs!

Regular grooming keeps animals coats shiny, healthy, and the process is a great opportunity to check the overall health of your animal as well - that's why grooming is this issue's Responsible Guardianship Tip!

# Craft: Clay Nature Impressions

Bring a bit of nature into your house with these cool clay nature impression coasters!

## Materials needed:

- > Air dry clay
- > Rolling pin or bottle
- > Paint and paint brush
- > Leaves, sticks, pinecones, etc.
- > Can, cup, or cookie cutter



## Instructions

1. Roll a piece of clay into a ball.



2. Place a leaf under the ball of clay.



3. Using a rolling pin or smooth bottle, flatten the clay over top of the leaf evenly.



4. Use a round object, like a can, cup, or cookie cutter to cut the clay into a circular shape.



5. With a small amount of water, use your finger to smooth out the clay around the leaf and edges.



6. Gently remove the leaf from the clay.



7. Leave clay in a safe place to dry.



8. Once the clay is completely dry (this could take about 48hrs), you can get creative and paint the clay!

## SPCA Reading Challenge

A BIG thank you to Read NZ and all of the awesome kids throughout Aotearoa who took part in the SPCA Reading Challenge this summer.

Lucas and Phoenix were among the incredible participants that included their adorable companion animals in the reading fun - way to go!



Do you or does someone you know have a catio?

Send us photos, we'd love to see and share!

Email [education@sPCA.nz](mailto:education@sPCA.nz)

Boggl'er answers::  
 Answers:  
 Cat, dog, bird, rat,  
 Chicken  
 Horse  
 goat, fish, pig, cow,  
 duck, kakapo, kea,  
 weka, weta, kaka,  
 fantail, tahr, kiwi  
 Rabbit  
 Dog

## SPCA Animal Welfare Dice Games

Cut the below shapes out along the dotted outer lines, fold along the blue bolded lines, then glue or tape the flaps together to create the cubed dice.

These awesome game dice can be used for a number of different games and activities! You can make up your own game, or choose to play one or all of the game ideas below:

1. There are a lot of things that animals need to be happy and healthy - test your five freedom knowledge by rolling the five freedom dice along with the animal dice. Next, identify something that those particular animals needs when it comes to that freedom. Example: If the dice lands on freedom from hunger and thirst, dog, horse, and guinea pig, you could say, "freedom from hunger and thirst: dog biscuits, hay, and vegetables." You can information on the five freedoms [here](#). You get a point for every roll you get right - first to 10 wins!
2. Take the first game to the next level - roll the dice and then write a story about the particular animals and freedom that you land on.
3. Create your very own BINGO cards, but instead of using the letters B-I-N-G-O, you can use the five freedoms. Under the freedoms, randomly write the animal names in a 5x5 table. If a freedom and an animal is rolled that matches your card, you can place a marker on that spot! You can switch the animal dice out, but you can only roll one animal dice at a time.
4. Roll the three animal dice and then draw a picture that shows the perfect environment for those particular animals. Consider things like: Do these animals require the same environment? What kind of bed do they need? What toys do they like? Do they need a friend of the same species? Is the environment safe?

We would love to see photos of the games you play or come up with. Send a photo to [education@spca.nz](mailto:education@spca.nz)!







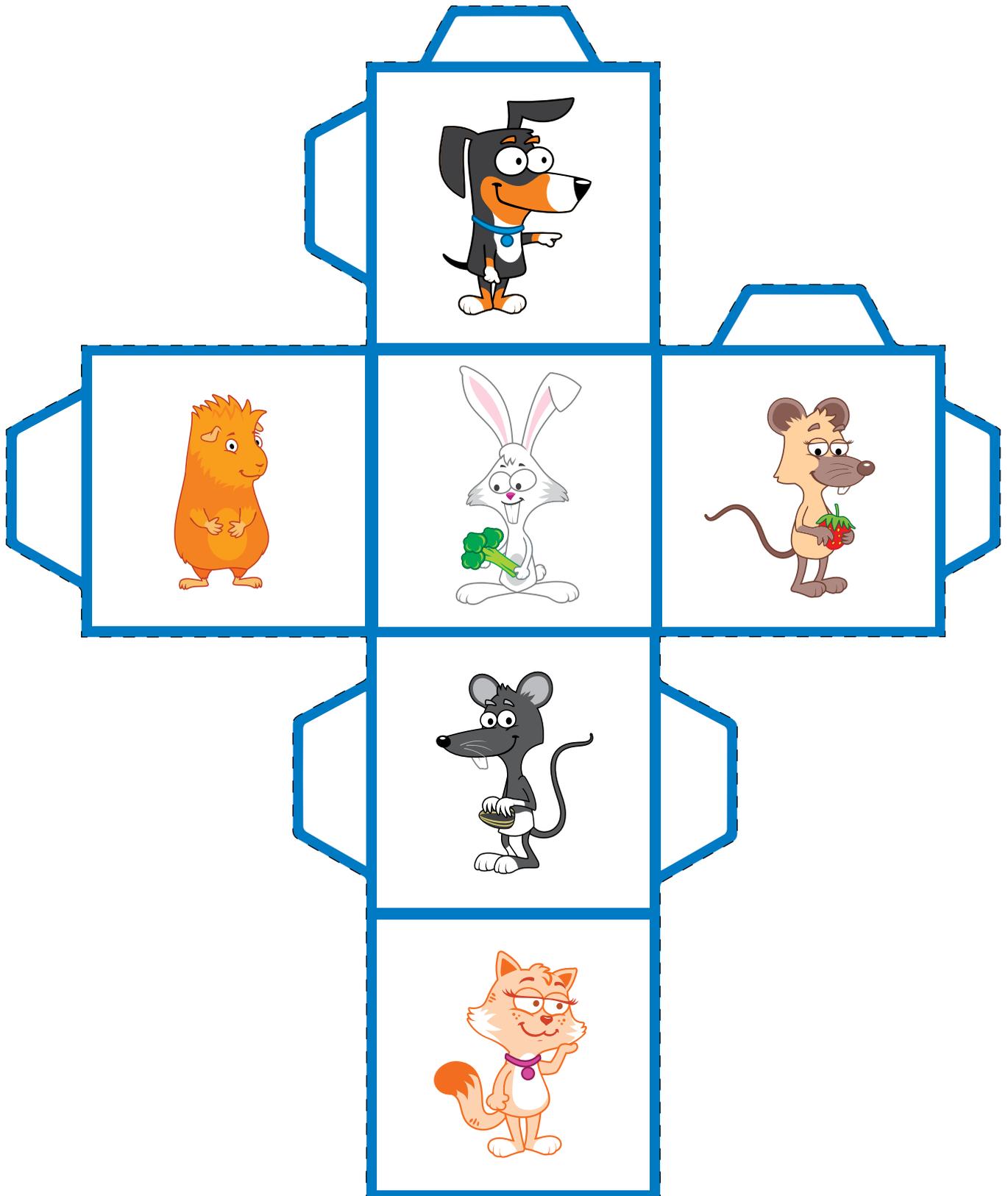
Kids

Kind Matters



Game

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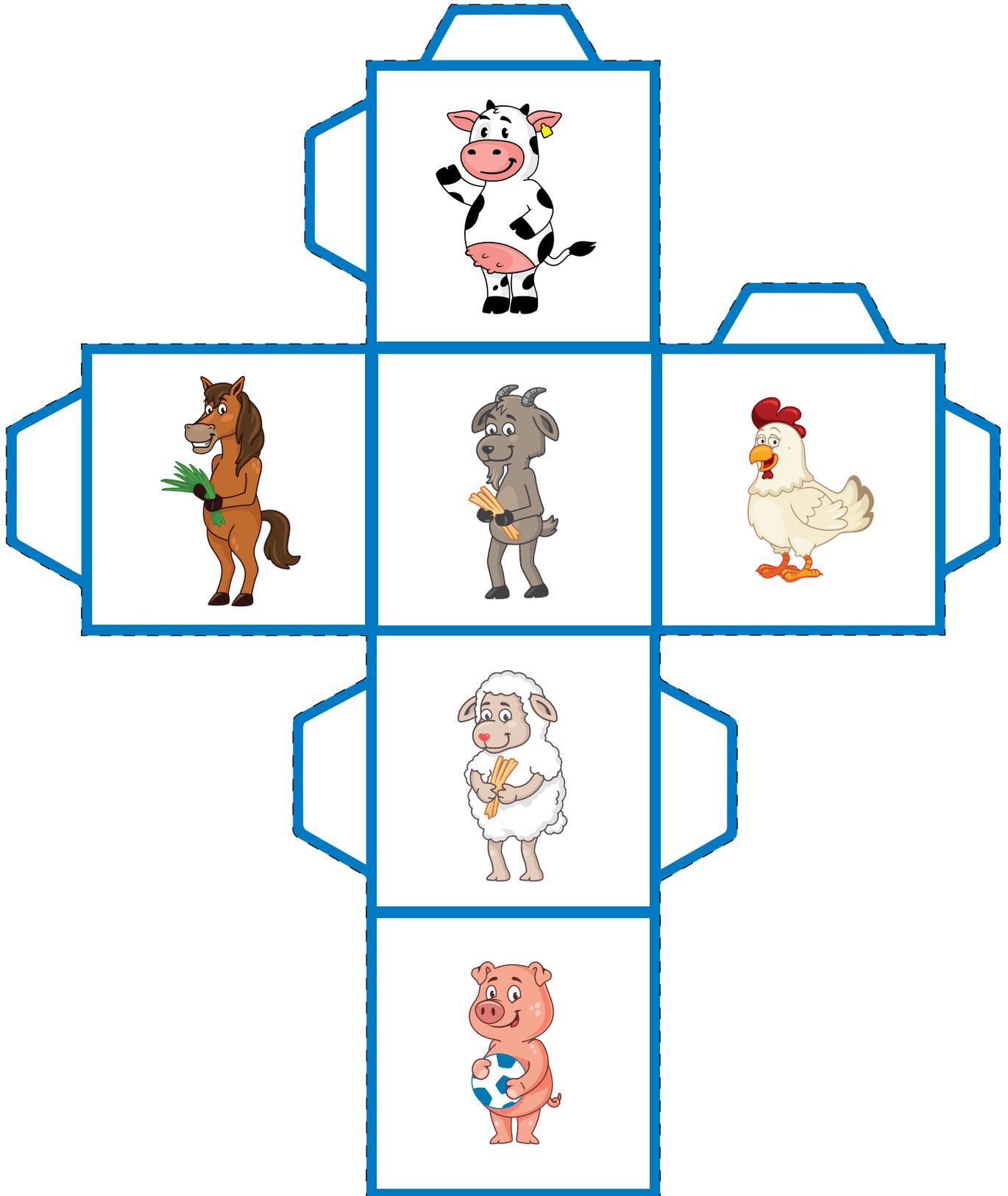
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Game

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