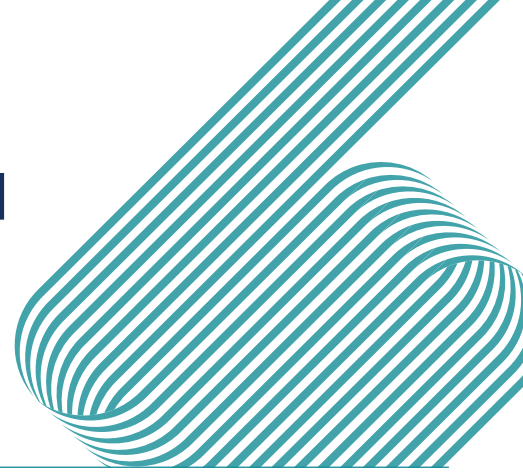


# PATHWAY DEVELOPMENT IN VETERINARY MEDICINE

## NAVIGATOR TOPIC GUIDE

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### What is pathway development?

Pathway development is the intentionality of identifying, exposing, and supporting underrepresented students (especially pursuant to race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status) to consider a profession in veterinary medicine. These programs target age ranges from kindergarten through fifth grade, middle school (12-15 years of age), high school, and undergraduate students and can range from an individual event to a continuous program.

### A 15-minute meeting?

The Journey for Teams educational modules are designed for a 15-minute block because veterinary workplaces are busy! We recognize that more than 15 minutes is needed to discuss pathway development in depth. After the meeting, we hope the team will be inspired to explore this topic further as a team or individually. Check out Dr. Bruno’s resources at the end of this guide.

### Let’s begin!

Refer to the [Navigator Handbook 1.0](#) and the steps below to help you lead and facilitate discussion about pathway development.

**1** To begin the meeting, welcome everyone to the room by name.

**2** Remind the group that the culture of a Journey for Teams meeting embodies engagement, open-mindedness, respect, and compassion.



ENGAGED



OPEN-MINDED



RESPECTFUL



COMPASSIONATE

**3**  Play the “Pathway Development in Veterinary Medicine” video.

**4** Read aloud the 3 take-home messages from the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide:

- **Pathway programs are an important way to inspire students from Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) populations to pursue a career in veterinary medicine.**
- **Proactively contacting schools and youth organizations in areas with BIPOC populations to volunteer your time for career days and mentoring is a great way to get started.**
- **Don't underestimate the positive impact you can have on a student AND their parents while caring for their pet. Take that moment to encourage, educate, and hopefully inspire them about veterinary career opportunities.**

**5** Ask for 1-2 comments on the take-home messages. Try to keep it brief to respect the 15-minute time commitment.

**6** Read aloud the 2 questions from the 3-2-1 Discussion Guide.

Question for the team:

**What have we done in the past to introduce diverse youth in our community to veterinary medicine, and what can we do differently and better in the future?**

*Spend a maximum of 5 minutes discussing the team question.*

Question for individual self-reflection:

*No need to share answers or thoughts with anyone.*

**How can I share my experiences with young people as a way to educate them about the opportunities in veterinary medicine?**

## The most important part of the meeting

**7** As a team, decide on **1 actionable and measurable behavior change** to implement in your workplace. Consider 1 from the list below, or come up with your own idea.

- Consider providing paid student internship programs for high school and college students to help eliminate socioeconomic barriers to gaining valuable experience.
- Partner with youth organizations (Boys & Girls Clubs, local YMCA) and schools to participate in career days and open houses at your workplace to introduce students to the field of veterinary medicine.
- Add books to your waiting room that show diversity in the veterinary field and download coloring sheets from [vetsofallcolors.org](http://vetsofallcolors.org) to give out to children when they visit your practice.

Our actionable idea

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**8** Invite the team to self-reflect. Team members may consider and commit to **1 personal behavior change** (no need to share them with anyone).

- Join an organization in veterinary medicine dedicated to supporting and mentoring students in pathway programs, such as Purdue University's This is How We Role, Pawsibilities, BLENDvet, and Diversify Veterinary Medicine Coalition (DVMC).
- Offer to volunteer at a local public school with a BIPOC student population. Contact the office and explain that you would be open to visiting with students to talk to them about taking care of animals and what it is like to work in the veterinary field.

**9** Thank everyone for contributing, and congratulate yourselves on how much you accomplished in 15 minutes!

## RESOURCES

4-H. Retrieved June 5, 2023, from <https://4-h.org/>

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Greenhill, L. (2019, June 1). *Pipelines and pathways*. Today's Veterinary Business. <https://todaysveterinarybusiness.com/pipeline-and-pathways/>

Human Animal Bond Research Institute, PetcoLove. *Understanding the role of race and ethnicity in pet ownership and care: survey highlights opportunity to better serve all pet parents*. Human Animal Bond Research Institute. <https://habri.org/DEI>

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Roth, C. (2021). *What does a real doctor look like?* Fulton Books.

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Thompson, D. (2013, November 6). *The 33 whitest jobs in America*. The Atlantic. <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/11/the-33-whitest-jobs-in-america/281180/>

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Vets of All Colors. *Coloring book*. Retrieved June 5, 2023, from <https://vetsofallcolors.org/coloring-book-2/>

The inclusion of resources by this author does not imply or constitute an endorsement by the American Veterinary Medical Association or the Veterinary Medical Association Executives.