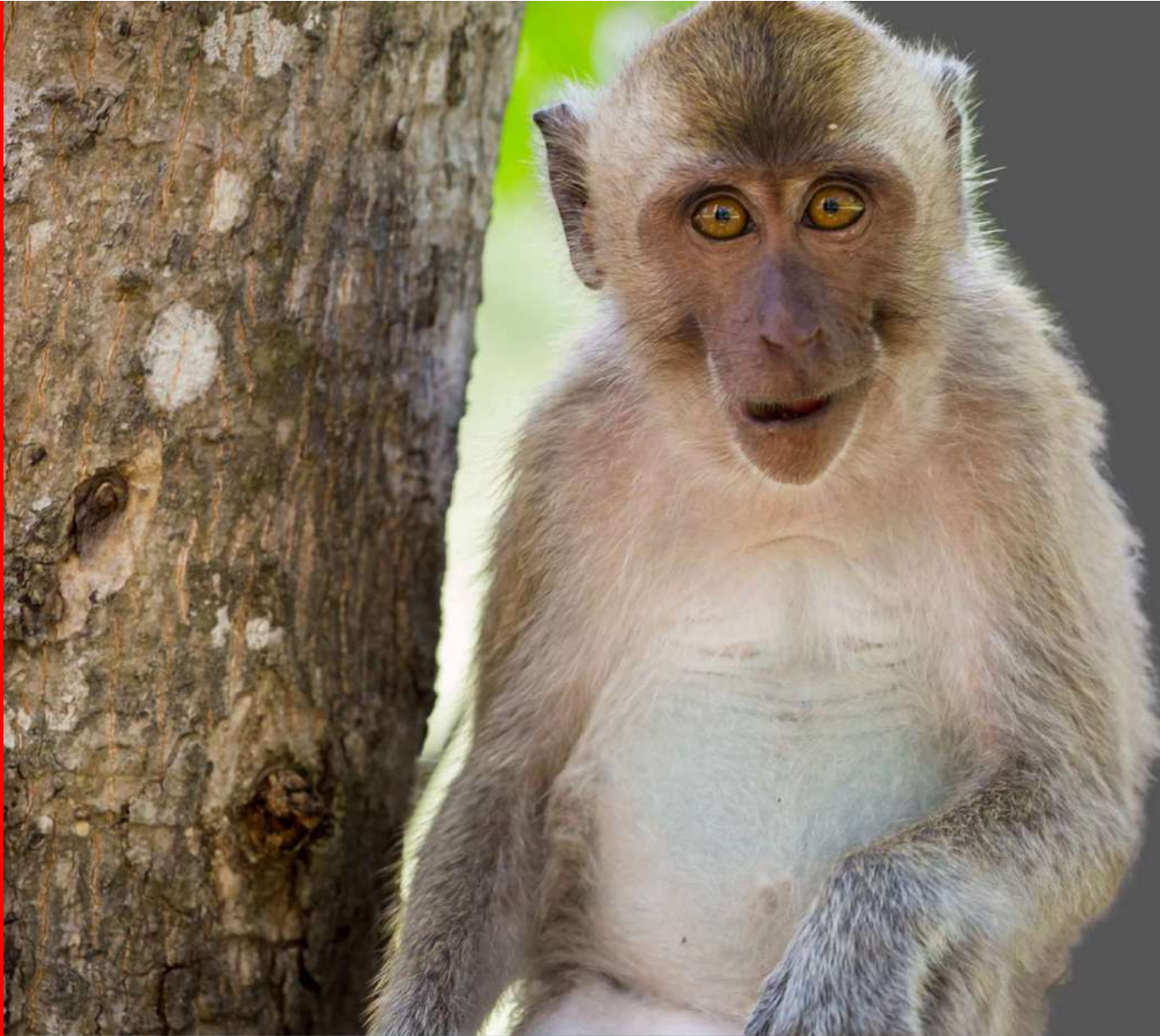




**SPOT THE SCAM:
Unmasking Fake Rescues
on Social Media**

Amanda Yonica
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coordinator

Winaya Tippy
SMACC
coordinator



WARNING

Some of the images and topics addressed in this presentation can be distressing

WHAT IS ANIMAL CRUELTY CONTENT?

...a range of human behaviors, performed intentionally or unintentionally, that cause animals harm or suffering which may be immediate or long-term, physical or psychological.





HAVE YOU EVER COME
ACROSS ANIMAL RESCUE
CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA?



A passerby walked past an abandoned house and heard the desperate cries of a kitten

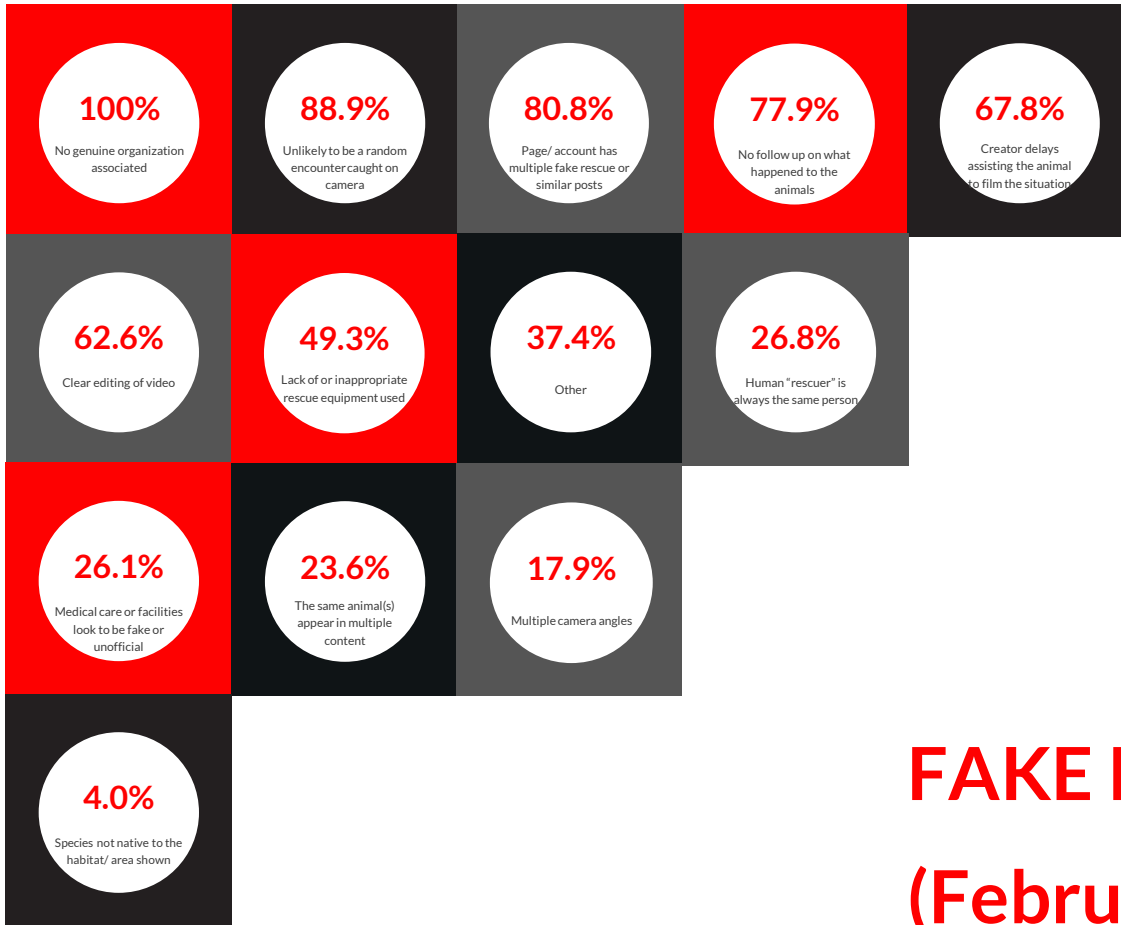


and I ran as fast as I could to save the kitten

- Undisclosed face of the rescuer
- Towel already prepared beforehand
- Rescuer is aware of the camera location
- Unlikely scenario captured in at random
- Delay in assisting the animal
- Clear editing of video



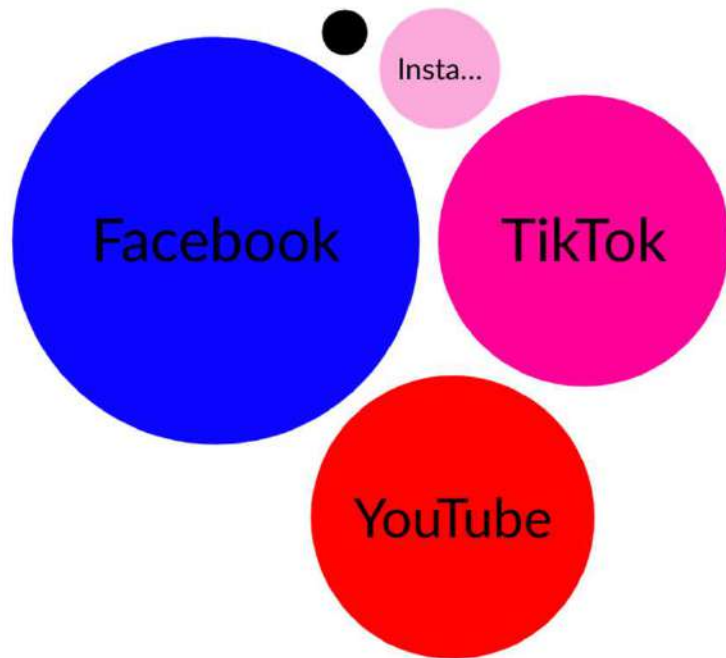
and I ran as fast as I could to save the kitten



FAKE RESCUE INDICATORS (February- May 2024)

 **Figure 1: The prevalence of Fake Rescue indicators in terms of the video proportion and the abundance**

▶ Figure 2: The total percentage of Fake Rescue content for each platform



▶ ~48% FACEBOOK LINKS

▶ ~24% TIKTOK LINKS

▶ ~23% YOUTUBE LINKS

▶ ~3% INSTAGRAM LINKS

▶ ~1% TWITTER/X LINKS

1022 LINKS COLLECTED OVER 6 WEEKS

52% of the links were found on Meta owned platforms, with YouTube and TikTok each featuring around a quarter of total content

KEY FINDINGS

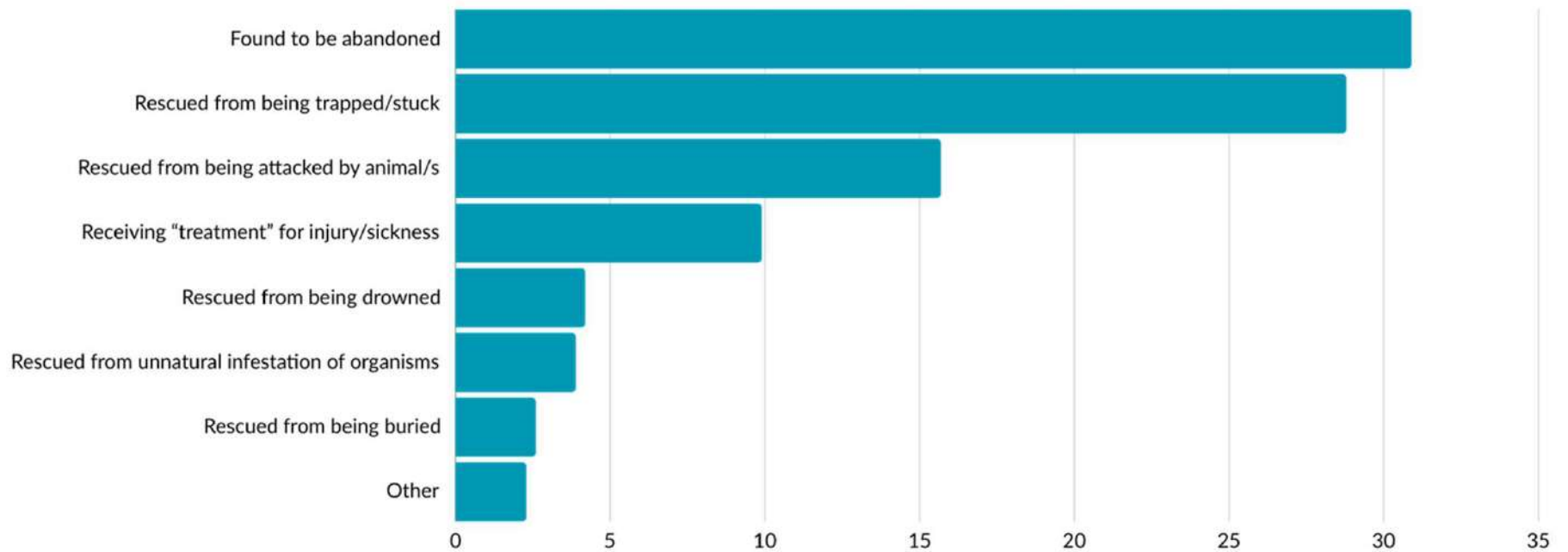


Figure 3: The total percentage of links assigned to each Fake Rescue main theme

KEY FINDINGS



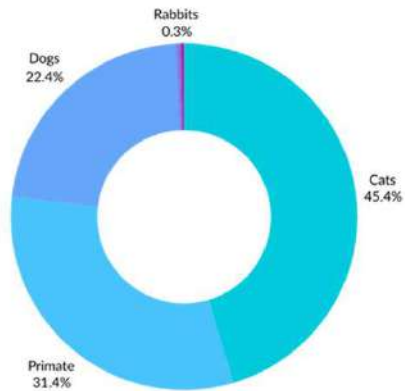
- ▶ LINKS COLLECTED HAD BEEN WATCHED 572,013,959 TIMES
- ▶ 21% OF LINKS HAVE EXTERNAL DONATION LINKS
- ▶ 21.5% OF LINKS GATHERED WERE BASED ON PLATFORM'S ALGORITHM
- ▶ 22.8% OF LINKS ARE REMOVED/ UNACCESSIBLE FOR PUBLIC

KEY FINDINGS



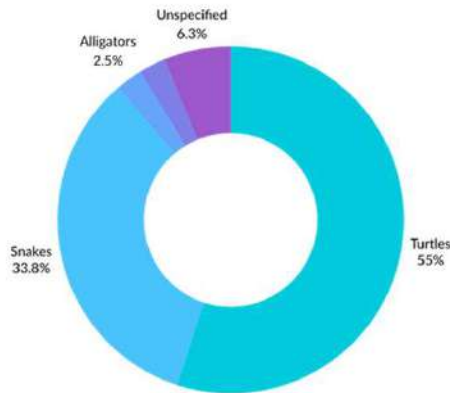


Figure 3: The total percentages of animals identified in the content per class



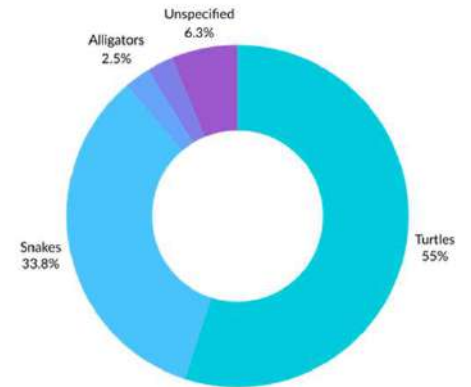
▶ **91.5% MAMMALS**

Threaten species were identified which includes long-tailed macaques (Endangered), Stump-tailed macaques (Vulnerable), Arunachal macaques (Endangered), Northern pig-tailed macaques (Vulnerable), and Southern pig-tailed macaques (Endangered)



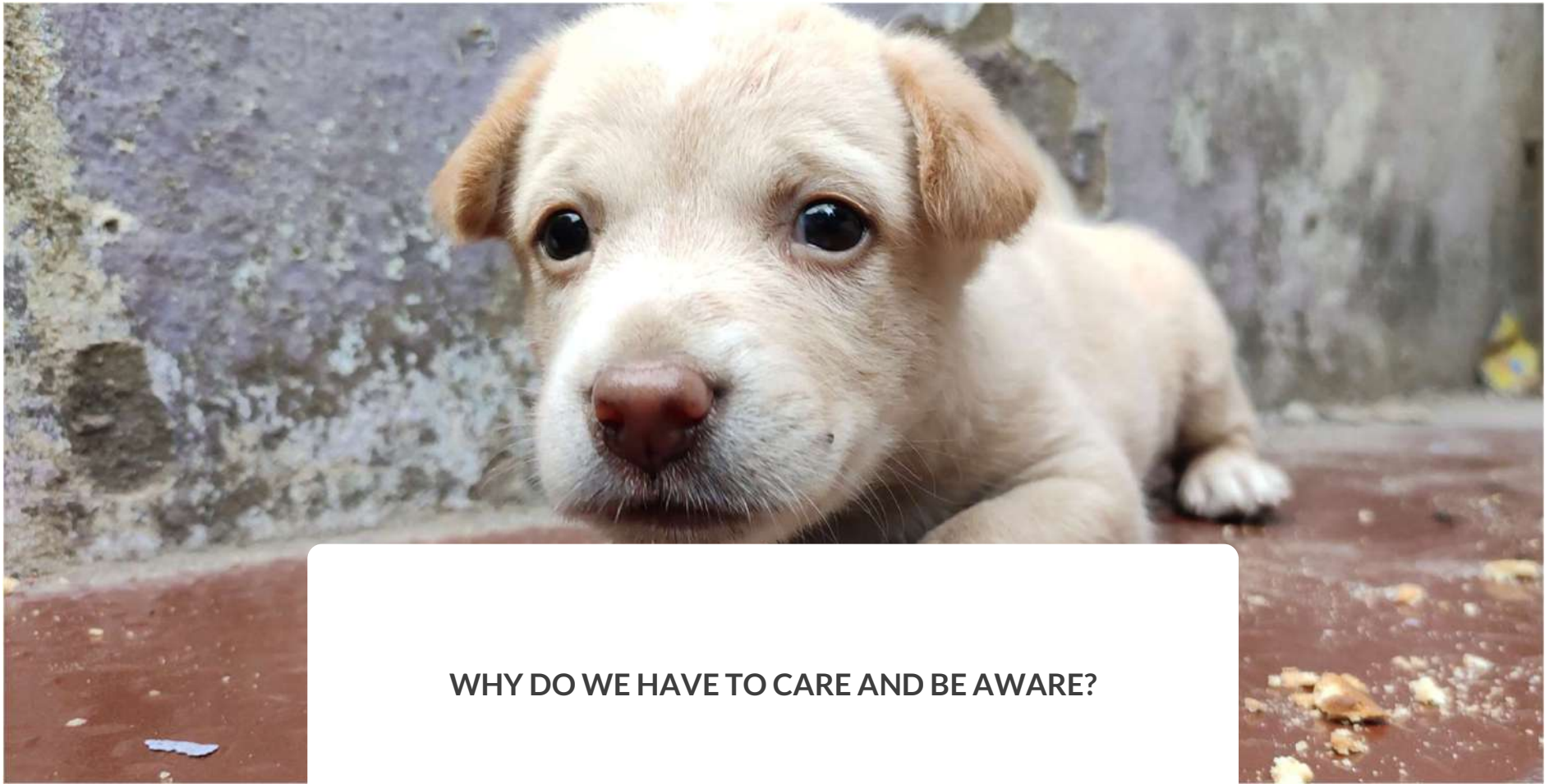
▶ **7.9% REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS**

This includes species-dependent animals



▶ **0.8% BIRDS**

This includes species-dependent animals



WHY DO WE HAVE TO CARE AND BE AWARE?



OUR ENGAGEMENT COULD MAKE IT VIRAL

Viral content has a wide-spread exposure, leading to more engagement from users, more fake rescue content produced and more people being scammed.



A PHENOMENON IN ITS OWN WAY

Fake Rescue has been on the radar of several organizations - WAP, LFT, Four Paws - since 2020. It is an increasingly trending type of animal cruelty which is very difficult to identify and tackle.



HINDERS GENUINE RESCUE'S WORK

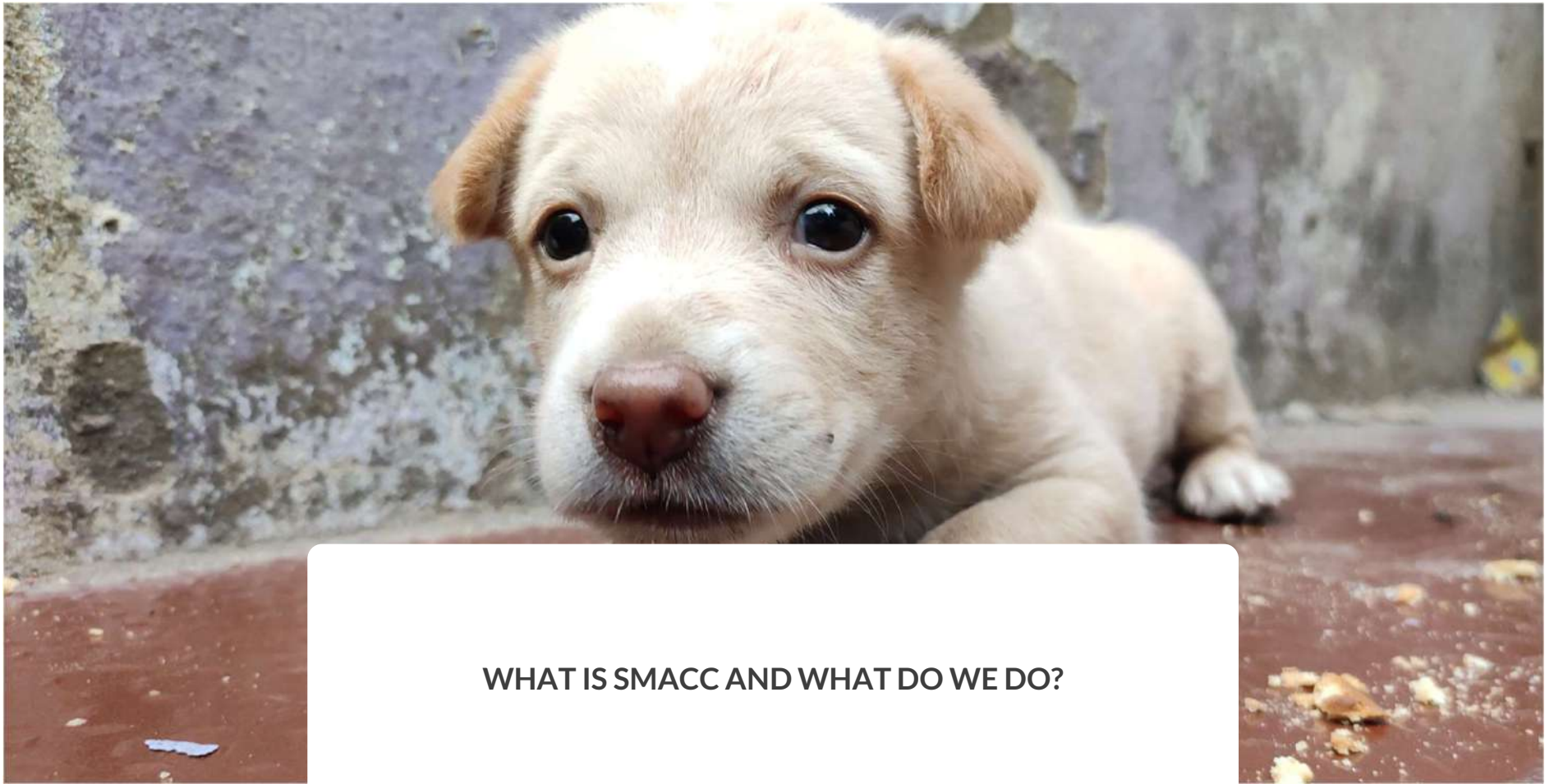
Fake rescue content and channels might overshadow genuine rescue work on social media, which could lead users to donate to the misleading creators.



MISCONCEPTION




Staged animal content contains disinformation about wildlife rescue, interspecies interaction, strays rescue, and many more.

WHY DO WE HAVE TO CARE AND BE AWARE?



WHAT IS SMACC AND WHAT DO WE DO?



- ▶ DATA COLLECTION
- ▶ REPORTS
- ▶ UNITING DIVERSE VOICE
- ▶ PUBLIC ADVICE
- ▶ PUBLIC AWARENESS
- ▶ ENCOURAGE COLLABORATION
- ▶ REPORT CONCERN FORM
- ▶ SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS   

Continually seek dialogue and hold ongoing communications and create a united front of organizations



How to identify animal abuse

Here are some indicators of animal abuse that you should be aware of (non-exhaustive):



Being aggressive or violent towards an animal



Shouting and subjecting an animal to constant auditory distress



Inappropriate feeding of animals



Animals are trained or forced to attack each other



Filthy sanitary conditions impacting the animals' health and well-being



Absence of proper medical care when there's evidence of injury



FLAGGER PROGRAM

SMACC is now a part of the TRUSTED FLAGGER PROGRAM of YouTube and TikTok



ONGOING COMMUNICATION

SMACC has been in dialogue with Meta since 2021

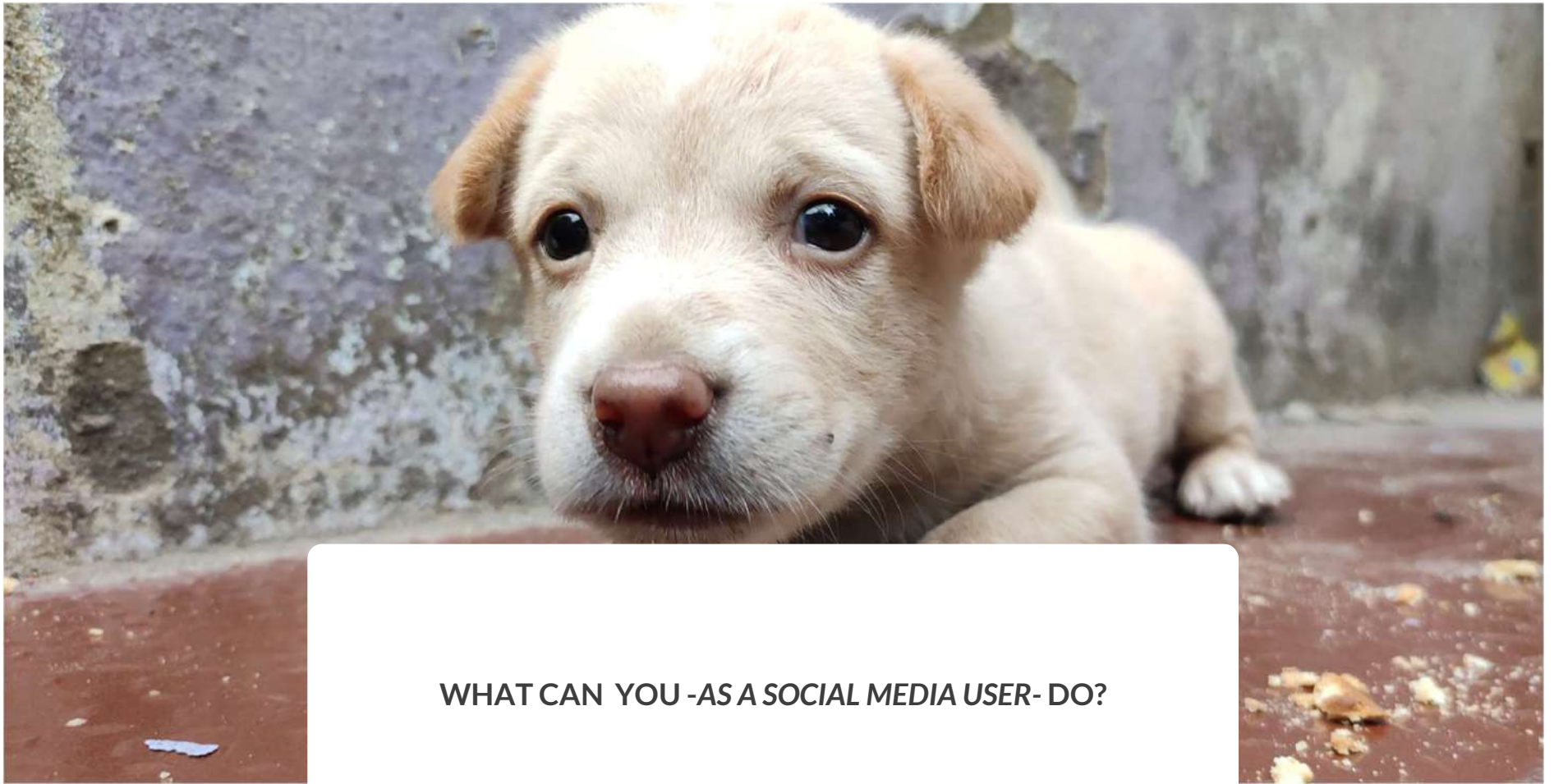


SEEKING DIALOGUES

SMACC approaches social media platforms to open conversations and support them in making improvements for animals

Animal welfare

Updated: November 6, 2024



WHAT CAN YOU -AS A SOCIAL MEDIA USER- DO?

#SpotTheScam



HOW TO SPOT FAKE
RESCUES:
REMEMBER A.R.C

Authenticity

Always check the source!

- No genuine animal organization associated
- Page has multiple fake rescue or similar videos
- No follow-up on what happened to the animals
- Unprofessional rescue or veterinarian practices

Reality check

What is really happening?

- Unlikely to be a random encounter caught on camera
- Odd combination of species (snake vs cat)
- The same animals appear in multiple videos

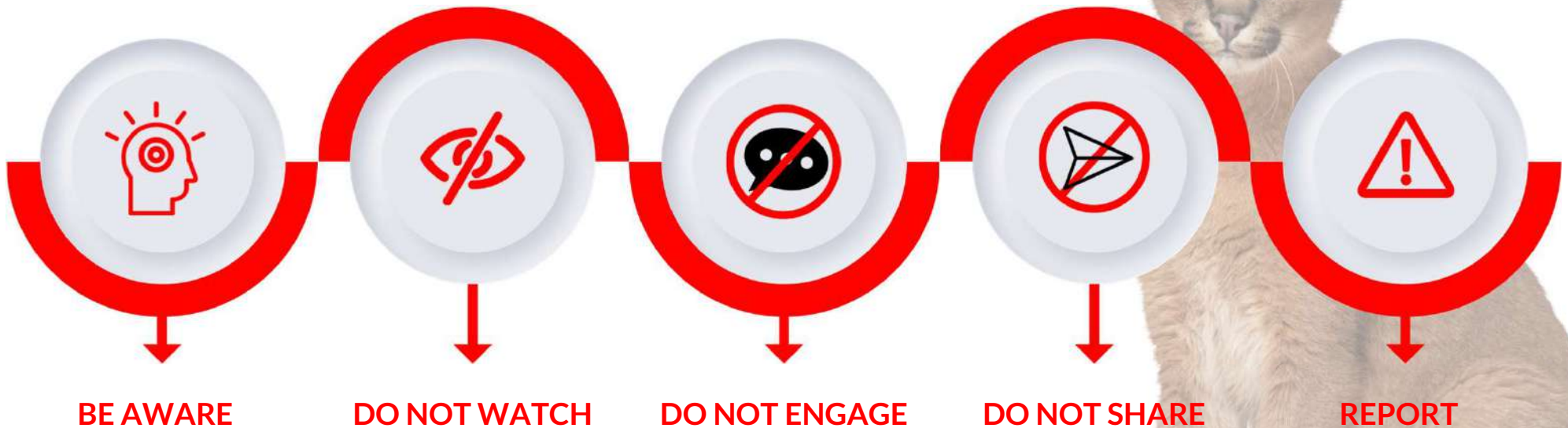
Creation

How the content is created?

- Creator delays assisting the animal to film the situation
- Clear editing of videos
- Multiple camera angles indicating set up

smaccoalition.com/fake-rescue-report

PLEASE FOLLOW SMACC'S FIVE STEPS TO STOP ONLINE CRUELTY



<https://www.smaccoalition.com/report-a-concern>

PUBLIC REPORT > INVESTIGATION

RECEIVE REPORT

SMACC receives information from the public via public form or email



INITIAL ACTIONS

Can SMACC take action by escalating to SM platform for removal?



ASSIST NGO

Collating evidence, seeking other sources of information, identifying stakeholders, flagging with SM platforms



ASSESS CONTENT

Is the information concrete?

Does it have enough useable information?

Is the country/locale evident?

Process may be blocked at this stage



IDENTIFY NGO

1. Is located in the country/locale

2. Has laws available to them to tackle this crime

3. Has capacity to investigate

Process may be blocked at this stage



smaccoalition.com/volunteer

**Want to help animals?
Volunteer with us!**

*If you can speak different languages,
are able to look for information online, have
the ability to design content or want to help
spread awareness, then you are perfect for this
role!*

Scan the barcode to access the form
It should take approximately 2 minutes to complete



Help us improve our work by letting us know your understanding & experience on online animal cruelty

bit.ly/SMACCSurvey2023

Scan the barcode to access the survey

It should take approximately 2 minutes to complete



Thank you!



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www.smaccoalition.com