Dolphins in Captivity
Debunking myths about captivity

MYTH

Dolphins are happy in captivity

The dolphin smile is nature’s greatest deception. It creates the illusion that they’re always happy. "- Ric O’Barry. The “smile” is an anatomical illusion that stems from the configuration of their jaws. This makes them look as if they’re always happy, even when they’re not. In captivity, limited space curbs a dolphin’s natural behaviors. This causes emotional and physical stress that can lead to a weakened immune system and illness.

Captive dolphins are safe from predators and don’t have to look for food like they would in the wild.

Dolphins have few natural predators or enemies in the wild. Some orcas - the largest member of the dolphin family - do prey on smaller dolphins, but this is nature. Orcas - as an apex predator, have no natural predators. Both dolphins and orcas are under threat from pollution and overfishing. The single largest threat to these animals in the wild is man.

Captive dolphin displays have educational value.

Dolphins in captivity are shadows of their wild counterparts. Forced into man-made pods, their natural societies collapse and their breeding is controlled by artificial insemination. There is no educational or scientific value that can be placed on keeping dolphins in artificial and unnatural environments. This is miseducation.

Children establish a connection with dolphins in captivity that would otherwise be impossible to achieve.

This statement undervalues the imagination of every child on this earth. Kids love dinosaurs, outer space, and fantastical worlds of wonder created by a beloved author. Children are smart, they look at the world around them, they are curious and they find joy in learning.

For further information, visit DolphinProject.com.

TRUTH

Recued dolphins have a good home

Real dolphins are reservoirs of joy. As they are moved from the wild to the pool, they are still able to enjoy the water and the freedom of their environment. They are not kept in tanks or small rooms where they are unable to move or swim freely. Instead, they are kept in large pens where they can move about and interact with their surroundings. This allows them to maintain their natural behaviors and continue to live as dolphins should.

TRUTH

Dolphins in captivity display a ecosystem any more than "captive dolphins do not represent dolphins in the real world. Their movements and behaviors are not natural and they are not able to interact with their natural environment.

TRUTH

Dolphins in captivity are not for sale.

Dolphins are not owned or sold by any facility. They are rescued from the wild and brought to a facility to receive medical care and rehabilitation. They are not kept in captivity for entertainment or profit.

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Dolphins and whales are very intelligent. They have large, complex brains; they are self-aware; and they create music, art, and even their own languages. Despite these remarkable abilities, many dolphins are subjected to a miserable existence in captivity. Here is what you can do:

1. **Don't buy a ticket to a dolphin show.** Don't support the dolphin industry. The money that goes towards dolphin shows never goes towards dolphin conservation. Instead, support organizations that are dedicated to protecting dolphins and their habitat.

2. **Tell your friends and family not to see a show.** Spread the word about the cruel conditions dolphins endure in captivity. Encourage your friends and family to support organizations that work towards protecting dolphins and their habitats.

3. **Support dolphin sanctuaries.** There are several sanctuaries around the world where dolphins are carefree and happy. Visit these sanctuaries and spread the word about their important work.

4. **Learn more about dolphins.** Educate yourself about the incredible world of dolphins. This will help you make informed decisions and support organizations that are dedicated to protecting dolphins.

By supporting these initiatives, you can help protect dolphins from the threat of captivity and ensure they have a chance to live their lives naturally and freely. Together, we can make a difference and ensure that dolphins are not just a source of entertainment but a valued member of our marine ecosystem.