

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Preparing for Pet Parenthood**

*NAPPS Encourages Families to Consider Welcoming a Pet to their home in Honor of National Kids and Pets Day, April 26.*

MOUNT LAUREL, N.J. February 15, 2012 –The National Association of Professional Pet Sitters (NAPPS), a nonprofit trade association dedicated to promoting the welfare of animals, encourages parents to give their children a loving relationship that will last a lifetime, by welcoming a pet into their family in honor of National Kids and Pets Day, April 26, 2012.

The Animal Miracle Foundation and Network, a nonprofit organization whose mission includes teaching children compassion towards animals, annually celebrates National Kids and Pets Day. The spring holiday celebration promotes the adoption of animals and the value of childhood pets. Similarly, NAPPS provides children with lessons focused on the basics of animal welfare through the Youth Education Program, an initiative launched in 2011. The program offers animal education to schools, youth groups, scouts, churches, and various community groups, free of charge.

“Pets help children develop a range of skills and abilities,” said John D’Ariano, President of NAPPS. “In addition, a pet is a best friend, a keeper of secrets, a first mate, and a co-pilot for childhood adventures.

According to the American Miracle Foundation and Network, the bond between a child and pet is a loyalty that becomes an eternal part of the human experience.

To help parents welcome a pet into their family, NAPPS offers these tips:

- Conduct research to determine the type of pet that is best suited for your family. Utilize online resources such as [petfinder.com](http://petfinder.com) to identify pets of all ages in need of a new home. These websites will allow you to maximize search results of kid-friendly pets seeking loving families.
- For families living in pet-friendly communities with smaller living space, consider a cat as a family companion. Cats are fairly independent and adapt well in a variety of living environments.
- For families with young children or busy schedules, consider adopting a mature, older dog. As opposed to puppies, mature dogs are generally house trained and accustomed to living with children.
- Teach your children pet diversity. Fish are great pets for educating your child about different habitats and hermit crabs provide a unique look into the lives of crustaceans.
- Create an animal-friendly atmosphere before bringing your pet home. Common household items can be harmful to pets, including candles, potpourri, tobacco products and chocolate. Limit the use of electrical cords where possible and

- caution children of the harm that can come to the family pet if toys and game pieces are not stored properly.
- Consider adopting a pet from your local animal rescue shelter. Knowledgeable staff can help determine which pet will be the best fit for your family.
  - With childhood obesity on the rise, it is becoming increasingly important for children to be active. A pet can help your family stay healthy and stick to daily exercise routines. Walking your dog is a great way to stay fit and spend time as a family.

In addition to the companionship that comes with being a pet parent, there are many health benefits as well. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, owning a pet can reduce stress and decrease blood pressure and cholesterol.

Today, there are pets that meet every lifestyle in a variety of price points. For families always on the go, don't shy away from making a pet a part of your life because of demanding schedules. Professional pet sitters are always a reliable alternative and are able to help provide the love and care your pet needs when you need to be away.

**About NAPPS:** NAPPS is the only national nonprofit trade association dedicated to serving the needs of professional pet sitters. The Association aims to help the pet owning public, those interested in pet sitting, and professionals engaged in the in-home pet care industry by fulfilling its vision statement, serving as "the most respected authority in professional pet sitting." It does so by providing the tools and support to foster the success of its members. Additionally, pet parents can benefit from NAPPS' free resources including a disaster preparedness guide, tips on how to select a pet sitter, and a nationwide referral service,. To find a pet sitter in your area, check out NAPPS' nationwide "Pet Sitter Locator" at [www.petsitters.org](http://www.petsitters.org). For more information on NAPPS, please follow [@TheNAPPS](https://twitter.com/TheNAPPS) on Twitter or join us on Facebook at [facebook.com/TheNAPPS](https://facebook.com/TheNAPPS).

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