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**Is My Child Ready For A Family Pet?**

**By Jennifer Gove**

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At some point every child asks that all time famous question. "Can I have a pet?" While owning a pet fosters responsibility and compassion, some children are just not ready to help take care of a pet. It is a huge responsibility and one that must be given careful thought.

There are many things you should consider as a family.

What kind of pet?

What kind of pet would fit into your life style best. There are many options from large dogs to little fish. You should carefully consider the needs of each and what you think will fit into you life style as well. The happiest pet is one with happy owners that don't feel stressed by its care and needs. You should study into types as well as breeds so you know exactly what to expect breeds.

Can you afford the addition of a pet?

Now that you have decided on a type of pet. You need to consider the cost of owning a pet. Pets even if you are given on free are very expensive. If you have a dog or a cat there will be vet visits, food, licensing, toys and supplies and if your pet should become sick there are medications they may need. Owning a pet is very expensive.

Do you have the time?

Animals require attention just like we do as human beings. The need to be feed, groomed, walked, played with. They need to know they are loved. With out proper care they will suffer. Families that are going threwh major changes such as a move or birth of a child or that work long hours may just not have the time.

## Is My Child Ready For A Family Pet?

### My home

Do you live in an apartment? Is a pet ok with your landlord? Will you have to pay a separate pet deposit? Do you have the space? Is there room in the back yard for a pet to roam? Are there laws in your area regarding scooping and licensing? What are they?

### My child

Is he or she ready? Owning a pet is a family matter. Never surprise your child with a pet they are not expecting. Expectations about the pet's care and exercise should be laid out clearly. Many children lose interest in a pet after the first few weeks and leave mom and dad to care for the pet. Pets require gentle handling and understanding do you think your child is ready for that? How do they react to animals you see out in public? Are they rough, or afraid? It may be better if they learn some animal care before you add a pet to your home. Visits to the local animal shelter are a wonderful start and

often the staff is willing to teach basic animal care to children.

### Remember

A pet is a huge commitment. Many pets live for at least 15 years with proper care. Will you still want this commitment then? Puppies, kittens and such are cute, but they grow and have needs that must be met.

Jennifer is a full time mother of nine children. She resides in a small fishing village on the coast of Maine. She has been married for 12 years to her best friend whom is also her loving husband. You can find many more articles like this one at

as well as parenting chat and message

forums.

### **Kids and Pets, will it work?**

**By Mariangie González**

#### **Kids and Pets, will it work? by Mariangie González**

How can my child benefit from having a pet?

1. Social skills and self-esteem. Feelings and positive experiences with their pet can help children feel good about their own. Loving a pet can also help kids to love and trust other people.
2. Exercise. All pets need to exercise, and playing with their pet is a fun way to incorporate some physical activity to your kid's lifestyle.
3. Responsibility and respect. To learn how to take care of their pet can help kids develop empathy, concern and responsibility towards other beings. On top of that, during the life cycle of the pet, parents

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have the opportunity to talk to their kids about birth, sickness and death.

4. Parent interaction. Kids and their parents can spend more time together playing and taking care of their pet.

How can my child help take care of the pet?

1. A small child can help out by feeding or providing fresh water to their pet (portions must be measured by you).

2. The child can help walking the pet, not alone of course, but just another time to spend together with your kid.

3. Children can help you in bathing and grooming the pet.

4. Assign to your child small, simple tasks that can be performed under your supervision.

How can I keep my child healthy and safe around a pet?

1. Choose your pets wisely, if you don't already own a pet, study and learn from the different breeds and species, you will find that some are specially "kid friendly".

2. Consider any allergies a family member could have, before acquiring a pet. Consult with your kid's pediatrician about any allergies that may be present.

3. Take your pet to the veterinary to a general check up before you bring it home.

\* Always supervise interaction between pets and kids.

\* Teach your child not to touch any pet, unless you say it's OK to do so.

\* Never leave pets and kids unattended. Kids tend to play rough and that could provoke an attack or harm a small pet.

\* Make sure your child stays away while the pet is eating, sleeping or taking care of its own offspring.

\* Teach your child to keep a good hygiene, not to touch the pet droppings and wash his hands after playing with the pet.

\* Treat immediately any scratch or bite caused by a pet. Consult with your child's pediatrician if the scratch or bite tears your child's skin.

Mariangie González is an Agronomist with a major in Animal Science and runs the day-to-day operations of her home-based business and website which carries natural pet care, pet aromatherapy, holistic pet health, pet toys, pet jewelry and much more. She can also help you start your own

home-based 100% natural pet supplies business, you can visit online at:

<http://www.MindBodyAndPaw.com>

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