

Be a responsible pet owner

MINI VASUDEVAN

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Summer vacation is the time when there is a perceptible interest in pet ownership largely triggered by children's desire for companionship. While getting a pet is a random act for many, only very few realise the responsibility that comes with it. Sadly, reports of abuse and abandonment of pets either due to old age or illness are on the rise. It is very important to realise the importance of responsible ownership before making the decision of bringing a pet to your home.

First and foremost, one must understand that companion animals are social beings: they need attention, interaction and love for their well being. Anything that compromises these aspects in their lives would result in serious behavioral issues. Pets are very much like children and need to be treated in the same manner – physical punishment and cruel training methods (that cause fear or pain) must not be used against them. Solitary confinement in kennels and tying them up for long periods of time are to be avoided.

The health and safety of pets need to be ensured through periodic visits to the veterinarian and keeping vaccinations current. They have to be kept well nourished, groomed, properly exercised and socialized. It is also important to remember that as an animal owner, one has responsibility towards society as well. Simple acts such as using a leash while taking your pet for walks must be followed without fail. Last but not least, one should realise that companion animals have short life spans and it is important to be there for them during the difficult journeys of their lives such as illness and old age. Senior pets need all the reassurance you can give them. Abandoning them during that time is total lack of compassion.

A well cared-for pet can provide great enjoyment, companionship and pleasure. Owning a companion animal is therefore a rewarding experience but not without the responsibilities and commitment that come with it. (For further details, email to metropetpassion@gmail.com with your city and number)

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