



Dear Educators,

The Humane Society of Charles County would like to take this chance to introduce a new Class Pet Project that we are offering to educators. If you are a teacher with a classroom full of children interested in animals you may qualify to take part in our new Class Pet Project. Any educator that is regularly in a classroom that makes the promise to be responsible, kind and take care of the needs of the animal may qualify for the program.

The Humane Society will supply the pet and the support, plus any health issues that may arise. Your classroom provides all of the pet supplies and daily care. The entire class will adopt the animal for the school year. The educator and class must promise to care for the pet even when school is not in session. This means holidays, weekends and school breaks. Once the year is over, the teacher or a student may fill out a final adoption application for a permanent home. If the teacher decides that a class pet is not the right fit for their classroom, you may return the pet to The Humane Society of Charles County at any time.

To kick off the program, the class will receive a pet care/pocket pet presentation by a Humane Educator. This will teach the children about the needs of domesticated animals and the regular responsibilities that humans must accomplish for the pet to stay healthy and happy.

Through this program the children will learn responsibility, compassion, respect, fairness and even citizenship. Not only do they consistently learn about character education, you can use the opportunity the animal brings to teach language arts skills through writing activities, math skills with overpopulation, the cost of caring activities and pet supplies, social studies skills in learning the culture in which the animal originates and its history of becoming a pet and even science when you study the animal itself.

As you can see, the benefits of a class pet are enormous. Not only will they learn what you need to teach them in a fun way, the children will form a bond and have memories of your classroom for their entire lives.

Pocket pets, such as guinea pigs, rabbits and rats are the most popular class pet because they have their own habitat and are kept safe with their cage. It is most likely that fewer children will have allergies to a pocket pet and in many ways there is less care. It is always a good idea to have the children help with the daily cleaning and care of the pet, this teaches responsibility.

If you are interested in a class pet and would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact us. I would love to discuss details and help in any way possible.

Below are some internet links to help you make the right decision for you and your classroom.

<http://www.scholastic.com/parents/resources/article/more-school-life/animals-make-good-teachers>

http://www.kids4research.org/caring_for_classroom_pets/caring_for_animals_sheets.pdf

http://www.proteacher.org/c/433_classroom_pets.html

<http://www.petsintheclassroom.org/pets-in-the-classroom-add-some-excitement-to-your-classroom-pets-environment/>

<http://www.aspca.org/pet-care/small-pet-care>

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Christine Gonzales at 240-346-6508 or cgonzales@humanesocietycc.org

Sincerely,

Christine Gonzales

Director of Humane Education
The Humane Society of Charles County

