
Benefits of Allowing Students to Bring Pets With Them to College

To most of us, pets are family and we treat them as such. We give them the love and affection they show us daily. They know when we are sad, happy, or even stressed, and always know how to make our day better. If you've grown up with a family pet, it might be hard to leave them at home when you go off to college. Becoming a college student in general is very stressful and eye-opening, especially if you go out of state. Losing one of your best friends can be a tough transition to go through when going through that milestone. Many college students go through stages of depression and anxiety and have almost no way to cope with it. Allowing students to bring pets with them to college is beneficial to them by helping them cope with stress, anxiety, depression, and loneliness.

Scientists have concluded many studies proving that animals improve your overall health and well-being. "A study of women in China found that those who were dogs owners had fewer doctor visits, took fewer days off sick from work, and exercised more often than non-dog owners" (Casciotti, Zuckerman). These results were found because pets, to a lot of owners, are like family and are treated as such. Pets always know when we are sad, happy, or scared. For example, some dogs love to greet their owners when they get home after a day of work, or cats love to purr and rub against you when they want your affection.

Studies have shown that no matter your age or disability, pets can you make you feel like you have "a sense of responsibility and purpose that contributes to their overall well-being" (Csciotti, Zuckerman). Although pets can be very loving and caring, they can also be very messy and hard to keep up with. Depending on the animal, training them can be a daunting task. Cleaning up after them and making sure they aren't getting into things they aren't supposed to is a struggle for all pet owners. This is why many parents get their kids pets when they are young. Owning a pet teaches the individual about responsibility and what it is like to own something and take great care of it. For example, learning how to teach dogs tricks, how to behave properly, not to beg, and potty train them are just a few ways they can teach you responsibility (Kaye). As child, this can develop into life long skills and help you mature quicker. As a college student, this could help you with time management and learning how to do things independently.

College teaches you how to become independent and transition from childhood to adulthood. For some, this is never easy to do. There are always some kids who come to college and aren't familiar with how to be independent and not have to rely on your parents all of the time. Many

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soon dropout due to the overwhelming stress, anxiety, and not being able to handle doing everything on their own. Students come to college and get very homesick as well. This may be the result of missing their family and pets. For most, the hardest thing to do when you leave for college is to leave your childhood pet at home.

Transitioning into adulthood can be a very stressful time in everybody's life. You have to rely on your own income to stabilize yourself and be independent on where you live and find a stable job. Studies have shown that owning a dog through early adulthood can help reduce stress and anxiety. Pet owners in the early 20's also have a higher success rate in finding a stable job with a living income (Robinson, Segal). Pets can also serve as a companion when lonely. Some can even act as an audience when reciting a big presentation or stress reliever when finals are creeping up.

Many students have tried to bring "Therapy Dogs" to college. Their reasoning is that their dogs help them reduce the stress and anxiety that many young students face daily. Some can even detect panic attacks before they happen and help calm their owner down (Martin). The number of people being diagnosed with depression and ADHD have risen dramatically over the years. The demand for Therapy Dogs have also increased in response. Depression is a growing problem in the teen/early adulthood community. Statistics have shown that students facing stress and loneliness in college are more likely to commit suicide and take their own life. One study showed how owning a pet can reduce loneliness and depression. There's a reason dogs are "Man's Best Friend" and that's because they act as a companion and show you love and affection. Their bright attitudes and soft, furry coat are proven to relieve any anxiety or depression you might have (Casciotti, Zuckerman).

College can be a very hard transition for most teens. Most come into college with a preexisting depression disorder. Starting college can be difficult since you are away from home, on your own, and self-dependent. It has been proven that having a pet can help one's mood. From being sad, lonely, and depressed, the subject immediately became happy and excited when brought a dog (Nagengast). The same was done with a cat and the results didn't vary. A study given to California University states that 86% of their students would want to bring their pet to college or would like to have a pet for college (Martin). Some colleges have even agreed to do testing and studies by allowing some students to have a pet for a certain amount of time and compare their work ethic and behavior over those weeks compared to when they did not own a pet. The results showed how students with dogs were happier and more engaged in the classroom. They did better on tests and performed academically and athletically better. Their grades went up and became more engaged in the college community. Those who didn't have a pet were more likely to go out and party and put off studying. They would also fall asleep in class, do poorly on school work, and become more secluded (Martin).

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College teaches you how to become independent and transition from childhood to adulthood. For some, this is never easy to do. There are always some kids who come to college and aren't familiar with how to be independent and not have to rely on your parents all of the time. Many soon dropout due to the overwhelming stress, anxiety, and not being able to handle doing everything on their own. Students come to college and get very homesick as well. This may be the result of missing their family and pets. For most, the hardest thing to do when you leave for college is to leave your childhood pet at home.

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When going to college it can be very beneficial to have a pet to bring with you. They help in many ways. They teach you responsibility, improve your mood, and help fight against depression, stress, and anxiety. It is clinically proven that owning a pet can dramatically improve your overall well-being. This can be crucial to a student during a tough time in their life. Having a

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pet can also decrease student suicides and even student dropout rate. Bringing pets to college will be very beneficial to the students and should be allowed in more colleges and universities.

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