

PETS – GOOD FOR CHILDREN’S HEALTH?



CODE 137

Fertigkeit	Lesen
Relevante(r) Deskriptor(en)	Deskriptor 4: Kann einfachen Texten zu vertrauten Themen in Zeitungen und Zeitschriften die wesentlichen Informationen entnehmen, wenn sie klar gegliedert und gegebenenfalls mit Bildmaterial ausgestattet sind. (B1)
Themenbereich(e)	Körper und Gesundheit
Zeitbedarf	15 Minuten
Länge des Lesetextes	447 Wörter
Material- und Medienbedarf	Schreibmaterial
Besondere Bemerkungen, Hinweise zur Durchführung	---
Quelle	---

UNTERLAGE FÜR SCHÜLERINNEN



PETS – GOOD FOR CHILDREN'S HEALTH?

Read the text about keeping pets.

Then tick (✓) the correct answers to the five sentences on your task sheet.

The underlined words are explained at the bottom of the page.

Children who have pet animals at home have stronger immune systems and do not become ill as easily as others, a study says. Scientists at Warwick University have found that having a cat or dog means more infections early in life for children. This has a positive effect on their immune systems and means these children are on the whole healthier. Pet owning children were found to have an extra nine days at school over the course of a school year compared to¹ those without animals as they were ill less often.

If this is really true it proves a theory that specialists have been discussing for quite some time, namely that too much cleanliness early in life can leave the immune system weak later on. For some doctors this also explains why the number of young children who suffer from² asthma has risen dramatically in the last twenty years. But Dr. McNicholas, a health psychologist who helped to produce the study also warned that keeping pets can mean health risks for children. 30% of the children who were interviewed said that they often allowed pets to eat food from their plates and that they allowed their pets to lick their fingers without washing them later.

Another very different danger to the health of children is that more and more of them are attacked by animals kept as pets. For example, a four-year-old girl from Barnsley was taken to hospital after her neighbour's Rottweiler dog had bitten her and thrown her against a wall when she was playing in her garden. Her father told newspaper reporters that the law was not strict enough and that such things should never be allowed to happen.

Animal rights activists³ in Britain have also called on the government to work on stricter controls on who is allowed to keep dangerous wild animals as pets. One reason for this was that in October 2001 a six-foot boa snake was found in an empty flat in Merthyr Tydfil, south Wales. The aggressive and underweight snake, which lives in South and Central America, had escaped from a nearby flat while the owner was away on holiday. Some weeks before inspectors found a two-and-a-half foot caiman – a member of the crocodile family – in a pool in south-east Wales where its former owner had set it free.

Animal Rights activist Kate Davies says: "Exotic animals do not make suitable pets because of their special needs. We feel that snakes such as large boas and pythons, which can kill or harm a child, should be added to the list of animals that cannot be kept as pets. She warned that "we cannot wait for a tragedy to happen."

Vocabulary:


1 - compared to – *verglichen mit*

2 - suffer from – *leiden an*

3 - animal rights activist – *Tierschützer*



The text says that

-  (1) Children with pets at home
- ☐ are ill more often than kids without pets
 - ☐ are ill as often as kids without pets
 - ☐ are ill less often than kids without pets
 - ☐ miss school more often than kids without pets
- (2) Some doctors think that kids have asthma because
- ☐ pets are a health risk
 - ☐ they allow pets to lick their hands
 - ☐ their parents kept their home too clean when they were very young
 - ☐ they were born with a weak immune system
- (3) A little girl was attacked by a dog because
- ☐ she wanted to play with it
 - ☐ the dog had run away from its home
 - ☐ the girl was playing in the dog's garden
 - ☐ Rottweilers are aggressive dogs
- (4) It is a problem that exotic animals
- ☐ are not looked after carefully enough by their owners
 - ☐ might attack swimmers in pools
 - ☐ are too aggressive to be kept as pets
 - ☐ cannot be taken on holiday by their owners
- (5) Animals rights activists say that keeping large snakes
- ☐ is a tragedy for the animals
 - ☐ should only be allowed in large houses
 - ☐ should not be allowed at all
 - ☐ is easy if you know about their needs



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