



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 13, 2020

Contact: Jamie Baxter
The Impetus Agency
jamie@theimpetusagency.com
Cell: 775-412-7278

Pet Partners Launches Worldwide Read with Pets Project Encouraging Reading at Home to Pets

Introducing We Are All Ears, a new initiative fostering youth literacy

(Bellevue, WA) During this time of social isolation and distance learning, Pet Partners, the nation's leading organization registering therapy animals for animal-assisted interventions, is encouraging families and children to read to their pets through their new initiative: We Are All Ears, A Worldwide Read with Pets Project. With Pet Partners' registered volunteer therapy animal teams across the country unable to conduct their regular therapy animal visits, the organization is promoting an already-proven animal-assisted interaction based on their Read With Me initiative: children reading to animals.

“Reading to pets is an amazing way to get children excited about reading when they can’t be in school,” said Annie Peters, President and CEO of Pet Partners. “Children who are learning to read are often hesitant about their reading abilities. Many kids feel more at ease reading to pets, who are simply there to listen – not to judge how well they are reading.”

With communities across the country experiencing educational disruptions, and parents educating their children at home, Pet Partners is excited to introduce this new program designed to bring the power of the human-animal bond to at-home learning.

When a family takes the pledge to read at home to their pets, they can determine a reading goal that is right for them, whether it is to read a certain number of books, pages, chapters, or minutes. Pet Partners has put together some great resources to support families as they participate in We Are All Ears including a [reading log](#), [bookmark templates](#), and a special [BINGO card](#), all to help encourage regular reading. A [Certificate of Completion](#) is also available for parents to present to

their child and pets upon reaching their goals. There is also an official [We Are All Ears T-shirt](#) for sale, with proceeds benefiting Pet Partners.

Reading to an animal can significantly impact student reading rates. Research shows when reading to pets, children achieve higher end-of-year reading scores, and improve reading rates, accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. They also are better able to stay on task when a furry, feathered, or scaled companion is involved.

How: Tips on reading successfully to your pet

- Set up a comfortable spot for the reader and pet to sit.
- Make sure the reader will be able to show the pet pictures from the book.
- Pets can get distracted, so have a favorite pet toy on hand to keep the pet engaged if needed.
- Encourage your child to pause and pet your animal to keep them settled down and comfortable during the reading session.
- Reward your pet for their good listening behavior with a treat at the end of the reading session!
- Share photos and videos online using #WeAreAllEars #PetPartners

*** Interviews welcome ***

###

Pet Partners is the national leader in demonstrating and promoting the health and wellness benefits of animal-assisted therapy, activities, and education. Since the organization's inception in 1977, the science proving these benefits has become indisputable. With more than 13,000 registered teams making more than 3 million visits annually, Pet Partners serves as the nation's most prestigious nonprofit registering handlers of multiple species as volunteer teams. Pet Partners teams visit with patients in recovery, people with intellectual disabilities, seniors living with Alzheimer's, students, veterans with PTSD, and those approaching end of life, improving human health and well-being through the human-animal bond. With the recent release of its Standards of Practice for Animal-Assisted Interventions and international expansion, Pet Partners is globally recognized as the industry gold standard. For more information on Pet Partners, visit petpartners.org.