



AccessEAP<sup>®</sup>

People in Focus



**5 WAYS**  
**PETS CAN BOOST**  
**YOUR WELLBEING**

# 5 WAYS PETS CAN BOOST YOUR WELLBEING

**Pet Power.** If you are an animal person, you are likely to already know that pets can boost your physical and mental health. There are some solid reasons for this.

- 1. Pets help you to relax.** Pets can promote relaxation and mindfulness. You can get lost in the activity of watching their antics. Cats and dogs with balls, fish swimming, birds splashing in their water bowl. Research shows that just patting a pet can ease stress and reduce blood pressure.
- 2. Pets provide company.** Pets are very good listeners, and unless you have trained your parrot to talk, they generally don't talk back! They can be accepting, loyal, affectionate and even intuitive, knowing when you need them by your side. Pets can also help feelings of loneliness.
- 3. Pets for purpose.** Owning and looking after a pet can provide you with a

sense of purpose, which helps improve mental health conditions like anxiety and depression. The responsibility of ensuring they are well and healthy is an important part of this and can motivate us to do our best for our pets.

- 4. Pets help you to be social.** Well trained pets can be a great way to meet and socialise with people. You can join a club or attend pet shows and take pet ownership to the next level! Having a shared interest is a great way to start a conversation and maintain a relationship.

Pets can also help people who have anxiety around meeting new people and are great icebreakers and confidence boosters.

- 5. Pets improve your general fitness.** Particularly for dog owners where you can both benefit from regular walks. Physical activity provides a natural mental health and wellbeing lift for dog and owner.

Pets require care and commitment. There are expenses associated with pet ownership that vary greatly depending on the pet. Different lifestyles are more or less suited to different pets, so it's important to choose the right pet for you. For many years my family dog had the perfect situation where we would all leave for work and school, and our dog would pop next door and enjoy walks and sitting on the lap of an elderly neighbour. Dog share was a win-win-win!

If you don't own a pet, reach out to a loved one who does own a pet or explore your local neighbourhood parks to see pets roaming.

AccessEAP is our EAP provider and can help connect you with clinical experts who can help you support your mental health and wellbeing.

**For more information or assistance, contact AccessEAP on 1800 818 728.**

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