



PETS FOR CHILDREN

Owning and caring for a pet can be one of the most rewarding things we can do, especially for children. It can, amongst other things teach them respect for nature and considerate behaviour towards other living creatures.

Being involved in the day to day tasks of perhaps looking after a rabbit or guinea pig or even the family dog can give children a tremendous sense of self esteem and achievement.

Children need encouragement in all sorts of area and animal welfare should definitely be one of them. It must be said however, that animals are not a substitute for toys.

A LOAD OF RUBBISH

Cut through the plastic rings that hold together a four pack of beer or lager before you put them in the bin. When all rubbish is dumped on a tip these plastic rings are potentially dangerous to birds who can strangle themselves whilst looking for scraps of food.

ASSISTING INJURED ANIMALS

An injured animal needs to be approached calmly and quietly and it would be of benefit to let him see or hear you approaching so as not to subject him to any more shock by being suddenly handled. Keep your movements towards him calm and steady but confident as this will be passed onto the animal. Talk to him in a quiet and sympathetic voice avoiding shouting or crying out. A nervous animal may respond better if you crouch down, talking reassuringly to him before slowly approaching, but a seriously injured animal is unlikely to be aware or concerned about your presence. If the animal appears vicious, for example growling, snarling or hissing, caution is advised.

A pair of thick gloves to protect the hands is a good idea and a blanket to restrain and secure the animal, but remember he has to breathe.

On successful approach, reach out to the animal with a clenched fist rather than outstretched fingers and then try to gain his confidence by gently stroking him.

If you need to move a less seriously injured animal, if possible secure him by taking hold of the scruff of the neck. If he escapes, your first attempt

will probably be your last, so try to get hold of as much skin in your grasp as possible. If possible try to secure the animal with a slip-lead. A more

seriously injured animal may need to be moved onto a makeshift stretcher, for example a dog who has been in a road traffic accident. An old coat or blanket placed behind the animal can be used. Move him backwards with legs trailing onto the stretcher rather than forwards as this will reduce any further injuries and try to keep the position straight. If you suspect serious spinal or head injuries place him on an ironing board (if available) as this will fit on the back seat of the car for travelling to the vets, or a piece of board for smaller dog.

ALWAYS SEEK PROMPT VETERINARY ATTENTION.