Selecting the Right Pet for You

Pets bring a joy to your family that is unmeasurable. They are known to lower blood pressure, reduce stress, and provide companionship. Selecting the right pet for your family is easy to do when you first consider the following…

What type of pet is best? There are many different types of pets out there like rodents, rabbits, cats, and dogs (just to name a few). They all need daily exercise, mental stimulation, and human interaction but they don't all require the same amount of time and energy. When selecting the type of pet, consider how much time and energy you have to provide.

What breed is best? When selecting a cat or dog, it is important to remember that there are many different breeds out there that have specific characteristics to them, for instance retrievers like to have things in their mouths; terriers like to dig; and Siamese-type cats tend to be very talkative. We recommend doing your research about different breeds before selecting one.

What age is best? A pet of any age can bond with the people who love and care for them, giving as much to the relationship as they receive in return. However the age of your new pet will determine how much time and energy is needed. For instance a kitten or puppy (less than 1 year old) requires a lot of time, patience, and supervision. While adults require less time and attention once they've adjusted to your family and household routine. They are also often already house broken or litter box trained.

The following questions may also help you decide the type, breed, and age of your new pet.
1. **Will this pet be a companion to another pet?** Depending on the type of pet you already have, will help you determine what type of pet is the best companion. Rodents and rabbits do will with other rodents and rabbits, but could be easily injured by cats and dogs. Also if you already have a dog, but want a cat, remember that some breeds of dogs are more likely to chase cats. Finally age is something to consider. An older animal for instance may not do well with a high energy kitten or puppy.

2. **Are there any children in the home? How many? How old?** Living with a pet can be beneficial to a child. Pets enhance their self-esteem, teach them responsibility, and help them learn empathy. Rats for instance, can make good first time pets for children. However, if you have young children, remember that no matter what type of pet you decide on, they all need to be supervised when with your children.