

# ANIMAL-ASSISTED THERAPY RESEARCH

## PHYSICAL BENEFITS



- Animal-Assisted Therapy helps release endorphins that manipulate perceptions of pain and stress
- Petting a dog can be relaxing, which is measured by a slower heart rate and a drop in blood pressure
- Playing with animals emits important hormones and neurotransmitters in the brain that promote proper body function and rebuild strength
- Owning a dog can help reduce the risk of asthma
- Dog owners are more likely to survive heart attacks than non-pet owners
- The presence of a dog can ease the effects of Alzheimer's disease
- People with dogs have been found to have lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels when compared to people who do not

## EMOTIONAL BENEFITS



- Animal-Assisted Therapy increases the body's level of oxytocin, which boost happiness, improves empathy and promotes a happier life
- Animal companionship can lower the level of cortisol, a hormone associated with stress, in the body and increase serotonin, a chemical associated with well-being
- Elderly people with dogs are better able than non-pet-owning elderly people to cope with daily activities
- A bond between a pet and human is one of unconditional love, which can teach and support feelings of self worth and value, especially in children
- For those who may feel like detaching from normal social activity, Animal-Assisted Therapy can relieve feelings of social isolation
- Especially in children, Animal-Assisted Therapy is a great way to release excess energy for better concentration
- Children who have dogs tend to be more self-reliant, sociable, and less selfish than children without pets
- Owning a dog gives isolated people a routine, a sense of purpose, and a sense of fulfillment that helps prevent depression and loneliness