



PRESS RELEASE

“Pet ownership continues to increase”

Dog psychologist Martin Rütter on the rising number of pets

Krefeld, Germany, April 20th, 2009 – The worse the news, the more people appear to retreat to their homes in search of stability, warmth and comfort as a positive contrast to the threatening world outside. British market researcher Faith Popcorn coined the phrase “cocooning” to describe this trend of returning to the home in 1981.

“Whatever the buzzwords or trends, you cannot deny the fact that many people in our society lack empathy and interpersonal contact – across all levels of society,” explains dog psychologist Martin Rütter. Technisation and anonymisation creates a lack of human interaction and sense of security. Add to this crises and disappointments and people retreat and look for an equaliser – and many find this in pets. German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer cut straight to the heart of the matter when he said, “Since I met people, I love animals”. A pet doesn't ask if someone is rich or poor, whether they are successful or whether they have lost their job. They are reliable, always there and create a dependable and uncomplicated world where the owner can feel at ease. “This is clearly observable in dog owners. In contrast to most other pet owners, they go for walks with their animal and are visible in public around town and in dog parks. They show how important their pet is to them through how they relate to them. Pets have taken on an important social role and fulfil an important function, which is why more and more people keep animals and are prepared to invest money in them,” says Rütter.

Pet owners can be classified in the following groups:

Double income no kids: This group is generally not yet ready for a child and “practices” with a dog.

Families with children: This group sees their idyll complete with the addition of a dog. First pets can also be rodents such as hamsters or rabbits.

Just retired: This group has more time for themselves and want to spend a large part of this outside and in an active manner. They quickly recognise dogs as a motivation for daily exercise and as a door-opener to meeting people.

75+ retirees: It is no longer common for people to maintain active, intensive contact with the elderly and pets are often the only company for this group. They often gain a new lease of life through keeping a cat.

Further information:

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