



**PEP! Talk is supposed to be fun!  
Be sure to have fun while delivering this educational message!  
Here are some tips to make the most of your PEP! Talk:**

-Before starting, always ask permission if photos are allowed. If not, ask if there are some kids that are ok to photograph. (This is usually never a problem. They will usually pull kids aside who don't have photo releases).

-Ask how much time you have. (30 minutes goes by quick, but 45 minutes is ideal!)

-Kids love it when you are animated. Smile and laugh a lot. And move around. No need to feel embarrassed! Kids will get excited for animals if you are!

-Don't let kids speak out of turn cause they will take up a lot of time. They always have tons of stories. Ask them to share them at the end!

-Tell kids and teachers about our Happy Tails Magazine, PEP! Squad Book, youtube, and musical.ly channel. Also ask about getting the book into their library or book fair!

-Feel free to paraphrase or cut down material if you are running short on time!

-If you have access to a PA System, feel free to play fun animal music or our theme song as the kids are walking into the room. Clap your hands and have the crowd clap. Play the music until everyone is seated. If you have PEP! Ears to hand out, get the teachers to help.

-If you want to go into more detail or add to the PEP! Talk, use discretion. Please contact Erica Falbaum [erica@peteducationproject.org](mailto:erica@peteducationproject.org) if you are unsure of adding material.

**PEP! Talk strictly covers pets. We are not an animal rights group.  
Under no circumstances should the following be mentioned during PEP! Talks.**

-Vegetarianism/ Veganism

-Animal exploitation: Factory farms, fur farming, animal testing, etc.

**Topics that are ok if time allowed and depending on age group:**

-Dog Fighting

-Puppy Mills

-TNR

-Feral Cats

-Adopting senior pets

-(There are lots of acceptable subjects, but just confirm with Erica ahead of time)

-Offer to host a coloring contest or essay contest to help develop the relationship with the school.

-After the PEP! Talk mail a thank you card or give a small thank you gift to the teacher. Candy in a goody bag is always appreciated. The teachers love chocolate.

**ALWAYS HAVE FUN! KIDS WILL SAY AND ASK THE DARNDDEST THINGS! SO GET READY!**



# The 5 Steps to a Happy and Healthy Pet

## Introduction:

Hello boys and girls! My name is..... And I'm an animal hero! PEP! The Pet Education Project and (your business/ rescue/ shelter) sent me here to your school on a special mission to recruit Junior Animal Heroes for my PEP! Squad!

**Engaging the Audience: (Have them shout out these answers to get them focused)**

My first question for you is:

Q: Do you want to be an animal hero?! Raise your paw up if you do!

So today I will tell you how!

Q: Does anyone know what an animal shelter is?

A: An animal shelter is a place where homeless cats and dogs go to find a home. Have you ever seen a stray animal or an animal on the side of the road? The animal shelter will take in these pets and keep them till they find a happy family!

Introduce your rescue/ business (if one): At we take in homeless pets who need a home!

(This is a good time for you to tell the kids more about your rescue).

Q: Do you think it's sad that some animals have a home and some don't?

A: It is!

Q: How many of you have pets? Raise your paw if you do!

Q: Who is your pet's best friend?

A: You are! Your pets love you so much that they want to be your best friend!

And our 4 legged friends have feelings just like you!

Let me ask you this!

Q: Do you get hungry?

Q: Do you think your pets get hungry?

Q: Do you feel hot or cold sometimes?

Q: Do you think your pets feel hot or cold?

Q: Do you get lonely or bored?

Q: Do you think your pets get lonely or bored?

A: Our pets have feelings just like you! And they can't text or call you (or play on musical.ly) when they want to play.

Q: What are you supposed to do to be sure your pet doesn't get bored?

A: Play with them everyday!

Q: So if you are your pet's best friend, then whose responsibility is it to care for your them?

Q: Is it your mom and dads?

A: No! It's yours!!

### **Mission:**

So today we are here to teach you to care for your pets so we are going to break it down into 5 Simple Steps! Raise your paws up if you want to be an Animal Hero!

*(Raise your hand up)*

### **Rules:**

-Please be quiet from now on! If I put my cat ears up then that means you are too loud!

*(Cat ears is your index and middle finger together pointed up by the top of your head)*

-Let's try putting on your cat ears. (Have the audience practice cat ears)

-If you are good then we have some special treats for you!

-Please save your questions till the end and we will answer you then!

-Put your cat ears up if you got it!

Ok here we go! Raise your paw up!

### **Step 1: Food!**

Q: What do you feed your pets?

A: Dogs eat dog food and cats eat cat food.

Q: Are our pets supposed to eat people food?

A: No! Some people foods can make your pets very sick!

Q: Does anyone know of a food that can harm your pet?

A: Chocolate, Grapes, Raisins.

Q: What about bones? Can dogs have bones from your dinner plate?

A: No! Bones like chicken bones can hurt your pet. Bones can splinter and choke your pet!

Q: Do you want to know what will make your pet love you even more?

A: By filling up their food bowls! They love the person who feeds them!

### **Step 2: Water!** *(Paw up with 2 fingers)*

Our pets need fresh water to drink!

Q: Can your pet fill up their own water bowl?

A: No!

Q: Who is supposed to do it for them?

A: You are!

Let's see how smart you are!

Q: What happens to water in the Summer?

A: It evaporates and turns green!

Q: How many of you would like to drink out of a dirty water bowl?

A: Gross! Not me!

Q: What happens to water in the Winter?

A: It freezes! Our pets can't drink a popsicle!

It's good to fill your pet's bowls up at least 2 times a day! So I challenge you to fill it up in the morning before school and in the afternoon after school!

### **Step 3: Shelter!**

Our pets need a place to call their own! It's important for a pet to have a space. This helps with training your pet too!

Q: Where do you sleep?

(Kids will shout an answer, their bed)

Q: Do you sleep under a tree?

Q: Do you sleep outside chained up?

A: No!

Our pets don't want to live chained to a tree either!

Q: Do you think our pets like to live outside all the time?

A: No!

Q: Do you think people should have pets if they will leave them outside all day and night?

A: Probably not!

Some people have indoor pets and some people have outdoor pets. If your pet is outdoors be sure your pets have adequate shelter to protect them from the weather! Your pet doesn't want to be out in the rain, cold, or heat! So here are some things you can do to protect your pet if they live outdoors!

-Give them an outdoor house! Fill it with straw or blankets to keep them warm!

-Give them a bath and bring them indoors when the weather is bad outside.

-Check on them everyday.

Your home is also your pet's home!

Q: What happens if your pet goes missing? How can we be sure they are found?

A: Be sure they have a collar and tags with contact information in case they get lost! Remember, our pets can't talk. So if they go missing, then their name tag will tell the person who found them where they live!

Microchipping is important too! Microchips are the size of a grain of rice! And they put it in the back of their neck. If your pet goes missing then any vet or animal shelter can scan them to find their family!

Let me tell you a story about microchipping. There once was a dog that was found and it didn't have a collar or tags! So they took him to the animal shelter to be scanned for a microchip! Guess where he was from?! Mexico City! Because of the microchip, he was able to go home to his family!

Q: So a collar, tags, and microchip can help you find your lost pet! But where do they end up if they don't have those?

A: The animal shelter!

Animal shelters are places where animals go who don't have a home. They stay at the shelter until a nice family can adopt them!

But sadly, animal shelters are often full and crowded because there are so many more pets than people to take them in.

Q: Can anyone guess how many animals go to the animal shelter everyday?

### **Tower Game:**

*Hold the tower and walk around the room so all the kids can see the animals inside. Take a look at this tower. It's filled with lots of tiny cats and dogs! Can you guess how many are in here?!*

*Let kids guess. You can give a hint to go under 500.*

*Announce the answer: There are 439 cats and dogs in here.*

*Young kids: (3rd grade and under) This is the number of cats and dogs that go to the animal shelter each day in (your state) and never leave.*

*Older kids: (Usually 4th grade and up, use discretion!) This is the number of cats and dogs that are put to sleep each day in your state!*

*Give winner of who guessed the closest a prize.*

There so many homeless pets and pets in shelters because there are not enough families to adopt them!

So today, I'm going to tell you about a way to stop pets from becoming homeless! Does that sound good?

The first thing is you can adopt! If you want to be a hero, adopt from an animal shelter!

Q: Raise your paw if you have ever adopted from an animal shelter! Good job!

Everyone around them give them high fives!

When you adopt a pet you are saving 2 lives! The one that you adopted and the other one that will take it's place!

Ok so you may want a pure bred dog and not a mutt. Pure bred dogs are weenie dogs, boxers, poodles.....etc. Can anyone else think of a pure bred dog?

Did you know that you can find a pure bred at the shelter?! In fact, 1 in 4 animals that go to the shelter are pure bred!

(This is also another good time for you to talk more about your rescue, about any purebreds that have come in)

Back to the tower! *(Hold the tower up again.)*

But want to know how you can help even more animals?!

Let's move on to our next step and I'll tell you how!

#### **Step 4: Care**

Care is important for you to know!

Q: Where do you take your pets when they are hurt or sick?

A: The Vet!

There are lots of things your vet can do to care for your pet! Like they prevent your pets from getting fleas and ticks! Yuck!



They also give your pets shots!

But there is also something else that your vet does for your pet! And it's one of the most important things to do for your pet! In fact, did you know when you get this done for your pet you become the world's biggest animal hero?! Do you want to know what it is?

Well, have you ever heard of getting your pets fixed?

It's a simple surgery that your vet does to stop your pets from having babies! It's called Spay and Neuter! That's a really weird word huh?!

It's important that your pet doesn't have babies because did you know that your pets can have up to 16 babies a year! Wow! And what is sad is that there are more animals than homes!

Yes, puppies and kittens are cute, but it's not cute when you have to scoop 16 litter boxes! Or fill up 16 bowls a day with food!

Now everyone close their eyes and imagine you have 16 pets to take care of each day! You are tired cause you have to wake up early every morning to take care of them, feed them, and play with them and you have to clean up all that poop too! Gross! Now imagine that one day you woke up and all those 16 babies you had, each had 16 babies! That would be 256 pets!

That's a ton of food and water bowls to fill, a ton of vet bills to pay! That sounds like a lot of work! I can't take care of that many animals can you? NO!

Q: Does anyone remember how many babies your pet can have in a year?

16 pets in 1 year is a lot! So it's important for our pets to be Spayed and Neutered so they won't have babies. (Hold the sign up).

Today we want to be sure you remember those words! So let's play a game.

### **Spay and Neuter Games:**

#### **Shout Game:**

*(It's best to play this when they are in the gym or auditorium. If you are in a classroom, you may disturb the classes around you).*

*Split the room into 2 groups down the middle. And assign one half of the room to 'Spay' and have the other do 'Neuter'.*

*Have the kids shout their word when you point to the sign or their side of the room.*

*The loudest group wins.*

### **Classroom Game:**

*Have the class say Spay and Neuter. The object of the game is to have them tongue tied, but to have them remember and repeat the words. You will hold either the 'spay' or 'neuter' and they have to repeat the other one to you. Keep holding up the signs faster and faster to try to get them confused and tongue tied.*

*Tell them that you will either say Spay or Neuter over and over again. And they need to say the other word. Example:*

*You hold up: Spay*

*They say: Neuter*

*You hold up: Neuter*

*They say: Spay*

*Tell them good job.*

*And ask them one more time how do they prevent their pets from having babies!*

Let's talk some more about what our vets can do for our pets to keep them happy and healthy!

Our pets need shots just like you! This is to prevent from diseases like rabies!

Our pets should visit a vet once a year! Our pets can't always tell us if something is wrong, so that is why it's important to have a professional look at your pet!

A healthy pet can live to be 10, 15, or even 20 years old! Wouldn't that be great to have your pet for so long?!

Q: Because our pets have fur, what can happen to make them itch? (Motion scratching yourself)

A: They can catch fleas and ticks! Yuck!

Your vet will give you flea medicine to prevent them from biting your pet! Frequent baths, brushing, and grooming is important to keep your pets clean and happy! And you happy too!

Anyone ever smelled a stinky dog? Yuck!  
Give them a bath to keep them clean!

You know what is grosser than a stinky dog? Worms!

Q: Did you know your pets can get worms?

A: Yes! Gross! They can get worms in their tummy and in their heart!

Worms can live in your pets hearts! They are called Heartworms!  
Heartworms is a disease that your pet can catch where worms grow and live inside their heart! Heartworms is bad!

Can you repeat after me?  
“Heartworms is bad!”

*(Show them the heartworm picture)*

Do you see all these worms, they look like spaghetti that lives in your heart!

Q: Does anyone know how their pets can catch heartworms?

A: They actually catch them from a bug! *(Keep hinting until they get it)*

A: Mosquitoes! *(Pull out your stuffed mosquito and throw it into the audience, they will scream!)*

Heartworms is scary! So it's important for your pets to be on a heartworm preventative!  
Let's see how well you listen!  
Any time I say heartworm preventative you say it after me! Repeat after me!  
“Heartworm Preventative”.

Say it a couple of times to get them ready.

It's easy for your pets to catch heartworms so we will show you how!

**Game/ Demonstration:**

I need 3 volunteers to come up!

*(1- Hand each volunteer a dog jacket to put on, and hand 1 of them a heartworm and another the box of heartworm preventative, 1 kid should be empty handed at this point.)*

*2- Introduce each 'pup' by having the one holding a heartworm as a sick pup. "First up is our sick pup (Dog #1) , he/ she has heartworms! Give me a cough like you are sick. Second (Dog #2), we have a healthy, happy pup not on heartworm prevention. Have this healthy pup 'wag it's tail' by shaking their hips and giving a chipper 'woof' to show they are happy. Last up, we have another healthy pup (Dog #3) that is on heartworm prevention (You can say "What is this pup on? And have them yell "Heartworm prevention".) This pup also barks and shakes his hips to show that he is happy and healthy!*

*3- Introduce Mickey Mosquito and mention that he is very hungry!*

*4- Mickey Mosquito is looking for something to eat. Fly around the audience with the mosquito in your hand making a buzzing noise! (The kids should be squeeling and trying to get away!)*

*5- Announce that Mickey Mosquito has finally found his dinner and lands on sick pup #1. Touch Mickey Mosquito to sick pup to pretend he is drinking. You can even make gulping sound fx.*

*6- Announce that Mickey Mosquito is done drinking blood from sick dog and flies around and moves onto dog not on heartworm preventative.*

*Ask the kids what will happen to this pup since Mickey Mosquito bit him.*

*Answer: He will get heartworms cause he is not on heartworm preventative! (Let them shout heartworm preventative).*

*7- Mickey Mosquito is still hungry and flies to get a snack with Dog #3.*

*Q: Do you think Dog #3 will get heartworms since he is on heartworm prevention? (Let them shout heartworm prevention).*

*A: No!*

*Your pet needs to take a heartworm pill once a month to be protected!*

*How many times a year is that?*

*(You can go through the months 1 by 1 if you have time)*

*Q: What do you give your pet once a month to prevent them from getting heartworms?*

*A: (Have them shout it one last time!) Heartworm preventative!*

*Give these pups a round of applause! Have the kids return back to their seats and hand them a prize.*

So we have 1 more Step left. Let's go through the 5 Steps one more time!

1- Food

2- Water

3- Shelter

4- Care

And the last one is: LOVE!

Step 5: Love

Show your pets you love them everyday!

Q: How do you show your pet you love them?

A: I'll start! I can give my pet a tummy rub. And I can show them I love them by keeping them forever!

If a small group:

Hand the 'Love' Heart and have them pass it around while sharing who they can make their pets happy and show them they love them.

Large Group:

Ask kids to raise their hand to share how they can show they love their pets.

Have the kids go through the 5 steps 1 more time.

1- Food

2- Water

3- Shelter

4- Care

5- Love

Quiz:

- Who knows the 5 steps?
- Who knows a food that is bad for your pet?
- What can you put in your pet's shelter to keep them warm in the winter?
- Where do you take your pet when they are hurt or sick?
- What do you give your pet to prevent against heartworms?
- How do you prevent your pets from having unwanted kittens and puppies?
- Where is the first place you should look when looking for a new pet?
- Whose responsibility is it to care for your pet?

## **Pet Meet and Greet**

Introduce your therapy pet or puppy to the kids. And share their story.  
Teach them about animal safety. Do not let the kids touch the animal until they learn how to safely approach an animal!

- 1-Ask a grown up for permission.
- 2-Ask the owner if you can pet the dog.
- 3-Show the kids to make a light fist with fingers curled under.  
*(Tell them not to lunge quickly at the dog, otherwise it will look like they are going to punch it. And Tell them not let a dog smell an open hand in case it bites).*
- 4-Show them to let the dog sniff your hand first. Tell them it's like a handshake.
- 5-Tell the kids to pet the dog on the head or ask the owner where the dog likes to be petted.
- 6-Tell the kids to never lay on top of animals, or pull or tug on them, cause they may hurt them and cause the animal to bite.

## **Q&A**

Let the kids ask any questions.

Have all the kids pet the dog on the way out. Hand out stickers and goodies to the kids on the way out the door.

