

New Survey Finds that 85 Percent of Cat Owners Experience Therapeutic Benefits from Their Cat

Purina® Cat Chow® and Pet Partners team up to promote therapy cats and encourage the training and registration of therapy cat teams

ST. LOUIS, Sept. 17, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- Purina Cat Chow knows the power that special moments with your cat can provide, which is why the brand is on a mission to support the care and training of therapy cat teams. Purina Cat Chow is teaming up with Pet Partners, a national nonprofit known for its therapy animal program, to help increase awareness and advocacy for the therapeutic benefits of cats. To help fund the training and registration of therapy cat teams, Purina Cat Chow is donating \$30,000 to Pet Partners.

According to a recent survey conducted by Purina Cat Chow, 85 percent of cat owners agree that they have had therapeutic benefits from their cats and that becoming a cat owner has improved their quality of life (86 percent). While three-fourths of cat owners agree that society does not understand the benefits of having a cat, nearly all (94 percent) agree that many people can benefit from spending time with cats.

Purina Cat Chow recognizes the benefits of cats as therapy animals and like Pet Partners wants to improve health and well-being through the human-animal bond, a mutually beneficial relationship that improves the physical, social, and emotional lives of both animals and people who interact with them regularly.

"While most people tend to associate therapy animals with dogs, cats also provide a variety of mental and physiological benefits," said Dr. Annie Valuska, Ph.D., senior pet behavior expert at Purina Cat Chow. "Cat owners often have lower stress levels than non-pet owners, which can improve blood pressure and cardiovascular health over time. Cats can also boost our mental health, decreasing feelings of loneliness and increasing a sense of purpose."

Purina Cat Chow's recent survey confirmed that while most (94 percent) pet owners associate dogs with animal-assisted therapy, only 41 percent of pet owners associate cats with therapy animals. However, more people, especially cat owners, understand the special benefits cats provide, with 72 percent of cat owners believing cats could be effective therapy partners and 60 percent interested in learning more about how their cat could potentially improve others' lives.

Cats of all kinds can become great therapy animals. Take Tommy the blind cat for example. Even after losing his sight, the eight-year-old tabby passed his therapy pet evaluation with excellence. Now, as a registered therapy cat with Pet Partners, he loves helping people of all ages with his handler, Christy Santoro.

"For pet owners seeking to keep their therapy cats healthy and prepared to serve their communities, it is important to ensure their cats receive balanced nutrition, like that found in Purina Cat Chow, in addition to plenty of rest between visits. It's also key for owners to keep the bond strong with their cats, prioritizing time for play and affection," adds Valuska.

As people spend more time at home with their cats, Purina Cat Chow and Pet Partners encourage cat owners to learn how to become a therapy animal team with your cat. Thanks in part to Purina Cat Chow's donation, Pet Partners is offering online training courses and discounted registration of therapy cat teams.

Cats and cat owners can give back without even having to leave their homes. Together, Cat Chow and Pet Partners are working to enhance the well-being of local communities with the help of cats.

To learn more about registering you and your cat to become a therapy animal team visit [www.petpartners.org/catchow](http://www.petpartners.org/catchow).

### **About Nestlé Purina PetCare**

Nestlé Purina PetCare creates richer lives for pets and the people who love them. Founded in 1894, Purina has helped dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives by offering scientifically based nutritional innovations. Purina manufactures some of the world's most trusted and popular pet care products, including Purina ONE, Pro Plan, Fancy Feast and Tidy Cats. Our more than 8,000 U.S. associates take pride in our trusted pet food, treat and litter brands that feed 49 million dogs and 66 million cats every year. More than 500 Purina scientists, veterinarians, and pet care experts ensure our commitment to unsurpassed quality and nutrition.

Purina promotes responsible pet care through our scientific research, our products and our support for pet-related organizations. Over the past five years, Purina has contributed more than \$150 million towards organizations that bring, and keep, people and pets together, as well as those that help our communities and environment thrive.

Purina is part of Nestlé, a global leader in Nutrition, Health and Wellness. For more information, visit [purina.com](http://purina.com) or [subscribe here](#) to get the latest Purina news.

### **About Pet Partners**

Pet Partners is the national leader in demonstrating and promoting the health and wellness benefits of animal-assisted interventions. Since the organization's inception in 1977, the science proving these benefits has become indisputable. With more than 13,000 registered teams making more than 3 million visits annually, Pet Partners serves as the nation's most prestigious nonprofit registering handlers of multiple species as volunteer teams. Pet Partners teams visit with patients in recovery, people with intellectual disabilities, seniors living with Alzheimer's, students, veterans with PTSD, and those approaching end of life, improving human health and well-being through the human-animal bond. With the recent release of its [Standards of Practice for Animal-Assisted Interventions](#) and international expansion, Pet Partners is globally recognized as the industry gold standard. For more information on Pet Partners, visit [www.petpartners.org](http://www.petpartners.org).


### **About the Survey**

This survey was conducted by Dynata on behalf of Purina Cat Chow. The survey was conducted among a sample size of 2,500 pet owners across the U.S. Data was collected between August 14-24, 2020 and was carried out online. These online surveys are not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

SOURCE Purina Cat Chow

For further information: Emma Malisvewski, [emmamalisvewski@golin.com](mailto:emmamalisvewski@golin.com)

---

Additional assets available online:  [Photos \(1\)](#)