

Pitch:

Hi Perri,

I am reaching out because I thoroughly enjoyed your articles about parenting and childcare, and I especially appreciated the article you wrote for *New York Times*, "How to be a Modern Parent". I think many parents would find the information about how to feed and discipline their children very helpful and inspiring.

Seeing your interest in parenting and childcare, I wanted to draw your attention to the interesting benefits of exposing children to animals. Our organization has just published an article that covers the benefits of exposing children to animals at a young age. For example, our article highlights that exposure to animals actually has many health benefits, such as prevention of asthma. In addition, the article also highlights benefits for children's mental health as well. We believe this information would be very helpful for modern parents, as many fear that it is too soon to let their children be around animals.

Do you think this information would interest your readers? I look forward to hearing your thoughts. I look forward to hearing from you, and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you might have. You can contact me at sydsak4@gmail.com or (626)-831-8369.

Best,
Sydney Sakamoto
Canzelle Alpacas

The Benefits of Exposing Children to Animals at a Young Age

Animals do more than just play fetch and sit in petting zoos. Animals teach children about love, compassion, responsibility, and patience, which are all qualities that are essential to a fulfilling childhood and life. Animal exposure also has a lot of child developmental and health benefits. Many parents fear that early exposure to animals can be harmful for their children, but that is not true.

Exposure to animals can teach children life lessons and help their personality develop. They learn lessons about responsibility through taking care of pets. Pets require lots of love and patience, and caring for them can allow children to develop more empathy and compassion. These are essential qualities that a person must possess. The closer the bond is with them and the animal, the more easily they can read and understand their pet's needs. There are not many opportunities for children to have experience being nurturing and caregivers, as they are usually on the receiving end of that interaction, but having a pet certainly allows them to do so.

“When we got my five year old son, Gus, a dog for his birthday, they instantly became inseparable and formed a very special bond. During his early years of childhood Gus struggled with have empathy for others, as he could get quite violent at times. However, I truly believe that having a dog allowed him to learn how to care for and be gentle with others, and he is much more sympathetic now,” says Miranda Johnson.

Aside from these lessons, children can also learn about the cycle of life. Exposure to animals allows children to see many different stages of their lives, faster than they would with humans. Even though death and illness are not something people want to expose their children to, it is essential that children learn about these natural occurrences at some point. Even though this has many challenges as well, like it would expose children to death more often, they learn more about life and its processes.

“From chickens that lay eggs to cats that have kittens, through putting down the family dog, companion animals have shorter lives than most humans, which allows children opportunities to observe and experience a wide range of phases, stages and natural processes,” says Run Wild My Child, a popular parenting blog.

Exposure to animals actually has many health benefits as well. There is a lot of contradictory information about the association between asthma and animals in children. People used to believe that exposure to animal fur would trigger allergies, asthma, or other health problems in young children. However, many studies have shown that exposure to farm animals actually helps

reduce asthma. In a study done by JAMA pediatrics, they looked at all births in Sweden from 2001 to 2010 and compared it to the records of farm animals and asthma medication to see if there is an association between them. They found that farm animal exposure during the first year of life, reduces the risk of developing asthma later on in life.

“This information might be helpful in decision making for families and physicians on the appropriateness and timing of early animal exposure,” conductors of the study at JAMA pediatrics said.

Lastly, exposure to animals can help with a child’s mental health. Many studies have shown that petting animals and positive interactions with them can relieve stress and anxiety in children, as it lowers blood pressure. In addition, pets provide children with a companion and make them feel less lonely. Pets are naturally loving and affectionate, and this allows children to feel like they have someone to support and be there for them. Farm animals also have a similar benefit for those that struggle with mental health and have proven to be very therapeutic.

Even if children do not have access to a pet of their own, exposure to animals can come in many other forms and are just as beneficial. There are some very unique ways to get exposure to animals, including alpaca farms like Canzelle Alpacas. At these kinds of attractions, kids can safely and comfortably be exposed to animals and the benefits that come along with them.

“Our tours allow so many children to snuggle and interact with our alpacas. We love seeing the bright smiles on their faces every day. Our main goal is to provide unique and fun experiences like these for kids,” says Carole Ann Lonson, owner of Canzelle Alpacas.