

Bunnies As Easter Presents. Not The Best Idea.

For Immediate Release

For many parents getting their kids their first pet dog is a big step, requiring a lot of thought and research. After all, who would take a Great Dane pup to a tiny apartment, considering the size it will eventually grow to? Making sure the breed has the right temperament to be around small children is commonly looked into.

Sadly, most people don't give it much of a thought when looking at those cute little bunnies at the pet store when Easter Sunday is right around the corner. Just imagining the smile on a child's face, not to mention the potential photo ops, is enough to make a parent immediately reach for the credit card. Who doesn't like pictures of a child holding a cute little bunny, right?

Pet stores count on that during the month of March; the impulse buying so typical of the season, and rabbit breeders are all too eager to provide the necessary supply, not always acting in the best interest of these defenseless little animals, as Suzanne Trayhan, HRN President explained.

"The problems with these businesses have been around for decades. They breed rabbits to be born about five weeks before Easter, and then have them in pet stores when they are these cute fluffy things. Sadly rabbits are often in stores at four to five weeks, when they are so adorable, yet they don't even wean until they are six to seven weeks old and shouldn't be separated until they are eight weeks old. Many of these "too young" rabbits experience digestive problems that sometimes kill them or can cause problems for them the rest of their lives."

Another factor that is usually not considered is that the little bunny, depending on the breed, may grow up to be the size of a cat, and may not be that sociable. Most rabbits do not like to be held, and may bite. A parent who is not familiar with the intricacies of rabbit behavior may, in frustration, decide to get rid of it. Doing so, parents are setting the wrong precedent. "They are teaching their kids that pets are disposable," Trayhan pointed out.

Other times the child may quickly lose interest in the bunny and the parents end up caring for an animal that may live for about ten years. That's a big commitment, and a lot of people just don't think about this going in.

Many of these defenseless animals are abandoned out in the wilderness, where they are killed by predators or starve to death, given their limited survival skills. If they're lucky they'll be taken to an animal shelter, such as HRN, where they at least will be cared for and hopefully adopted.

HRN strongly believes there are other means of providing children with an enjoyable Easter, without putting innocent bunnies at risk. Plush rabbits, candy and other toys are better alternatives to the care required by a live rabbit.

Like always, HRN welcomes those individuals who have seriously thought about the long-term commitment that is required, and have decided to adopt a retired Easter bunny.

“If they plan on getting a rabbit -- or any pet -- they really should research and learn as much as possible first to be sure having a rabbit is the right match for their family,” Trayhan added.

About The House Rabbit Network

The House Rabbit Network is a Massachusetts-based 501 ©3 non-profit, all-volunteer organization dedicated to saving and adopting out unwanted bunnies and educating the public about rabbits. HRN provides rabbit education and adoption in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Connecticut.

###

If you'd like more information please contact Suzanne Trayhan at *PHONE_NUMBER* or e-mail Suzanne at *EMAIL_ADDRESS*.