

PSYCHOLOGY

Cats, Dogs Help Family

Pets can help relationships in disturbed or normal families and are particularly useful in treating disturbed children, a psychologist reports—By Elizabeth Mirel

► HAVING A PET around the house is good mental medicine.

In the normal household a pet can help the family get along and can teach parents and children valuable lessons about love and about responsibility.

In the home of a disturbed family a pet can give parents and children something in common to talk about and can help in re-arranging unhealthy relationships.

Dr. Boris M. Levinson of Yeshiva University, New York, reported his pet theory at the American Psychological Association meeting in Philadelphia. He said that no general or mental hospital should be without pets. Pets would change the sterile and cold environment of these institutions, he maintained.

Pets are particularly useful in helping emotionally disturbed children, Dr. Levinson has found. He described the case of a maladjusted little girl whose father would not let her have a dog. In helping the girl with her problems, Dr. Levinson prescribed a dog. The dog caused the family a lot of trouble, but through the dog, the little girl learned that she too could be naughty and still be loved by her family.

Some pets are better than others for helping children with their problems, Dr. Levinson said. Children who have trouble getting along with people, he has found, prefer large animals. Children whose problems are focused internally prefer small animals. Children who are withdrawn and unready

to get emotionally involved seem to prefer a cat.

The temperament of a breed of dog should be taken into account when choosing this animal for a pet, he said. Even a goldfish in a bowl can be helpful.

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Rocking Chair Babies

► BEING CUDDLED in that ole rocking chair is good for stimulating a baby as well as soothing him, investigators told a meeting of the American Psychological Association.

A baby who is held and rocked, they said, becomes alive to the world around him at an early age. Soon after birth, he begins to explore his surroundings. A baby who is barely handled at all takes a longer time to develop his sense of vision, their research showed.

Dr. Burton L. White and Peter W. Castle of Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass., tested 28 children born and raised in a state hospital. The infants whose vision developed early were handled and rocked for 30 days after their first week of life. The other infants were given only routine hospital care.

As the infants grew older, the investigators found, the two groups tended to become more and more alike.

Recent studies of animals have shown

that handled animals are healthier and gain more weight. No such differences were found for these babies, the scientists said.

In normal infants, the sense of vision does not usually begin to develop until after the first month.

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Television Fights Crime

► TELEVISION, often accused of encouraging crime, can be used to fight it.

The Houston community has learned how.

Commercial and educational TV stations in Houston joined in broadcasting 12 programs about juvenile delinquency. The series, part of the Greater Houston Action for Youth Project, was designed to tell citizens about the project, about the problems of juvenile delinquency and about the need for community planning to deal with delinquency.

Houstonians who watched the shows had less stereotyped views about juvenile delinquency, studies in 500 TV-owners' homes showed. They understood, better than those who did not watch the shows, that delinquency is not a simple, black-and-white problem.

Where the programs were tuned in, the people had a clear awareness of the project and what it was trying to do for the community.

Dr. Richard I. Evans of the University of Houston reported studies about the impact of the TV shows at the American Psychological Association meeting in Philadelphia.

He said 44% of the homes in the area were tuned in to one or more programs in the series. Of these, 99% found the programs "interesting" and 58% thought they were "more interesting than most television programs."

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ARCHAEOLOGY

Hopewell Mound Builder Homestead Unearthed

► A MAJOR SETTLEMENT of the mound-building Hopewell Indians has been unearthed for the first time.

The 2,000-year-old site, homestead of 35 to 50 persons, was discovered some five miles south of Chillicothe, Ohio, about 170 miles southwest of Cleveland.

Many artifacts have been discovered, including pottery, bone implements and a copper awl. The find is expected to yield many clues about the Hopewell people, whose burial mounds have been the source of speculation for a long time.

At one time, the Hopewells and related peoples inhabited much of the eastern United States. It is believed that these Indians were interrelated to tribes in the lower Mississippi region and even to the highly developed Aztecs of Mexico. The project is sponsored jointly by the National Science Foundation, Case Institute of Technology and the Natural Science Museum of Cleveland.

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Case Institute of Technology

EVIDENCE OF INDIANS—Archaeologists, uncovering the remains of an ancient Indian community near Chillicothe, Ohio, have found evidence that these early Americans were skilled farmers at the time of the birth of Christ. Important finds include flint knives and fragments of pottery.