

# BHS A.S.S.I.S.T. E-NEWS

## Pets and Natural Disasters



Disasters, like hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, floods and terrorism, can be devastating; and no one is exempt from the effects – including pets. If your family doesn't have a safety plan for disasters, your pets may

be an afterthought following the security of your human family members, and they are more likely to suffer. Before a disaster strikes, devise a plan to ensure your pets' safety before, during and after an emergency. Here are some things to remember:

**Before a Disaster.** Know where your pets' transport containers are if they have one, and store it in a readily accessible area. In the same location, store an animal evacuation kit that includes backup food and at least one jug of water, as well as an extra collar and leash for each pet if appropriate. Designate a willing neighbor to tend to your animals in the event that a disaster occurs when you're not home. Locate and prearrange an evacuation site for your animals outside your immediate area. Ideally, this would be a friend or relative, but other housing options include veterinary hospitals, boarding kennels and animal shelters.

### During a Disaster.

The type of disaster being encountered will determine your response. During inclement weather that may produce a tornado, for example, bring all pets inside. Make sure they have some form of identification securely fastened to them (or their cage) and put pets inside individual transportable carriers if they have one. All pets, as well as their evacuation kit, should be kept in the interior of your home.

During an evacuation for a hurricane or flood, you should evacuate as early as possible if instructed by local agencies to do so. Again, make sure all animals have identification attached to them. Then load pets in their carriers into your car with their evacuation kit. Call your prearranged animal evacuation site to confirm available space.

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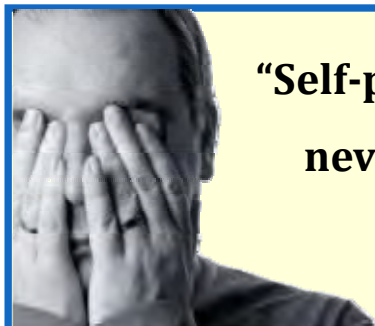
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**"Self-pity is our worst enemy and if we yield to it, we can never do anything good in the world." ~ Helen Keller**

Do you need an attitude check? Contact your EAP.

## Steps for Easing Your Child's First-Day-of-School Jitters

### One Week Before

- **Start practicing with the alarm clock.** Send your kids to bed at their regular school-night time, and start getting them up early. Explain that everyone needs to adjust to a new schedule.
- **Practice the bus run.** Describe the bus route for your children, including where the bus goes and how long it takes to get to school. Talk about what they can do on the bus to occupy their time.
- **Take a tour of the school.** Make arrangements with the school, and show your children their classrooms, cafeteria and restrooms.

### The Day Before

- **Lay out your child's school clothes.** With your child, select outfits for the first week so there's no anxiety about clothes in the morning.
- **Pack up the night before.** Get your children's books, lunch money and school supplies ready before they go to bed.
- **Send your child to school with a photo.** A family photo or a reassuring note in a child's lunch can help ease separation anxiety.

### The First Day

- **Send a note to the teacher.** This lets children introduce themselves to their new teacher. Talk about what they like to play and their favorite foods. Don't forget to include a picture.
- **Get them on the bus.** If your children will be taking the bus to school, don't drive them the first day. Help them get used to the trip right away.
- **Remember bus numbers.** Calm children's fears by going over the bus number, writing it down in several places they can reference and reminding them that their teachers will make sure they get on the right bus. Ψ



## Save Money on Magazines

If you love reading magazines but don't want to spend the money on multiple subscriptions, check with your local library. Many have subscriptions to a wide variety of titles that would allow you to read your favorites for free. If you have friends who like to read the same ones you do, consider a subscription-sharing arrangement



where you trade publications after you're finished with them. Ψ

## Contagious Behavior

Researchers staged a situation where a woman stood by a flat tire with a spare tire leaning against the fender of her car. Only 35 of 2,000 passing drivers stopped to help. The same researchers staged another scenario a mile down the road where a woman was standing watching a man change a tire. In that case, 58 people stopped to help out. It seems that the extra helpers were copycat do-gooders. What does the study imply? Humans like to imitate, so it's important to remember that you should choose your friends and mentors carefully. Ψ



## Don't Quit When You're Quitting Tobacco

Mark Twain supposedly said: "Giving up smoking is the easiest thing in the world. I know because I've done it thousands of times." But for most people, *really* giving up tobacco is the most difficult challenge of their lives. If you're looking for help to become tobacco-free, consider these suggestions:



**Set a date.** Don't just decide to stop on a whim. Set a firm date so you can prepare yourself mentally and start tapering off, if that's your approach.

**Know why you're quitting.** Some people write their own personal mission statements, citing health benefits, their family and other compelling reasons to quit. Whether this is your style or not, be clear in your mind about why ending your nicotine habit is important to you.

**Get support.** Many people can't quit alone. Whether you join a support group or seek counsel from your family and physician, enlist people to help you keep your commitment strong.

**Exercise.** You'll relieve stress and help your body recover from years of tobacco use. Start out slowly, and check with your doctor.

**Drink lots of water.** Water can help flush nicotine and other chemicals from your system and can satisfy your craving for something to put in your mouth.

**Do what works.** Some people literally try burying all their tobacco products so they have to put a major effort into getting a nicotine fix, or gnaw on dog biscuits when they feel like a smoke or chew. Don't go overboard, but find a solution that works for you.  $\Psi$



## Want to Make Marriage Great? Communicate!

Ask any marriage counselor how to maintain a healthy relationship, and you're sure to hear two words repeated again and again: good communication. But what do those two words actually mean? According to Andrea Holmes, a therapist in Tampa, Florida, communicating effectively with your partner calls for much more than merely talking and listening.

"The goal of true communication is empathetic understanding," says Holmes. "Both partners must engage in active listening and draw closer in an increasingly intimate relationship while maintaining their individuality." What's the best way for two partners to work at communicating better? Here are a few tips from the experts:

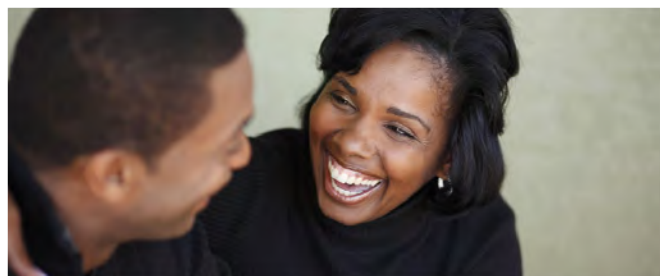
- Listen actively to what your partner is telling you by doing your best to imagine the situation he or she is describing.
- Don't try to fix your partner's problems with instant solutions. Quite often, you'll find that

he or she doesn't really want a solution, but simply a chance to talk about some strong feelings and experience really being heard.

Are you and your partner finding it difficult to talk intimately because of job stress or the demands of raising kids? If so, you must make the effort to set aside time each week for personal sharing. "It's an absolute necessity that you make time for each other," says Holmes. "You need to take a deep breath, step back and start enjoying each other's company again!"

For more information on improving your marriage, contact BHS at 800-245-1150 and talk with your designated Care Coordinator.  $\Psi$

*Source: Krames Staywell*



## How to Locate a Missing Pet

The search and rescue of pets lost during disasters is undertaken in a coordinated effort between the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). These efforts include Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMATS) and volunteer groups. Displaced pets disaster are frequently housed in shelters and by organizations in the state where the disaster occurred.

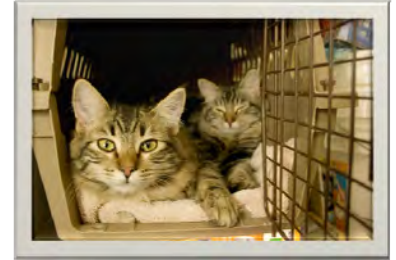
If your animal is lost, post waterproof "lost animal" notices. Notify animal care and control officers, animal shelters, veterinarians and your neighbors. Physically check your local animal shelters daily.

Also consider having your pet fitted with a microchip (a computer chip about the size of a grain of rice that is inserted under the skin) for permanent identification. Consult your pet's veterinarian about this option. Ψ



## PETS AND DISASTERS from Page 1

**After a Disaster.** The behavior of your pets may change after an emergency. Normally quiet and friendly pets may become defensive or aggressive so watch *all* animals closely. After the disaster, survey the area inside and outside your home for dangers such as sharp objects, contaminated water, downed power lines and dangerous wildlife. Release cats, dogs and other small animals indoors only. Release birds and reptiles only if necessary, when they are calm and in an enclosed room. In the first few days after the disaster, leash your pets when they go outside and always maintain close contact – familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and they may become confused and lost. Reintroduce food in small servings, gradually working up to full portions if they have been without food for a prolonged period of time. Allow uninterrupted rest and sleep for all animals to recover from the trauma and stress.



For a complete guide to disaster preparedness from the American Veterinary Medical Association, visit [www.avma.org/disaster/saving\\_family.asp](http://www.avma.org/disaster/saving_family.asp) Ψ



## Grilled Zucchini from [www.cookthink.com](http://www.cookthink.com)

If you're heating up the grill for your steaks or burgers, toss a few thick planks of zucchini on there too. They grill beautifully with just a touch of oil, and are a healthy side dish for the easiest weekday barbecue.

- 4 medium zucchini, cut into ¼ inch-thick planks
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper

Servings: 2-4

1. If using a gas grill, preheat it to high. If using a charcoal grill, pile the coals together to create a hot zone for direct grilling. Clean the grill with a grill brush. Oil the grill by holding a folded wad of paper towels with tongs, dipping it in vegetable oil, and brushing the oil (sparingly – it's flammable) onto the grill grate.
2. Rinse and dry the zucchini. Cut off the ends and discard them. Cut the zucchini lengthwise into ¼ inch-thick planks. Put the zucchini planks in a large bowl, toss with the garlic and olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill the zucchini over direct heat until they're well browned, 4-6 minutes per side.

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