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No Paws from Santa Claus

The Holidays are coming and children have thought long and hard about the gifts they would most want to receive this year. Trucks, trains, Groovy girls and scooters are popular gifts this year. Each year lists are filled with the “most popular” toys of that year. There is one thing each year that can be found on many children’s lists. A puppy. The image of a bright eyed plump adorable pup dressed in a red bow is an irresistible one. Or is it? Giving a life for a gift is something to think very carefully about. Puppies grow up quickly, cost a lot and need a life long commitment.

As a Professional Dog Trainer and Breed rescue volunteer, I have seen many sad endings for these once so irresistible pups. Spring comes around and the pup is now sixty or so pounds and full of unappreciated energy and spunk... The issues of teething and housebreaking are sore subjects for the entire family. The pup is out of control and no longer the highlight in the kid’s day. Many times this leads to a decision to “re home” the pup. This is the worst case scenario. Unfortunately it is all too common. Preparing ahead of time is essential to the success of a new puppy in your home.

If your family has made a decision to get a puppy please keep several things in mind. Getting a puppy is at least a 13 year long commitment depending on the type of dog. The most enjoyable dogs are well mannered. It is advised you seek out a dog trainer for instruction that suits your needs... All dogs need monthly heartworm prevention as well as yearly medical check ups. Please research the type of dog you are interested in. Different breeds have traits specific to them. Find traits that suit your family’s lifestyle there are many options for where to get a dog or puppy from. The internet is a great resource of information on this. Most breeds have a rescue group of some kind. There are many wonderful dogs that are without homes.

So, if you see a puppy on the top of your child’s list this year. Might I suggest that you go out and purchase the cutest stuffed puppy that you can find? Get it a leash and collar with tags. Get a food bowl and some biscuits for effect and then research together the many options you have in deciding when and what type of furry family member you would like to bring into your family. Preparation, Education and dedication are the best recipe for a perfect happy ending for all.
Happy Holidays