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New Partnership Keeps Homeless Families Together with Their Pets

PetSmart and Family Promise launch PetSmart Promise program

PHOENIX – A new national program will help temporarily homeless families keep all members of their family together – including their four-legged family members. The PetSmart Promise program, a result of a collaboration between PetSmart and Family Promise, will build pet kennel facilities at day centers for temporarily homeless families across the United States.

The partnership between PetSmart and Family Promise, a non-profit that provides food, shelter and support to temporarily homeless families, brings a solution to the heartbreaking decision many homeless families have to make: stay in a shelter and give up their beloved pet (since most shelters do not allow animals) or live on the street in order to keep their family together.

“I am thrilled to announce the launch of PetSmart Promise, a nationwide program to keep homeless families and their pets together,” said Joe O’Leary, PetSmart Executive Vice President of Merchandising, Supply Chain, Marketing and Strategic Planning. “Homelessness continues to be a huge problem in America. Our hope is that PetSmart Promise revives the conversation about this critical issue, and provides an innovative solution for families who are truly in need.”

The PetSmart Promise program will build on-site dog and cat kennel facilities at existing Family Promise day centers throughout the country for families who are staying at the shelter and are in transition or temporarily homeless. The families, who stay at the shelter for 60 days or less, will be able to continue to care for their pet and keep their family – including their four-legged members – together during a difficult time.

PetSmart established a pilot program with Family Promise of Greater Phoenix in 2012, and will expand the program nationwide this year, with the goal of five new facilities opening each year until all 182 Family Promise facilities have the opportunity to participate in the program at a level that is appropriate for them. In 2013, on-site facilities are anticipated to open in Lake Houston, Texas; Fayetteville, N.C.; and Bozeman, Mont.

“With the success of the on-site facility in Phoenix, we knew we wanted to work with PetSmart to take the program nationwide,” said Karen Olson, President of Family Promise. “By working together, we can help temporarily homeless families stay together and get back on their feet. It is incredibly comforting to the children involved to be able to have their dog or cat by their side during this time of transition.”

In addition to the on-site facilities, PetSmart Promise will offer a menu of options for Family Promise facilities, based on individual needs and limitations. These options include:

- PetsHotels: complimentary use of boarding space in existing PetSmart stores, for families utilizing nearby Family Promise centers. Six PetsHotels are slated to be tested as part of the PetSmart Promise program in 2013: Houston, Texas; Charlotte, N.C.; Atlanta, Ga.; Boston, Mass.; Albuquerque, N.M.; and Colorado Springs, Colo.;
- Installation of fish tanks in Family Promise centers across the nation, teaching children and families utilizing the center about the care and responsibility required when owning a pet; and
- Creation of a foster network of Family Promise employees and volunteers to house pets when a Family Promise pet housing facility or PetSmart PetsHotel is not available

The PetSmart Promise program will officially kick off tomorrow, May 4, at the Family Promise National Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

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About PetSmart

[PetSmart, Inc.](#) (NASDAQ: PETM) is the largest specialty pet retailer of services and solutions for the lifetime needs of pets. The company employs approximately 52,000 associates and operates more than 1,278 pet stores in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico, over 196 in-store [PetSmart® PetsHotel®](#) dog and cat boarding facilities and is a leading online provider of pet supplies and pet care information (<http://www.petsmart.com>). PetSmart provides a broad range of competitively priced pet food and pet products; and offers dog training, pet grooming, pet boarding, [PetSmart Doggie Day CampSM](#) day care services and pet adoption services. Through its in-store pet adoption partnership with PetSmart Charities®, PetSmart has helped save the lives of more than 5 million pets since 1994. [PetSmart Charities, Inc.](#) and PetSmart Charities of Canada, Inc. (“PetSmart Charities”) are independent, nonprofit organizations that save the lives of homeless pets and reduce shelter intake through spay/neuter efforts. In 2012, nearly 450,000 dogs and cats found homes through the organization's adoption centers in all PetSmart stores and by sponsoring community adoption events. PetSmart Charities is the leader in granting money to help pets in need, with more than \$28 million given in 2012 throughout North America.

About Family Promise

[Family Promise](#) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to helping homeless and low-income families achieve sustainable independence. The organization is based in Summit, New Jersey, where they were founded in 1988 on the belief that Americans are compassionate people who want to make a difference. Today Family Promise comprises 182 Affiliates in 41 states, with more in development. Family Promise programs involve more than 160,000 volunteers and they provide assistance to more than 50,000 family members annually. Family Promise is celebrating their 25th Anniversary as a national organization in 2013. Since their founding, they have served about 500,000 people, including tens of thousands of homeless families who found temporary homes at Affiliates nationwide.