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Busy Owners Cause Bad Behavior

Behavioural issues in pets are on the rise and a recent survey carried out by CEVA Animal Health, manufacturer of D.A.P.® for dogs and Feliway® for cats, has revealed that 94 per cent of veterinary professionals believe that owners' lifestyles are the major cause.

Highlighting the scale of the problem amongst the nation's pets, over three-quarters of those questioned believed that owners should spend more time with their pets to prevent these issues, while 89 per cent thought that owners were too busy to deal with their pets if they developed behavioural problems.

The fast pace of owners' lifestyles is significantly affecting the stress felt by both dogs and cats and this is further exacerbated in cats by the social demands that pet owners put on them. Cats are solitary survivors that cope better with short, frequent interactions and like their own company. While they are popular for their independence, owners often like to have their pets' full attention when they return from work which is at odds with their cats' preferred behaviour patterns.

Behavioural issues can also result from changes in a pet's environment and new experiences such as moving house, building work, the introduction of a new pet to the household, going to a kennel or cattery, travelling in a car, visiting the vets and stressful events such as Bonfire Night and Christmas. To help combat stress, nearly 65 per cent of dog owners avoid putting their pets in stressful situations, while 19 per cent choose to ignore their stressed dog.

"Our modern lifestyles are leading to stressed pets which, in the long-term, will exacerbate behavioural and medical problems," says Lucy Brett, product manager at CEVA Animal Health. "If behavioural issues develop, it is important that owners seek advice before it is too late."

David Ryan from the Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors, comments: "Dogs, cats and other animals can find it difficult to cope with the demands placed upon them by their owners' lifestyles and many behaviour problems arise through a mismatch of owner expectations and the needs of their pets. A properly qualified behaviour counsellor can help owners understand and address the root causes of stress in their pets, allowing them to provide appropriate outlets for natural behaviour and improving quality of life for both pet and owner."

D.A.P.® for dogs and Feliway® for cats can help comfort pets at times of stress and provide reassurance when encountering new experiences and unknown environments, helping to prevent the development of inappropriate or unwanted behaviour. D.A.P. ® and Feliway® are available as plug-in diffusers and sprays. D.A.P.® is also available as a collar for dogs.

For further information, please contact your vet.