

## Features



TOP

# Dog Ownership Benefits Children with Autism

APRIL 15TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

Dog Ownership Benefits Children with Autism

*Submitted by  
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Writer*

**Columbia, Missouri** - Many families face the decision of whether to get a dog. For families of children with autism, the decision can be even more challenging. Now, a University of Missouri researcher has studied dog ownership decisions in families of children with autism and found, regardless of whether they owned dogs, the parents reported the benefits of dog ownership included companionship, stress relief and opportunities for their children to learn responsibility.

“Children with autism spectrum disorders often struggle with interacting with others, which can make it difficult for them to form friendships,” said Gretchen Carlisle, a research fellow at the [Research Center for Human-Animal Interaction \(ReCHAI\)](#) in the [MU College of Veterinary Medicine](#). “Children with autism may especially benefit from interacting with dogs, which can provide unconditional, nonjudgmental love and companionship to the children.”

Carlisle interviewed 70 parents of children with autism. Nearly two-thirds of the parents in the study owned dogs, and of those parents, 94 percent reported their children with autism were bonded to their dogs. Even in families without dogs, 70 percent of parents said their children with autism liked dogs. Many dog-owning parents said they specifically chose to get dogs because of the perceived benefits

to their children with autism, Carlisle said.

“Dogs can help children with autism by acting as a social lubricant,” Carlisle said. “For example, children with autism may find it difficult to interact with other neighborhood children. If the children with autism invite their peers to play with their dogs, then the dogs can serve as bridges that help the children with autism communicate with their peers.”

Parents of children with autism should consider their children’s sensitivities carefully when choosing a dog in order to ensure a good match between pet and child, Carlisle said.

“Bringing a dog into any family is a big step, but for families of children with autism, getting a dog should be a decision that’s taken very seriously,” Carlisle said. “If a child with autism is sensitive to loud noises, choosing a dog that is likely to bark will not provide the best match for the child and the family. If the child has touch sensitivities, perhaps a dog with a softer coat, such as a poodle, would be better than a dog with a wiry or rough coat, such as a terrier.”

Carlisle recommends parents involve their children with autism when choosing a dog.

“Many children with autism know the qualities they want in a dog,” Carlisle said. “If parents could involve their kids in choosing dogs for their families, it may be more likely the children will have positive experiences with the animals when they are brought home.”

Although her study only addressed dog ownership among families affected by autism, Carlisle said dogs might not be the best pet for every child with autism.

“If you know one child with autism, you know one child with autism,” Carlisle said. “Dogs may be best for some families, although other pets such as cats, horses or rabbits might be better suited to other children with autism and their particular sensitivities and interests.”

“This research adds scientific credibility to the benefits of human-animal interaction,” said Rebecca Johnson, a professor at the MU College of Veterinary Medicine, director of ReCHAI, and the Millsap Professor of Gerontological Nursing in the [MU Sinclair School of Nursing](#). “This research helps us understand the role of companion animals in improving the lives of children with autism and

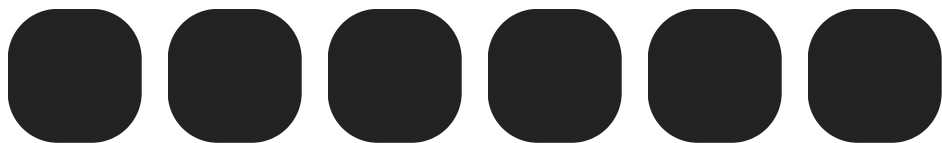
helps health professionals learn how to best guide families in choosing pets for their families.”

The study, “Pet Dog Ownership Decisions for Parents of Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder,” was published in the Journal of Pediatric Nursing earlier this year.

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[Go to post](#)



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[TOP](#)

## The Plus Minus of Telemetry; Automatic

APRIL 03RD 2014 BY STAFF WRITER

[The Plus Minus of Telemetry; Automatic](#)

*Article by  
ShowMe Times Staff*

**Dexter, Missouri** - Has the future of technology become uncomfortable to you? Your

reply to this question may be generationally biased, but the way in which technology rapidly surrounds our lives is often a challenge to our normal everyday life.

Whether you consider yourself a technology genius or you find struggles adjusting to the new automated world, we continue to see rapid expansion of gadgets filling our world.

The art of Telemetry is on the horizon and has been in development for many years. This technology has evolved in many different industries, and has most recently become available to the consumer through a new gadget known as **Automatic**. This technology is not necessarily new; however it is now been packaged for simple, easy to use to the general consumers through **Automatic**.


The effects of the Apple iPhone to our society has been a technological "game-changer" in how people interact, seek information and become more informed. The idea that "there is an APP for that" continues to bring opportunities to the marketplace with new applications and gadgets that offer to us more of nearly everything.

A recent offering by **Automatic** now offers to connect your smart phone to your car. Does that sounds a little crazy? Actually, this has been done for years at your local service station or auto dealership. You would schedule an appointment and their handheld computer device would perform diagnostics on your car, reaching a conclusion of what needed to be repaired.

You may also be familiar or have experienced a call to OnStar, a roadside assistance program offered through your local GMC dealerships. Even while driving down the road, an OnStar operator can provide you with advice regarding your cars performance and recommend needed repairs.

But **Automatic** is so much more than an evaluation of the mechanics of your auto. Driver performance becomes a feature that is available through this device. Driver feedback is developed related to rough braking, speeding and rapid acceleration that take place with the driver. This data ultimately develops a "Drivers Score".

This always brings about the argument that "*Big Brother Is Watching*". No one really wants to be measured in our society on the basis of their driving habits. What I do in my car is my own business - Right? Well yes, sort of right.

However, there are alternative features that make **Automatic** more of an interest to the 

general public overall. Some of these incidental features could be considered convenience items, such as; Trip Timelines, Crash Alert, Check Engine Alerts, Engine Trouble Codes and even remembering where you parked.

But where is the significant contributions that are worthy of divulging our private driving habits and a \$100.00 retail price for the **Automatic** gadget? Being measured is typically not the first idea someone has when they jump into the front seat of their car. In fact, being measured is something that society tries to avoid at all costs.

However, a more grand view of where this sort of technology is already beginning to develop is in the insurance marketplace. The advertisements from leading insurance providers tout how customers can save money being willing to build their own driving personal history.

Most would argue that a good driver deserves better rates than a bad driver! The use of telemetry brings this possibility into a reality in the future, as we are already beginning to see.

Do you text and drive? It would be a reasonable assumption that if so, you would hit the rumble strips along on the shoulder of a major highway, or possibly have occasion to hit the brakes quickly. Personally, a driver doesn't really want to expose that to the judgement of their insurance provider. Does that make you a bad driver? Not necessarily. But does that make your driving habits a higher risk than someone who doesn't text and drive?

A more personal vantage point would be from the position of the parents of a new 16 year old driver. Parents teach their kids the safe and proper way to operate a car, but at that point are reduced to hope and prayer that the new driver will be safe. Experience has been our only teacher. The same value could be offered to the business-owner with employees that operate company vehicles.

The bottom line to these new technologies is that they offer pluses and minuses to our lives. Knowledge is both good and bad, depending on the value the knowledge offers to our personal lives. **Automatic** provides you a way to enjoy the knowledge privately at this point to manage and oversee your own family or business.

SMT Readers can receive a special discount of 20% by clicking this link to order their own **Automatic** device.

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[TOP](#)

## It's Time to Register for the PAT Strollerthon, 5K and KidFest

MARCH 25TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

[It's Time to Register for the PAT Strollerthon, 5K and KidFest](#)

*Written by  
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Writer*

**Dexter, Missouri** - It's that time of the year we all wish Spring was just a little closer! Mark your calendar as the 2014 Dexter Parents As Teachers Strollerthon, 5K and KidFest will be held on Saturday, March 29, 2014. This event will be full of fun for every member of your family!

The PAT Strollerthon, 5K and KidFest will be held at Southwest Elementary School in Dexter. The morning will follow a similar schedule as last year with

registration starting at 8 a.m., 5K at 8:30, KidFest opening at 9 and "Strollerthon" at 10:00 a.m.

The Parents As Teachers' Egg Hunt will follow the Strollerthon. Even the Easter Bunny will be stopping by to check out everyone's strollers and visit with the PAT kids while they hunt eggs!

The first event is a 5K Run/Walk. 5k walkers and runners will be completing 3.1 miles that will provide them with a "Tour of Dexter Schools." This is not a race, but a chance to be active with their children. This is an opportunity for everybody, not just parents and grandparents, to get an active start this Spring and support a great community program! No need to bring a stroller for the 5k - Just lace up the old sneakers or running (or walking) shoes and meet them at the large crayons in front of Southwest Elementary at 8:30 a.m. Their route has only a few small hills and will take participants around each of Dexter's schools and a few nearby neighborhoods. Maps provided to participants will have interesting tidbits and information about the buildings you will pass.

KidFest, introduced last year, will be returning! KidFest is a FREE, fun, interactive area where parents and children are able to meet PAT sponsors, find out about the goods and services they provide, and participate in developmentally appropriate activities. Last year's KidFest booths included a sticker activity from Bootheel Pediatric Therapy, a "Scentsy" smelling station provided by Ashley Williams, balloons handed out by Liberty Hill General Baptist, scribble-art and a book give-a-way with First Baptist Church, kid's self defense tips by Carillo Martial Arts, a science table from the Malden Bootheel Youth Museum, sensory exploration bags from Jennifer Pittman (31 Bags consultant), and a fun Photo Booth from Chris Brannan (State Farm Insurance)!

Not up for a 5k (3.1 miles), but have a cute kid and a stroller? Register for the Strollerthon!!! Bring your decorated stroller and display it with your child during a 1 mile fun walk at Southwest before the PAT egg hunt. Spectators will be able to vote for their choice as "Best Decorated Stroller" by placing dollars in that stroller's designated jar. FANTASTIC prizes awarded to the top 3 strollers! Also, impartial judges who will choose one stroller that really stands out will award "Judges Choice". Look to your favorite children's books for decorating inspiration.

All registered 5k and Strollerthon participants will receive a t-shirt, swag bag, water and refreshments with their \$20 registration.

**Registration forms can also be found at the Dexter Chamber of Commerce website ([www.dexterchamber.com](http://www.dexterchamber.com)) or on the bookcase at Southwest Elementary School.**

**You can also contact the PAT office at 614-1004. Parents may also find information on the PAT Facebook page, Dexter Parents as Teachers by clicking [HERE](#).**

Trim off the bottom portion and send it with your fee to PAT Strollerthon and 5k c/o Melanie Stoelting, 915 W. Grant, Dexter MO, 63841, by Thursday, March 13, 2014, to guarantee your shirt on race day. Extra shirts will be available in limited sizes on race day.

All proceeds from the day will go toward providing information, support, and encouragement parents need to help their children develop optimally during the crucial, earliest years of life. Parents As Teachers provides free health, hearing, vision and developmental screenings for children birth to 36 months old and home visits where parent educators and parents discuss developmental topics such as sleep, nutrition, discipline, health, etc. Your participation will help PAT reach more families through group connections such as "Big Truck Night," "Mommy and Me Fitness," and "The Best Place to Read."

Thank you for your continued support in helping make Parents as Teachers program one of the most successful in the state!

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## MO Dept. of Conservation Regulation Booklets Available

MARCH 15TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

MO Dept. of Conservation Regulation Booklets Available

*Submitted by  
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Writer*

**Missouri** - The Missouri Department of Conservation's (MDC) 2014 Summary of Missouri Hunting and Trapping Regulations, 2014 Summary of Missouri Fishing Regulations, and 2014 Spring Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information booklets are now available. The booklets contain related regulation information in an easy-to-read format, including regulation changes and other new information for the year ahead.

“Conservation makes Missouri a great place to hunt and fish, and abiding by the regulations of the Wildlife Code of Missouri is important to keep it that way by sustaining healthy forests, fish and wildlife,” says MDC Protection Division Chief Larry Yamnitz. “These handy regulation summary booklets are great resources for hunters, trappers, and anglers.”

Get copies of the booklets where permits are sold, at MDC offices throughout the state, and online at [mdc.mo.gov](http://mdc.mo.gov) by searching for the name of the booklet.

Get a direct link to the hunting and trapping booklet online at <http://mdc.mo.gov/node/3657>.

Get a direct link to the fishing regulations booklet online at <http://mdc.mo.gov/node/6108>.

Get a direct link to the spring turkey hunting booklet online at <http://mdc.mo.gov/node/4066>.

For more information on hunting, trapping, fishing, and other outdoor activities in Missouri, visit <http://mdc.mo.gov>.

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[TOP](#)

## Spring Forward to Daylight Savings Time

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MARCH 07TH 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Spring Forward to Daylight Savings Time](#)

*Submitted by  
Dee Loflin, SMT Manager/Writer*

**Stoddard County, Missouri** - Twice each year this controversial practice gives rise to various questions: Why do we spring forward and fall back?

Daylight saving time 2014 will begin at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 9, when most U.S. states will spring forward an hour. Time will fall back to standard time again on Sunday, November 2, when DST ends.

But the federal government doesn't require U.S. states or territories to observe daylight saving time, which is why residents of Arizona (except for residents of the Navajo Indian Reservation), Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Marianas Islands won't need to change their clocks this weekend.

Ben Franklin—of "early to bed and early to rise" fame—was apparently the first person to suggest the concept of daylight saving time, according to computer scientist David Prerau, author of the book [Seize the Daylight: The Curious and Contentious Story of Daylight Saving Time](#).

While serving as U.S. ambassador to France in Paris, Ben Franklin wrote of being awakened at 6 a.m. and realizing, to his surprise, that the sun rose far earlier than he usually did. Imagine the resources that might be saved if he and others rose before noon and burned less midnight oil, Franklin, tongue half in cheek, wrote to a newspaper.

"Franklin seriously realized it would be beneficial to make better use of daylight, but he didn't really know how to implement it," Prerau said.

It wasn't until World War I that daylight savings were realized on a grand scale. Germany was the first country to adopt the time changes, to reduce artificial lighting and thereby save coal for the war effort. Friends and foes soon followed suit. In the U.S. a federal law standardized the yearly start and end of daylight saving time in 1918—for the states that chose to observe it.

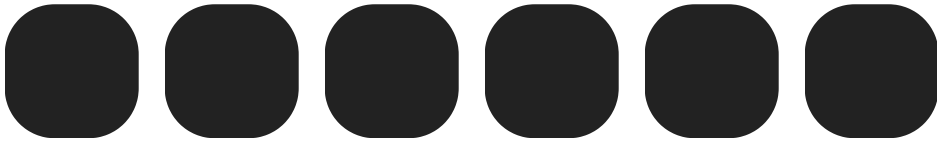
During World War II the U.S. made daylight saving time mandatory for the whole country, as a way to save wartime resources. Between February 9, 1942, and September 30, 1945, the government took it a step further. During this period DST was observed year-round, essentially making it the new standard time, if

only for a few years.

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