

Special Report: Petco's Whole Health Initiative

□ From Pg. 26

"In line with veterinary recommendations, Petco is choosing to focus on safer alternatives to rawhide and steer pet parents away from the digestibility health concerns associated with the traditional products," said Dr. Whitney Miller, Head of Veterinary Medicine for Petco. "While many dogs enjoy traditional rawhide, the fact that they pose even a minimal risk to pet health led to the conclusion that we should exclusively focus on products that better align with our mission and Whole Health philosophy."

5 Pillars of Health

According to the company, the Petco Whole Health approach addresses the 80 percent of pet parents who say they feel as close to their pets as they are to their children or partner, the majority of whom also admit they have no idea how to properly care for the pets they love. Breaking down the components of all-around health and wellness, Petco shares products and a map of services it provides corresponding to each of the Whole Health pillars.

- **Physical Health:** The goal with physical health is to provide the nutrition, activity and preventative care needed to keep pets fit inside and out. In terms of nutrition, Petco said it stands behind the science-led, minimally processed and premium kibble categories. The former represents formulas designed to target specific health concerns including weight control, sensitive stomach and skin and coat, based on decades of research. The latter premium kibble category still encompasses high-quality nutrition with natural or holistic ingredients only, and Petco carries a wide array of options to be able to meet various budgets as well. Petco also makes several toy recommendations to engage cats and dogs and support their physical, social and mental fitness, as well as over-the-counter pest prevention products. Petco's internal veterinary and grooming services round out its physical care support offerings.

- **Mental Health:** With mental health, Petco's dog training services embody the company's resolve to utilize positive reinforcement. Aside from engaging toys, the company also carries an as-

sortment of living habitats for small animals to ensure comfort and security, as well as an array of solutions to promote calming and anxiety relief.

- **Social Health:** Nurturing pets to feel confident and comfortable around other animals and humans can help strengthen their social health. Petco's catalog offerings of pet toys and treats support this goal, along with a variety of outdoor adventure gear to allow them to explore new environments. The company's positive reinforcement training classes, likewise, aim to allow for socializing with other pets and people as much as they enforce obedience.

- **Home Health:** With the goal of creating safe and stimulating environments where pets feel safe and a sense of belonging, Petco's product catalog includes a variety of feeding apparatuses to suit individual behaviors and needs, furniture, beds and playpens for resting and the tools needed to maintain clean habitats.

- **Accessible Health:** Petco provides pets and pet families the care they need in affordable and convenient ways. The company's same-day delivery and curbside pickup services, as well as subscription-style online orders means pets are never without their needed items for long. Convenient veterinary care is available at many of its retail locations, and routine care is encouraged with programs like Vital Care, an annual wellness plan that encompasses everything from grooming to exams and more for under \$20 a month.

Challenge Issued

Petco followed the Whole Health announcement with a Petco Whole Health challenge in April to support and reward pet parents for taking action to improve their pets' overall wellness.

The Whole Health challenge—a three-week educational commitment—asked pet parents to go beyond the basics to deliver complete care that improves pet well-being and helps pets lead full, rewarding lives. The company released five tips each week intended to spark pet parent action mapping to the five pillars of the philosophy.

"We asked pet parents to go beyond the basics to improve their pets' well-being and help them lead full, rewarding lives," said Katherine Nauman, VP of

Integrated Marketing. "We're evaluating a number of factors that made it a success, including general participation in the challenge; enrollments into our annual membership program, Vital Care; and overall engagement, impressions and sentiment across our social media channels and broader brand metrics. Most importantly, throughout the Whole Health challenge, we saw incredible feedback from pet parents who took the time to learn about and address each of the five Whole Health pillars and mastered the basics, tried something new and prepared their pets' for long-term health and happiness. From ensuring their pets are mentally stimulated and prioritizing their dental hygiene, to trying out a new workout with their pets and making sure their food is nutritious, we helped more pet parents learn how to care for their pets' Whole Health and routine wellness needs, and that was the whole point."

Moving forward, the company aims to continue leading the industry in doing what's best for pets with new, innovative and expanded offerings and commitments, all in alignment with its health and wellness philosophy, said Nauman.

"Most recently, we launched Vital Care, a revolutionary annual membership program for pet parents; and the first credit card offering by a major pet health and wellness company that not only provides benefits to pet parents but also a charitable donation to Petco Love with every purchase. We'll also introduce a playbook and toolkit later this year to help employers go pet-friendly when they return to work, which we believe will create better work environments for pets, people and employers alike. Additionally, we recently committed to increasing our assortment of sustainable pet products to 50 percent by the end of 2025. I'm proud of the strides we've taken to date and look forward to furthering our mission of improving the lives of pets, pet parents and our own Petco partners in the years ahead."

The Whole Health Program can be found online at the Petco portal www.petco.com/wholehealth.