

Diseases Spread Between You And Your Pet

continued from Page 5

the feces of infected animals,” said Ivanek-Miojevic. “An infected person may suffer from abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting and fever, and it can be life threatening to very young people or older individuals.” The best way to prevent the transmission of salmonellosis is to thoroughly wash your hands after handling animals, and to always keep your pets’ living quarters clean. As per recommendation by CDC, reptiles and amphibians should be kept out of households that include children aged <5 years or immunocompromised persons.

Our feline companions can carry zoonotic diseases as well. Toxoplasmosis, for example, is a parasitic infection transmitted through cat’s feces. Cats can get infected by eating rodents, birds, or raw meat or by coming into contact with contaminated soil. “Healthy people that acquire toxoplasmosis usually do not have symptoms, but the parasite remains in their body in an inactive state and can be reactivated if the person becomes immunosuppressed,” said Ivanek-Miojevic. “Worse, a woman that acquired the infection during pregnancy may not experience symptoms, but infection can transmit to her baby and result in a miscarriage, a stillborn child, blindness or mental disability of the child.” To prevent such transmission, it is best to wear disposable gloves and thoroughly wash hands after changing cat litter.

Cat scratch disease, or bartonellosis, is a bacterial infection that we can receive from cats. Cats may harbor infected fleas that carry the bartonella bacteria, which can then be transmitted to people if bitten or scratched by the cat. “An infected person develops a mild infection at the point of a cat scratch or bite and lymph nodes around the head, neck, and upper limbs become swollen,” said Ivanek-Miojevic. “To prevent transmission of the infection,

people, particularly immunocompromised individuals, should avoid rough play with cats, particularly strays and kittens, in order to prevent scratches.” To play it safe, you should always treat your cats for fleas and do your best to keep them away from strays.

Both toxocariasis and campylobacter infections are spread through accidental contact with feces of infected animals. Toxocariasis, a parasitic infection of dogs and cats, may transmit to a person when the animal sheds toxocara eggs in their feces and a person accidentally swallows dirt that has been contaminated with it. “To prevent the infection, people, particularly children, should wash their hands after playing in the dirt or in uncovered sandboxes,” said Ivanek-Miojevic. “Feces of dogs and cats should be disposed of promptly and pets should be regularly dewormed, particularly if they spend time outdoors and may become infected again.”

The bacterial infection campylobacter can be spread through food and hands contaminated by infected animal’s feces. Aside from occasional diarrhea, animals often do not show significant symptoms of the infection. If a person becomes infected, they may also develop diarrhea, which can occasionally be accompanied by fever. Washing your hands after interacting or coming into contact with pets is a must to prevent the spread of this infection.

“In summary, our pets can have a wide variety of infectious diseases, many of which could spread from pets to people,” Ivanek-Miojevic said. “In order to protect human health, pets should be regularly vaccinated against rabies and treated against intestinal parasites and fleas. The closer we share our lives with our pets, the more important becomes their health to our own.”

TWC Launches Partnership to Provide Scholarships for Child Care Providers

AUSTIN – The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) has launched a partnership with the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (Texas AEYC) to expand a program that provides scholarships to caregivers working for eligible child care providers. TWC’s grant award of \$500,000 will expand scholarship opportunities and increase the knowledge base of early childhood professionals working with young children and thus improving the care children receive.

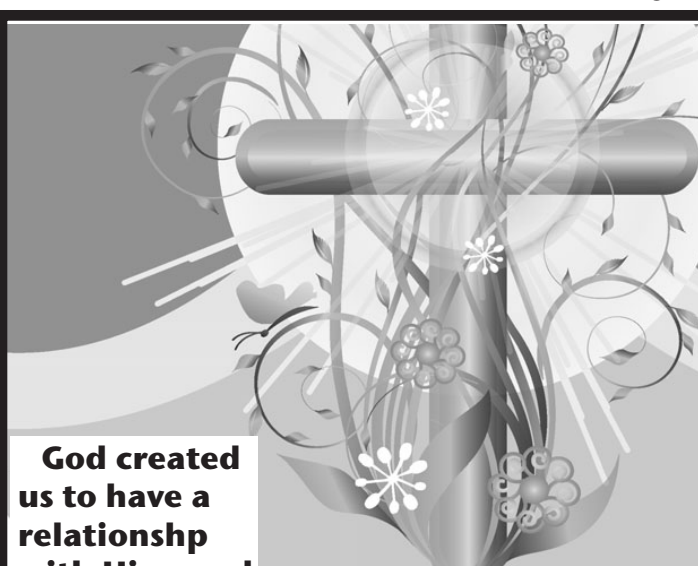
Texas AEYC has awarded scholarships through the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) program since 2011. Scholarships awarded to child care workers through this program assist with fees for assessment and certification as a Child Development Associate (CDA), a Certified Child Care Professional (CCP), or for tuition at a community college toward an associate’s degree program in child development, early childhood education, or a related field.

This newly-formed partnership will help eligible child care providers achieve Texas Rising Star (TRS) status, which certifies child care providers that meet higher levels of quality beyond the minimum child care licensing standards.

With the \$500,000 awarded, T.E.A.C.H. anticipates awarding 80 CDA/CCP Assessment Fee Scholarships and 74 associate’s degree scholarships over the next two years. Texas AEYC will determine eligibility for the caregivers applying for scholarship through the program. Caregivers are responsible for a percentage of their tuition and a portion of the cost for books, depending on which type of scholarship they receive, and the associate’s degree model requires caregivers to take 12-15 credit hours per year.

To be eligible for a scholarship, a caregiver must work for an eligible provider for at least 30 hours per week at less than \$15 per hour; be 16 years of age or older; be a Texas resident; and be a U.S. citizen or a noncitizen authorized to work in the United States.

TWC: 512-463-8942;
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