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Marshmallow Peeps Maybe, but the East Bay SPCA asks Parents to Avoid the Temptation of Giving Live Bunnies, Chicks and Other Small Pets to Children for Easter



(Oakland, CA) March 31, 2015 – The East Bay SPCA encourages parents to avoid giving live chicks or bunnies to children as Easter gifts. Each spring, animal shelters brace themselves for an influx of bunnies, chicks and small pets that were surrendered or abandoned after Easter. As

tempting as it is to wake up to find cute, fluffy friends in a child's Easter basket, the adoption of bunnies and small animals warrants the same careful research, consideration and preparation conducted when adopting cats, dogs, and other household pets.

Bunnies have long been depicted as cute symbols of Easter and springtime. German settlers brought that tradition to the United States in the 18th century. From Peter Rabbit to Roger Rabbit to Bugs Bunny, film and television has cast bunnies as silly, fun companions. But potential adopters need to know that, while they are delightful and social creatures, bunnies need to be carefully handled and children-rabbit interactions require supervision. Bunnies can live as long as twelve years, and require socialization, care, chores, and litter training. They also need to be spayed or neutered, just like dogs and cats.

Baby chicks are another popular springtime purchase. It's important to remember that chicks grow into chickens and they can live as long as fifteen years. Chickens require vaccinations, proper oversight, feeding, and shelter. Young chicks require a heated, draft-free brooder until they get their feathers. Furthermore, in some areas in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, it's not even legal to have chickens as pets. Please factor in all of these considerations before making a purchase.

Pets and children can be a wonderful combination. Animals can help teach kids about responsibility and discipline, compassion and love. But families should carefully consider whether a pet fits into their home. The East Bay SPCA urges families to do their research and learn more before making a decision. The [Animal Place](#) website offers a wealth of information about adopting chickens and other rescued farm animals. Families who realize that they are not ready for the responsibility and commitment of a new furry friend might think about treating their children to a self-guided tour of [Animal Place's 600-acre sanctuary](#) in Grass Valley, California. Children will experience the joys of animal interaction while learning more about the care they require.

[About the East Bay SPCA](#)

The East Bay SPCA is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit committed to the welfare of cats and dogs in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Established in 1874, the East Bay SPCA is one of the nation's oldest independent humane organizations and receives no funding from local, state or federal governments, or any national animal welfare organization. The mission of the East Bay SPCA is to eliminate animal cruelty, neglect and overpopulation by providing programs and education that support people and companion animals. Operating three facilities in Oakland and Dublin, the organization offers [adoption centers](#), [spay/neuter surgery centers](#) and [companion animal behavior and training classes](#). The AHAA accredited, full-service [Theodore B. Travers Family Veterinary Clinic](#), is located on the Oakland campus of the East Bay SPCA. For more information visit eastbayspca.org. Find us on [Facebook](#).

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