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Click2Houston.com

Submitted via web portal

To whom it may concern,

We write to you in response to your recent article "[Man's Pet Monkey Goes Bananas for Astros.](#)" Although it may seem like a harmless and cute article, promoting the private ownership of primates is directly condoning primate suffering. Encouraging contact between humans and exotic animals is harmful to all involved. As experts in the field of primate care, we implore you to reconsider promoting such irresponsible treatment of animals.

The owners of pet monkeys claim to be animal lovers, but their "love" causes direct harm. Pat Hales's vervet monkey Sophie is only six months old! She should be being raised by her mother, and instead she is forced to wear human clothes and engage in human activities. She will suffer for the rest of her life, as a result of living in Mr. Hales's home. Additionally, Mr. Hales and those around him will suffer as Sophie grows older, stronger, more inquisitive and more aggressive. "Pet" infant monkeys are a disaster in the making.

Primates are highly social animals that require the company of conspecifics, and infancy is a key time for monkeys to learn and develop species-appropriate behaviors. Sophie is being denied this. Being forced to wear clothing can cause skin ailments and permanent disfigurement. Such abnormal practices create monkeys that grow into physically and mentally unwell individuals prone to self-harm, obsessive compulsions, aggression and depression. How do we know this? We see it every day in the monkeys living in our sanctuaries, many of whom started their lives as pets until their owners were no longer able to keep them, often after a human was injured by their pet primate.

The North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance (NAPSA) is a coalition of ten of the leading primate sanctuaries on the continent. In our sanctuaries, we care for over 730 primates and have personal experience with the sad results of monkeys kept as pets. Please reconsider promoting such harmful and irresponsible treatment of animals in Click2Houston.com.

Sincerely,

Erika Fleury
Program Director