



Photo by Bruce Andre [www.bruceandre.com](http://www.bruceandre.com)

### **Do You Know that Rabbits:**

- Need as much care and attention as dogs and cats.
- Should live indoors, as members of the family.
- Most children lose interest in a live bunny after only a few weeks.
- All bunnies need to be spayed or neutered even when living alone.
- Can learn to use a litter box.
- Are not "low-maintenance" pets.
- Are a poor choice as a pet for children.
- Have a lifespan of 10 years and require as much work as a dog or cat.
- Your home must be bunny-proofed, or bunny will chew cords and furniture.
- Rabbits must be spayed and neutered or they will mark your house with feces and urine.

**So please, stick with a toy stuffed bunny when giving an Easter gift to a child.**

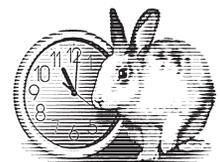
### **Real rabbits require special care and a long term commitment, which is more than a child can provide.**

Every year, many thousands of rabbits are abandoned to shelters or released outdoors (a sure death sentence for a domestic rabbit) often because of misunderstandings on the part of the parents who bought them for their kids.

Rabbits are prey animals by nature. They are physically delicate and fragile, and require specialized veterinary care. Children are naturally energetic, exuberant, and loving. But "loving" to a small child usually means holding, cuddling, carrying an animal around in whatever grip their small hands can manage—precisely the kinds of things that make most rabbits feel insecure and frightened. Rabbits handled in this way will often start to scratch or bite simply out of fear.

Many rabbits are accidentally dropped by small children, resulting in broken legs and backs. Those rabbits who survive the first few months quickly reach maturity. When they are no longer tiny and "cute," kids often lose interest, and the rabbit, who has no voice to remind you he's hungry or thirsty or needs his cage cleaned, is gradually neglected.

Parents, please help. Don't buy on impulse. Make an informed decision by learning about rabbit care first. Consider adopting a rabbit from your local shelter or rescue group. For the rabbit's health and well-being (as well as for your child's) make sure an adult will be the primary caretaker and will always supervise any children in the household who are interacting with the rabbit. Domestic rabbits are inquisitive, intelligent, and very social by nature. A rabbit is a delightful companion animal as long as you remember: he's not a child's toy. He's a real, live, 10-year commitment!



HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY