



Younger pet owners plan to spend less, lose pets in 2022

TIM WALL FEBRUARY 1, 2022

The percentage of millennials and Gen Z concerned how finances will affect their pet expenditures rose in 2021.

Compared to Gen X and baby boomers, younger pet owners worry more that they may need to spend less on pet food and treats in 2022 or change to a cheaper brand. In a November 2021 survey by the [American Pet Products Association](#) (APPA), distinct generational differences arose related to economic issues.

Since early in the pandemic, APPA has surveyed U.S. pet owners about [how COVID-19 influenced pet ownership](#). The percentage of millennials and Gen Z that are concerned how finances will affect their pet expenditures rose in the last survey. That survey was conducted in November 2021 and is detailed in the APPA report "COVID-19 Pulse Study: Pet Ownership During the Pandemic."

"Gen Z and millennials report 38% and 37%, respectively are worried about the expense of having a pet during COVID-19," the report's authors wrote. "The same is true for only 22% of Gen X and just 8% of baby boomers."

That percentage increased for Gen Z and millennials from 24% and 29% respectively in December 2020, numbers that had remained within a few percentage points since the onset of the pandemic.

Millennials and Generation Z may give up pets

What's more, in the latest survey, Gen Z and millennial pet owners dramatically increased their concerns that they will need to give up a pet because of the pandemic. In all age groups during 2020, fewer than 20% of respondents thought they might need to give up a pet. However, by November 2021, the Gen Z and millennial groups had more than doubled. In May 2020, 16% of millennials agreed with the statement, "I may have to give up my pet due to COVID-19," and 14% of Gen Z. In the most recent survey, 30% of Gen Z and 27% of millennials agreed.

APPA analysts didn't discuss what may be causing this generational divide. Younger pet owners may be more likely to work in jobs that require one's physical presence in a facility. Similarly, they may have lower income than older demographic groups.

Despite the difference among age groups and concerns among younger pet owners, in the November 2021 APPA survey, 30% of pet owners stated that they had spend more on pets in the past month. Thirteen percent said they had spent less, while 57% spent the same.

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