Puppies ARE NOT wise gifts

[Article by Dr. Elizabeth Turpel]

Puppies and Christmas sounds like a wonderful childhood fantasy. The reality of a young dog coming into your home can be as stressful as a new born baby from the hospital coming home. A new puppy can involve several middle of the night outings, a rotating three hour schedule, special feedings, nap times, puppy behaviour of chewing and biting, bathroom accidents and care involving much of the adoptive parent's time. Add in the busy schedule that occurs at Christmas time of visiting friends and family, meal preparation, house decorating, shopping, house cleaning, time away from your home visiting and suddenly the responsibility of a puppy becomes very stressful. Believe me taking your puppy that is not toilet trained or still gets car sick to Aunt Zelda's over the holidays is not going to make for a great day.

If you are ready for the time involved and the responsibility of a young child then you are ready to bring a puppy home. Both you and your puppy deserve to have the time to develop a trusting and mutually beneficial lifelong relationship with each other. Thank goodness I can now get my holiday shopping done without thinking that my couch is getting chewed while I am out. ∎

The Welland and District Humane Society also cautions against adopting a pet for Christmas. Although they are very careful and selective in their adoption process and experience very few returns at any time, they still advise people to think carefully about adoption.

The busy Christmas season, according to the WDHS, is often not the time for adoption of a shelter animal. All animals need an opportunity to adapt to their new surroundings and during an activity-filled holiday season there is often not enough time for a new four-legged member of the family. Of course this is not indicative of all family environments and the WDHS will begin the adoption process if the circumstances are favourable.

For the WDHS, finding homes for their animals is their number one priority!