How do Americans feel about pet adoption, and what do they really know about shelter animals? Those were two key questions Best Friends Animal Society hoped to answer through its inaugural “Pet Adoption” survey.

**AMERICANS LOVE PETS!**

95% of Americans agree that owning a pet makes people happier. Only 11% consider themselves pet haters.

**AMERICANS ARE UNCERTAIN ABOUT SHELTER ANIMALS**

While the majority of Americans believe that shelter animals are lovable, companionable and sweet, 65% of Americans feel that shelter animals are poorly behaved, malnourished and unhealthy. In fact, one third (33%) of respondents believe that shelter animals are less desirable than those purchased from breeders. In reality, not only are most shelter animals great family pets, but shelter animals tend to be healthier than those purchased as pets.

**TO ADOPT OR NOT TO ADOPT**

86% of Americans are very likely to recommend that someone adopt a pet from a shelter.

**HAPPY AND HEALTHY?**

Approximately 1/3 of Americans do not consider regular vet check-ups, having their pets spayed or neutered, or regular grooming to be very important to their pets’ health. In fact pets should be seen annually by a veterinarian for physical examinations, vaccines, parasite test, dental check, and any needed bloodwork. Regular grooming helps identify physical changes that could require medical attention.

**BENEFITS OF SPAY/NEUTER?**

4 in 5 believe all cats and dogs should be spayed or neutered (80%). 65% believe all spaying/neutering can improve your pet’s health by reducing the risk of some cancers and infectious diseases, as well as improving behavior.

**YOUNG ADULTS NEED ADOPTION EDUCATION**

Approximately 95% of Americans believe shelter animals are harder to find and harder to afford. However, 15% of the total population do not recognize the benefits of adopting a pet from a rescue organization or shelter.

**BEST FRIENDS’ INAGURAL PET ADOPTION SURVEY**

Best Friends Animal Society worked with Ketchum Global Research & Analytics to design and analyze a phone survey of 1,000 adults 18 and older in the U.S. The survey was fielded between November 15th through 21st, 2012 by Braun Research Inc. and has a margin of error of +/-3.1% at the 95 percent confidence level. The results were weighted to adjust for variation in the sample relating to geographic region, sex, race, Hispanic origin, marital status, age, education and the number of adults in the household. The statistical weights were designed and applied from the United States Census Bureau statistics.