



Dear Socks, Dear Buddy: Kids' Letters to the First Pets

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In a world dominated by video games, voice mail, and television, it's easy to overlook the importance of the written word. If one very important thing parents can do to help their children learn is read to them, then encouraging them to write must run a close second. What better -- and more rewarding -- way to teach a child these invaluable communication skills than through letter writing?

In her warm and engaging text, Mrs. Clinton suggests ways parents can help their children initiate and enjoy the experience of writing and receiving letters, sharing her family's (and pets') experience, and explains how letters to Socks and Buddy are received, sorted, and answered at the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home. Mrs. Clinton gives a brief "pet history" of the White House, from Dolley Madison's parrot and Teddy Roosevelt's children's menagerie to the Bushes' English springer spaniel Millie. She also talks about the ways Socks and Buddy participate in White House life, such as greeting guests and visiting hospitals and nursing homes. Fans of the First Pets will be delighted by a section on their vital statistics (Socks' tail length: 1 foot; Buddy's snout length: 5 inches) and answers to the questions most asked by correspondents ("Do you have room service?").

In *Dear Socks, Dear Buddy*, Mrs. Clinton also shares more than fifty letters children have sent the nation's First Pets, from a simple request for a "paw-tograph" to more exacting notes of good wishes ("I want to give you a big heart, as big as the whole world") and generous advice ("Just because they went on a trip and didn't take you doesn't mean they don't love you any more"). Illustrated with more than eighty photographs of Socks and Buddy on the job and at play in the White House, this book will inspire children to share their ideas and wishes through writing.

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