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Soothing and Healing Through Pet Therapy

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Courtesy of Hospice of Santa Barbara

Therapy animals are well-known for their soothing and healing effects on those in need, so [Hospice of Santa Barbara](#) recently hosted an orientation for volunteers interested in helping current clients and patients of the Hospice. Therapy animals are trained to accept unfamiliar people's petting, and owners accompany their pets on all visits. For people experiencing the effects of a life-threatening illness or who are grieving the death of a loved one, therapy animals can provide a sense of healing and nurture.

Aside from its Pet Therapy program, Hospice of Santa Barbara also helps more than 700 children and adults every month through its free professional counseling and care management services. It also works with children and teens grieving the loss of a loved one on 11 local elementary, middle and high school campuses.

If you are interested in participating in the Pet Therapy program, your pet needs to go through a certification process. For this and other volunteer opportunities, please call Dana Vandermey at 805/563-8820 or click [here](#) for more information.

—Manon Cooper