



Experts Agree...*Fish Work!*

Consumers and Professionals, Doctors and Patients, Students and Teachers—All Cast a Line Into the Stress-Reducing World of Aquarium Fish

(NAPSA)—Aquarium fish may be the latest stress-reducing, calming and decorating trend in offices, schools and medical facilities, according to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association (APPMA), the nation's leading not-for-profit pet trade association that educates consumers about the health benefits associated with pet ownership.

From children's classrooms to office cubicles and dentists' offices to nursing homes, aquariums filled with colorful fish and inventive accessories are making a splash helping students, workers and patients relieve daily stress levels and improve creativity.

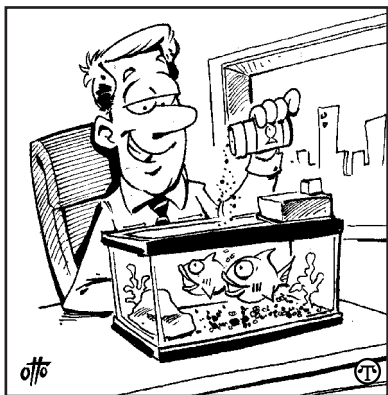
"The soothing motion of swimming, vibrant-colored fish make a fish tank mesmerizing to viewers. There are many therapeutic health benefits that come with watching an aquarium," commented Funda Alp, spokesperson for APPMA. "Viewing aquarium fish is relaxing and has been proven to reduce anxiety levels."

According to APPMA, *Fish Work!* In fact:

- Keeping an aquarium in an office or cubicle contributes to a more creative work environment and provides relief from everyday pressures.

- Aquarium fish displayed in a doctor's office creates a peaceful atmosphere and helps patients to be less anxious while waiting for their appointment. Fish also capture children's attention and keep them occupied until the doctor is ready to see them.

- Alzheimer's Disease patients are better able to relax, focus and finish meals in the presence of an aquarium. Studies show those suffering from the disease are calmer and better able to perform day-to-



day tasks after viewing fish in an aquarium.

- Along with reducing anxiety levels, aquariums placed in classrooms can be learning tools for students. Caring for fish teaches children responsibility, educates them about proper pet care and improves schoolwork in areas including math, science and creative writing.

"Whether children, professionals or patients, we observe a relaxation response when people interact with companion animals," said Dr. Alan Beck, director of the Center for the Human-Animal Bond at Purdue University. "We know that pets bring joy to our daily lives, but companion animals also help lower blood pressure and improve our well-being."

APPMA's 2001-2002 National Pet Owners Survey revealed that nearly 13 million households in the U.S. own aquarium fish. "Because aquarium fish are easy to maintain, they make ideal companions for the workplace and school environments," commented Alp.

For more information about the health benefits of pet ownership, please visit APPMA's "The Pet Owner's Manual" at www.appma.org.