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Howard County Library System
New HiTails Ambassadors Partnership Seeks to Benefit Children and Shelter Animals

ELLIOTT CITY, MD-- HiTails Ambassadors, Howard County Library System's new partnership with Howard County Animal Control and Adoption Center, is working to make shelter animals more adoptable through increased social interaction while also building reading skills and nurturing empathy in children. Participants in the project visit the adoption center and read to the animals awaiting a new home for 20 minutes each week. The project, which piloted in early January, is now in full swing with more than 50 children trained to become reading ambassadors.

The new initiative is open to children ages 6 through 15. A one-hour training session is required prior to the visit to the adoption center, and children must be accompanied by an adult both at the training session and the adoption center. Training sessions include basic instructions about what to do and say when visiting and reading with the animal. Key principles of Choose Civility are stressed in the training.

Once training is complete, the HiTails Ambassadors receive a special pin to wear during their visit to the adoption center. Children choose their books from an on-site selection at the adoption center or may bring a book from home. A yearly celebration is planned to acknowledge participants.

More information about how to become a HiTails Ambassador is available at hclibrary.org.

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