



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 9, 2012

MEDIA CONTACT:
Sarah Dietze, PCI
312-558-1770
sdietze@pcipr.com

Making A Splash With Dolphins!

New Poll Finds Young Adults Eager to Swim with Dolphins

Dolphins have long been the public's favorite aquarium animal, and a new poll shows that, for young adults, having an up close and personal dolphin experience is high on their wish list.

According to the opinion poll released today, 97 percent of young people ages 18 to 24, and 87 percent of those ages 18 to 34, are interested in swimming with dolphins in a safe, legal and permitted environment at a marine life park, aquarium or zoo.

The poll, released by the [Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums](#) and conducted by Harris Interactive[®], also found that 78 percent of Americans with children in the household would like to swim with dolphins.

"It's great to see the huge number of young adults who are eager to swim with dolphins and experience these fun, educational programs," said Marilee Menard, executive director of the Alliance. "Interacting with dolphins in Alliance member parks and aquariums can inspire a lifelong passion and appreciation for the conservation of our oceans and marine mammals."

Alliance members offer the public a variety of compelling marine mammal encounters in a controlled and safe setting, said Menard, who advises people to seek out Alliance-accredited facilities when choosing an interactive program.

"People love dolphins, and so do the trainers, veterinarians, educators and animal care professionals who work at Alliance member facilities. Together, we provide educational experiences, support critical conservation programs and fund research that contribute to the health and protection of wild dolphins and other marine mammals in our oceans," said Menard.

The public also overwhelmingly values Alliance education programs. The Harris Poll found that 94 percent of respondents agree that marine life parks, aquariums and zoos

provide guests with valuable information about the importance of oceans and the animals that live there.

Below are some additional findings from the new research:

- 97 percent of respondents agree that marine life parks, aquariums and zoos are important because they educate children about marine mammals – animals that children might not have the opportunity to see in the wild.
- 94 percent of people agree that children specifically are more likely to be concerned about animals if they learn about them at marine life parks.
- 94 percent agree that visiting a marine life park, aquarium or zoo can inspire conservation action that can help marine mammals and their natural environment.
- 93 percent agree that many of the successes to save endangered or declining species are at least in part a result of work done in marine life parks, aquariums and zoos.
- 91 percent agree that seeing a marine mammal at a marine life park, aquarium or zoo fosters a connection to the animal.
- 89 percent agree that you can learn more about marine mammals at a marine life park, aquarium or zoo than in a school classroom.
- 88 percent agree that you can learn about animals at marine parks in a way that can't be replicated by watching film or TV programs.
- 40 percent of Americans (about 125 million people) have visited a marine park, aquarium or zoo in the last 12 months, including 56 percent of households with children (about 20 million households).

Methodology

Harris Interactive® conducted the study online on behalf of the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums between Aug. 29 and Sept. 6, 2011 among a nationally

representative quantitative survey of 1,011 U.S. adults ages 18 and over. The data were weighted where necessary to be representative of the total U.S. adult population on the basis of age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income. The propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

The Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums is an international association of marine life parks, aquariums, zoos, research facilities, and professional organizations dedicated to the highest standards of care for marine mammals and to their conservation in the wild through public education, scientific study, and wildlife presentations.

###