

# ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE of BOSTON



\*\*\*MEDIA ADVISORY/PHOTO OP\*\*\*

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## **ARL Adopted Rabbit Impacting Autistic Teens' Everyday Life** *Owner Having "Joey" Certified to be a Therapy Animal*

Therapy animals come in all shapes, sizes -- and species. Joey, a two-year-old rabbit was adopted from the Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) this past spring by 17-year-old Kelsey Fitzgerald, and he has made a tremendous impact on her life.

Kelsey has been diagnosed with high-functioning autism, as well as anxiety and depression. She says Joey has not only helped her in her daily life, she has also witnessed his therapeutic powers when visiting her grandfather who is suffering from dementia. Now she wants to share his healing abilities with others and is in the process of having him certified as a therapy animal.

"I'm a huge animal lover, and just having Joey to hold provides therapy for me," Kelsey said. "He's helped my confidence, and socialize with other people, something I could not have done previously."

Dressed in a sweater, Joey goes everywhere with Kelsey, and even has his own Instagram page ([https://www.instagram.com/the\\_amazing\\_adventures\\_of\\_joey/](https://www.instagram.com/the_amazing_adventures_of_joey/)). She brings him to a local pet store, lets people hold him and ask questions about him. His abilities and the process of having him certified have also helped the 17-year-old answer the age old question – What am I going to do when I grow up?

"What Joey's done for me, I know I want to work with animals in some way," Kelsey said.

Joey and other rabbits like him can make excellent pets, especially for those who don't have the space or time for a dog or cat.

**Here are 5 reasons why animal lovers should consider adopting a rabbit:**

1. Bunnies spend the majority of their day quietly inside their cage, making them the **perfect companions for apartment dwellers**.
2. Cottontails can be **trained to use a litter box**, so you won't have to rush home from work to let them out.
3. Hares need **minimal exercise** every day, so they require less attention than cats or dogs.
4. Rabbits are **curious, friendly, and will entertain you for hours** with their silly antics.
5. Hop-a-longs **keep themselves tidy** and are all about "clean eating", snacking on salad, hay, and carrots as treats.

**For photos of Kelsey and Joey, click the link below:**

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/42hlbxo3dhvyv1s/AAATfP\\_ZVKkafIQTUmE7rVyAa?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/42hlbxo3dhvyv1s/AAATfP_ZVKkafIQTUmE7rVyAa?dl=0)

**ABOUT THE ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF BOSTON:**

***The Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) is an unwavering champion for animals in need, committed to keeping them safe and healthy in habitats and homes.*** Founded in 1899, ARL provides high quality veterinary care, adoption, and rescue services; while also confronting the root causes of animal cruelty and neglect through innovative community programs, police investigations, and public advocacy. In 2016, ARL served more than 17,800 animals throughout Massachusetts. ARL is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. We receive no government funding and rely solely on the generosity of individuals to support programs and services that help animals in need.

For more information please visit us online at [www.arlboston.org](http://www.arlboston.org); and be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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