

Survey: People know much about chimps

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A Humane Society of the United States survey determined that people know more than they thought about chimpanzees, including the fact they are endangered.

The survey of 1,500 people, however, showed few knew the animals' lifespan is 60 years.

About 90 percent of the participants initially said they knew little or nothing about chimpanzees. However, more than 70 percent correctly responded that chimps can use sign language, use tools, count objects and have strong familial bonds. And, when shown photos of animals, including macaques, gorillas, baboons and chimps, 75 percent correctly identified the chimps.

"We are pleasantly surprised and excited about the knowledge that the humans have about chimps," said Humane Society spokeswoman Kathleen Conlee. "Our goal is to turn that knowledge into power to help chimpanzees who are subjected to harmful research and have been confined in laboratories for decades."

The Humane Society said approximately 1,300 chimpanzees live in nine U.S. laboratories today, with nearly half of them owned by the U.S. government. The chimps might spend their entire lives being used in experiments.

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