

Make A Difference...Be A Foster Parent

Q: Why a Foster Care Program?

A: A crowded shelter housing a wide variety of animals is not the best environment for the health and well-being of every animal. Very young puppies and kittens need time for their developing immune systems to respond to vaccines that prevent diseases while pets recovering from injury or illness need rest and supervision. Similarly, an animal presented at the shelter might be too timid for the kennel environment, or housebroken to the point where life in a dog run creates considerable stress. Such animals, though they are potentially excellent pets in the home, simply do not do well in the kennel. Foster care provides a needed transition to adoptable age or status by maintaining human contact on an individual basis in a home environment. In short, foster care helps make animals with special needs more adoptable.

Q: What animals need foster care?

A: Puppies, kittens, pregnant animals near term, injured or recovering animals and others who are not well-suited to kennel life are examples of animals with special needs.

Q: How does the Foster Care program work?

A: Foster caregivers make a contract agreement with the Humane Society for temporary care of the animal(s). The agreement is based on the animal's needs, may or may not define a specific time frame for the foster care, and spells out responsibilities of both yourself and the Humane Society. You shelter and care for the animal; and agree to take it to the vet for scheduled vaccinations, etc. The Humane Society remains the owner of the animal, and it comes back to the shelter at the end of the foster care period, if a certain return date was agreed upon in the contract agreement.

Q: Is the animal "up for adoption" while in my foster care?

A: The animal's adoption status depends both on the animals and on your agreement with the Humane Society. Young animals are not adopted until weaned, of course, and there is a 7-day waiting period for all animals after arrival at the Humane Society before an animal becomes available for adoption, as to allow any prior owner to claim their dog or cat. However, if the animal is of adoptable age and adoptable status, they will still be up for adoption while in your care.

Q: How can the pet find a home if potential owners do not see it at the shelter?

A: Photos and descriptions of pets in foster homes may be on displayed at the kennel. In addition, animals in foster homes will be listed as adoptable animals on our petfinder page.

Q: If someone wants to adopt a pet in foster care, how does it work?

A: Adoption takes place through the Humane Society, so anyone wanting to adopt a pet in your care must make arrangements at the shelter. The Humane Society staff will contact you to make arrangements for interested people to see the animal at your convenience.

Q: Do I need special facilities?

A: Not necessarily special, but facilities appropriate for the situation are needed. For example, a restricted area such as a fenced yard or a pen is needed for some pets, but walks on a leash may work well for others.

Q: Who buys food and toys for fostered animals?

A: The foster parent is responsible for buying food, toys, etc for the foster animal while in it is in their care.

Q: What about veterinary care needs and costs?

A: The Humane Society maintains a health program for vaccinations, worming, etc and any other required health care. You would be responsible for taking the animal to the vet for scheduled care, but the Humane Society pay the bill.

Q: What if behavior problems of the pet or changes in my home make the foster care arrangement impossible?

A: Things happen. In unresolvable problems occur, contact the shelter and other arrangements will be made.

Q: Can foster caregivers adopt a fostered pet?

A: You can adopt if you want (since the Humane Society goal is to find animals good homes and we'd be crazy to say no), but is it important to remember that for very practical reasons, you just cannot keep every animal (your mother told you this). The adoption fee will need to be paid if you decide to adopt the animal.

The Facts About Purebred Dogs In Shelters

Choosing the right dog for your family and lifestyle takes time and research. Many potential pet owners are torn between the longing to rescue an animal from a shelter and the desire to own a purebred pet. It is possible, however, to fill both needs by visiting your local humane shelter or rescue organization.

"Animal shelters are a great source for purebred pets," said Betsy McFarland of The Humane Society of the United States. "Not only do they have a wonderful selection of adult animals for adoption, but they also have kittens and puppies. In fact, 25% to 30% of the dogs in shelters are purebred."

The purebred facts

Before considering a purebred pet, it's important to understand what the term means. Purebreds conform to a specific "breed standard," offering the advantage of knowing what general physical and behavioral characteristics-- including size, appearance, and temperament -- that breed is likely to have.

However, purchasing a purebred is not a guarantee of good health and temperament. The only thing the "papers" from purebred dog and cat registry organizations certify is that there is information regarding the lineage and identity of the pet. Purebred papers are also not an assurance that your pet will be exactly like his breed profile.

Benefits of shelter adoption

Shelters want to be sure that the adoption is permanent, so they will provide lots of support in the adoption process. Shelter counselors will assist you in determining which type or breed will be best for your family's lifestyle. Many shelters also provide follow-up assistance, such as pet parenting and dog-training classes, medical services, and behavior counseling. If you prefer, they can refer you to providers of these services.

Shelter adoption fees vary, but are much less than a breeder's or retail pet store's purchase price. Additionally, if you adopt your pet from a shelter, he has most likely already been vaccinated, dewormed, and spayed or neutered, saving you hundreds of dollars in veterinary expenses. A growing number of shelters now microchip pets as well.

Try a breed rescue group

An excellent source of purebred animals is a breed rescue group. These organizations are usually run by local or national breed clubs, or dedicated individuals who are advocates for a particular breed.

Good rescuers will try to match each applicant with the appropriate dog, so be ready to answer a lot of questions about your home and lifestyle. Most rescue groups require an application to be completed by potential adopters before even meeting a pet.

In general, rescue dogs are more than six months old and are housetrained. They often end up as rescues because families were not prepared for the temperament or care of the particular type of pet. Many dogs are placed in rescue when their original owners are unable to care for them due to financial or lifestyle change or illness.

Adoption strategy

If you decide to adopt from a shelter or rescue, don't be surprised or discouraged if there are no animals available on your first visit. Speak with a counselor about your choice of pet, and have your name put on a waiting list. The shelter will call you when an animal matching your preference becomes available.

To learn more about purebred rescue, visit the AKC website at www.akc.org/breeds/rescue.cfm. Petfinder (www.petfinder.com) also features a searchable database of over 100,000 animals that need homes from over 5,000 animal shelters and adoption organizations across the United States.

SPOTLIGHT ON:



**#239 George-Sponsored
Tabby - Grey**

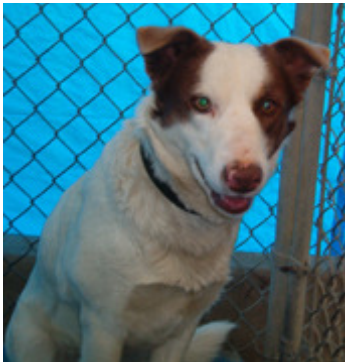
"My name is George and I'm a fat kitty who was brought out to the shelter after hanging around on North Main Street for a couple of weeks. I'm a lazy boy and I'd just love to be the newest member of your family. Please come out and visit with me. I promise you'll fall in love!" Thank you to an anonymous donor, who sponsored a portion of George's adoption fee. Now he can go home at a reduced rate!

**#221 Tom-Sponsored
Domestic Short Hair - orange and white**

"My name is Tom, and I'm a pretty kitty who arrived at the shelter on December 10th, after spending the last couple of weeks over on Northwood Loop. It was getting so cold outside, so I was kinda happy to have come out here. At least I'm warm now, and I don't have to scrounge around for food either. I just really hope somebody comes out to adopt me soon. A family of my own! What a great Christmas gift that would be!" Thank you to Lora Woods, who sponsored a portion of Tom's adoption fee. Now he can go home at a reduced rate!



**#194 Brandi-Sponsored
Border Collie, Shepherd Mix**



"Hi. My name is Brandi. Don't you think I'm pretty? And I'm a real sweetheart too. I still don't know how this whole internet thing works. But the girl who took my pictures told me she was going to put me on the internet and then somebody would come adopt me. I didn't really like that flashy thing, but I think I took pretty good pictures anyway. I came to the shelter after hanging around down on Herndon Road for a couple of weeks. If you'd like to adopt me, please come on out." Thank you to an anonymous donor, who sponsored a portion of Brandi's adoption fee. Now she can go home at a reduced rate!

**#208 Polly
Beagle**

"Hi. My name is Polly and I'm a little bitty beagle girl who is looking for a new home. I'm only about three years old and I love kids. I love other dogs too. Right now, I'm sharing my kennel with three other little ones and we just play all day and snuggle up all night. If you would like me to come and live with you, just come on out to the shelter and see me!"



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*"We can't save every
animal in the world...
but we can give the world
to every animal we save!"*

We want to take a moment to thank the many employees and volunteers that work so hard each and every week to make the shelter life a little easier for our orphans, and those who take time out of their busy schedules to work adoption events, fundraisers, and help with media relations to spread the word to try to find homes for each animal that comes through our doors. The lives of these dogs and cats depend on a handful of devoted supporters.

If you would like to volunteer at the shelter or at our adoption events, please contact Donna Callahan.

Thanks for the support from our local community and animal-loving citizens, we have been able to have 138 animals spayed or neutered in the past four months! Assuming that each of these pets would have had an average of five babies, that means that 690 unwanted pets will not be brought into this world, and into our shelter! Wow! We still have a little money left in our spay/neuter assistance account, so if you know someone who needs to have their pet fixed, please remind them to pick up an application at the shelter, on the blue Humane Society board in the pet section at Wal-Mart, or on our website at www.andersonky.petfinder.com!