LIFE HACKS

Kids Practice Reading to Shy Shelter Dogs at the Missouri Humane Society

By bestfolkmedicine · 08/10/2021 · 2 min read



At the Missouri Humane Society, children help shelter pups learn socialization in the most unique way. Namely, the kids practice reading and also help the shy dogs to socialize in the mutually beneficial program known as the Shelter Buddies Reading Program.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(122); });

In the program, the children read to a non-judgmental audience and help adjust the anxious or shy shelter dogs to human presence.

Beneficially-Mutual Program for Kids & Shelter Dogs

According to the assistant director of education at the Missouri Humane Society, JoEllyn Klepacki, they started the program for two reasons.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(130); });
One is because shelter dogs struggle with a lot of anxiety and stress and they wanted to do something soothing for them and also help them get adopted faster.

The other is the number of kids in their area who're engaged and often ask how they can help and make a difference.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(131); });
The children are ages six through 15 and each of them go through a training program where they're taught to understand the perspective of shelter dogs and how to read the body language of the dogs.

After completing this 10-hour training, the kids can take their favorite books to the shelter or borrow one from the shelter's animal-related books.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(132); });
Getting the Dogs Used to the Front of the Kennel Is Crucial

According to Klepacki, the anxious dogs in the shelter, before the children's reading, were mostly the ones who would stay at the back of the kennel, all scared.

The purpose of the reading is to make the shy dogs come to the front by the time the kids finish the book or a few of them. Klepacki also added that they're aware that the dogs who approach the front of the kennel have a higher chance of adoption.

ezstandalone.cmd.push(function () { ezstandalone.showAds(133); });
This is why they're also doing the reading project to increase the timid dogs' chance of adoption. When the dog comes to the front of the kennel, the children pass them treats, positively reinforcing their attitude.

The difference is already visible and for Klepacki, it’s really amazing.

Sources:

ABC NEWS

TIME

Read online: https://bestfolkmedicine.com/2021/10/kids-practice-reading-to-shy-shelter-dogs-at-the-missouri-humane-society/
Downloaded on 22/11/2026

DISCLAIMER: We do not provide medical advice and nothing contained herein shall be construed as medical advice. The contents such as text, comments, graphics, images, videos and other content contained on this site are for informational purposes only. Statements on this website have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration, and are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. Always consult your personal physician before starting any fitness or exercise program or changing dietary habits. The content of this site is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. It is not a substitute for a medical exam, nor does it replace the need for services or counsel provided by medical professionals.