



Rondout Valley Kennels, Inc.

Pet Lodging  Training / Behavior  Adoptions & Education

For Shelter Workers



How can learning about dog behavior and training benefit your shelter?

Many dogs that are surrendered to animal shelters have either never been trained, or training has been attempted but has failed. Often these dogs are perceived by the owner to have a behavior problem that they do not know how to solve and no longer will tolerate. Behavior problems do not magically go away while a dog is sheltered. In fact, many behavior problems are aggravated by being sheltered or kenneled, so that a dog may be adopted and returned a number of times. It's not always "bad", uncaring, uncommitted people surrendering "good" dogs, but frustrated and misinformed people returning problematic or difficult dogs. Learning more about temperament and behavior problems can help frustrated owners deal more effectively with their pets BEFORE the situation gets so bad the owner wants to give up. Learning more about dog behavior can help match prospective adopters more accurately with appropriate dogs and can help the shelter identify true problem dogs.

1. Learning about behavior and training can give you the knowledge you need to successfully assess and re-home the dogs in your shelter. Counseling prospective adopters about potential behavior problems and ways to avert trouble spots can make a difference between a successful permanent placement or a return.
2. Understanding behavior problems, their treatment, management, and cure, can make shelter workers more empathetic and sympathetic towards adopters and people considering surrendering. What often seems like irresponsibility or a lack of commitment may actually be a frustrated pet owner who has not yet received valid, effective advice.
3. The animal shelter should be a full service resource for the community. If the public would turn to the shelter for behavior and training advice and not just as a last resort before surrendering a dog, the shelter's image would reflect better in the public eye and would be given a new respect and authority in the community.