Welfare Considerations in Rehoming Breeding Dogs

Why rehome?

It is the responsible, ethical choice that the public expects

Candace Croney



Challenges to Rehoming Success

- Unanticipated health care costs
- Global fearfulness
 - * Lack of socialization
- Lack of training
- Housebreaking challenges
- Finicky eating

Socialization= gradual, controlled, gentle exposure to various environmental stimuli (people, things, animals, places, and experiences) that results in a positive experience

Teaches what is safe and unsafe, appropriate behavioral responses, and social skills.

Lifelong socialization is the key to preventing problems related to fear, arousal or anxiety.

Setting Dogs up for Rehoming Success: Do they have what they need?

- Space
 - * Complex, indoor/outdoor
- Social interactions
 - * People, other dogs
- Exercise
 - * Outdoor yard, leash walks, sports
- Enrichment
 - * Toys, chew items, scents, sounds
- Training
 - * Leash walk
 - * Basic commands (sit, come)
- Ongoing socialization
 - * People, places, objects, sounds

Is this dog a candidate for rehoming?

Factors to Consider:

- Age
- Welfare status
 - * Is the dog healthy?
 - * Does the dog have any genetic issues?
 - * Does the dog have any behavioral issues?
- What training and transitioning is needed?
 - * Low stress handling
 - * Acclimation to home environment
 - * Positive, reward-based training
 - * Social facilitation via other dogs

Consider individual preference for other dogs



Transition for retirement

Re-assess prior to rehoming decision

Transition for rehoming

Special Needs of Retired Breeding Dogs

- Physical health monitoring
- Behavioral support
- One on one positive caretaker interactions
- Secure resting area
- Positive, reward-based training





Transitioning to Homes

- Social facilitation/stress buffering via other dogs
 - * Consider individual preference for other dogs
- Knowledgeable, prepared rehabilitators and owners
- Low stress handling
- Acclimation to home environment
 - * Ideal to simulate in kennel design

Implementing a Retirement Plan

Assess dog in different areas of facility

Identify retirement location

Determine if candidate for rehoming

Assume dogs will need social support

Consider pairadoptions where feasible

 Dogs should be stable, familiar and compatible

Euthanasia decisions should not be made on the basis of convenience.

Establish criteria:

 Severe, poor prognosis for physical or behavioral health issues that result in ongoing poor quality of life

Take Home Messages

- Successful retirement & rehoming is difficult
 - * Requires planning and collaboration
- Set dogs up for success early
 - * Assess dogs early and often using criteria for both retirement and rehoming