

## ***Before You Adopt a Project POOCH Dog – Here Are Some Things To Think About...***

**WE HOPE YOU DO** and we are glad that you are thinking about sharing your home with a dog from Project POOCH.

Unfortunately, it's been our experience that sometimes people think they want a dog but after a while they change their minds and bring the dog back to us. This is difficult for everybody – for the people who thought they were ready to adopt and found they were not, for the youth in the program who care deeply about the dogs they train (and who often have issues about abandonment and rejection based on their own experiences), and especially for the dogs in need of a permanent bond with a human and a “forever home.”

Before you visit the kennel, before you pick out a dog, before you pay the \$195 adoption fee, we ask that you seriously consider the following:

- **Adopting a dog is a long-term commitment** of 10-20 years
- **Adopting a dog will be a continuing expense.** In addition to the initial adoption fee, can your budget afford dog food, toys, grooming and medical treatment? Normally you can expect veterinary care for your dog to cost several hundred dollars a year, but if the dog develops a serious medical problem, the cost can be higher.
- **Adopting a dog means including the dog in your family** and life planning. If you decide to move to another city, are you willing to take the dog with you and find a new home that will also accommodate your pet?
- **Adopting a dog means providing daily activity and exercise.** If the people in your family are too busy or too tired to take the dog for a walk every day, the dog may develop behavior problems. It's trite but true, “A good dog is a tired dog.”
- **Adopting a dog means providing both discipline and affection.** Project POOCH dogs have been trained and earned their Canine Good Citizen Certificates. But if no one maintains and reinforces their training, the good habits they've learned may be forgotten. Likewise, dogs need affection and attention. Ignoring and/or sending them to live in a backyard are forms of animal neglect.
- **Adopting a dog means that everybody in the family shares the commitment.** Are all of you equally willing to feed, exercise and take care of the dog? If a new baby is born, will the family dog suddenly

become an intrusive nuisance? If your teenager leaves to attend college, will the family dog suddenly become the “backyard dog”? What about your other pets – are you sure that they will accept the new dog?

Different dogs have different needs. Some are high-energy and require vigorous exercise and a sense of purpose, while others are low energy and perfectly content to lead the life of a “couch potato”. When you come to the Project POOCH Kennels, we will ask you to complete a Meet-Your-Match Adoption Survey from the ASPCA to help determine what personality type dog will be most compatible with you and your lifestyle.

If you find a Project POOCH dog that you like and that likes you, we will bring the dog for a home visit to give you (and the dog) an opportunity to see if it fits in with the rest of your family, including your family pets.

We think it is well worth your while to take your time to thoroughly discuss and carefully consider before agreeing to take one of our dogs to be your dog “til death do you part.”