

Your Pet May Become Stressed at the Shelter!

Imagine yourself walking into a noisy room in which you can smell the stress and feel it in your bones. You are locked inside a cage with hundreds of dogs barking constantly, day and night. You are scared, so you coil up in a small bed, barely moving. Because nobody has time for you, you spend twenty hours or more inside that small enclosure, until someone else decides whether you should be spared or thrown into the trash— literally.

Today, we live in a disposable society in which we waste everything— food, clothes, money... We even throw away what some consider to be family members— dogs, cats, guinea pigs, rabbits... We either dump them at someone else's house, or we dump them at the local shelter. Worse, some of us even dump animals on the streets.

At the shelter, many animals succumb to stress. They circle around their cages, they jump up into the air the minute someone comes who might possibly take them out, and some even begin to self-mutilate, leaving wounds all over their legs and other places on their bodies. They chew at themselves for hours on end, because they have nothing to do. That, or they rub against the cage so many times that they cut open the skin on their faces. Some also chew on the cage wires for hours on end and end up losing their teeth.

Others fare worse. They lash out at any person who comes near their cage with a loud bark and a full mouth of gnashing teeth. These often have no chance at adoption at large city shelters or even some smaller ones. Most of these may be rehabilitated, but most shelters will not take the chance to save them when there are many others they consider more worthy of saving (not that I agree.) Some become not only kennel aggressive but aggressive in general due to the frustration of being barred up for most of the day. These are usually automatically given the death sentence.

Do you really blame them, however? First, they were abandoned in some way. Some never even had an owner to begin with. Others were either taken from their family from a situation in which they were abused. **Stress can happen to even the animals that were treated the best, however.** Can you imagine having to be confined to a tiny bedroom for over twenty hours per day? Some animals are there for months. **Do you honestly want to force your beloved pet into that situation?**

Large breeds do the worst, of course, in the kennel environment. Those that need a lot of exercise are not able to get nearly as much as they truly need. Sometimes, they aren't even walked once a day, and when they are, they often do not get the length of time they need.

Many small breeds also do not do well in kennel situations. Many become cage aggressive. Many smaller breeds need plenty of exercise, sometimes as much as large dogs.

At most shelters, the staff and volunteers do not nearly have as much time to give over 300 animals quality walks each day. It's not their fault that so many people choose to throw their pet away. They try their best, but there is only so much that they can do.

A large percentage of the animals surrendered to shelters actually lose their lives, even the healthiest and most even-tempered ones, as well as the youngest ones.

This is why I beg you to exhaust every, single option possible before surrendering your best friend to an animal shelter.

Also consider volunteering your time to walks dogs and interact with the other animals. They need you, and you will be helping them get adopted. You can also take pictures and videos of them, which will also help them get adopted.

- Author unknown

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