

LIVING IN A SHELTER FROM A DOG'S POINT OF VIEW.

How does a dog end up in a shelter?. About 85% of the dogs that come to Sammie's Friends are picked up as strays, by a member of the public. These dogs have most likely been dumped out by someone who no longer wants them or cannot take care of them. They have done nothing wrong, they just no longer have a home. About 15% of the dogs are reclaimed by an owner and no one ever comes for the others.

A dog arrives at the shelter, usually with someone they don't know and then they are scanned for a microchip and vaccinated and looked over for injuries or any signs of identification by someone else they don't know. Next they enter the kennels, usually the other dogs bark. This can be scary for young or shy dogs. Some dogs just roll with it. Next they find their new home, which is a kennel with a door and they only come out when someone lets them out.

There is not much to do in this kennel but sleep and play with a toy that is given to them. There is no one in the kennel with them much of the time, so they must play by themselves.

If you are a dog and you have the unfortunate experience of being homeless the best place you could be is Sammie's Friends. There are over 150 volunteers at Sammie's Friends, about half of them tending to the dogs. Each dog gets walked twice a day. This is an opportunity to get a little exercise and fresh air. It is also an opportunity to interact with a lot of different people which will help in the adoption process. Approximately three times a week the dog will get to go out in the play yard with our doggie behaviorist and play with other dogs. That's a lot of fun. We encourage volunteers to check out a dog, like you would a book at the library, and go for a long hike or swim in the river or to Mc Donald's for a burger. We even had one dog who ran with the cross country team at the high school.

Some of the dogs remain at the shelter for a long time waiting for their turn to be adopted. As hard as we try to keep them happy while they are there some of them get depressed, some act out and get cranky. We know this will not make them adoptable so

we have to step it up and find something interesting for them to do. Lying in a kennel for most of the day with very little to do is boring. Dogs crave stimulation where they can use their bodies and their minds. Most dogs roll with it a lot better than us humans would. We expect a lot out of them.

We do our best to enrich the lives of the dogs at the shelter during their stay. We cry happy tears when they get adopted and get to go have a happy life. Please make our doggies happy and come and adopt them. Our goal is that no dog stays in the shelter longer than 2 months. Even that is a long boring piece of time. Isn't it?

***Cheryl Wicks
Co-Founder and President
Sammie's Friends***