

Why adopt from shelters? The Truth behind Puppy Mills.

Imagine your child in a squalid closet with 15 other kids. There's no heat in the winter, no air conditioning in the summer and no room to exercise or socialize.

We have all been there, standing outside the glass window, or inside the mall cooing at the adorable puppies. As the kids pull you through the pet shop door you have seconds to decide. Do I succumb and purchase this puppy knowing that I could give him a special home, or do I explain to the kids that pet store puppies are bred in horrible environments and if people stop buying them, breeders will go out of business.

Where do pet store puppies come from anyway? They are bred in commercial production facilities known as "puppy mills." Puppy mills typically make money by shortchanging the physical and psychological development of an animal. "Puppy mills" are facilities where dogs are bred to maximize profits at the lowest possible costs. Puppy mill breeders often spend as few dollars as possible on the care and welfare of the puppies. Many breeders will keep puppies in small crates no bigger than the size of their own bodies with minimal food or veterinarian care. Females are bred as young as six months and as often as physically possible until they die.

What can you do to put puppy mills out of business?

- Educate your family, friends and neighbors about pet store puppies and the deplorable breeding practices involved.
- Write your legislator(s) or congressman to ask that stricter laws be adopted to govern the breeding of puppies and that existing laws be enforced.
- Use the media to expose puppy mill conditions. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper, contact your local TV or radio station to publicize the horrific breeding conditions.
- Work to enact a local ordinance that would limit the number of animals a breeder can sell.
- Distribute brochures and flyers to expose puppy mill conditions.

The more difficult it is for a pet store to turn a profit, the more likely they will quit selling live animals. Remember, reputable breeders do not make money by selling puppies, and no reputable breeder would ever sell their puppies to a pet store. If you want a pet and can take care of it, why not adopt? If puppies and companion animals were adopted from shelters or rescue organizations, puppy mills would no longer be able to earn a profit and would cease to exist.