

I have also seen these same dogs some months on – living a good life. One that we had in our care just over 12 months ago who displayed all of the behaviours outlined above is now a happy and confident dog who is very bonded with her family.

I observed her at Dogs Day Out at Port Elliott last weekend and saw her:

- Interact happily with other dogs and people
- Tail held high and wagging furiously
- Head up and gaze open
- Relaxed body posture
- Run to her Dad and sit by his side
- Sit next to a little boy in wheelchair and interact with him – licking his hand as he patted her

She has overcome fear of the car, fear of new people and fear of new places. She loves her life with her new family, she feels secure, safe and loved. She goes to Doggy Daycare once a week, enjoys daily walks and loves to run randomly and happily and engage in games with other dogs. This hasn't happened overnight – it has taken 12 months of love, patience, persistence and effort to bring her to this point and she is still developing. Does she still worry about things – yes she does. Should she have been euthanised because she'd never been a family dog and didn't know how to – I think the outcome speaks for itself.

The internet is full of similar stories. There are groups in the US that very successfully run rehabilitation programs for ex puppy mill dogs as they call them. They have programs, manuals, books and resources to work with suitable and vetted foster care families to achieve success with these dogs who have not had a good start or a good life.

We have many troubled and maladaptive children in our community who have experienced appalling living conditions, dysfunctional homes and a lack of love or appropriate interactions with others. As a consequence they have a range of challenging behaviours and often have lasting psychological issues. We don't however put them down because that is the easiest and most expedient outcome. Why should it be any different for animals – particularly animals who more frequently share their lives living side by side with humans?

It may be that even after intensive rehabilitation and experimentation with a drug regime, that these dogs can not live in a domestic home environment, but I do not believe they have been given adequate time or opportunity to be able to categorically state that, at this point. They have been sold short and let down by the very Organisation whose primary purpose it is to care for them. What exactly is the point of removing them from their environment, putting them back into the very same sort of environment (without the neglect and filth) and then arbitrarily killing them for the very same issue they were saved for?

I think the RSPCA has lost its way. I think its lost sight of its primary charter to: care for all animals great and small.

I see an overinflated focus on marketing campaigns and a constant beseechment to the public to donate, donate, donate. I note from the RSPCA SA Annual Report of 2017-18 that 26% of the Organisation's expenditure was spent on marketing. Even more disturbing though is that \$3,339, 714 was spent on fundraising/marketing for an apparent return of \$3,344,639. That's a lot of effort and money to outlay for a net result of \$4,925.