

Puppies Aren't Products

A Best Friends campaign to expose the connection between puppy mills and pet stores, and encourage adoption

Right now, millions of adult dogs are suffering on the “production line” in America’s puppy mills. Their sole purpose is to breed and make money for their owners. They live in tiny, wire-bottomed cages, in squalid conditions, with little human contact and often no veterinary care. It is no life for man’s best friend.

Meanwhile, roughly 11,000 animals are euthanized in America’s shelters every day. There’s something wrong with this picture.

The goal of Best Friends’ Puppies Aren’t Products campaign is to create a world of No More Homeless Pets by fighting against puppy mills and irresponsible breeding. Our campaign team saves lives by holding peaceful demonstrations at pet stores that sell puppies from mills, educating consumers about the inhumane conditions in puppy mills, encouraging people to adopt rather than buy pets, and advocating for better laws to combat puppy mills.

Please join us in working toward a day when all of America’s pets have what they deserve: good care, safety and love from a family of their own.



How is Best Friends fighting puppy mills?

Education: Educating consumers about the horrors of puppy mills increases awareness and decreases the demand for puppy mill puppies. When consumers learn the truth about puppy mills and pet stores that sell them, they make informed choices. We reach thousands of people through our peaceful demonstrations, action kits, printed materials, volunteer-staffed booths at events around the country, humane education in schools, public service announcements, podcasts and websites. Best Friends action kits give you the tools to help stop pet stores from selling puppy mill dogs in your community, making it possible to reach more people than ever.

Decrease in puppy sales in pet stores: Most dogs sold in pet stores are from puppy mills. In 2008, Best Friends launched its first Puppies Aren’t Products local program in Los Angeles, aimed at stopping the sale of puppies from irresponsible breeders in stores and increasing adoptions. We advocate switching to a humane model, encouraging stores to stop selling pets and to have rescued pets available in the store for adoption. Best Friends targets the issue from multiple angles: We conduct peaceful demonstrations in front of pet stores, investigate puppy suppliers, and work with local governments to clamp down on puppy mills.

In less than a year, Best Friends has:

- Helped close or convert five pet stores to the “Adopt, Don’t Buy” humane model
- Assisted with removing nearly 200 dogs from a puppy mill in Los Angeles County
- Organized talks with Los Angeles city and county officials to overhaul puppy mill and pet store regulations
- Hosted peaceful demonstrations at puppy stores around Los Angeles to educate consumers about where dogs sold in pet stores come from

As of April 2009, the Puppies Aren’t Products campaign has expanded to include two more cities: Las Vegas and New York. Best Friends holds peaceful demonstrations at one or more

stores every weekend in each of the three cities until the targeted store agrees to change to a humane business model, or they decide to close.

Pup My Ride: Through Pup My Ride, a lifesaving transport program, over 1,000 small dogs facing euthanasia in Los Angeles shelters have been transported to areas where small dogs are in high demand. In 2009, the program is expanding to move cast-off, unwanted breeding dogs from Midwest puppy mills to New York, where they are placed with no-kill rescue groups and shelters to find their forever homes. In the first year alone, an estimated 800 dogs facing certain death in puppy mills will be transported. Education will be a strong component, with every adopter learning about the issue and how the choice to adopt helps stop puppy mills.

Puppy mill busts and legislation: When possible, Best Friends helps prosecutors, state departments of agriculture, sheriff's departments and humane societies to close the worst puppy mills. We have helped thousands of dogs get out of puppy mills in several states. In addition to closing puppy mills, Best Friends works with state, city and county governments to better regulate and, in some cases, forbid puppy mills. With the help of our partners and members, Best Friends is doing this work in many states.

Collaboration with others: Best Friends employees work with people around the country to fight puppy mills. Here are some of the ways we do this:

- Assisting groups with closing down or prosecuting puppy mills when violations are found
- Promoting other groups' events, protests and petitions through our website
- Calling on Best Friends members for help during rescue situations
- Helping individuals report suspected illegal puppy mills to the proper local authorities
- Helping organizations find proper placement for dogs removed from puppy mill busts
- Giving funds to organizations for specific projects or cases

How can you support Puppies Aren't Products?

- Never buy a puppy online or in a pet store or from classified ads.
- Adopt your next dog or puppy from a shelter or rescue group.
- Have your dog spayed or neutered.
- Support stronger dog breeder laws.
- Stage your own pet store protest.
- Become a Best Friends volunteer.
- Donate to the Puppies Aren't Products campaign.

For more information

If you want to know more about Puppies Aren't Products, go to the campaign website at puppiesarentproducts.com or e-mail puppiesarentproducts@bestfriends.org.

Puppies Aren't Products is part of Best Friends' mission to bring about a time when there are No More Homeless Pets.

