

Many dogs can have some anxiety meeting new people. Just because a dog approaches someone to investigate and sniff them, does not mean they are ready to be grabbed and pet by a new person. These are a couple things we can do to really help build their confidence and trust in people:

### **WE OFTEN MISS THE SIGNALS DOGS ARE GIVING TO TRY AND LET US KNOW THEY ARE UNCOMFORTABLE**

Dogs in shelters can be more sensitive due to inadequate socialization. Following these guidelines can help earn their trust faster, build their confidence, and prevent bites.

### **TOSS TREATS AWAY FROM YOURSELF**

An approaching dog is not always an invitation to pet them. Petting a dog that doesn't know you can be rude. When meeting a dog for the first time, it is best to avoid petting, and just offer a treat instead. Tossing the treat away from yourself will help prevent luring the dog closer than they are comfortable with.

### **3-SECOND PETTING**

Too much petting can be stressful, and can even lead to a bite. It is best to keep petting to just a couple seconds at a time (1-2 strokes) and then stop. This will give the dog a break, and gives them the choice to either ask for more or walk away from the situation.

### **THEY AREN'T ASKING FOR A BELLY RUB**

Although some dogs do enjoy belly rubs, most do not. A dog rolling over onto their back is often a sign of extreme fear. The best thing to do if a dog begins to roll onto it's back is to stop petting immediately, and step away from the dog to give them some space. Ignoring this sign of discomfort can quickly lead to a bite.