

program for inappropriate play



Congratulations! **You have adopted a new family member.**

As your adoption counselor discussed with you, your dog displayed some inappropriate/physical play behavior while in the shelter. **What does this mean?** It means that your dog may be more likely to mount, mouth, and body slam you and/or other dogs while playing. While we conducted a successful behavior modification program with the dog while he was with us, we suggest that you continue this work with the dog when you take him home. Inappropriate play is both treatable and manageable. We suggest you follow the plan below, beginning the moment your dog comes into your home.



the plan:

- **Avoid rough and tumble games with your dog.** Although you would both likely have a great time with the game, it encourages your dog to begin playing in inappropriate and physical ways.
- **Be sure to have an appropriately sized crate** or a small room in your house that you can use to put your dog into during “time-outs” when he plays too physically.
- **When your dog mounts, mouths, or body slams** you or another dog, in a neutral voice say “oops” or “too bad” and put him into the designated room or crate for a 1-2 minute “time-out.” After the time out, he can exit the kennel and re-engage in play as long as he is appropriate.

If you are unable to do the preceding exercises, we suggest you choose another dog to adopt. While we cannot 100 percent predict the future, research does show that dogs who display inappropriate play in the shelter are more likely to display the same behaviors in the home. We want you and your dog to create a strong bond early-on post-adoption and for your dog to have the opportunity to be able to work through his issues. Please take the time to ask yourself if you are ready to take on a bit of a project.