



### **HSCC Policy Statement: Puppy Mills**

**Position:** The Humane Society of Chittenden County strongly opposes the existence of ‘puppy mills’, and any breeder who produces numerous dogs or any other animal for the pet store trade and/or for distribution to dealers.

**Definition:** Puppy mills are commercial kennels where females are bred continuously to mass produce a constant supply of puppies. Because of this over-breeding, puppies from such facilities often have genetic defects or medical ailments. The dogs are generally housed in filthy, overcrowded conditions, without adequate food, shelter or veterinary care, leading to a high prevalence of disease. The puppies are then sold to pet stores, over the internet or in newspaper ads, while the mother and father dogs are often killed or left to die after their puppy bearing years are spent.

#### **What you can do:**

- Adopt a companion animal from a shelter (one of every four shelter dogs is a purebred) or from a breed specific rescue organization instead of buying from a pet store.
- Shop at pet supply stores that only sell supplies and no live animals (including birds, reptiles and small animals).
- If you do choose to acquire a dog from somewhere other than a shelter, do your research first. A reputable breeder breeds a dog for love of the breed and not for profit. This person at a minimum will only breed a dog once a year, will screen the dog for any medical issues, will screen potential guardians, will take the dog back if there are problems, and will let you meet the father and mother of your puppy so that you can see the conditions in which the puppies and parents are housed and raised.

#### **Resources**

- HSCC Adoption Counselor
- <http://www.stoppupmills.org>