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## IS FOSTERING FOR YOU?

The thing that ABR always needs most is more foster families. The one thing that keeps us from being able to take in all the dogs we find out about is the fact that we just don't have enough room for them all.

These are some of the concerns we hear from people who are considering becoming a foster family:

**I'd love to take in a foster dog, but we really can't afford another dog in the house.** If that's the only thing keeping you from fostering - we can help! ABR will pay all the shelter fees and vet bills for your foster dog. Usually we ask foster families to pay for them and get reimbursed. But if paying up front is a problem, your state coordinator will find another option.



We also have the Extended Family Tree plan to help foster families. ABR has supporters who would love to take in a dog but they really can't for one reason or another. Becoming an Extended Family Member gives them a way to support others who are able to foster. You can find out more about it in the "Ways To Help" section of our website.

**How long do dogs stay in foster care?** On average dog stay with their foster family for two to six weeks. We want them in foster care for at least a week before we start looking for a home for them. It takes that long for them to get over acting like a "guest" or being freaked out that they're in a new place so that we can tell what they're really like. We need to know that so we can be sure we're finding the right home for them.

**Don't dogs who come into rescue have a lot of problems?** Actually the most common problem with dogs who come into rescue is that they were smarter than their owners. So the biggest challenge for most foster caregivers is making it clear to their new foster dog that he doesn't get to be the one who makes the rules.

**What are the Foster Home's responsibilities?** This will vary depending on how your State Coordinator has set up his or her state. You may be asked to do any or all of the following:

- Pick up the dog from the shelter or from his owner.
- Get him to the vet to be sure that his shots are up to date, he is neutered, heartworm tested, wormed and microchipped.
- Begin training the "basics", housebreaking (if necessary) and proper family etiquette. Many of the

dogs who come into our care have spent their lives alone in a back yard making their own rules. We're lucky that this is a breed who responds quickly to affection.

- See that the dog is properly listed on the ABR website.
- Talk with prospective adopters.
- Complete all the appropriate paperwork when your foster dog finds his new home.

**I don't think my kids could handle giving up a dog they have come to care for.** We have many foster families with children. Being part of a foster family can be a wonderful learning experience for them.



My own son was an infant when we took our first foster dog. He'd always had them around. He learned a lot about working with different temperaments. He learned that, like people, dogs aren't just dogs - each one is different. I believe he learned a lot of good life lessons from the fosters we took in.

Dogs have so much to teach us in their loving, patient way. Even when they pass away, they offer us the opportunity to learn how to deal with the passing of a loved one. When they come into our homes neglected or untrusting, they help us learn how to heal those hurts. And when we let one go to his very own new home to make room for the next one in need, they allow us the opportunity to learn about doing the best for someone we care about - even if it hurts a little to do it.

They give us so very much in return for the concern we show when we take them in!

**If you'd like to try fostering** please fill out the volunteer application on the ABR website. Your state coordinator will call and talk with you more. There is a volunteer contract and code of ethics we ask all volunteers to sign. Your signature makes it possible for us to cover you under ABR's liability insurance should a foster bite someone while in your care. We've never had the need to use this insurance, but if something DID happen, we wouldn't want you to be the person liable to the victim.

Foster care is sometimes difficult, but always rewarding. Our foster homes are essential to the work we do. If you think you might be able to provide a safe, temporary place for a Brittany in need, please contact us.