

Shelter Dog Nosework Program

Nosework is an enrichment strategy to engage the dogs number one sense - their sense of smell. It is an easy program to develop and a wonderful enrichment strategy for the dogs.

Teaching a dog the game

Bring a dog to the nosework room and follow the below steps.

**The below steps will only have to be performed one time for each dog. Once you go through these steps the dog will know how to play the game for the future.

Step 1 - toss a treat on floor and say “find it” – repeat several times

- This step teaches the dogs that when you say “find it” there will be a treat to find

Step 2 - Put a box down – toss a treat inside the box – say “find it” – repeat couple times

- This step teaches the dogs that the treat will now be inside of a box, not on the floor.

Step 3 - Put 2 boxes down – toss treat inside only one of them – say “find it”

- This step teaches the dogs that the treat will only be in one box even if there are two boxes

Step 4 - Put 3 boxes down – toss treat inside one of them – say “find it”

- This step continues to train the dog that there will only be a treat in one box regardless of how many boxes there are.

Step 5 - Keep adding boxes (2-3 at a time) until you have 12-15 boxes down but continue to only put a treat inside one of them.

Conducting Nosework Sessions

Set up your nosework room with 12-15 boxes. Place a treat inside one of the boxes. Go to the kennels and get a dog who has gone through the above training and bring him/her to the room. Take off his/her leash and tell the dog to “find it” and let the dog run around checking all of the boxes until he/she finds the treat. You can then remove the dog from the room for a second and hide another treat. Do 3-4 rounds with this dog and then return him/her to the kennels and get another dog.