

# FACT SHEET

## ***Is your family ready to adopt a retired racer?***

Many parents feel a pet will be a great addition to the family. Greyhounds can be wonderful family companions, but if you have young children it is important to think carefully before making the commitment and bringing a retired racing greyhound into your lives.

## ***Is it the right time?***

First, you need to be honest about your expectations. Having a dog or puppy is almost as time consuming as having young children. Regardless of breed, they need to be taught basic manners and 'house rules', there is a high level of supervision necessary, and then there is the need for ongoing training and finding time to exercise and groom your dog.

Retired greyhounds will have been through foster homes to help them make the transition to life as a pet, but many still need some extra time to adjust to family life after adoption. For many people, especially families with younger children, there are not enough hours in the day to really do a dog justice.

## ***'But we want a dog for our children to enjoy'***

Unfortunately, many people get a dog for their children well before the children are really ready to take part in the dog's ownership. Having young children and a new dog may mean that the dog does not get enough time and education, which in turn can increase the risks of problem behaviours developing. That dream of having the magic relationship where the dog and the child grow up together may turn sour very quickly. Real dogs are not like dogs on television or in movies. Real dogs need training and management to ensure they are safe around children.

Retired racing greyhounds although usually affectionate and calm with children are quite large and at times can be exuberant or a bit silly. Having a large dog with young children or toddlers may put them at risk of being bumped or knocked over.

## ***So when is the right time?***

A good time to add a dog to the family is when the children are a little older, and can assist with some of the responsibility of owning a dog. Don't ever think of getting a dog if you are not really committed to caring and looking after it yourself, as children, although helpful, are rarely ready for the full responsibility, and much of the dog's care will fall back to you. If you are not keen yourself, then maybe now is not the time to bring a retired racing greyhound into your lives.

## ***Is there someone I can talk to?***

You are more than welcome to contact the staff at the Greyhound Adoption Program during office hours to discuss your own personal situation. We want all of our greyhounds to go to a home where they will be a valued family member, and want you to enjoy the wonderful experience of life with a retired racer.