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Animal Welfare Association Fights Misconceptions During Pit Bull Awareness Month

October is National Pit Bull Awareness Month

October 1st, 2021

Voorhees, NJ – Animal Welfare Association (AWA) strives to provide humane education to our local communities and to spread awareness about the animals in our shelter. Throughout Pit Bull Awareness Month, AWA will work to change common misconceptions about the breed.

“Many people are fearful of pit bull breeds more than any other type of dog,” says Maya Richmond, Executive Director of Animal Welfare Association. “We thought Pit Bull Awareness Month would be an excellent time to bust through some misconceptions and help people explore where humans let down these amazing dogs and change their gut reaction to the word pit bull.”

Pit bulls are often subjected to negative stereotypes. The most common stereotypes are that pit bulls have the strongest bite, a locking jaw, are fighting dogs and do not like other animals or children. Contrary to these beliefs, pit bulls consistently achieve excellent temperament scores and a number of breeds have stronger bites.

After dogfighting was outlawed in 1976, criminals realized the profit potential from breeding pit bulls for underground fighting rings. This created a high demand that led to backyard breeding and changed society’s perception of pit bulls. Stories published by [Time Magazine](#) and [Sports Illustrated](#) in the 1980’s further damaged the breed’s reputation and instilled fear in the public.

As a result, pit bulls became the most at risk breed for shelter impoundment and euthanasia in the United States. [Arm the Animals](#) reports that pit bulls account for 40% of the 1.2 million dogs euthanized each year. It was not until the last decade that the public’s perception of pit bulls began to change.

Once referred to as nanny dogs, pit bulls are especially affectionate with children, love to cuddle and are eager to please. Pit bulls are people-oriented and happiest surrounded by humans. In addition to their devotion, pit bulls tend to be relatively healthy and do not require much grooming.

Animal Welfare Association will continue to challenge the stereotypes surrounding pit bulls throughout the month of October. For more information, visit www.awanj.org.

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Animal Welfare Association, a private, non-profit, 501(c)3 animal welfare organization, serves the people and animals of southern New Jersey. AWA is dedicated to eliminating animal suffering, promoting the importance of the human-animal bond, and improving the role of animals in the wellbeing of people. Through a variety of programs including adoptions, veterinary services, pet therapy, and humane education. AWA is South Jersey’s leader in progressive companion animal care.

