Santa Barbara County Animal Services held a three day workshop on the “Dogs Playing for Life” enrichment program at the Santa Maria Animal Center September 25 through 27th. Animal Services staff and volunteers, along with representatives from other animal shelters learned the techniques for establishing play groups for shelter dogs.

Dogs Playing for Life!™ stresses the consideration of the whole animal: physically, emotionally and behaviorally. The program develops a method for allowing shelter dogs a daily kennel break by participating in a supervised play group with other shelter dogs. Offering a more natural environment and comprehensive approach to the care of shelter animals helps organizations to better assess behavior, maintain healthy behavior, and support better adoption matches.

As the animal welfare industry evolves, our approach to sheltering advances as well, incorporating new practices and innovations. Sheltering organizations, staff and volunteers, and animals are clearly benefiting from the newest trends, as is demonstrated by an overall reduction of euthanasia rates and more open practices.

“I look forward to implementing daily play groups at all three of our community animal shelters which should prove to be a win-win for people and animals!” said Jan Glick, Animal Services Director.

The workshop featured the founder of the Dogs Playing for Life!™ Program, Aimee Sadler, and was sponsored by a generous grant from the Animal Farm Foundation in New York. Aimee and her team presented a comprehensive training on establishment of play groups in a shelter setting with an emphasis on the concept that “one size does not fit all”.

To quote Aimee Sadler regarding the concept “And to think that these exciting lifesaving outcomes revolve around something so simple and natural: let dogs be dogs and allow them to play together.”

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County Animal Services hosts Dogs Playing for Life!™ Seminar