



DOGTOPIA
Dog Rescue
Established in 2012

OPEN DOG HOUSE INSPIRES OTHERS TO OPEN THEIR HEARTS TO RESCUE DOGS

SAN ANTONIO - There were paws and people all over the grounds of the new Dogtopia Dog farm in San Antonio, Texas on May 16, 2012. With the grills filled with hotdogs and hamburgers for sale to the guests of the Open Dog House, the atmosphere was one full of excitement.

Lauren Santana and her team of volunteers have been working for 16 months to make Santana's dream of creating a dog rescue a reality.

"I'm just so thrilled that Dogtopia is finally open for business!" Lauren Santana, founder of the Dogtopia Dog Rescue, said. "I've been dreaming about opening a place like this for dogs for over five years and to see it finally happen is really gratifying."

The events at Dogtopia included informational sessions about how to care for your new addition to your family, tours of their facility and people interacting with the dogs up for adoption. But for one particular girl, the event served as a therapeutic relief.

Maddison Lynch is a 9-year-old cancer survivor who's been in remission for a year. She was seen playing in a pin with two dogs for the duration of the event. Her mother said ever since she was an infant, she's always been infatuated with dogs. Because she got sick at the age of five, she wasn't allowed to have a dog. Even now while she's in remission, it's best not to keep a dog in the house. That's why she's been

coming to Dogtopia Dog Farm once a week for the past six weeks, even before Dogtopia's doors officially opened.

For Maddison, playing with the dogs serves as a good way for her to socialize and get out of her house to enjoy some time with her four-legged friends.

"I love coming here and playing with the dogs because there's lots of room for us to play together and because I just love all the dogs here," Lynch said.

Santana said she hopes she can start serving more children who are recovering from illnesses by having them interact with the dogs of Dogtopia.

"I think that having a program where kids can play with our dogs where they both benefit from it would be great," Santana said, "Enjoying the simple love and gratitude of a dog is something special I wish to share with kids just like Maddison."

First and foremost, Dogtopia is a dog rescue that takes on a whole new way of taking care of its dogs. Dogtopia provides its dogs with doggy living rooms equipped with couches and other living room items in its kennels instead of the standard metal cage; they've already set themselves apart from other animal rescues.

If the dogs of dogtopia can provide so much love for one child like Maddison, then there is no doubt that they can't do the same for other families. To find out more information, you can check out Dogtopia for yourself at 9521 Paw Print Rd., San Antonio, Texas or look them up on Facebook at www.facebook.com/dogtopiasatx or on Twitter at www.twitter.com/dogtopiasatx.

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