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### 2014 Arlington Animal Shelter Essay Contest

One of the favorite parts of my day is when I get to come home and play with my dog Sasha. We adopted Sasha from the Arlington Animal Shelter last summer. She has turned out to be a very energetic and playful dog. She can sometimes be the highlight of my day. When I was at the animal shelter, I also saw a lot of other pets with a lonely look in their eyes and droopy shoulders. I felt bad thinking, “How did all these pets end up here?”

I can tell you how to prevent your dog’s offspring from ending up in the animal shelter. One of the most important things is to make sure your pets are spayed or neutered. This is really the best thing because taking care of your pet is a lot of work and it’s your decision if you want to get another dog but it might not be your decision if your dog has five or six offspring.

If your pet does not get spayed or neutered, you should always make sure you are giving them to the right owner. That means someone who is ready to take very good care of a pet because pets take a lot of time and a lot of care. You may not realize it, but dogs need a lot of love and attention. They’re almost like people. We have to see the doctor every once in a while, well they have to see the vet every once in a while.

Something else you have to do to keep your pet and their offspring out of the animal shelter, is make sure they have a proper ID. During storms, keep your pets inside safely. Sometimes your pets get scared and run away during a storm. If your pet has a collar and tags there is a better chance someone will return your pet to you.

“Ruff, Ruff!” Well, there’s Sasha. I have to go feed her. She likes her home here, it’s a lot different from the shelter, so take proper care of your pets so their offspring won’t end up in the shelter, like she did. But I guess if she hadn’t ended up in the shelter, I wouldn’t have a pet, so some stories do have a happy ending anyway.