

- **Pit Bulls As Pets**



Reported by: *Stacey Morgan / WCIA 3 News*

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Some Pit Bull owners say the breed has been labeled as mean, aggressive and unpredictable. But in their experience, that's not the case.

"Otis" is a Pit Bull mix and has never shown aggression towards his owner.

"He never jumps on anyone," says Rachel Austin. "He's very gentle and very loving. He loves to play with kids.

Austin thinks those are the true characteristics of Pit Bulls, despite what others may feel about the breed as pets: "It's frustrating because they're just listening to the stereotypes of the Pit Bull- not being great with kids or other pets. It's completely not true."

"Stereotypes are hard to overcome," says Macon County Animal Control Director Kris Horton. "There are some people who will absolutely never consider one as a pet."

Horton has seen a number of Pit Bulls come through the animal shelter. She says there is no reason to think a Pit Bull is more dangerous than any other breed: There doesn't seem to be a particular breed that bites more than others."

And people should be cautious of all animals.

"Any dog can attack, any cat can attack, a lion and tiger can attack," says Horton. "They are animals. You need to be very careful with animals. You need to treat them as animals."

What makes the difference is the owner.

"The dog is based on how you raise the dog," says Austin, "and how you get him socialized with other people and animals."

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