Piglet, the deaf blind pink puppy
I am Piglet

I am a deaf and blind, pink puppy.
When I first met my mom and dad, I looked like a tiny baby pig, so they named me Piglet. Coincidentally, I also look a lot like Winnie the Pooh’s friend Piglet.
Deaf and Blind

When I was a newborn puppy, I immediately knew something was very wrong. I was unable to hear and unable to see which made me feel alone and very scared. I screamed a lot. This made my dog mom upset so she pushed me away.
My name wasn’t always Piglet

I was born in Georgia where my dog mom lived in a small apartment with too many dogs. Her humans didn’t spay or neuter any of their dogs so more and more puppies were born. They started with only three but eventually ended up with 37 dogs! It was a horrible hoarding situation. Fortunately, I wasn’t there for very long.
I was lucky

A very nice friend named Gloria came and rescued my mom, my sister, my two brothers, and me, along with some other dogs.

Gloria is the director of Colbert Veterinary Rescue Services in Georgia. She is a veterinarian so she was able to take very good care of us.
I was very tiny and wasn’t doing very well

Gloria took special care of me. She fed me puppy formula, and tried to comfort me. I still got to snuggle some with my mom, sister, and brothers.

Down in Georgia, my name was Bart.
I did a lot of screaming

I just couldn’t figure out what to make of the world. I felt alone and confused. I couldn’t see or hear anything around me. I needed a family that would be with me around the clock, and I needed a nice warm lap to snuggle into. That’s when Gloria contacted my mom and dad in CT.

Good morning Melissa. We have this precious little fellow who came with his litter from a hoarding situation. He has microphthalmia and is not visual. The dachshund mixes that came to us from the same place are dappled and mom,is dappled as well so this is likely how he came about. He is 1 pound now at 6 weeks and he will be a special placement. Know anyone who,may be a good fit for him?
They said yes!

So, on March 3, 2017, I headed north. I traveled in an RV from Georgia to CT with 35 other rescued dogs. They were going to an adoption event at a Petco store to look for their forever families. I was on my way to meet my new foster mom. Of course, I knew she was going to be my forever mom right from the start.
I had no idea my life was about to take a sharp upward turn

On March 4, 2017, I arrived at the Petco in Milford, CT, screaming at the top of my lungs. My brothers and sister stayed in Georgia and my dog mom was at the adoption event looking for her forever home. I was so upset, I continued to scream as my new mom carried me out of the store to the car for the ride home.
Our first stop was the Veterinary Hospital

My mom is a veterinarian. She needed to stop at the animal hospital to pick up some puppy supplies to help take care of me. She also wanted me to meet some new friends.
No one knew what to do with me

I was tiny, pink, and screaming non-stop. No one knew what to do with me. Fortunately, my new friend Monica sang to me and then stuffed me into her shirt. I didn’t hear the singing but I knew there was something very special about Monica that made me calm and relaxed. I went right to sleep.
Then we went to my new home

That meant another car ride of screaming. But, my new home had friendly dogs to cuddle with, lots of dog beds, and an amazing dad. Since it was winter time, my new dad wore very warm jackets and vests for me to snuggle in. It didn’t take me long to decide that my dad is my most favorite person.
Piglet’s first weekend at home
It took me quite a while to get settled into my new home. There were so many things to learn and get used to. Dog crates really scared me and I was petrified to be left alone even for a few minutes. So, I continued to do a lot of screaming unless I was being held.
But after a while, things changed

I had been so upset, screaming all the time, I didn’t even realize that I can actually “see” light and dark. I happened to notice my dad’s dark blue jeans as he walked past me. As it turns out, sometimes I can tell when large dark objects are near me. I can also tell day from night. This gave me some comfort, even though in most circumstances, I can’t see at all. I use my nose so well that many people assume I can see and hear!
The other dogs in my new home were very nice to me

Susie came into my dog beds to comfort me. She snuggled with me to keep me warm so I wouldn’t feel so alone. Zoey, Evie, and Annie played with me gently. And Dean and Gina were very tolerant of my tiny pointy teeth!
Baby Piglet Playing with his Sisters
My mom helped me relax in my travel crate

This was very difficult because I was very scared of crates when I first arrived. Gradually, over a few months, I realized that the crate means treats, chewy sticks, and going to work with my mom. I get to visit fun places like the vet hospital to “see” my friends, pet stores, or a fun place to take a walk. So now I can’t wait to get in.
Using my tap signals, my mom taught me all sorts of new tricks and ways to communicate.

My mom uses tap signals under my chin, on my back, on my nose, on my chest, on my ribs, and on the side of my neck to let me know “come”, “sit”, “wait”, “ok”, “go pee”, and “relax”. I’ve learned to sit with all the other dogs for group portraits. I am a very smart pink puppy!
I love my treats!

I practice my tricks before I eat my food, when I’m playing out in the yard, when I’m out visiting friends, at the veterinary hospital, and when I’m shopping at the pet store. I love the treats that come my way when I work hard.
Piglet **training outdoors** and **indoors with his sisters**
Early on, being part of my pack gave me confidence. Doing tricks together is a lot of fun. I’m the most eager and enthusiastic participant in our group sit, stay, come games. The treats give us all the incentive to work together.
Despite all this training, **sometimes I object**

There I am wearing a coat, having to sit on a couch with my brother and sisters. This was one of the most ridiculous videos she wanted us to sit for. You can see that the other dogs aren’t delighted with this silly video either.
I am thankful that I have three out of the five senses

I use my nose to SMELL food, friends, toys, and chewy sticks. I also use my nose to map and track my way around.

I use my sense of TOUCH to feel the floor, hugs and pets by friends, and rough play contact with the other dogs.

I use my tongue to TASTE everything in my path.
Smell: I pretty much see with my nose!

I use my sense of smell to recognize my friends, different foods, and special places I’ve been. Most people are surprised that I recognize them by sniffing their nose and mouth. Of course, I also give great kisses!

My amazing sense of smell allows me to find my way around my house, yard, and even new places. When I’m playing with the other dogs, I have an idea where they are by smelling their breath.
Piglet greeting a good friend
Touch

I use my sense of touch along with my sense of smell to help me map out rooms in our house, the backyard (grass) and back steps (slate and wood), and fun places we visit, like the veterinary hospital and the bank. My pink paw pads detect changes on the ground and floor which helps me recognize and know where I am. I also love to feel loving hands petting and hugging me, assuring me that I am safe.
Taste

My eagerness to use my sense of taste is fine when I’m kissing my friends and eating food and treats. But it’s not such a great thing when I am chewing shoes, eating leaves and grass outside, or chewing the kitchen floor. But these are things all puppies do!
I love my daily routine. I feel most comfortable when I know what to do. I sit and wait before he goes into my eating crate. And I sit and wait when I come out of the crate after eating.
My mom taught me to **go up our back stairs**

This required me to learn where the stairs are relative to the rest of our yard. I learned the feel of the slate at the bottom of the steps and to poke the front of the bottom step to get started up. Then I learned to poke each step so I knew where to jump up to the next step. And finally I learned the feel of all 5 stairs so I could just run up without hesitating. I know where the back door is so I can run into the house to see my dad.
Piglet running up the stairs

Big shout out to my grandfather who customized the back stairs to keep me safe!
Another obstacle I had to overcome was exercising safely. Like all puppies, I love to run around. But I needed to figure out how to avoid running into everything. I finally learned how to hold onto my favorite toys to play tug. This was difficult in the beginning because I was so small. Now I hang on tightly, and trust the person on the other end of the tug toy to keep me from crashing into anything.
Piglet Playing Tug **In the Kitchen** and **Outside**
I also like to race around in our backyard.

This takes careful planning because I don’t want to run into anything and hurt myself. I use the slate at the bottom of our back stairs as a reference point and I come back to it and tap it with my feet so I know where I am. I run in bigger and bigger circles, faster and faster, coming back to tap the slate each time I go around. This is a lot of fun.
Piglet Tapping the Slate and Racing Around the Yard
Piglet plays in the yard and then heads inside.

After months of practice, I’m getting pretty good at the yard and stairs. It’s still important to keep things consistent for me because I will bang into things that I’m not expecting to be in my path.
Taking a walk with the other dogs turned out to be much easier than any of us expected.

When I’m walking on a leash, I trust that the person at the other end of the leash will keep me from running into anything that will hurt me. After a few times up and down the same road, I learn the lay of the land with my senses of smell and touch, and sometimes I find myself leading my mom and sisters on our walk. I know how to map out my surroundings.
Piglet Taking a Walk
Friends in the neighborhood

When I take walks down our street, I get to visit with neighborhood children, their parents, and other dogs. Two of the children on our street are deaf like me. They have cochlear implants that allow them to hear.
I’ve made lots of new friends

My friends at the vet hospital hold me so I can give them kisses, and sometimes they give me treats. My tail wags and I get very wiggly when I “run into” someone I know.
Piglet and Zoey Trick or Treating

We love to visit our friend Monica at Norwalk Veterinary Hospital. She usually gives us treats. This was a special occasion so we got dressed up as pumpkins.
Nap Time

During the day I take naps in my crate or in my cocoon beds in the kitchen. If my dad is home I might get to take a nappy on his lap. I am a burrower so I prefer to snuggle in a cocoon bed or to have a blanket over me.
After a long day of running, playing, working, visiting, and eating, I go to sleep!

At night, I love to snuggle in bed with my mom and dad, Zoey, and Annie. Probably because I can’t hear, I sleep very soundly throughout the whole night. I’m definitely not an early riser.
I know that I am a very lucky puppy to have been rescued from a very scary place

I found an amazing home where I am loved for who I am. My mom and dad, and my dog pack, help me to far exceed expectations for a tiny, blind, deaf, pink puppy. Unfortunately there are many others like me in shelters and rescues. They are looking for a good home like I have already found.
Piglet’s Inclusion Pack!

I live with a group of 6 beautiful rescued dogs. They understand that I have limitations so they treat me with extra gentle kindness.

They accept me for who I am and include me in all their activities. That’s why we call them, Piglet’s Inclusion Pack!
A Higher Purpose for Piglet

When I was adopted, my mom decided that I needed to be more than just another dog member of the family.
So, she got me a Facebook page, Instagram account, and a YouTube channel, and a website. Then she made me a mission.
Piglet on the Web
I’m hoping that we can help others like me by telling my story and sharing my mission

Piglet’s Mission:
• Advocate for and support rescued animals through education and fundraising.
• Inspire and motivate others to adopt special needs pets.
• Facilitate Piglet Mindset Educational Outreach to teachers, students, and others in the community.
• Encourage Acceptance, Inclusion, and Kindness through the example of Piglet’s Inclusion Pack (Piglet’s dog pack of 6 rescued dogs).
• Put a smile on faces all around the world.
Piglet Educates and Inspires Children with His Positive Mindset, A Piglet Mindset

- Piglet Inspires
- Piglet Educates
- Piglet Approaches Life with a Growth Mindset
- Piglet Uses a Positive Mindset to Overcome Challenges
- Piglet’s dog pack members accept him, include him, and are very kind to him.
- Piglet Makes People Smile
Fundraising for Special Needs Dog Rescues
We have raised thousands of dollars selling Piglet merchandise.
E-mail: pinkpigletpuppy@gmail.com
Facebook: Piglet, the deaf blind pink puppy
Instagram: @pinkpigletpuppy
YouTube: Piglet, the deaf blind pink puppy
The Dodo Videos: Piglet’s video, Impact video Little But Fierce
Piglet Mindset Visit to 3rd Grade Class in MA
Website: https://www.pinkpigletpuppy.org/
Info about double dapple & double merle dogs: https://www.doublemerles.info
Q&A

Why is Piglet Deaf and Blind?

• Piglet is a double dapple dachshund chihuahua mix.
• His parents were both dapple (merle) color. Dapple is a very cool marble-like color pattern. But breeding two dapple dogs causes serious problems for the puppies.
• Double (two) dapple means that both parents were dapple. The double dapple puppies have a 25% chance of being born with abnormal ears and eyes. Some are blind, some are deaf, some are partly blind or deaf, and some are not blind or deaf at all.
What can be done to prevent other puppies from being born with Piglet’s disabilities?

- Spay and neuter is the only way to prevent unwanted breeding.
- Spaying is a surgery that prevents female dogs from becoming pregnant and having puppies. Neutering is a surgery that prevents a male dog from becoming a dad.
- Educate the public about the importance of spay and neuter. Spread the word! Spay and neuter!!
- Avoid breeding two dapple (merle) color patterned dogs
How much vision does Piglet have?

- Piglet can “see” light and dark. So, he knows when it is daytime and nighttime.
- Sometimes he catches a large dark object moving in front of him and sometimes he can briefly track objects or people moving in front of him for a few inches. His tracking ability is due to his sense of smell but it looks like he can see.
- Piglet runs into the other dogs when he’s playing outside in the yard
- When he’s sitting in front of the back door waiting to go into the house, he can’t see when the door opens. But it looks like he can see when he “follows” the other dogs into the house.
Q&A (cont.)

Can Piglet hear anything?
• No

How big is Piglet?
• 5.8 pounds

What does Piglet do when he’s upset?
• He barks, and cries.
• He runs around “looking” for someone to comfort him.
Piglet, the deaf blind pink puppy
Piglet snuggling

Piglet at a lake in New Hampshire
Happy National Dog Day