

# A Piglet Mindset

Piglet, the deaf blind pink puppy



© Copyright 2020 Piglet International Inc., Melissa Shapiro, DVM

Piglet International Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation



# Hi, I'm Piglet, the deaf blind pink puppy.

I wasn't always such a happy guy. In fact, I was rescued from a hoarding situation in Georgia along with my mom, 3 littermates, and many of my relatives. I am a double dapple dachshund chihuahua mix which is why my haircoat is white and I was born with congenital ear and eye defects.

I am deaf and blind. When I was a tiny baby I was extremely anxious and screamed constantly. I was lucky to find a safe, supportive home with a family that showers me with unconditional love.

My situation was 100% preventable by spaying and neutering and NOT allowing two dapple (merle) colored dogs to breed. Placing special needs dogs like me is not easy. While some find great homes, many find themselves abandoned or in rescues and shelters.



*Joan Carruthers*  
PHOTOGRAPHY

# From the beginning, something just didn't seem exactly right.

I know they say that since I was born deaf and blind, that's all I know.

That's true, but that doesn't mean I was ok with feeling alone and isolated when I was a tiny baby dog.

In fact, I was scared, anxious, and frustrated. I didn't know how to communicate so I did a lot of screaming.



# What does it feel like to be deaf?

YouTube link for video [here](#)

Think about what your life would be like if you weren't able hear all the things you can hear.

How would you "listen" if you weren't able to hear?

What would you miss if you weren't able to hear?

What would you do instead of hearing?

Cup your hands over your ears to get a feeling of what it's like to be deaf.



Zoey didn't understand why Baby Piglet wouldn't respond to her barking. Eventually she learned how to communicate with her deaf blind baby brother using touch.

# What does it feel like to be blind?

YouTube video link [here](#)

Think about what your life would be like if you weren't able to see all the things you can see.

How would you see if you were blind?

What would you miss if you weren't able to see?

What would you do instead of seeing?

Close your eyes to get an idea of what it's like to be blind.



Piglet can smell the other dogs, but he can't see them. So, sometimes he bumps into them when they are playing. The other dogs (Annie in this video) have learned to control their reactions to Piglet when they are startled from a bump. They understand that this is who he is and that he means no harm.

# What does it feel like to be deaf and blind at the same time?

YouTube video link [here](#)

Think about what your life would be like if you were deaf and blind at the same time.

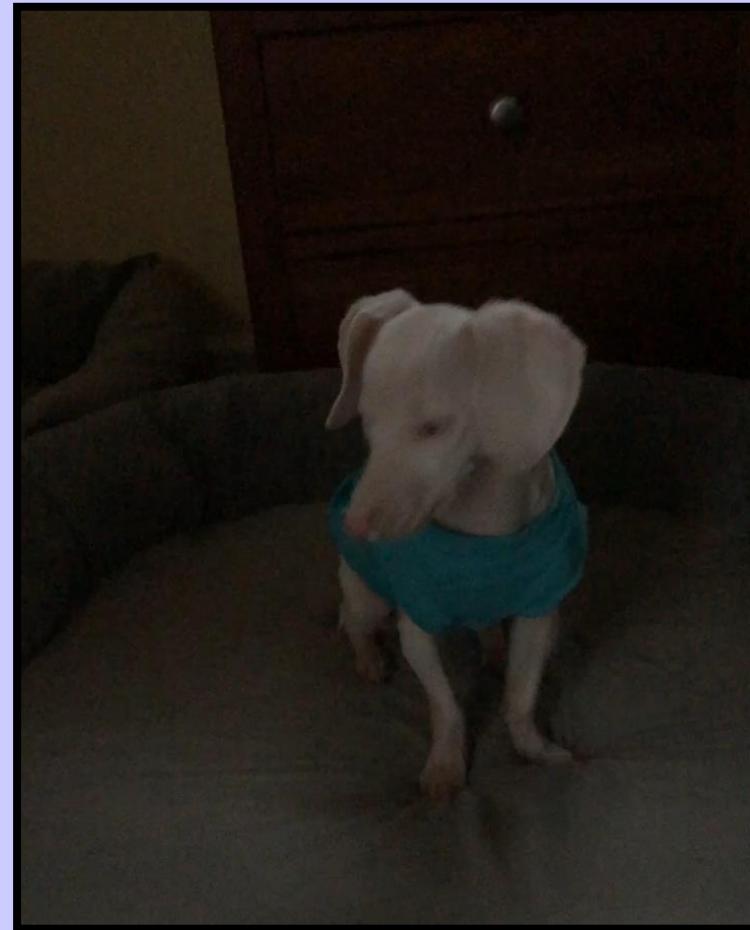
Close your eyes and cup your hands over your ears.

Now imagine what it would be like to live in dark silence.

How would you communicate with others? How would they communicate with you? How would you find your way around your house, your yard, your school, and your life?

Would you feel isolated and alone?

Would you try to figure out how to learn about the world around you and teach others about yourself?



Piglet couldn't figure out how to get off the bed because he couldn't see where the floor was.

And he couldn't hear encouragement from his people telling him it was Ok to jump.

Once he learned that the floor was only inches away, he jumped on and off with confidence.

# Piglet is deaf and blind.

YouTube video link [here](#)

I found myself in that very position of being deaf and blind at the same time. I felt alone. I felt isolated. I was anxious. I was scared.

I didn't know how to let my mom and dad know what I wanted and needed. And they didn't know how to let me know that everything was going to be ok.

At times I got so upset that I screamed, for hours and hours.

The only time I was peaceful was when I was sleeping.

Susie comforted  
Piglet when he was  
scared and upset.



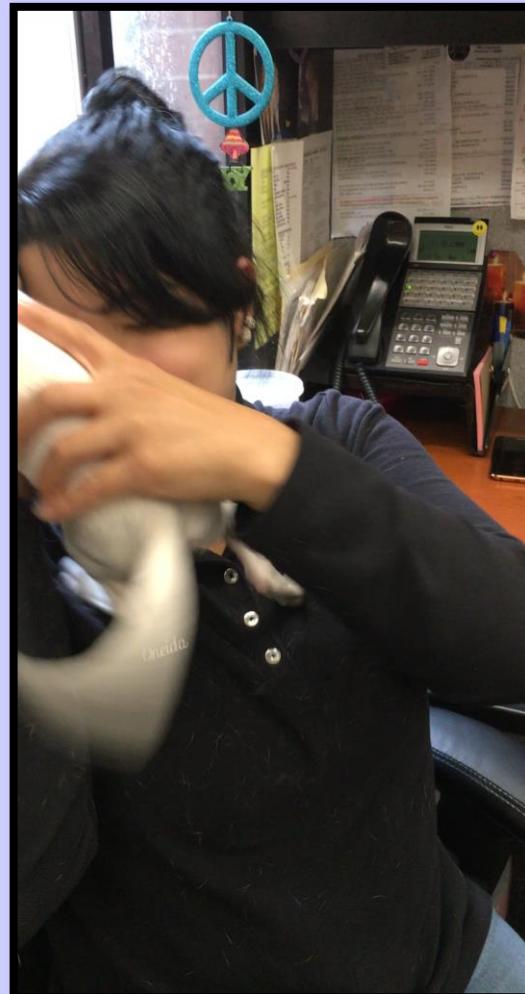
# Then things started to change.

YouTube video links here [1](#) [2](#)

I started to recognize my family and friends by the smell of their breath.

I started to understand my daily routine. As it turned out, I didn't have to get upset wondering when I would get my breakfast. I figured out that after all of us dogs went outside to pee, our mom would get all the food dishes ready and we would eat!

I also learned that going in my car carrier meant that we were going to work with my mom. And that meant visiting my vet tech friends who played with me and gave me cookies!



# Facing Challenges with a Positive Attitude

YouTube video link [here](#)

Once I got going, there was no stopping me. My **positive growth mindset** kept me focused on finding ways to engage my environment, my family, and my daily routine.

I replaced my screaming with a new positive approach to facing my challenges.

I learned to use what I have, not what I am missing.

I learned to use what I have in different ways that those who can see and hear would never think of.

I am optimistic, flexible, perseverant, and resilient. And my positive attitude draws empathy from everyone who meets me.



Once Piglet learned how to jump off the one step, he enjoyed racing and leaping off to play with his dog pack friends. Here Gina plays so gently with Piggy despite his wild and fierce leap!

# What do I have?

YouTube video link [here](#)

- I have a great **sense of smell**. I can tell when a new person or another dog walks into the room even when I am sleeping under a blanket on my mom's lap! I can track my way into my house from anywhere in my yard!
- My **sense of touch** lets me feel the ground with my pudgie pink paw pads so I can find the stairs when I'm ready to go inside to eat cookies!
- My **sense of taste** keeps me motivated to do my tricks because I love my treats!
- I also have a sharp **sense of humor**.
- And I have an especially **sweet sense of love**.
- I have the determination to face my challenges with a positive Piglet Mindset!!



We try to keep  
Piglet's paths clear  
so he doesn't bump  
into unexpected obstacles.  
Sometimes chairs and gates get  
in his way.  
This is how  
Piglet manages his challenges-  
He is  
Positive and  
Resilient!!

# So what exactly is a Piglet Mindset?

A **Piglet Mindset** is facing and overcoming challenges with a positive attitude. It is focusing on what you have and moving past what you don't.

It is accepting individuals for who they are.

It is including them despite their differences.

It is having empathy and understanding towards others and following with positive actions.

And it is being kind to all people and animals.

**As you watch the rest of this presentation, be sure to keep an eye out for ways Piglet uses his Piglet (Growth) Mindset in everything he does.**



# I have a very good sense of touch and an exceptional sense of smell.

YouTube video link [here](#)

By paying attention to differences in ground and floor coverings like carpeting, wood, grass, pavement, and dirt I am able to map out areas where I walk and run.

I notice scents and smells wherever I go which also helps me recognize familiar places and learn about new ones, and track my way around.

I use the slate at the bottom of our back steps as a center point in our yard. When I was a baby I used to check in to the slate when I was playing so I could keep track of where I was.



# Piglet Mapping

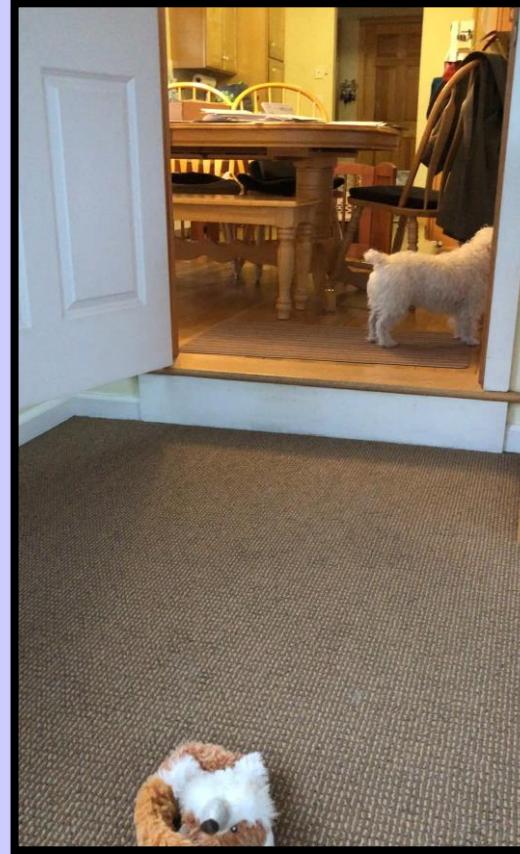
YouTube video link [here](#)

I don't like to feel lost and I don't like to bump into things, so I map out my environment using the senses that I have.

I have mapped:

- the layout of our house, yard, and neighborhood.
- the path from our car into the vet hospital, and once inside, where to find my friends.
- my way in and out of the bank.
- my way from our car to the beach, and then back to the parking lot.

And I continue to add to my mind's map collection.



Watching Piglet maneuver in and out of the room, if you didn't know, would you think he was deaf and blind?

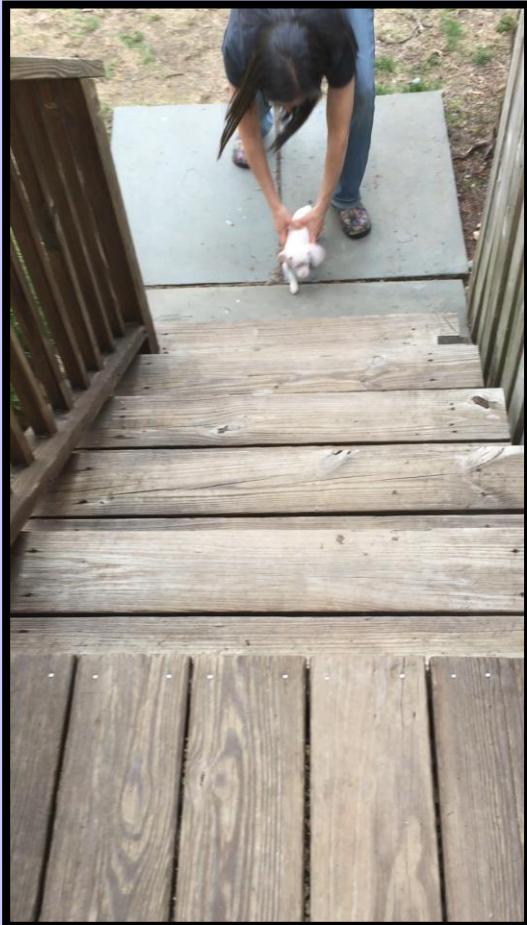
I've got a very good handle on  
the layout of my house.

YouTube video links here [1](#),[2](#)



# Practice Makes for Much Better Results!

YouTube links [1](#), [2](#), [3](#)



Piglet learned to find the back steps, race up, and into the house. He loves to chew on our shoes!

I love to take walks! I have maps from many locations "filed" away in my amazing memory. YouTube video links are here [1](#) [2](#)



My favorite place  
to take walks is  
Princeton University.

# Instead of communicating with my ears and eyes, I use my senses of touch and smell.

YouTube video links here [1](#) [2](#)

My mom taught me tap signals for sit, stay, come, so I can sit quietly at the bank, go pee before it's time to go out in the car, and do tricks with our other dogs.

I pay close attention to what my mom is telling me. Sometimes a cookie finds me after I've done a good job of "listening".

We practice our tricks so we can enter and win tricks competitions.



# We do lots of group work! I know my part well.

It's ok that I don't do the same thing as the other dogs. I do what I can using what I have.

They accept and include me no matter what. They treat me with kindness.

YouTube video links here [1](#) [2](#)



Instead of listening for the call to wait like the other dogs do, Piglet gets a tap signal on his nose. Instead of listening for the call to come, he waits for the tap signal for come under his chin.

# I'm definitely a routine kind of guy.

YouTube video link [here](#)

I take charge of our daily routine, making sure my mom doesn't forget anything.

I feel confident and secure knowing what to expect.

Mealtime is serious business. I sit and wait before going into my eating crate. This is a very important ritual! It does not require vision or hearing!!

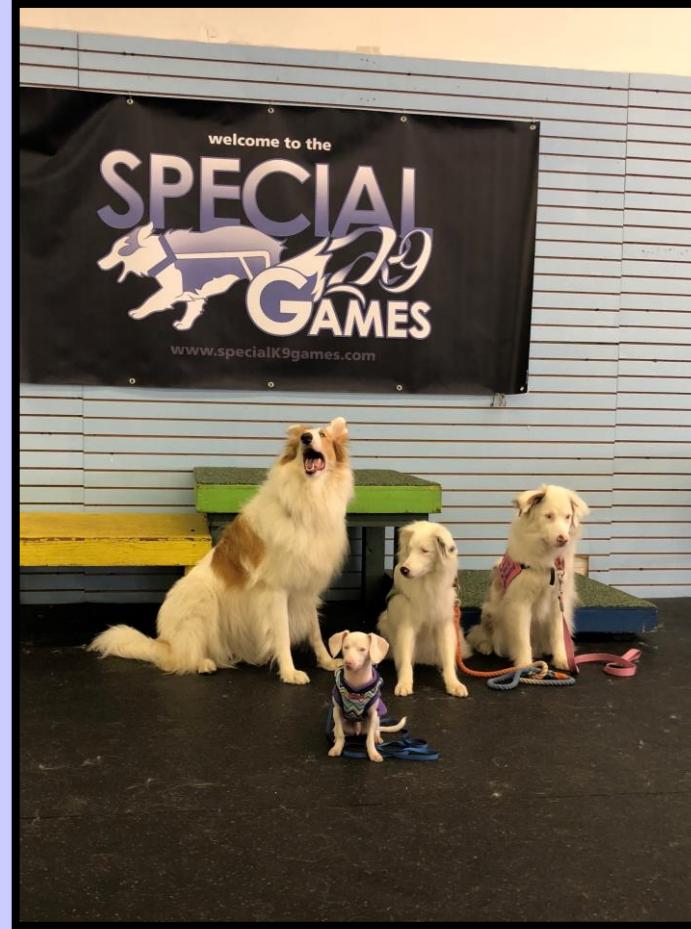
I like the predictability of routines, but I understand that sometimes I have to be flexible.



This is Piglet's old mealtime routine. He would wait in front of the crate and wait for the ok to go in and eat. Now without the crate, he sits with the dish in front of him until he gets the OK tap signal.

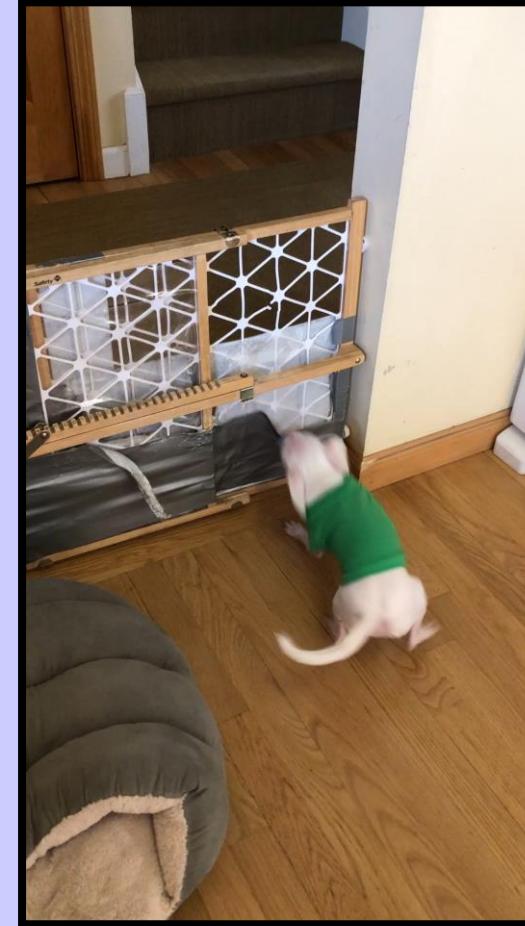
I am brave as I move out of my comfort zone to try new and challenging activities.

YouTube video link [here](#)



These are some of my deaf blind friends at the Special K9 Games that I participated in.

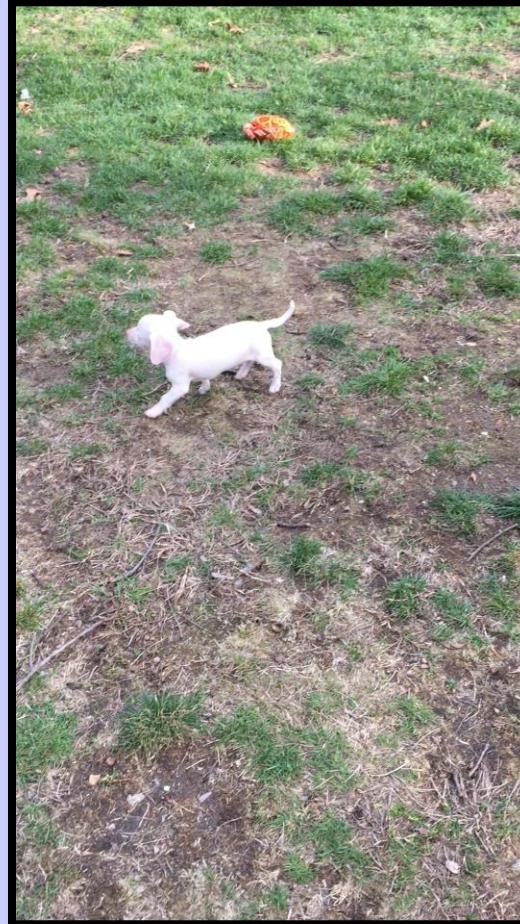
When I'm feeling frustrated or I want to play,  
I figure out how to get attention! [YouTube video link here](#) 1,2



Piglet knows that he isn't supposed to chew the gate. So when he is chewing, he is aware that I might be watching him. When he realizes he's Being watched, he turns around quickly as if he wasn't actually doing anything wrong.

I keep things light and fun. I have a great sense of humor.  
I am a smile maker!

YouTube video links here [1](#) [2](#)



These are videos  
of Baby Piglet playing  
with his dog friends.

Pretty much everything I do makes  
for a good smile.

YouTube video links here [1](#),[2](#)



# My family helps me find success.

YouTube video link is [here](#)

While I am a very positive pink dog, I am actually very small. There are things I really do need help with. I am very lucky that my mom and dad are willing to accommodate my special needs.

They keep me safe with gates and closed doors to keep me from falling down stairs. They guide me when we are walking using my harness and leash so I don't walk into or fall off curbs. They carry me when necessary.

I have a dog stroller for long city walks and events where I might feel overwhelmed or stressed.

They hold me when I need a little extra cuddling.

How do your family and friends support you?



Despite my limitations, I have a meaningful, productive, happy life. I have a special sweet sense of love.

YouTube video links here [1](#), [2](#)

Piglet loves  
Massages, and  
He loves his friends  
At the vet hospital  
Where his mom  
Works.



# Do you have a Piglet Mindset?

List ways Piglet is:

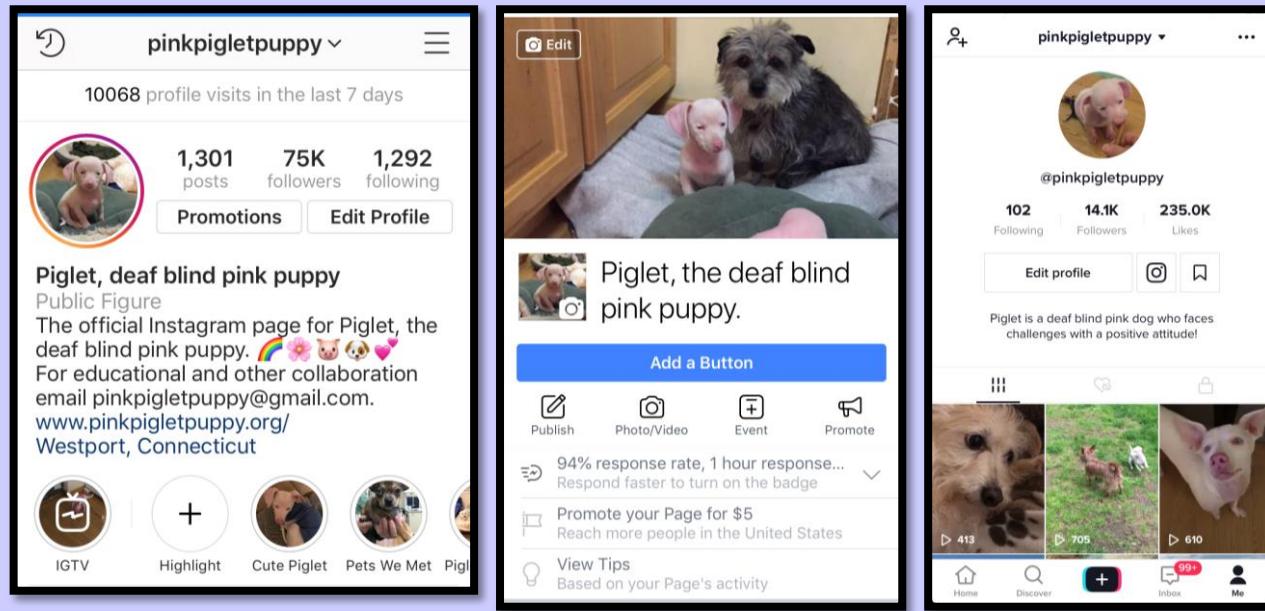
- Optimistic
- Resilient
- Perseverant
- Flexible
- And how he encourages everyone to have Empathy and Compassion.

List ways you are:

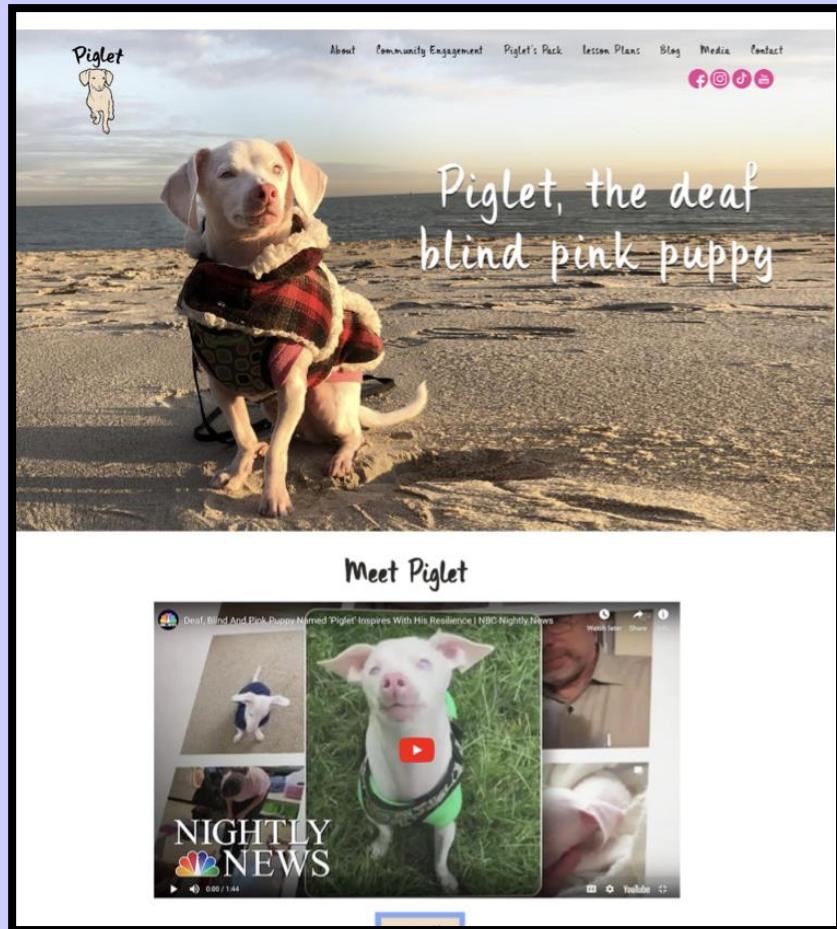
- Optimistic
- Resilient
- Perseverant
- Flexible
- Empathetic and Compassionate

My social media accounts reach thousands of people every day.  
They say I inspire them to face their challenges  
with a Positive Piglet Mindset!

What does Piglet  
inspire you to do?



My website is a resource for others to learn about my Story, my Piglet Mindset Educational Outreach, and 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.
- Put a smile on faces all around the world.

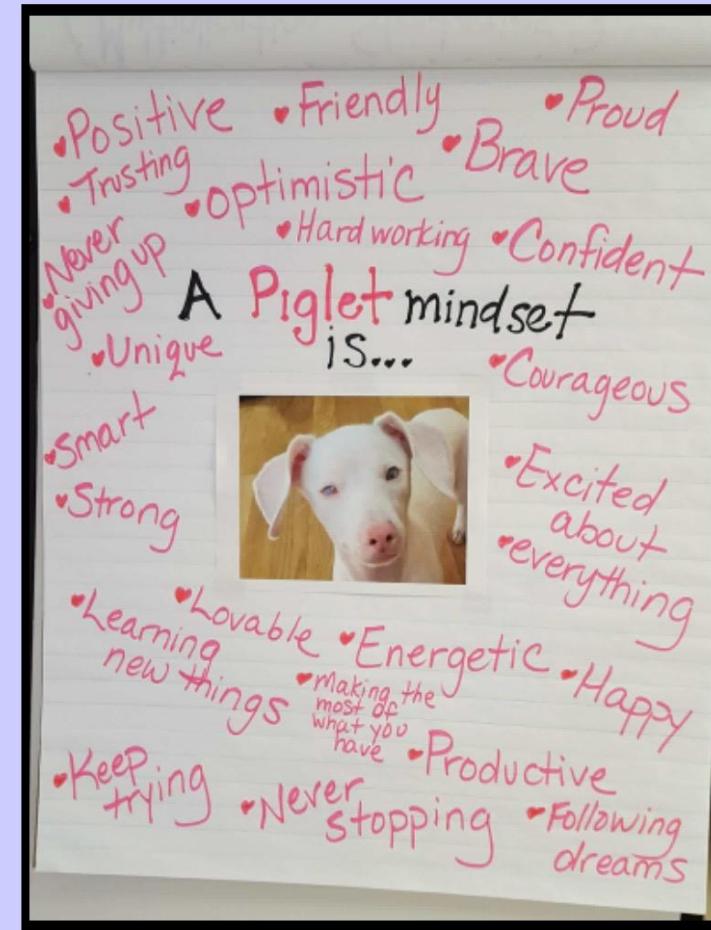
# *For Teachers and others choosing to use Piglet Mindset Educational Outreach in their classrooms and organizations*

Lesson plans and educational materials are posted on Piglet's website. They tell the inspirational story of Piglet, the deaf blind pink puppy, his Piglet Mindset, Piglet's Inclusion Pack, and our work with special needs animals in an easy to use versatile format.

Personal communication between students and Piglet through video greetings, cards, and Piglet merchandise keep students engaged in the program.

Virtual and in-person visits are arranged to reinforce the positive Piglet Mindset and Piglet's Mission.

PigletMindset.org



# Piglet Mindset Educational Outreach



# Thanks for joining us!

YouTube video link is [here](#)

