

## **TAG**

The following information has been adapted from Dr. Brenda Griffin's [Playing Games with Shelter Dogs](#)

Tag can be the ticket to healthy fun engagement with people for some dogs – so don't rule it out as a way to connect and play with a dog. However, it can frighten some dogs or result in over-arousal for others. Remember: games should NEVER induce fear and if unruly behaviors are triggered, the game should be modified to prevent such, or another game should be played instead. For dogs that get too aroused with tag, consider playing GO WILD AND FREEZE, or redirect the dog with LIFT or SPIN

Finally, if the dog likes to run while carrying a toy, you can try playing while he is doing so because he can't mouth YOU as long as he has the TOY in his mouth. However, he can still join you for some jumping, running, hopping, FUN together!

### **What to do:**

- 1) At a distance from the dog, assume your best play stance (wide stance, knees bent), smile with your mouth open and look at him sideways with squinty eyes—then, laterally hop towards the dog (who should be looking at you).
- 2) If he does not look afraid, reach out (without looming over him) and playfully touch or gently push at his neck, shoulder or rump—then move away. Don't come on too strong at first – easy does it until you can gauge his response! If he comes after you with playful excitement – you can run a few steps – giggling is good.
- 3) Depending on his response, getting on the ground and engaging him might be good – repeat what was fun for both parties! Adjust or end the game as needed if any unruly behavior is triggered!