



## Service and Learning go Hand in Hand



American International School of Bucharest 2010

**A very enthusiastic group of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders are determined to make a difference in the lives of some local street dogs. They have been visiting a shelter where many street dogs are being kept until they are adopted by families outside the country.**

**The dogs were thrilled to see the children and receive some one-on-one attention! The children brought dogs toys, played with them and walked them on leashes to help them socialize in preparation for their prospective new adopters. It was difficult to say who looked happier...the dogs or the children!**

**The children learned that the dogs in the shelter need old bedding, blankets, towels, collars, leashes and toys to play with. So they decided to reach out to the school community to ask for their help by giving donations.**

**The children had the opportunity to learn how people in the community are trying to help address the plight of these street dogs through a representative from a local animal rights organization. They learned that one of the most effective ways to help alleviate the street dog problem was to have the female dogs sterilized in order to stop them from giving birth to more puppies.**

**With this new found knowledge, the children came up with lots of practical ideas on how they could help raise the money needed to sterilize the dogs. They wanted to try and encourage people to foster and/or adopt these very lovable street dogs by posting photographs of them on the school's bulletin boards. It is hoped that by sharing**

success stories of the dogs that were already fostered or adopted by families, it might encourage other people to do the same.

Through this service learning experience children are learning how to identify needs in their community, and how to follow through with a plan to help provide for the need. It is empowering for the children involved to know that they can make a difference in the lives of these street dogs. The children are providing a service while also learning new skills and engaging themselves actively in the community!

They are learning the true meaning of the quote by Anita Roddick, activist and founder of The Body Shop...

*“If you think you are too small to have an impact, try going to sleep in a room with a mosquito.”*



Back row: Zoie, Amanda, Jessica, Megan, Casey

Front row: Lea, Heidi, David, Zintle, Bukho

