

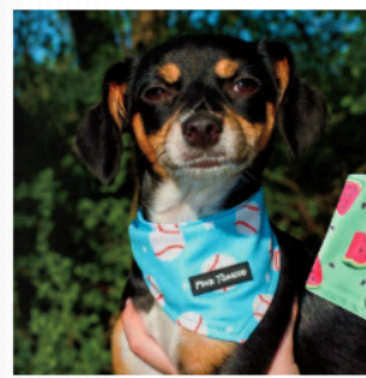
SAVING DOGS, ONE POST AT A TIME

Eric Noxon and Joey Maslolski turned Instagram into a powerful platform for rescue, adoption, and hope.

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Eric Noxon, Joey Maslolski with Noelle and Nadine



Dog bandanas from Pink Tongue



In the vast sea of social media, where trends come and go, some creators are driven by more than clicks and views. Eric Noxon and Joey Maslolski, known as *@eric.and.joey* on Instagram, are two such voices making a real difference.

Before amassing more than 600,000 followers, Eric and Joey started with a small project, selling dog bandanas to support shelters that quickly evolved into a full-time mission: using social media to rescue dogs, raise awareness, and help animals transition from cages to homes.

"For the last three years, we've helped hundreds of dogs find loving homes by sharing their stories online," Joey says. Eric, who initially studied biology and chemistry, took a leap of faith to dive headfirst into animal rescue alongside him. "We noticed there wasn't a young voice in the animal rescue space, and the content out there wasn't always the best quality. We knew we could do better and use that to help more dogs get adopted."

Their approach is simple but powerful: high-quality videos and photos that capture each dog's personality, struggles, and journey. In a world where shelter animals often remain unseen, Eric and Joey's content brings them to the forefront, inspiring thousands to consider adoption.

Among the many stories they've shared, two dogs stand out: Bertha, a massive mastiff used as a breeding dog in a puppy mill and then left in a shelter for more than a year; and Mr. Jones, a senior dog who waited four years for a home. "We actually drove from Chicago to Oregon and transported Bertha to her new home," Eric adds, "She was 6 years old and mastiffs only live until like 7 or 8. Bringing her to an oasis of a home and a wonderful adopter named April ... it was an amazing experience."

"Mr. Jones blew up on social media," Eric recalls. "He was about 13 years old and had been in the shelter for four years. Now, he's enjoying his life in Tampa on boats and beaches, hanging out in the sun."

"It's hard not to get attached," Joey says. "Putting the animals in a better situation makes it feel a lot better. Also, once you give a dog a home, that means you can help another dog."

Their mission extends far beyond individual rescues. "Money is always a challenge," Eric explains. "Some of the biggest shelters we've visited have only one vet on staff. Without resources, it's hard to provide the care these dogs deserve." Joey adds, "Exposure is key, too. Many dogs stay in shelters for years simply because no one knows they're there."

That's where social media comes in. Their videos reach tens of thousands, sometimes millions, of viewers. "Every single dog that we've focused on has had a 100 percent adoption rate," Eric explains. "If you post a video about a dog, that's 100,000 eyes on a dog that would never get out or probably get euthanized."

Still, challenges persist. "Breed stereotypes are a huge hurdle," Eric notes. "People hear a dog bark and think aggression, but often the dog is just excited. Pit bulls, especially, face unfair stigma despite being loving, loyal pets." A shelter's appearance can also raise unfounded concerns. "Shelters often get unfair blame for conditions beyond their control," Joey shares. "Many are working with limited funds and doing the best they can. Cracked floors and rugged cages are a reminder of the need for support, not a reason to look away."

Walking through shelters comes with emotional challenges. Joey reflects, "When we go in and film content with the animals at the shelter, it's stress-relieving to spend time with dogs. But it's also heartbreaking: the smells, the dogs locked in cages, the barking."

What stays with them, he adds, are "all the people who work at the shelters and who volunteer. These shelters are full of wonderful people. Highlighting that through videos is something we've been trying to do because it's often forgotten."

Through it all, they've found community and purpose. "Being part of Chicago's animal rescue network means everything," Joey says. "It's about connecting with people who share our passion and working together to make a difference."

"You don't even have to adopt or volunteer to help," Eric reminds. "Just watching, sharing, and engaging with our content makes a huge impact."

Looking ahead, their vision is to help millions more dogs find homes and to raise millions of dollars for shelters nationwide. Their business, Pink Tongue bandanas, donates a portion of proceeds to lower adoption fees, making it easier for families to bring dogs home.

In a noisy digital world, Eric and Joey have carved out a space where passion and purpose align. Through creativity and love for animals, they are saving lives one dog at a time. And as their community grows, so does the hope for countless shelter animals waiting for their second chance.

Follow Eric and Joey's journey on Instagram *@eric.and.joey* and treat your furry friend to a new bandana from *pinktongueco.com*. Eric and Joey work locally with *PAWS Chicago*, *parwschicago.org*, and *Border Tails Rescue*, *bordertailsrescue.org*.