



happy tails dog training

Happy dogs, Happy homes!

Socialization

The term "socialization" is mentioned frequently to new puppy owners. Friends, veterinarians, trainers, and other sources stress the importance of "socializing" a new puppy. However, what "socialization" actually involves is rarely clearly defined.

What is socialization?

- 🐾 Teaching your puppy to be comfortable and mind his manners in a variety of situations; not just interacting with other dogs
- 🐾 Meeting all types of people, experiencing different places and learning how to enjoy interactions with others
- 🐾 Help your puppy be relaxed and comfortable with sudden changes; guests coming over, people walking past the house, vehicles going by on walk, etc.

Why is socialization important?

- 🐾 Dogs are social, domesticated animals, but they are a different species
- 🐾 Fitting into our human dynamic is a skill puppies need to learn to do; failure to socialize leads to behavior problems including poor manners, fear and aggression
- 🐾 A well socialized puppy has the opportunity to be a successful family member and join family activities

When does socialization start?

- 🐾 Puppies start learning within days of being born; the first two to four weeks puppies should be handled, held, cuddled and played with by humans
- 🐾 The weeks spent with their littermates are important; the puppies are learning play skills, communication, and bite inhibition from each other
- 🐾 Weeks 10 to 12 puppies tend to be more curious than afraid making it the perfect time for positive new experiences with people, places and things

Socialization is for life! The process starts during puppyhood but continues on through the life of the dog. Many people stop socialization after puppy class; which often results in adolescent and adulthood behavior problems. Lack of continued positive social experiences will cause a dog to become uncomfortable, afraid and to not understand how to successfully fit in human society.

As your dog grows into adulthood, continued positive social experiences result in an adult dog that understands how to behave well in public, when visitors come to your home, and participate successfully as a member of your family.